

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HIGHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 28th MARCH 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 Mrs O Mayes
Councillor R J Gell		Councillor B A Prigmore
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 S Mantle		Councillor Mrs A M Sauntson
Councillor Mrs V M Newbery		Councillor J Smithers
Mrs S J Mitcham (Town Clerk)		Miss A Schofield (Assistant Town Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE: District Councillor G Harwood MBE, PCSO Simon Arthur and PCSO Leanne Parker

17/44 **APOLOGIES**

No apologies.

17/45. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Other Interests

Cllr Mrs V Newbury, item 12, member and representative to the Twinning Association

Cllr J Smithers, item 10.4 (i), resides close to Parker Way

Cllr Mrs O Mayes, item 13, Chair of HiFARS

Cllr H L Jackson, item 12, member of the Twinning Association

Cllr D C Lawson MBE, item 20, resident of Mallard Close

Cllr P Tomas, item 20, resident of Mallard Close

Cllr Mrs A M Saunston, member of the Twinning Association

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

Cllr P Tomas, item 10.4 (ii), owner of Peter Tomas Company Limited

17/46. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 28th February 2017 be signed by the Mayor as being a true and accurate record.

17/47. **POLICING**

Crime figures that had been circulated. PCSO Simon Arthur apologised that the activity breakdown to support the figures was not included. The crime figures were lower than the previous month. He confirmed that domestic violence was included within the figures. Further information regarding a stabbing in Simpson Avenue was sought. PCSO Simon Arthur was not able to comment on the particulars of the incident but did advise that gang and drug related stabbings have increased in the wider area and a Police Intervention Team is in place to try and reduce the increase. Police attendance at Town Council meetings will only be 1-2 times a year due to lack of officer numbers and a letter from the Sargeant should be coming to the Town Council to explain this. Cllr D C Lawson asked the Police representatives to convey the disappointment regarding the difficulty prevailing over the presentation of the crime figures. Cllr D C Lawson queried the current position with the Joint Area Group (JAG)

meetings. The Town Clerk had hoped ENC would take the lead on the meetings but it was becoming clear the matter would likely rest with the Town Clerks. Cllr Mrs O Mayes queried Police staffing levels. It was suggested more staff are to be lost and also staff redistributed. The Safer Community Team are often moved to Instant Response.

17/48. **PUBLIC FORUM (15 minutes)**

No address from the public.

17/49. **MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported on the events she had attended.

- 2nd March, Irthlingborough Civic Service
- 8th March, Ladies International Day Lunch at Chelveston Village Hall. The Mayor thanked all those who attended, donated raffle prizes and offered their help.
- 13th March, attendance at a meeting of the Tourism Group to discuss the plans for the Mayors Market on the 6th May.
- 19th May, Due to illness the Mayor was unfortunately unable to attend the NMPAT concert at the Derngate given by the Youth Orchestra but it was reported back as being to the usual high standard and the Mayor was disappointed to have missed it. Thank you was passed to the Deputy Mayor for attending the Raunds Mayor's Civic Service that same day.

The Mayor gave advance notice of the St Georges Day Tea on the 26th April, with tickets priced at £10. On the 6th May the Mayor's Market is to be held and will include a pavement café, May Queen, various stalls and entertainment, the Mayor's Raffle and 2 performances from Northampton Morris Men.

17/50. **TOWN CLERKS REPORT**

PCC Meeting Invite

Stephen Mold was unable to attend the Annual Town meeting.

Traveller Site

Complaints about the scrap yard extending out under the viaduct and beyond have been passed to the relevant authorities. The owner has been served with a notice requesting it be cleared up.

Co-op Bus Stop Lay-by Update

NCC have advised there is possibility that the timing bay could be moved and therefore the bay could be placed in the carriageway and parking formalised in this area. A plan is being drawn up.

Council Tax Enquiries

6 enquires about the Council Tax increase have been received so far.

Presentation from Linden Homes

Linden Homes representative, Alex Clarke, presented in advance of the Planning and Development Committee 14th March 2017 regarding the treatment of the Japanese Knotweed at Garden Fields.

The Clerk sought direction regarding the attendance of the PCC at a meeting of the Town Council and it is considered preferable to have the PCC attend a separate meeting of the Town Council.

Cllr Mrs A Saunston asked the Clerk if there was any feedback from the owner following complaint to the relevant authorities regarding the scrap yard. The Clerk replied that no response had been received so both ENC and NCC will be contacted for an update.

RESOLVED:

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

17/51 **QUESTIONS**

No questions.

17/52. **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES**

No reports.

17/53. **FINANCE**

17/53.1. **To approve accounts for payment as at 28th March 2017.**

RESOLVED:

That the accounts for payment total of £46,921.88 be approved for payment. Copy attached to the minutes.

17/53.2. **To approve the bank account reconciliation as at 28th February 2017.**

RESOLVED:

That the bank reconciliation as at 28th February 2017 be signed by the Mayor after being checked by Cllr D C Lawson MBE.

17/53.3. **To receive and note the budget report as at 28th February 2017.**

The Clerk reported income from the hire of the Pavillion and burial income were over budget.

RESOLVED:

That the budget report as at 28th February 2017 be received and noted.

17/53.4. **To approve the following expenditure:-**

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

The practicality and the need for the part repair of the fence and future part repair was considered alongside the purpose and benefit of the fence in its current position.

RESOLVED:

That the fence repairs be left for the present time and the fence be re-inspected in 12 months.

(ii) **Repairs to shutters at the Pavilion and the Public Toilets, £390**

Cllr P Tomas withdrew from the discussion and vote as he had declared a disclosable pecuniary interest.

RESOLVED:

That the repairs to the shutters at the Pavilion and the Public Toilets be undertaken at a total cost of £390.

(iii) **Annual tree works to Castle Fields, the Cemetery, Saffron Road and other open spaces**

RESOLVED:

That the Town Clerk be delegated to appoint the contractor with the lowest price to undertake the annual tree works to Castle Fields, the Cemetery, Saffron Road and other open spaces.

17/54. **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

17/54.1. **Planning and Development Committee held on 14th March 2017.**

RESOLVED:

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

17/54.2 **Environment and Recreation Committee held on the 14th March 2017.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Environment and Recreation Committee held on the 14th March 2017 be received and adopted.

Recommendations:

(i) **Higham Ferrers Riverside Park Anglers Association**

RESOLVED:

That the proposed Licence Agreement with the Riverside Park Anglers Association be agreed and signed.

(ii) **Dogs Off Lead Area, Stanwick Road**

Cllr Mrs A Saunston asked if Councillors might be able to visit the Pavilion in advance of the Priorities Planning event on Saturday. The Clerk will email to make arrangement for those wishing to visit. Cllr Mrs A Saunston sought detail regarding the Dogs Off Lead Area and was advised it would be similar to the one at Rushden Hall Park. The Dog Warden had provided advice for the fencing requirements.

RESOLVED:

That a budget of £5,500 be allocated to undertake the following works:-

- To the Stanwick Road boundary take down and clear away the existing barbed wire fencing, to then trim back overgrowth to find the fence line. To then supply and erect approximately 100m of 1.1m high pressure treated post and 4 rail fencing, comprising 38x88 rails nailed to 125x75 posts dug into the ground and well rammed up at a maximum of 3m centres, to then drive into the ground and nail on a 38x88 prick post in the middle of each bay, price includes end of run post.
- To the 2 no sides trim down grass/overgrowth for and to supply and install approximately 170m of C8-80-15 galvanised sheep type netting strained and stapled to the existing post and rail fence.
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- Install a dog bin, litter bin and notices

That the area be added to the maintenance contract to be flailed once a month. If the area is not grazed, and it is required, the area will be flailed prior to August.

17/55. **REQUEST FROM THE TWINNING ASSOCIATION FOR A DONATION /GRANT TOWARDS THE COST OF THE VISIT**

RESOLVED:

That the Twinning Association be granted £500 towards the cost of the visit of the twinning group from Hachenburg in July.

17/56. **TEST PITS ON OPEN SPACE BY THE WALNUT TREE**

Cllr Mrs O Mayes withdrew from the discussion and vote as she had declared an Other Interest.

RESOLVED:

That HiFARS store the finds in their archive following the test pits on the open space by the walnut tree with a copy of the records and photos being handed over to the Town Council to be retained in their records.

- 17/57. **PARKING ENFORCEMENT**
The Clerk advised patrols may commence following receipt of payment.
RESOLVED:
That the Town Clerk be delegated authority to liaise with the County Council regarding what hours and days are to be patrolled by the Parking Enforcement Officers for the 6 month period of additional parking enforcement.
- 17/58. **CHRISTMAS SPARKLE AND CHRISTMAS LIGHTS**
- (i) **To consider whether to proceed with the purchase of new Christmas lights for the Market Square.**
RESOLVED:
That the item be deferred to the end of May pending the scheduled installation of the heritage lamps in May to allow investigation as to whether the Christmas lights can link to the heritage lamps.
- (ii) **To agree outline of event for Christmas Sparkle, 18th November 2017.**
RESOLVED:
That the item be deferred pending the meeting of the Events Working Party in 2 weeks from which a better idea of the proposed plans will be available.
- (iii) **To consider increasing the budget for Christmas Sparkle to £3,500.**
RESOLVED:
That the item be deferred.
- (iv) **To delegate authority to the Town Clerk to determine the breakdown of the budget and agree expenditure for Christmas Sparkle 2017.**
RESOLVED:
That the item be deferred.
- 17/59 **RUSHDEN LAKES UPDATE**
The Mayor confirmed to Cllr D Hamblin that request had been made for a visit by Councillors to Rushden Lakes.
RESOLVED:
That the report from the Assistant Clerk on the Rushden Lakes Working Party meeting 8th March 2017 be received and noted.
- 17/60 **YELLOW LINES AROUND THE CENOTAPH**
To consider the following proposal from Cllr P Tomas:-
That the Town Council request that the County Council continue the yellow lines around the Cenotaph up to the Town Hall.
The proposal was seconded by Cllr J Smithers.
The motion failed as insufficient votes in favour.
- 17/61. **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.
- 17/62. **RUSHDEN EAST**
17/62.1. **RESOLVED:**
That the report from the Town Clerk on the Rushden East Stakeholder Group meeting

held on 21st February 2017 be received and noted.

17/62.2 **RESOLVED:**

That the report from the Assistant Clerk on the Rushden East Board meeting held on 7th March 2017 be received and noted.

17/63. **REQUEST TO PURCHASE LAND ADJACENT MALLARD CLOSE**

Cllr P Tomas and Cllr D C Lawson MBE withdrew from the discussion and vote as they had declared an Other Interest.

RESOLVED:

That the Council do not sell the land further to the request from a resident of Mallard Close seeking purchase of a small piece of land adjacent to his property

17/64. **RE-OPEN THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

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

17/65. **ITEMS TO REPORT**

Cllr J Smithers referred to the number of posters on the wooden entrance gateway to the town by the Chowns Mill roundabout and the desire for the removal of the posters.

He also queried the progress of the town staff taking over the park inspections. The Clerk confirmed they were still looking to do this.

Cllr C P O'Rourke spoke of overhanging vegetation at a house in Milton Street and queried if it had been reported. The Clerk advised it hadn't been reported and would look to do so via Street Doctor.

Mayor

Date