

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HIGHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 28th FEBRUARY 2017 AT THE TOWN HALL AT 7.30PM.**

PRESENT:

	The Mayor (Councillor Mrs P H Whiting)	
	The Deputy Mayor (Councillor P Tomas)	
Councillor D Drage		Councillor B A Prigmore
Councillor R J Gell		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 S Mantle		Councillor Mrs A M Sauntson
Councillor Mrs V M Newbery		Councillor J Smithers
Councillor Mrs O Mayes		Miss A Schofield (Assistant Town Clerk)
Mrs S J Mitcham (Town Clerk)		

IN ATTENDANCE: District Councillor G Harwood MBE

17/21. **PRAYERS**

The meeting was opened with prayers led by Father Roger Knight.

17/22. **APOLOGIES**

Cllr R D Hamblin.

17/23. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Other interests

Cllr H L Jackson, item 5.1 (ii) of item 12.1, neighbour to 9 High Street

Cllr J Smithers, item 11, resides close to Parker Way

Cllr Mrs O Mayes, item 14, Chair of HiFARS

Cllr Mrs P H Whiting, item 17, member of Planning and Policy Committee, ENC

17/24. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 31th January 2017 be signed by the Mayor as being a true and accurate record.

17/25. **POLICING**

No Police present.

Cllr Mrs V M Newbery informed of an email received from a new resident which she had intended to pass on to the Police during the meeting.

Cllr Mrs A Sauntson had received complaint regarding youths and the litter and bottles left in the play areas in Larkin Gardens. The Police were to be asked to monitor.

Cllr C P O'Rourke informed of the parking issues on the private road leading to the rear of the Green Dragon pub. He reported confrontation between residents of the road with users of the library who were using the road for parking.

17/26. **PUBLIC FORUM (15 minutes)**

Father Roger Knight referred to the disabled parking spaces to the front of the library and suggested the kerb needed altering to allow more room given space wasn't actually sufficient for 2 cars.

17/27. **MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported on the events she had attended, including an event in January omitted from last month's report.

- 3rd January, official opening of the Cando Care Centre in the library
- 12th February, Northampton University awards at the Derngate with lunch at the Sunley Centre on the College Campus
- 17th February, the Mayor of Rushden's Civic Dinner
- 23rd February, Ferrers School production of West Side Story
- 25th February, Northampton Mayor's Race Night

The Mayor reminded that the Litter Working Party will be taking part in the Great British Litter Pick Saturday 4th March and volunteers are sought. The Mayor still has a few tickets left for her Ladies International Day Lunch on the 8th March.

17/28. **TOWN CLERKS REPORT**

Car Parking Enforcement

Parking Enforcement have confirmed that they can work between 6pm and 8pm, the reporting system shows how many visits have been made, the duration of visits and the locations visited. There is strict legislation on how the money received from fines is spent. It pays for the service and then buys new equipment. They are confirming with the contractor whether 5 hours a week is viable.

Road Closures - Advanced Warning

Highways will be installing a disabled access ramp on Nene Road, Higham Ferrers. The road will be closed from 26th April for 2 days between 9am and 5pm for the works to take place.

Market Square

A response has been received to the request to ring fencing of funds spent on Market Square maintenance.

"The County Council cannot authorise the belated payment for unauthorised works carried out on the public highway, namely the Market Square car park. I did say that the County Council would look favourably on the funding of the highway scheme being developed by my colleague Sarah Barnwell in conjunction with the Town Council, subject to its feasibility. Unfortunately the County Council would not be able to guarantee to ring fence any sum of monies."

To address query raised by Cllr Mrs T Reavey the email with the map of the High Street and Westfields Terrace will be circulated.

RESOLVED:

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

17/29. **QUESTIONS**

No questions.

17/30. **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES**

As representative to the Twinning Association, Cllr Mrs V Newbery, outlined the programme for the visitors from Hachenberg. They arrive 6th July and will be with hosts. Saturday 8th July there will be a tour of Higham Ferrers with the help of Toursim, followed by a beetle drive in the evening. 9th July sees a visit to Rockingham Castle.

17/31. **FINANCE**

17/31.1. **To approve accounts for payment as at 28st February 2017.**

Cllr J Smithers sought clearer descriptive terminology for items listed for payment,

with particular reference to water rates and overtime. The Clerk explained the purpose of the staff leave planner following a query from Cllr Mrs V Newbery.

RESOLVED:

That the accounts for payment total of £55,602.96 be approved for payment. Copy attached to the minutes.

17/31.2. **To approve the bank account reconciliation as at 31st January 2017.**

RESOLVED:

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

17/31.3. **To receive and note the budget report as at 31st January 2017.**

RESOLVED:

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

17/31.4. **To approve the following expenditure:-**

(i) **Repair of the fencing, Parker Way, £2,080**

Quotes had been obtained to replace the broken posts and rails. Quotes had also been obtained to replace with all new post and rail and also metal black estate style fencing.

RESOLVED:

That the item be deferred to allow consideration of, and quotes for, suggested alternative fencing options to those presented.

(ii) **Clean and jet wash all play equipment at Villa Rise and Fitzwilliam Leys play areas, £270**

RESOLVED:

That the play equipment at Villa Rise and Fitzwilliam Leys play areas be cleaned at a cost of £270.

17/32. **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Planning and Development Committee held on 14th February 2017.

17/32.1. Cllr Mrs A M Saunston raised query regarding the radio base station and the co-op bus stop lay-by. The Mayor responded to say that the radio base station upgrade did not increase the height of the mast and was not large scale development. The option to be taken to Highways and Council regarding the bus stop lay-by was that of moving its position.

Cllr R Gell asked if the list of determined applications could be included in the agenda pack with the minutes of the Committee meeting. The Clerk confirmed this would be possible.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on 14th February 2017 be received and noted.

17/32.2. **Policy and Resources Committee held on 14th February 2017.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 14th February 2017 be received and adopted.

Recommendations:

(i) **Risk Assessments**

RESOLVED:

That the report on the review of risk assessments and the 'Financial Risk Assessment' attached to the minutes be approved.

(ii) **Review of Council Internal Controls and Internal Audit**

RESOLVED:

That having carried out the annual review of the Council's Internal Controls and Internal Audit procedures that the documents be adopted.

Appointment of Independent Internal Auditor for 2017/18

(iii) **RESOLVED:**

That NCALC Internal Audit Service be appointed as Independent Internal Auditor for 2017/18

(iv) **Donations, SERVE**

That the Council give donation of £500 to SERVE towards the cost of a sound proof partition.

(v) **Review of Policies**

RESOLVED:

That the following policies be reviewed without change.

- Sickness Absence Policy.
- Retirement Policy.
- Standing Orders
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Financial Regulations
- Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Social Media Policy

(vi) **Adoption of Policies**

RESOLVED:

That the draft policy - Recording of Delegated Decisions be adopted.

(vii) **Mapping Software**

RESOLVED:

That the Council purchase the Land Registry Layer for the mapping software at a cost of £85 and Cemetery Searcher at a cost of £200 plus £100 pa for hosting.

(viii) **Interpretation Panel – Saffron Road**

RESOLVED:

That the Council allocate a budget of £3210 to undertake the research and production of artwork for an interpretation board at the Saffron Moat, purchase an interpretation board and undertake archaeological supervision on installation should it be required by Heritage England. The project was part funded by £1700 from Cllr Empowerment funds from Cllr Lawson MBE. Balance from Higham Ferrers Improvement Reserve.

17/33. **PROPOSED YELLOW LINES REMOVAL**

Cllr B Prigmore outlined the consultation responses received by the County Council. The Highways and Transport Group considered the report from the Highways Officer and they recommend still proceeding with the proposal to remove the yellow lines.

RESOLVED:

That the Council proceed with the proposal to remove sections of yellow lines in College Street, Linnets Lane, Wharf Road and Wood Street.

17/34. **REQUEST TO UNDERTAKE TEST PITS ON OPEN SPACE**

Cllr Mrs O Mayes withdrew from the discussion and vote as she had declared an 'Other Interest'. The Clerk confirmed a risk assessment and method statement would be required in advance of any works commencing.

RESOLVED:

That the request from HiFARS to dig test pits on the open space by the walnut tree be permitted.

- 17/35. **IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE YOUTH**
RESOLVED:
That the resident be invited to meet with the Mayor, the Clerk and the Leader of the Council to discuss ideas for improvements for the youth of Higham Ferrers. That the resident be invited to attend a Council meeting.
- 17/36. **MUGA REFURBISHMENT**
RESOLVED:
That the Council appoint Play Innovation to undertake the MUGA refurbishment at a total cost of £19,436.26.
- 17/37. **EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE LOCAL PLAN PART 2 REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION**
RESOLVED:
That the Council respond to the consultation as per the response drafted by the Town Clerk.
- 17/38. **PROPOSAL FOR A CHURCH SCHOOL ON RUSHDEN EAST**
RESOLVED:
That the Council offer support for a church school on Rushden East.
- 17/39. **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.
- 17/40. **RUSHDEN EAST**
- 17/40.1. **RESOLVED:**
That the report from the Assistant Clerk on the Rushden East meeting held on 2nd February 2017 with Bidwells, Barratts and Taylor Wimpey be received and noted.
- 17/40.2. **RESOLVED:**
That the report from the Town Clerk on the Rushden East Board meeting held on 20th February 2017 be received and noted.
- 17/40.3. **RESOLVED:**
That the report from the Town Clerk on the Rushden East Stakeholder Group meeting held on 21st February be received and noted.
- 17/41. **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**
RESOLVED:
That the minutes of the Personnel Committee held on 22nd February 2017 be received and adopted.
- Recommendations:**
- (i) **Payment of salary in lieu of holiday**
RESOLVED:
That Chris Spring be paid the 46 hours he has not taken as holiday for 2016/17.
- (ii) **Completion of probation period for the Assistant Clerk**
RESOLVED:

That the employment of Alicia Schofield as Assistant Clerk be made permanent following satisfactory completion of her probationary period.

17/42. **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.

17/43. **ITEMS TO REPORT**

Cllr J Smithers sought a progress report on the move to the use of electronic agendas and tablets at meetings. The Town Clerk explained there were a number of projects and competing priorities and that a priorities planning event is to be arranged. The use of electronic agendas and tablets will feed into this event.

Cllr Mrs S Mantle asked if the schools had been approached regarding Mallard Close. The Town Clerk advise there had been no consultation at this time.

Mayor

Date