

MINUTES OF A STATUTORY MEETING OF HIGHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY 29th AUGUST 2017 AT THE TOWN HALL AT 7.30PM.

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE: District Councillor G Harwood MBE, 4 members of the public

17/145. **PRAYERS**

The meeting was opened with prayers led by Canon Richard Stainer.

17/146. **APOLOGIES**

Cllr R Gell, Cllr B Prigmore.

17/147. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Other Interests

Cllr Mrs P H Whiting, item 7, the application lies close to the border of her District Council ward.

Cllr H L Jackson, item 15, member of Tourism and the Charter project working group.

Cllr Mrs S Mantle, item 7, has a motorhome stored on an adjoining field.

Cllr Mrs A Sauntson, item 15, member of Tourism, page 55-58 5.1 (iii), neighbour to 44 Saffron Road.

17/148. **MINUTES**

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 25th July 2017 be signed by the Mayor as being a true and correct record.

17/149. **PUBLIC FORUM (15 minutes)**

All members of the public spoke with reference to item 7, planning application 17/01328/FUL for the poultry farming unit.

Mrs J Burt outlined the main reasons for objection from Newton Bromswold Parish Meeting with reference to the historic Higham Park and scheduled ancient monument within; the impact on the public footpath and bridleway network; the inappropriateness of the development in the open countryside; the size and scale of the farming unit; vehicle movements and conflict between HGVs and tractors; lorries reversing; light pollution; waste from the unit and where the waste will be spread on the estate; odour; cumulative development from the applicant; the creation of only 5 jobs. Mrs J Burt urged the Town Council to object to the proposal

Mr R Barns objected to the proposal and referred to the size of the unit and the possibility the applicant will seek expansion and a slaughter house in the future. He spoke of the impact on the historic Higham Park, the morality of the nature of the

poultry farming proposed and the environmental impact in relation to odour and levels of ammonia.

District Councillor G Harwood MBE spoke of the vast area to be taken up by the poultry unit and that it was essentially an industrial operation not a farming operation. He spoke of the history of the AD plant and that the application was from the same company. The development is not right for the site. He referred to the morality of the proposal but stressed that objection must be based on material planning considerations.

Ms S Green objected to the proposal and referred to the straw burner and the resulting fumes, ammonia, particulate matter and harm to human health. She spoke of the unacceptable HGV movements and the value of Higham Park as a heritage asset.

Mr P Flowers objected to the proposal. He advised of the public footpath to the front of the site and HGV movements that will cross it; on site traffic movements with reference to the transport of the straw to the biomass burner; the impact of the development on local archaeology and the importance of David Hills archaeological report.

Canon R Stainer spoke of his experience of the 2 poultry farms he encountered whilst walking the Pennine Way and his concern regarding the proposal.

17/150. **MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported on the events he had attended:

- 27th July, Civic leaders Tour, RAF Alconbury.
- 2nd August, United Charities Summer Party, Bede House 2-4pm.
- 6th August, Art Exhibition followed by the Classic Car Show with prize giving.
- 20th August, Launch of the Community Church, 'Valley of Hope'.

17/151. **PLANNING**

To consider planning applications received:-

17/01328/FUL: Erection of 10 No. poultry buildings and associated infrastructure (as set out in Table 1 of Design and Access Statement May 2017) – application accompanied by Environmental Statement (EIA) at land north east of Westwood AD Plant, Bedford Road, Rushden.

Cllr Mrs P H Whiting did not take part in the debate and vote having declared an interest.

The recording of the vote was requested by Cllr J Smithers.

RESOLVED:

That Council object to the proposal. That the Clerk be delegated to write the response taking account of the concerns raised by Councillors. That the draft response be circulated to Councillors for information in advance of submission to East Northamptonshire Council.

Councillor D Drage (Object)

Councillor Mrs V M Newbery (Object)

Councillor R D Hamblin (Object)

Councillor C P O'Rourke (Object)

Councillor H L Jackson (Object)

Councillor A M T Reading (Object)

Councillor D C Lawson MBE (Object)

Councillor Mrs T Reavey (Object)

Councillor Mrs O Mayes (Object)

Councillor Mrs A Sauntson (Object)

Councillor Mrs S Mantle (Object)

Councillor J Smithers (Object)

Councillor P Tomas (Object)

The response delegated to the Clerk to write and submitted to East Northamptonshire Council was as follows:

Higham Ferrers Town Council considered this application at their meeting Tuesday 29th August. The Town Council unanimously objected to the proposal. The Council objects for the following reasons:

- *The unit is extensive large scale farming, with industrial style buildings covering a floor area of 29,000 sq. metres, equating to 2.9 hectares of industrial buildings on a total development site of 7 hectares. The proposal is considered out of scale and excessive development in the open countryside.*
- *The development lies within the historic Higham Park, an early medieval deer park attached to Higham Ferrers Castle. The development is out of character and not appropriate within this important historic landscape. There is archaeological evidence for early settlements within Higham Park and concern is raised regarding the impact of the development on the park and the scheduled ancient moat to the south west of the development area.*
- *The number of HGV lorry, vehicle and tractor movements associated with the development is high, particularly on the later days in each flock cycle. The council object to the long term impact this will have on the A6 and the local traffic network and the effect this level of traffic may have on the agricultural tracks to access the unit and the right of way that crosses the access track.*
- *The level of noise and odour and the impact this will have on the local area and users of the adjoining rights of ways.*
- *Assessment required of the level of light emitted, bearing in mind the unit will be operational at night for parts of the flock cycle.*
- *The impact of the spreading of the waste on the local fields with concern regarding the level of phosphorous in the waste.*
- *The risk to human health from ammonia and particulate matter given the nature and large scale of the development combined with emissions from the near-by AD Plant and the A6.*

17/152. **TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

Police

Letter circulated from Inspector Lyons with an update for Councils. Reminder of the meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner, 22nd September at 9.30am.

Classic Car Show

Letter of thanks received from the Rotary Club.

NCALC AGM

Saturday 7th October 10am to 1pm 'Local Councils Question Time' with panellists Chris Heaton-Harris, Simon Edens and Sue Baxter. Chaired by Dr Paul Blantern.

Parking – Rushden Lakes

A resident of Larkin Gardens has forwarded to the office copy of a flyer circulated by Dorothy Maxwell. He is concerned that the proposed yellow lines on Northampton Road will force drivers to park in their estates. The flyer indicates that employees from one of the large businesses affected by the parking restrictions will do just that. On request information on what the council has discussed on this matter and parking

generally has been provided. He has asked “that the council will spend some time in consideration of the Higham Ferrers residents whose chosen quiet village lives could be burdened and disturbed by the expansion of our neighbour.” The Clerk has replied to say she will make the Council aware of the issues and directing the resident to Northamptonshire County Council and East Northamptonshire Council.

RESOLVED:

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

17/153. **QUESTIONS**

None.

17/154. **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES**

Cllr Mrs V Newbery, spoke as representative to the Twinning Association. The guests from Hachenburg arrived safely at 7.30pm on Thursday 6th July. On Friday they were entertained by their hosts, some visiting Castle Ashby, Oundle and other venues in the area. On Saturday there was a tour around the towns historic buildings and places of interest. In the afternoon the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Raunds gave the guests a tour of their town, ending at the Town Hall with cold drinks and biscuits. In the evening there was a fish and chip supper and game of beetle at Raunds Football Club. After supper the Mayor of Raunds presented the guests with a mug with sights of Raunds on. On Sunday the guests went to Rockingham Castle where they were given a private tour and had lunch in the tea room and french skittles games in the afternoon. The guests left early Monday morning . A visit to Hachenburg is planned for the 16th to the 20th August 2018.

17/155. **FINANCE**

17/155.1. **To approve accounts for payment as at 31st August 2017.**

RESOLVED:

That the accounts for payment total of £67,172.37 be approved for payment. Copy attached to the minutes.

17/155.2. **To approve the bank account reconciliation as at 31st July 2017.**

RESOLVED:

That the bank reconciliation as at 31st July 2017 be signed by the Mayor after being checked by Cllr D C Lawson MBE.

17/155.3. **To receive and note the budget report as at 31st July 2017.**

RESOLVED:

That the budget report as at 31st July 2017 be received and noted.

17/155.4. **To approve the following expenditure:-**

(i) **Town Council Logo.**

RESOLVED:

That the update of the Town Council logo proceed at a cost of £255.

(ii) **Retaining chains for the Chains of Office.**

RESOLVED:

That only 2 retaining chains be purchased for the Chains of Office. One retaining chain for the Mayor’s Chain of Office and one for the Deputy Mayor’s Chain of Office. Cost for 3 chains was £105, so expenditure will be reduced to account for the purchase of only 2.

(iii) **Post protectors for goal posts in the MUGA.**

That a £200 budget be allocated for the purchase of post protectors for the goal posts in the MUGA.

17/155.5. **To agree to apply for a fuel card for use by the Park Ranger.**

RESOLVED:

That a shell fuel card be approved with a £100 per month limit.

17/156. **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

To receive and adopt the minutes of the following committees:-

17/156.1. **Planning and Development Committee held on the 15th August 2017.**

Cllr Mrs A Sauntson advised of her phone call to the planning department in relation to application 17/01395/FUL at 44 Saffron Road. A letter is to be sent to the applicants requiring them to provide off road parking.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on the 15th August 2017 be received and adopted.

17/156.2. **Policy and Resources Committee held on the 15th August 2017.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 15th August 2017 be received and adopted.

Recommendations

(i) **REVIEW OF POLICIES**

Graffiti Policy

RESOLVED:

That the Graffiti Policy be reviewed without change.

Media Policy

RESOLVED:

That the Media Policy be reviewed without change.

Memorial Safety Policy

RESOLVED:

That the Memorial Safety Policy be reviewed without change.

PAT Policy

RESOLVED:

That the PAT Policy be reviewed without change

(ii) **Investments**

The Clerk responded to query regarding the advantage of the investment change with reference to securing better interest rates and the desire to spread funds across the banks to better manage the risk of banks/building societies folding.

RESOLVED:

That £100,000 is invested in the Cambridge and Counties Bank 31 day notice account.
Funds to be transferred from the Nationwide Building Society.

(iii) **Fencing at MUGA**

The Clerk outlined the issues at the MUGA with reference to the call log and anti-social behaviour reports received. The Town Hall has a collection of footballs that have been handed in from the resident whose garden they have been kicked into.

RESOLVED

That a quote of £720 plus VAT be accepted to install a 1.8m high galvanised weldmesh fence on top of the wall between Wharf Road and the MUGA.

- 17/157. **OFFER FROM LINDEN HOMES, GARDENFIELDS**
Council considered the offer from Linden Homes for £5,000 in lieu of installation of speed cushions.
RESOLVED:
That the matter be deferred whilst advice is sought as to whether recompense can be obtained from Northamptonshire County Council and East Northamptonshire Council due to the failure of the condition.
- 17/158. **TEXTILE BONDING SITE AND FENCING WORKS**
RESOLVED:
That the update report on the situation with the boundary between the open space on William Steele Way and the former Textile Bonding site be received and noted. That an update be sent to the residents who contacted the Council at the time of the fence installation.
- 17/159. **COMMUNITY FACILITIES FUND**
RESOLVED:
That the following 3 projects and grants sums be submitted to the Community Facilities Fund.
- Saffron Road play equipment for older children/young teens, £8,000
 - Blue heritage signs on buildings for the heritage trail, £3,500
 - Play equipment at Mallard Close, £10,000
- 17/160. **RESTORATION OF THE TOWN CHARTERS**
RESOLVED:
Further to the receipt of feedback from the Heritage Lottery following the submission of a fresh ‘expression of interest’ the project group have amended some detail and revised some of the costings of the project.
RESOLVED:
That Council submit the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund with grant sought of £49,600 and with amended detail reflecting the advice received.
- 17/161. **TOWN TEAM**
17/161.1. **RESOLVED:**
That the minutes from the Higham Ferrers Town Team meeting held on 24th July 2017 be received and noted. That thanks be passed to the Town Team for their good work and effort.
- 17/161.2. **RESOLVED:**
That the update from the Town Manager be received and noted.
- 17/162. **COMMUNITY CENTRE WORKING PARTY**
RESOLVED:
That the minutes from the Community Centre Working Party meeting held on 8th August 2017 be received and noted.
- 17/163. **TOWN HALL PHONE SYSTEM UPGRADE**
RESOLVED:
That the phone system at the Town Hall be upgraded at a cost of approximately £206 per month based on a 5 year contract.

17164.. **PARKING ENFORCEMENT**

Consideration was given as to whether to extend the additional parking enforcement beyond the 6 months already agreed. Views were expressed regarding the success of the enforcement bearing in mind the 5 minute observation period prior to the issue of a parking contravention notice; and whether the presence of the parking enforcement officers was a deterrent in itself.

The recording of the vote was requested by Cllr P Tomas.

RESOLVED:

That the 3 months notice be given now to withdraw from the paid additional parking enforcement.

Councillor D Drage (For)

Councillor Mrs V M Newbery (For)

Councillor R D Hamblin (For)

Councillor C P O'Rourke (For)

Councillor H L Jackson (For)

Councillor A M T Reading (For)

Councillor D C Lawson MBE (For)

Councillor Mrs T Reavey (For)

Councillor Mrs O Mayes (For)

Councillor Mrs A Sauntson (For)

Councillor Mrs S Mantle (For)

Councillor Mrs P H Whiting (For)

Councillor P Tomas (Against)

Councillor J Smithers (For)

17/165. **CLOSURE OF MEETING TO PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED:

That in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and by reason of the confidential nature of the following items of business, the Press and the Public be excluded from the meeting.

17/166. **LAND OFF STANWICK ROAD**

Council received a report on the activities on land off Stanwick Road.

RESOLVED:

That the matter remain with the Clerk with further legal advice being sought. That an agreed course of action/litigation be deferred to the next meeting.

17/167. **RUSHDEN EAST**

17/167.1. **RESOLVED:**

That the report from the Town Clerk on the Rushden East Board meeting held on 14^h August 2017 be received and noted.

17/167.2. **RESOLVED:**

That Council accept the offer made of a meeting with both the Chief Executive and the Head of Planning, East Northamptonshire Council. That a separate meeting with representatives of the Duchy of Lancaster be sought.

17/168. **RE-OPEN THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED:

That the confidential business having been concluded, the Press and Public be re-admitted to the meeting.

17/169. **PROPOSED NEW CEMETERY**

RESOLVED:

Council considered whether the proposed site for a cemetery in Rushden East is acceptable for a joint cemetery provision with Rushden Town Council. The proposed Rushden East site has not yet been proved to be suitable.

RESOLVED:

That a suitable site has not been offered.

17/170. **UNITARY AUTHORITIES/DEVOLUTION
RESOLVED:**

That, due to time constraint, the discussion on the possibility of devolution of services to the Town Council and/or the establishment of a Unitary Authority in Northamptonshire be deferred to the next meeting.

17/171. **ITEMS TO REPORT**

Cllr Mrs O Mayes announced her resignation from Council due to increasing commitments in other areas outside of Town Council business. She thanked all for the help and advice offered during her time as a Town Councillor.

Cllr P Tomas thanked Cllr Mrs O Mayes for her service. He expressed appreciation for her work. She will be missed as a member of the Town Council.

Mayor

Date