

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HIGHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON  
TUESDAY 28<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2020 HELD VIRTUALLY USING  
VIDEO CONFERENCING AT 7.30PM.**

**PRESENT:**

	The Mayor (Councillor C P O'Rourke)	
	The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Mrs C Reavey)	
Councillor D C Lawson MBE		Councillor Mrs A Gardner
Councillor H L Jackson		Councillor Mrs S Mantle
Councillor J Smithers		Councillor B Spencer
Councillor Mrs P H Whiting		Councillor B Prigmore
Councillor A M T Reading		Councillor V Paul
Councillor P Tomas		Councillor Brown
Mrs S J Mitcham (Town Clerk)		Miss A Schofield (Assistant Town Clerk)

20/60. **APOLOGIES**

Councillor R D Hamblin, Councillor Mrs A Sauntson.

20/61. **STANDING ORDERS**

**RESOLVED:**

That Standing Order 3(e) *'That all meetings of Full Council shall be held in the Town Hall, commencing at 7:30pm, unless the Council otherwise decides at a previous meeting'* be suspended to facilitate remote meetings.

20/62. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**Other Interests**

Cllr P Tomas, item 9, Member of ENC Planning Management Committee and item 11, Resident of Mallard Close.

Cllr D C Lawson MBE, item 11, Resident of Mallard Close.

Cllr C P O'Rourke, item 7.1, Mayoral expenses, 300585, 300584, 318, 333, Mayors tickets DD Lloyds.

20/63. **MINUTES**

20/63.1 **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020 be signed by the Mayor as being a true and correct record.

20/63.2. **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the extra-ordinary meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020 be signed by the Mayor as being a true and correct record.

20/64. **PUBLIC FORUM (15 minutes)**

None.

20/65. **TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

**Police Report**

Link to the Police report for February 2020:-

<https://www.streetcheck.co.uk/crime/nn108bt>

**Glebe Farm**

The copy of the letter from the tenant had been circulated.

### **Farmers' Market**

The Farmers' Market went well. Although visitor numbers were down the social distancing measures worked. There were many positive comments from users of the market as well as the traders. There was a visit from Environmental Health who were pleased with how it had been organised and one member of the public happened to be the Coronavirus Operations Manager for the Police and he congratulated the Council on its organisation of the market.

### **LED and 5G**

Correspondence received on 5G has been circulated. Since circulation more correspondence has been received from the same resident. Councillors have been copied in on emails. If the same tone and frequency of mails continues the Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour Policy will be followed.

### **Environment 7 Recreation Committee: Timber Trail**

Historic England wants the number of individual items reduced, as well as pieces of equipment that require foundations over 500mm deep removing, so a revised drawing has been requested.

### **Higham Times**

This is currently being drafted. Usual distribution is end of May. Although the printers are still working Rushden Reporter are not operating deliveries at the moment, and are unlikely to be delivering again until June. We are looking at an online Coronavirus issue in the next couple of weeks as the hard copy is likely to be delayed.

### **COVID-19**

Cllr Smithers had circulated an update from Northants Together.

Key figures from the Community Resilience Service:

- Our volunteer army now stands at 13,313 people
- We have taken 2,530 calls to the support line
- We have received 1,344 requests for support
- Volunteers have completed 920 urgent food deliveries
- Volunteers have completed 505 medication deliveries
- Volunteers have supported 171 people experiencing loneliness
- Volunteers have run errands for 35 people
- We have provided support for 36 people to get online
- We have dealt with 128 other requests

Thanks were expressed by Councillors to the Council staff for the organisation and good management of the Farmers Market.

### **RESOLVED:**

That the Town Clerk's Report be received and noted.

20/66.

### **FINANCE**

20/66.1.

**To approve accounts for payment as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 and 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

### **RESOLVED:**

That the accounts for payment total of £70227.54 as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 be approved for payment. That the accounts for payment total of £41588.44 as at 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020 be approved for payment. Copies attached to the minutes.

20.66.2.

**To approve the following expenditure:-**

(i) **Tree Surveys and Mapping**

### **RESOLVED:**

That the tree surveys and mapping in the Cemetery, Castle Fields and Saffron Road

- Recreation Ground be undertaken at a cost of £1650.
- (ii) **Rushden Reporter**  
**RESOLVED:**  
 That the Rushden Reporter advert continue for another 6 months at £180 per month once the regular full distribution recommences following Covid-19.
- (iii) **Northants ACRE**  
**RESOLVED:**  
 That the annual subscription to Northants ACRE be taken out at a cost of £35.
- (iv) **White Ceremonial Gloves**  
**RESOLVED:**  
 That 3 pairs of white ceremonial gloves be purchased at a cost of £63 to include delivery.
- (v) **Fire Alarm**  
**RESOLVED:**  
 That the fire alarm works to supply and fit a double pole isolator and produce and fit a zone chart be undertaken at a cost of £310.
- (vi) **Town Hall Boiler and Hot Water System**  
**RESOLVED:**  
 That the Town Hall boiler be replaced with an Ideal Logic Max HE 24 boiler at a cost of £2149. Funds from Building Maintenance Reserve.

20/67. **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

20/67.1. **To receive and adopt the minutes of the following committees: -  
 Planning and Development Committee held on the 17th March 2020.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on the 17th March 2020 be received and adopted.

20/67.2. **Environment and Recreation Committee held on the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the Environment & Recreation Committee held on the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020 be received and adopted.

*Recommendations*

(i) **TURN UP AND PLAY SESSIONS**

**RESOLVED:**

That application be made to the ENC Member Empowerment Fund for the ‘turn up and play sessions’ for the Summer holiday should it be possible to proceed with them.

(ii) **MUGA RESURFACING AND TENNIS COURT PAINTING**

**Resurfacing of the MUGA.**

**RESOLVED:**

That due to the complexity and variation in the specification of the quotes that the item be delegated to Environment & Recreation Committee for further review and a decision.

(iii) **Repainting of the tennis courts.**

That the tennis courts be cleaned and cleared of moss and repainted at a cost of £3995. This had been agreed under Clerks delegated powers so that the works could proceed during lockdown.

(iv) **TIMBER TRAIL AT CASTLE FIELDS**

**RESOLVED:**

That agreement to a design be deferred further to Historic England seeking a reduction in the number of items and the removal of items with foundation depths deeper than 500mm.

20/68. **PLANNING**

**To consider a response to the following planning application:-**

**20/00428/FUL: Single Storey Side Extension at 1 Edward Close, Higham Ferrers**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Council make no comments and no objections.

20/69. **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT**

20/69.1. **Audit Report**

**RESOLVED:**

That the In-Year Internal Audit Report for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 be received and noted.

20/69.2. **Action Plan**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Internal Audit Action Plan be approved.

20/70. **LAND AT NIGHTINGALE WAY PLAY AREA**

Having declared an interest Cllr P Tomas and Cllr D C Lawson MBE withdrew to the online waiting room for the discussion and vote.

**RESOLVED:**

That Council respond to the letter received from Purple Box Commercial expressing an interest in putting forward an offer to purchase the land by advising there is no interest in selling the land but noting that circumstances may change in the future.

20/71. **MEMORIAL BENCHES**

**RESOLVED:**

That the request for a memorial bench following a Covid-19 related death be deferred until the Covid-19 situation is much improved. That the applicant is thanked for their request and advised that Council will be looking into the matter.

20/72. **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

**RESOLVED:**

That the number of Councillors on Committees remains as currently exists.

20/73. **FARMERS' MARKET REQUEST FOR REFUND OF FEES**

**RESOLVED:**

That approval is granted to the appeal for the refund of the Farmers' Market stall fees for February 2020 to those who did not attend due to inclement weather and gazebos not being allowed.

20/74. **ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Annual Town Council meeting will take place on 26<sup>th</sup> May as part of the Full Council meeting.

20/75. **VE DAY 75th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Council pursue the following suggested VE Day 75th Anniversary celebrations during the Covid-19 lockdown:

- Encourage residents to decorate their windows or gardens, red, white and blue.
- Ask residents to share photos and memories from 1945.
- Create an online competition, activities for children and families.

- Friday 8th May - A local bugler be asked to video record themselves playing the last post for sharing through social media. This could be followed by the Mayor taking part in the nations toast and making a statement, read poem etc.
- Sunday 10th May - The Mayor read out the ‘Tribute to the Millions’ for sharing through social media.

20/76.

**COVID-19**

Considerable information has been circulated to Councillors regarding Covid-19 and the responses to by various organisations to it. County Councillor J Smithers referred to the concentrated efforts being made for the ‘at risk’ persons. The death rate is increasing in the county. The temporary morgue facility at Wollaston is now up and running. Work is being undertaken to try and open the Recycling Centres across the county with a date of 23<sup>rd</sup> May in mind.

20/77.

**ITEMS TO REPORT**

Cllr J Smithers referred to a new property boundary fence that was being erected by Cedar Way. The fence extends beyond the existing fenced boundary and concern is expressed regarding the lack of visibility it presents for road users and the loss of a fire hydrant within the new area. The Clerk confirmed she was aware of the matter and had been in liaison with the Highway Authority and planning enforcement. The Highway Authority have advised they do not own the affected land, it is registered with the property owner.

Mayor

Date