

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HIGHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON  
TUESDAY 25<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2017 AT THE TOWN HALL AT 7.30PM.**

**PRESENT:**

	The Mayor (Councillor Mrs P H Whiting)	
Councillor D Drage		Councillor Mrs V M Newbery
Councillor R J Gell		Councillor Mrs O Mayes
Councillor R D Hamblin		Councillor C P O'Rourke
Councillor H L Jackson		Councillor Mrs T Reavey
Councillor D C Lawson MBE		Councillor Mrs A M Sauntson
Councillor Mrs S Mantle		Councillor J Smithers
Mrs S J Mitcham (Town Clerk)		Miss A Schofield (Assistant Town Clerk)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** District Councillor G Harwood MBE, 3 members of the public

17/66. **APOLOGIES**

The Deputy Mayor (Cllr P Tomas), Cllr B Prigmore, Cllr A M T Reading

17/67. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Other Interests

Cllr Mrs P H Whiting, item 10.1, chq no. 300345, Mayoral expenses

17/68. **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2017 be signed by the Mayor as being a true and accurate record further to the month of the meeting in the title being amended from February to March.

17/69. **POLICING**

No police representative present.

Cllr D Hamblin asked when the PCC would be attending a Council meeting. The Clerk confirmed he had been invited and been advised that Council would meet with him at his convenience.

Cllr Mrs A M Sauntson expressed disappointment that a police representative was not present and that despite this the crime figures could still be sent to the meeting.

Cllr D C Lawson MBE queried if the police received the agenda. The Clerk confirmed there was regular liaison with the PCSO and he was aware of the meeting dates and issues arising.

Cllr J Smithers suggested the Council should consider purchasing a police presence for the town and the matter should be raised with the PCC or police representative.

17/70. **PUBLIC FORUM (15 minutes)**

The public in attendance were residents of Midland Road living in the properties located off the private road leading to the rear of the Green Dragon pub. There was reference to 3 separate drug related incidents that were reported to the Police. The residents are pulling ideas together to try and prevent these incidents. Concerns were expressed regarding the forthcoming beer festival further to incidents from previous festivals. Improved police patrolling was desired by the residents. Parking along the road at the time of the festival was mentioned and the fact that an emergency vehicle would not be able to pass down the road due to the double parking. The pub did have a road barrier

system in place but it was felt this was not manned properly.

The public were advised of the TASH meetings with suggestion they attend the next one. Council were asked if they or the Police could raise the concerns expressed at the meeting with the Green Dragon.

#### 17/71. **MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported on the events she had attended.

- 31<sup>st</sup> March, Corby Mayor's Civic Dinner
- 2<sup>nd</sup> April, thanks to Peter who had deputised at the Crazy Hats Walk at Wicksteed Park
- 8<sup>th</sup> April, Concert by St. Cecilia Singers in Rushden
- 23<sup>rd</sup> April, St George's Day Afternoon Tea in the Bede House. The Mayor thanked all who attended. The raffle raised £200.
- 25<sup>th</sup> April, lunch at Serve in Rushden scheduled with The Mayor arriving to find it cancelled.

To complete her Mayoral Year the Mayor reported she would be attending:

- 29<sup>th</sup> April, cutting of the cake at the Farmers Market
- 29<sup>th</sup> April, Brackley Mayor's Civic Dinner
- 6<sup>th</sup> May, Mayor's Market Morning
- 10<sup>th</sup> May, Photo Shoot with East Northants Community Facilities Grants

#### 17/72. **TOWN CLERKS REPORT**

##### **PCC Meeting invite**

There has been no answer as yet to the request for a meeting date. He is holding a session on Tuesday 7th June at 7pm at Wootton Hall, which is open to all Councillors to attend.

##### **Traveller Site**

An update was received on 29<sup>th</sup> March as follows: "Owner is in the process of complying with his notice. He has moved a lot of the stuff but I checked yesterday and some remains. If the notice is not complied with in full, consideration will be given to prosecuting him."

##### **Advertising Banners on the Highway**

A response has been received from Highways regarding powers on advertising banners on the Highway. They believe their powers only extend to writing to any identifiable person/organisation who has put up a banner, and asking them not to put it there again. They do not normally remove items themselves unless they are seriously impeding visibility at a junction. They are to double check their powers. A response has been chased.

In addition to the written report circulated the Clerk reported of:

- A meeting scheduled for 16<sup>th</sup> May with the Duchy of Lancaster and their partners for the Ferrers site.
- The Valuation Office have issued the Town Council with a bill for business rates for the Market Square car park.
- The Land Registry have notified of receipt of a claim for adverse possession of the land at the end of Ullswater Close.
- Attendance at the Rushden East Board meeting with reference to how the Managed Workspace will be delivered. A Stakeholder meeting is suggested in advance of the publication of the Vision Statement. The timescale for the production of the Masterplan is now the end of the year.

Cllr Mrs A M Sauntson suggested pressure for prosecution if the Traveller site was not cleared of all items.

**RESOLVED:**

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

17/73. **QUESTIONS**

No questions.

17/74. **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES**

Cllr Mrs V Newbery, Hachenburg Twinning Association. reported following the AGM. 14 members were in attendance with 8 apologies. Virginia Gudgeons was elected Chair, Gill Mercer as Vice-Chair, John Gudgeons as Treasurer, Kay Gillespie as Secretary and Mick Allen as Publicity. The constitution was agreed subject to a minor amendment. At the meeting following the AGM the trip to Hachenburg was scheduled for 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> August 2018 these dates being governed by the availability of the coach driver from R&B Travel. The Next AGM is to be 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2018.

17/75. **FINANCE**

17/75.1. **To approve accounts for payment as at 25<sup>th</sup> April 2017.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the accounts for payment total of £34,820.57 be approved for payment. Copy attached to the minutes.

17/75.2. **To approve the bank account reconciliation as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the bank reconciliation as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 be signed by the Mayor after being checked by Cllr D C Lawson MBE.

17/75.3. **To receive and note the budget report as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.**

The Clerk explained the budget report was presented in an overview format and this new presentation format was being trialed for the agenda pack.

**RESOLVED:**

That the budget report as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 be received and noted.

17/75.4. **To approve end of year transfers to/from reserves for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the following end of year transfers to/from reserves be approved:

**From Earmarked Reserves**

Castle Fields £1883.32 – Expenditure during the year

**To Earmarked Reserves**

S106 -Off Site Recreation- Midland Road - £39285.71

Street Lighting - £2000 – Donation from Higham Ferrers Tourism

Heritage Centre £19170 – Underspend of Budget

S106 Maintenance - £12000 – Final Instalment for phase 2 Kings Meadow Lane

Mallard Close Open Space Improvements- £5725 from David Wilson Homes

17/76. **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

17/76.1. **Planning and Development Committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2017.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on the 11<sup>th</sup> April 2017 be received and adopted.

17/76.2. **Policy and Resources Committee held on the 11<sup>th</sup> April 2017.**

That the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 11<sup>th</sup> April 2017 be received and adopted.

17/76.2.1 **CHARTERS**

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That, if required, the Clerk submits a fresh 'Expression of Interest' application to the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- (ii) That in principal the Clerk submits a full application to the Heritage Lottery Fund. The application amount in the region of £55,000 to £60,000 depending on final costings. The final amount and details to be approved by full Council. The Council contribution was £1500.
- (iii) That in principal the Council agrees to take ownership of the digital screen and accept liability for the system maintenance following the initial 3year period covered by the Heritage Lottery fund.
- (iv) That additional support is given to the existing project group to ensure delivery and budget management. This additional support to be the Clerk/Assistant Clerk and 2 additional Council members. Cllr P Tomas volunteered to join the group.
- (v) That the Council agree to support the Launch Event and the Historical One Day Event and that staff time is allocated to administer and manage the events.

17/76.2.2 **REVIEW OF POLICIES**

**RESOLVED:**

**Freedom of Information.**

That the amended Freedom of Information Publication Scheme be adopted.

**Grant Policy.**

That the amended Grant Policy be adopted.

**Terms of Reference for Policy and Resources Committee.**

That the following alterations be made to the Terms of Reference for the Policy and Resources Committee:-

- (g) To monitor internal and external audit reviews and to make recommendations to the Town Council accordingly.
- (k) To consider the appropriateness of officers action following internal audit reviews and to advise officers on any additional or alternative steps to be taken. Town Council to be advised of action taken.

17/76.2.3 **TOWN SIGNS**

The Clerk was able to confirm the price for the 4 signs would be an additional £1,995 on top of the cost presented at committee.

**RESOLVED:**

That 4 'Welcome to Higham Ferrers signs' be purchased from Malcolm Lane signs. Style based on the Godmanchester sign. Content to be finalised by the 'Town Team'. Cost as presented at committee plus an additional £1,995. The cost would be funded by the balance from the Town Manager budget for 2016/17 of £1500 and the remainder from Higham Ferrers Improvement reserve.

17/76.2.4 **BUSINESS/FORWARD PLAN REVIEW TO REFLECT OUTCOMES OF THE PRIORITIES PLANNING DAY**

**RESOLVED:**

That the revised timeline attached to the minutes be adopted.

17/76.2.5 **HERITAGE CENTRE**

**Recommendation:**

- (i) That the Council not proceed with the purchase of the property on Wood Street.

Cllr J Smithers proposed a deferral of the decision as he felt that consideration should be given for the building use as Town Council offices. The current offices had no option for expansion and offered no proper rest area. Other members not on the committee also felt that they should have the full information before the voting.

Cllr J Smithers requested the recording of the vote.

**RESOLVED:**

That a decision be deferred to allow the clerk to undertake further research on the costs associated with the project for town Council offices.

Cllr D C Lawson MBE (Against)

Cllr Mrs V M Newbery (For)

Cllr J Smithers (For)

Cllr D Drage (For)

Cllr C P O'Rourke (For)

Cllr R J Gell (Against)

Cllr Mrs T Reavey (For)

Cllr R D Hamblin (For)

(ii) Cllr Mrs O Mayes (For)

Cllr H L Jackson (Against)

Cllr Mrs S Mantle (For)

Cllr Mrs A M Sauntson (Against)

Cllr Mrs P H Whiting (Against)

17/76.2.6 **Recommendation:**

That the possibility of the Cemetery Chapel as a Heritage Centre be progressed.

(i) **RESOLVED:**

(ii) That a decision be deferred.

17/76.2.7 **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT**

**RESOLVED:**

(i) That the Internal Audit Report dated 20th February 2017 be received and noted.

That the Audit Action Plan as attached to the minutes be adopted.

**REVIEW OF INVESTMENTS**

(ii) **Recommendations:**

That a 1 year bond be opened with the Cambridge Building Society for £175,000 using £30,000 from Cambridge Building Society Instant Access Account and £145,000 from Nationwide Instant Access Account. This paid 1.2%.

17/76.2.8 That the funds on maturity of the Nationwide 1 year Bond in June to be paid into Nationwide Instant Access Account.

**RESOLVED:**

That a decision be deferred until maturity of the Nationwide 1 year bond, as the bond from Cambridge Building Society was no longer available.

**BANK ACCOUNTS**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Co-op current account be closed.

17/78. **CHRISTMAS SPARKLE**

The Clerk gave an overview of the events proposed and spoke of the issues for consideration following the meeting with Frank Harrison of the Safety Advisory Group. Issues include:- food safety, emergency situations, marshalling, traffic control and signage. Following consideration of the health and safety issues it may be that recommended actions impact on the budget.

**RESOLVED:**

17/78.1. That the outline of events for Christmas Sparkle, 18<sup>th</sup> November 2017, be agreed as follows:

- Continental Market
- Smaller rides
- Big Wheel and Helter-skelter in Market Square along with smaller stalls and rides. No larger ride to allow more space.

- Tourism Activities to include Father Christmas etc. and stage. They will be based in Chichele College and the Working Men's Club. They will be providing marshals in the vicinity of this location.
- Church Activities - No information as yet.

17/78.2. **RESOLVED:**  
That the Town Clerk be delegated authority to determine the breakdown of the budget and agree expenditure for Christmas Sparkle 2017.

17/78.3. **RESOLVED:**  
That the green space next to the Methodist Church be used for a Christmas Tree and stalls on Christmas Sparkle day.

17/79. **REQUEST FOR A WAYLEAVE/EASEMENT OVER OPEN SPACE AT WILLIAM STEELE WAY**  
Cllr R Gell asked if the Clerk could ensure that works be undertaken at the correct time of year so there was no disturbance to nesting birds and that the cable be at sufficient depth.

**RESOLVED:**  
That Western Power be granted a wayleave/easement over open space at William Steele Way to facilitate the installation of an underground electric cable.

17/80. **ITEMS TO REPORT**  
Cllr O Mayes referred to an incident in early April when a co-op delivery driver received verbal abuse from a van driver who felt it was difficult to pass along Westfields Terrace during the delivery. The Mayor referred to the Events Working Party and said Saturday deliveries to the co-op was an agenda item.

Mayor

Date