

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HIGHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 30th JANUARY 2018 AT THE TOWN HALL AT 7.00PM.**

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE: 3 members of the public

18/007. **APOLOGIES**
Cllr Mrs T Reavey

18/008. **HOPE METHODIST CHURCH PLANS**
Rev. Eales presented the plans for Hope Methodist Church, Higham Ferrers. The renovation will add a first floor to the building and ground floor extension to the rear. The façade of the building will be retained. The first floor will have seating for 150 people for worship. There will be a vestry, store, meeting room, sound desk and projection unit, coffee bar, additional stairs and a lift. The ground floor will have a community hall for hire, meeting room, kitchen, computer suite, coffee bar and childrens soft play area. The project is costed at £1.5 million and grant funding is being sought. The build is expected to take 1 year to 18 months, an Autumn start date is hoped for. The temporary buildings will go once the building is complete. The stained glass windows are to be replaced upstairs, with the glass being reused. Rev Eales was thanked by Council for attending the meeting and presenting the plans. The Council asked to be kept informed of progress.

18/009. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
Other Interests
Cllr P Tomas – item 10.1, chq 300493, 300494 and 300495 Mayoral expenses, BP572 and BP 561, Peter Tomas Company Ltd.
Pecuniary Interests
Cllr C P O'Rourke – item 15, a member of Candocare and his partner receives an income from Candocare.

18/010. **MINUTES**

18/010.1. **RESOLVED:**
That the minutes of the meeting held on the 19th December 2017 be signed by the Mayor as being a true and correct record.

18/010.2. **RESOLVED:**
That the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on the 17th January 2018 be signed by the Mayor as being a true and correct record further to the addition of the following

sentence prior to the start of the comments from the public at item 18/003, public forum, ‘Councillors noted the following 6 opinions put forward by members of the public.’

18/011. **PUBLIC FORUM (15 minutes)**

Mr Broadbent spoke again with regard to the future of the library, having spoken previously at the extraordinary meeting. He referred to the County Council decision to make cuts to the library service forcing a relationship between him and the Councillors. He referred to the lack of response from many Councillors to his emails. He expressed opinion that he felt the library was a done deal. He appreciates the Town Council have been placed in a difficult position by the County Council. Libraries enfranchised society, and Mr Broadbent asked if the Town Council wished to be responsible for disenfranchising future generations if the library closes. He referred to Councillors living in the best of times and consigning their children to the worst of times if the libraries are lost. He asked Councillors to think about this and hoped they felt uncomfortable.

18/012. **MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported on the events he had attended:

- 21st December, Bedesman Day, church service followed by dinner at the Bede House.
- 23rd December, The Farmers Market with presentation of the prizes to those who had won the Christmas competitions.
- 28th December, Fundraising event at the Rushden Town Bowls Club with the musical group, The Drifters.
- 9th January, Official opening of the new multi play unit at Saffron Road Recreation Ground with children from the Junior School.
- 27th January, Mayors Coffee Morning in the Council Chamber alongside the developer exhibition consulting on the housing development on land to the east of the Ferrers School.

18/013. **TOWN CLERK’S REPORT**

Police Report

- Registration plates stolen from a car in Newton Road, Higham Ferrers – 19th January 2018.
- Stolen Vehicle – Nightingale Way, Higham Ferrers between 6.30pm 2nd January and 5.45am 3rd January.
- Items stolen from a car – Mallard Close, Higham Ferrers between 5pm 19th December and 8.30am 20th December.
- Items stolen from a vehicle - Larkin Gardens, Higham Ferrers between 5am 23rd December and 11am 27th December.
- Items stolen from insecure garage – Oaks Drive, Higham Ferrers between 11pm -9th January and 7.30am 10th January.
- Car keys stolen from a property and vehicle stolen – Market Square, Higham Ferrers.
- Overnight between 20th and 21st January 2018 a vehicle parked in Windmill Banks had the front passenger window smashed, nothing was stolen.
- Items stolen from a vehicle on George Street – 15th January between 7.30pm and 11.15pm.

Inspector D Lyon is moving on and the acting Inspector is PS S Wildman and the acting Sergeant is PC Mitchinson.

Cllr C PO'Rourke asked if there was any feedback from the Police given the high number of vehicle thefts. The Clerk referred to the last JAG meeting where arrests were reported with a decrease in vehicle thefts as a result.

RESOLVED:

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

18/014. **QUESTIONS**

None.

18/015. **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES**

Cllr Mrs V Newbery reported that the next Hachenburg Twinning Association meeting would be the 19th February. Anyone interested in going on the next visit that will take place on the 16th to 20th August is advised to attend the meeting.

18/016. **FINANCE**

18/016.1. **To approve accounts for payment as at 31st January 2018.**

Councillors queried a number of the payments, with the Clerk reporting that the two payments for Rosetta Publishing related to different months as did the payments for the dog bin emptying. The charge for the supply and fit of the headlamp related to the van. Rates for the Market Square were liable for payment.

RESOLVED:

That the accounts for payment total of £29,966.22 be approved for payment. Copy attached to the minutes.

18/016.2. **To approve the bank account reconciliation as at 31st December 2017.**

RESOLVED:

That the reconciliation be deferred until the next meeting as the bank documentation was not available for the current meeting.

18/016.3. **To approve the following expenditure:-**

(i) **Rushden Reporter Advert**

Comments were made regarding the delivery of the Rushden Reporter, with 4 Councillors reporting non delivery to their homes.

RESOLVED:

That the Council continue with the half page advert every month at a cost of £180 per month.

(ii) **Tree surveys**

RESOLVED:

That the Council commission a tree inspection and risk assessment report including a schedule of works/priority at a cost of £725.

18/017. **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

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

18/017.1. **Planning and Development Committee held on the 16th January 2018.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on the 16th January 2018 be received and adopted.

18/017.2. **Environment and Recreation Committee held on the 16th January 2018.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Environment and Recreation Committee held on the 16th January 2018 be received and adopted.

Recommendations

(i) **Landscaping Adjacent the Tennis Courts**

RESOLVED:

That the works to finish off the exterior of the building adjacent the tennis courts be undertaken at a cost of £3,505.

(ii) **Fencing to Villa Rise Play Area**

RESOLVED:

That repair work to the wooden fence of the Villa Rise play area be undertaken at a cost of £840.

18/018. **UPGRADE TO CHRISTMAS LIGHTS**

RESOLVED:

That a working party be established to consider alternatives for upgrade of the Christmas lights and agree a recommendation for the Council to consider. That Cllr H L Jackson and Cllr D Drage be appointed to the working party.

18/019. **LIBRARY WORKING PARTY**

Cllr C P O'Rourke, having declared an interest, withdrew from the discussion and vote.

Cllr B Prigmore reported the working party had met twice, with a second meeting held that day. The working party had considered issues and agreed actions which they were carrying between them. They are speaking to the groups at the library, speaking to other venues in the town to assess availability and speaking to the Doctors Surgery and vacant shop units. Next meeting of the working party will be the 13th February when the valuation and condition survey of the building should be available.

RESOLVED:

That the report from the Library Working Party meeting held on the 19th January 2018 be received and noted.

18/020. **EVENTS WORKING PARTY**

RESOLVED:

That the report from the Events Working Party meeting held on the 23rd January 2018 be received and noted.

18/021. **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.

18/022. **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

To receive and adopt the minutes of the Personnel Committee held on the 11th January 2018.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Personnel Committee held on the 11th January 2018 be received and noted.

Recommendations

Increase in Salaries

RESOLVED:

That salaries be increased with effect from 1st April 2018.

- Town Clerk- SCP 47 to SCP 48.
- Assistant Clerk from SCP 27 to SCP 28.
- Administration Officer – from SCP 22 to SCP 23.
- Administration Officer/Finance – from SCP 19 to SCP 20
- Town Hall Cleaner SCP 13 to SCP 14.
- Parks and Open Spaces Warden 1. SCP 14 to SCP 15.
- Parks and Open Spaces Warden 2.SCP 12 to SCP 13.

18/023. **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.

18/024. **ITEMS TO REPORT**

Cllr J Smithers referred to the poor lighting in the Council Chamber and suggested consideration be given to upgrading the lighting. Cllr D Hamblin suggested the sound system also required upgrade.

Mayor

Date