

MINUTES OF A STATUTORY MEETING OF HIGHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY 28th AUGUST 2018 AT THE TOWN HALL AT 7.30PM.

PRESENT:

The Mayor (Councillor J Smithers)	
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor C P O'Rourke)	
Councillor D C Lawson MBE	Councillor Mrs P H Whiting
Councillor R D Hamblin	Councillor Mrs C Reavey
Councillor R Gell	Councillor Mrs A Sauntson
Councillor H L Jackson	Councillor Mrs S Mantle
Councillor P Tomas	Councillor B Prigmore
Councillor D Drage	Miss A Schofield (Assistant Town Clerk)
Councillor Mrs V Newbery	D Wicks (Mayor's Sergeant)
Mrs S J Mitcham (Town Clerk)	

IN ATTENDANCE: District Councillor Miss Harriet Pentland, Paul Fell, Delivery, Office of Police and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire, 2 members of the public

18/170 **PRAYERS**

The meeting was opened with the Lord's Prayer led by the Town Clerk.

18/171. **APOLOGIES**

Cllr A M T Reading, Cllr Mrs A Gardner.

18/172. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr C P O'Rourke, item 22.2, company seeking to advertise.
Cllr J Smithers, item 12.1, chq 300690 and 300691, Mayoral expenses.
Cllr D C Lawson MBE, item 19, resident of Mallard Close.
Cllr P Tomas, item 19, resident of Mallard Close.

18/173. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 31st July 2018 be signed by the Mayor as being a true and correct record.

18/174. **PUBLIC FORUM**

Mr J Farmery spoke with regard to 'Declarations of Interest' and felt the interpretation of when to declare an interest was too restrictive. With examples quoted he asked the Council to consider this point. The Clerk responded by advising that Councillors were governed by the Code of Conduct and that it was not just a pecuniary interest that was declared by Councillors but they must also consider the principles of bias and predetermination. The Clerk read out the tests that Councillors may use to ascertain if they might be affected by bias and predetermination. Advice is also taken from East Northamptonshire District Council Monitoring Officer.

18/175. **PCSO FOR HIGHAM FERRERS**

18/175.1. Paul Fell, Delivery, Office of Police and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire, explained the funded PCSO scheme which was introduced in 2005 by the Labour Government. Since introduction the scheme has been reviewed by Northamptonshire and the new scheme was outlined to Council. The sponsored salary is just over £38,000. The PCSO's are deployed to work within the boundary of the parish of

Higham Ferrers subject to removal for critical or major incidents of 5 days maximum in a 12 month period. The PCSO reports to Northamptonshire Police not the Town Council but duties are aligned to local priorities. Questions to Mr Fell ascertained that the PCSO hours would be 37 hours over 5 days to include Saturdays and Sundays. 4 weeks annual leave plus leave of absence for sickness and for any training. PCSO's do not have the power to arrest but can detain persons for up to 30 minutes pending arrival of assistance. They do not have the power to issue parking enforcement notices. The PCSO would be selected by the Police. The minimum term for sponsoring a PCSO is 12 months with a 6 month notice period. The vehicle for the PCSO is provide by the Police. There will not be a reduced service from the local police team if a PCSO is sponsored

18/175.2. **RESOLVED:**

That the Council will not fund a PCSO for Higham Ferrers.

For: Cllrs Lawson, Whiting, Gell, Hamblin, Prigmore, Jackson and Sauntson
Against: Cllrs Tomas, Reavey, Mantle, Smithers and O'Rourke.
Abstention: Cllrs Newbery and Drage.

18/176. **MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported on the events he had attended.

- 5th August, Higham Ferrers Classic Car Show at which prizes were presented by the Mayor.
- 9th August, Meeting with Northampton Borough Council representatives to outline civic practices in Higham.
- 16th-20th August, Twinning Association trip to Hachenburg with trips out including a boat cruise along the Rhine. The hosts were welcoming and generous and credit must be given to all involved in the organisation.
- 24th August, Summer Ball at the Guildhall, Northampton, in aid of the Northampton Borough Council Mayor's chosen charity, the Hope Centre.
- 25th August, Reception at the Inland Waterways Association Festival of Water in association with St Neots Town Council. With over 100 boats the St Neots stretch of the Great Ouse.

18/177. **TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

Police Report

6th August – Arson – Bowls Club, Saffron Road Recreation Ground.

8/9th August – Power supply cut to CCTV at football ground, Lancaster Road, Higham Ferrers.

Stairlift

This is now installed at the Town Hall. Marion Knott (former Mayor) has donated £500. A thank you letter has been sent.

RESOLVED:

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

18/178. **QUESTIONS**

None.

18/179. **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES**

Cllr H L Jackson attended the Rushden East Meeting held on the 13th August 2018 at

which the latest masterplan document was reviewed. Cllr Jackson had queried the statement that said because Higham Ferrer's Neighbourhood Plan had been completed before the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, this would take precedence over our own Neighbourhood Plan. However, because Rushden's Neighbourhood Plan had been completed after the NNJCS then any conflicts would be resolved in Rushden's Neighbourhood Plan favour. This is not what the Neighbourhood Plan Team had been told. It had been said that if the Plan was completed before the NNJCS our plan would have to be taken note of. This has a major effect when it comes to objections to the Duchy plans for B8 Warehouses on the Higham East Employment area and expansion.

Cllr Jackson reiterated a previous request at the meeting that the John Clarke roundabout be extended to assist traffic leaving the Sharba Homes site east of the Ferrers School but no changes have been shown even though half the traffic from Rushden East will use that roundabout including the HGV lorries from the employment area.

18/180. **REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR**
None.

18/181. **FINANCE**

18/181.1. **To approve accounts for payment as at 31st August 2018.**

In response to a question about rates on the Market Square car park the Clerk responded that as landowner the Council were liable.

RESOLVED:

That the accounts for payment total of £38,214.54 be approved for payment. Copy attached to the minutes.

18/181.2. **To approve the bank account reconciliation as at 31st July 2018.**

RESOLVED:

That the bank reconciliation as at 31st July 2018 be signed by the Mayor after being checked by Cllr D C Lawson MBE.

18/182. **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

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

18/182.1. Planning and Development Committee held on the 14th August 2018.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on the 14th August 2018 be received and adopted.

18/182.2. Policy and Resources Committee held on the 14th August 2018.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 14th August 2018 be received and adopted.

Recommendations

(i) **Review of Policies.**

Flag Flying Policy, Graffiti Policy, Media Policy, PAT Policy, Grant Aid Policy.

RESOLVED:

That the Flag Flying Policy, Graffiti Policy, Media Policy, PAT Policy, Grant Aid Policy be reviewed without change.

(ii) **Review of Policies.**

Grant Aid Policy.

RESOLVED:

That the revised grant application form be approved subject to the addition of a clause on GDPR and date of signatures.

(iii) **Cemetery**

RESOLVED:

That the quote of £4000 be accepted to undertake ground penetrating radar on the oldest part of the cemetery to assess whether there was free space. As this was specialist work only 1 quote was available.

(iv) **Bank Mandate for Unity Trust Bank**

RESOLVED:

- That Danielle Edwards be removed from the mandate.
- That Alicia Schofield and Donna Anderson be added to allow them to enter online payments and view accounts.
- That Cllr T Reavey, Cllr J Smithers and Cllr A Gardner be added to the mandate to include verifying online payments.
- That Julie Morris be removed from the mandate.
- That Alicia Schofield be added to the full mandate.
- That in future signature requirements are Town Clerk or Assistant Clerk plus 2 Councillors.

(v) **Review of Lease Rent, 5 and 5a College Street**

RESOLVED:

That following a revaluation of the lease rent as required by the lease, that the annual rent be increased to £19000 pa. for 5 and 5a College Street.

18/183. **BOWLS CLUB DAMAGE**

18/183.1. **RESOLVED:**

That the update on the damage at the Bowls Club be received and noted.

18/183.2. **To consider whether the Council will assist with repairing the damage.**

Item withdrawn. The fence is covered on the Town Council insurance so consideration of further assistance is not necessary at this time.

18/184. **EXTENSION TO THE GREENWAY**

The Clerk referred to the 'lift and shift' clause added allowing the transfer of the route to alternative space elsewhere on the Ferrers School site and the resulting addition of the dispute resolution clause.

RESOLVED:

That the Licence between the Council and the Ferrers School be sealed subject to no major amendments.

18/185. **REVIEW OF GRIT BINS BY NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

RESOLVED:

That the Town Council submit an expression of interest in being responsible for replenishing and maintaining the grit bins that are to be removed by the County Council.

18/186. **INSTALLATION OR REMOVEABLE BOLLARDS, SAFFRON ROAD RECREATION GROUND**

RESOLVED:

That consideration of whether to purchase and install removeable bollards for Saffron Road Recreation Ground be deferred to the Environment and Recreation Committee with a budget of £1,000.

- 18/187. **EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL COMMUNITY FACILITIES FUND
RESOLVED:**
That an application of £9,500 for grant funding for the play equipment at Mallard Close be submitted to East Northamptonshire Council Community Facilities Fund.
- 18/188. **MALLARD CLOSE AND LAND OFF STANWICK ROAD
RESOLVED:**
That a response to Hallie Homes be sent to advise that the Council already have uses allocated for the land at Mallard Close and land off Stanwick Road.
- 18/189. **USE OF DRONES ON PARKS AND OPEN SPACES
RESOLVED:**
That to try and prevent the use of drones on public open space owned by the Town Council the Council adopt and publicise the policy as drafted in the report that refers to the Civil Aviation Authority's Drone Code.
- 18/190. **TREE WORKS, STATION ROAD
RESOLVED:**
That planting and fencing works be undertaken at a cost of £2,853.75 to address issues raised following tree works at Station Road as follows:-
- Supply and install a 14m run of Ascot rail fencing to close access to the spinney.
 - Supply and install a continuation of the residents Ascot rail fencing to enclose his land.
 - Supply and install 24m run of 3 rail fencing along the kerbside to prevent access to the spinney.
 - Supply and plant a hawthorn hedge to the front of the new 3 rail fence.
 - Supply and plant a variety of whips to gap up the mature hedge.
- 18/191. **CHRISTMAS SPARKLE**
- 18/191.1. **RESOLVED:**
That the minutes of the Events Working Party Meeting held on the 10th August 2018 be received and noted.
- 18/191.2. **Advertising boards on the barriers**
Councillor O'Rourke, having declared an interest, withdrew from the discussion and vote.
RESOLVED:
That advertising boards be allowed on the barriers at a cost of £40 plus VAT per board and that it is on a first come first basis and limited to 1 board per business initially.
- 18/191.3. Christmas Tree on the open space adjacent to the Methodist Church.
The cost of a 24ft Christmas Tree would be in the region of £1,000.
RESOLVED:
That the Council do not underwrite the cost of a Christmas Tree on the open space adjacent to the Methodist Church.
- 18/192. **BOOK LENDING WORKING PARTY**
The Clerk advised that the County Council had lost the judicial review regarding the decision to close the 21 libraries. The next meeting of the working party is scheduled

for the 10th September where it is hoped that more help can be harnessed.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Book Lending Working Party Meeting held on the 7th August 2018 be received and noted.

18/193. **MOTION FROM A COUNCILLOR**

Cllr D Hamblin said he was proud when he was elected to the Town Council. The parks, play areas and open spaces are well maintained and look good, as does the town itself. Unfortunately for the town the issue of the library closure arose. If the building is not to be run as a library the motion will allow the Council to look at other uses for it.

Motion seconded by Cllr P Tomas.

RESOLVED:

That the Council request the Policy and Resources Committee consider and study the possibility of purchasing the Library building on Midland Road at an opportunist price that could be self-financing and report back to full Council.

18/194. **VACANCY ON THE EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT STANDARDS COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED:

That Cllr P Tomas be nominated for the vacancy on the Joint Standards Committee at East Northamptonshire Council.

28/195. **ITEMS TO REPORT**

Cllr Mrs V Newbery requested an agenda item regarding the Park Wardens.

Cllr C P O'Rourke referred to the overhanging vegetation and lack of street lighting on the Greenway from Saffron Road and by the Queensway.

Cllr J Smithers requested an agenda item to review the opening hours of the Town Hall.

Mayor

Date