

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HIGHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 27th MARCH 2018 AT THE TOWN HALL AT 7.30PM.**

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE: 1 member of the public.

18/041. **APOLOGIES**

Cllr D C Lawson MBE, Cllr Mrs S Mantle.

18/042. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Other Interests

Cllr Mrs P Whiting - item 11.1, Churchwarden.

Cllr Mrs P Whiting - item 17, Granddaughter went on the school trip.

Cllr Mrs A Sauntson – item 13, a member of Higham Ferrers Tourism.

Cllr P Tomas – item 9.1, chq 300664, Mayoral expenses.

Cllr P Tomas – item 19, holds strong views regarding the library.

Pecuniary Interests

Cllr C P O'Rourke – item 15, a member of Candocare and his partner receives an income from Candocare.

18/043. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 27th February 2018 be signed by the Mayor as being a true and correct record.

18/044. **PUBLIC FORUM (15 minutes)**

Mr Tomas spoke with regard to the library, not in his capacity as Mayor or a Town Councillor, but as a member of the public. The surveyor's report was noted by Mr Tomas and he expressed opinion there were not too many issues arising in the report. The building needs to be retained for the people of the town. The building has potential and can be used by many for various purposes, including use for Council meetings and storage. He urged Council to think seriously about buying the building suggesting Council assets might be sold to fund the purchase.

18/045. **MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported on the events he had attended, referring to the spate of adverse weather affecting some and in particular the cancellation of the Save the Children 50th Anniversary and Royal Visit.

- 11th March, NMPAT Youth Orchestra concert at the Derngate, Northampton.

- 23rd March, Wellingborough Mayor's Quiz Night raising funds for the Mayor's chosen charities.

18/046. **TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

Northamptonshire County Council

The Government Inspector has now issued his report. He has recommended that 2 unitary authorities are set up in Northamptonshire for 2020. He has also suggested that Commissioners are sent in to run services.

Rushden Living

A meeting has been arranged with LXB on Thursday 12th April at midday at the Town Hall. This is for all Councillors. A copy of the presentation boards from the consultation event will be available at the meeting.

Crime Update 27th March 2018

Burglary in the area of Mill Fields, with arrest made.

Vehicle seized in Upper Kings Avenue for no insurance, vehicle found to contain cannabis and other drug paraphernalia.

Forthcoming dates

Rushden Living presentation 12th April 2018.

Informal meeting to be held 17th April 2018.

RESOLVED:

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

18/047. **QUESTIONS**

Cllr D Hamblin questioned the County Council cuts and compensation available for cuts on statutory services. The Clerk advised that any complaint regarding services should be made to the County Council and that it was understood that cuts were on discretionary services. Further to the bad weather, Cllr D Hamblin queried if the town were prepared in the event of an emergency. The County Council have emergency plans and work with the Borough and District Councils. Cllr D Hamblin questioned the situation with regard to the Market Square maintenance costs in light of the status of the County Council. The Clerk responded that the situation was as explained at previous meetings.

18/048. **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES**

Cllr Mrs C Reavey referred to the Rushden Living Exhibition she had attended with Cllr Mrs A Gardner. LXB are to present to the Council on the 12th April and Cllr Mrs C Reavey urged Councillors to attend.

18/049. **FINANCE**

18/049.1. **To approve accounts for payment as at 30th March 2018.**

RESOLVED:

That the accounts for payment total of £30,761.65 be approved for payment. Copy attached to the minutes.

18/049.2. **To approve the bank account reconciliation as at 28th February 2018.**

RESOLVED:

That the bank reconciliation as at 28th February 2018 be signed by the Mayor after being checked by Cllr Mrs V Newbury.

18/049.3. **To receive and note the budget report as at 28th February 2018.**

RESOLVED:

That the budget report as at 28th February 2018 be received and noted.

18/049.4. **To approve the following expenditure:-**

(i) **Annual tree works 2018/19**

Cllr B Prigmore queried what works were to be undertaken to the trees. The Clerk advised that the works followed recommendation in the survey report from the Arboriculturalist. The extent of the works were kept to a minimum based on assessment of risk.

RESOLVED:

That a maximum budget of £6,500 be set for the annual tree works 2018/19

(ii) **NABMA membership**

RESOLVED:

That membership of £318 per annum be deferred pending the Rushden Living presentation.

(iii) **Membership of the Open Spaces Society**

RESOLVED:

That the Council join the Open Spaces Society with membership at a cost of £45 per annum.

18/050. **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

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

18/050.1. **Planning and Development Committee held on the 13th March 2018.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on the 13th March 2018 be received and adopted.

18/050.2. **Environment and Recreation Committee held on the 13th March 2018.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Environment and Recreation Committee held on the 13th March 2018 be received and adopted.

Recommendations

(i) **Footpath Resurfacing, Saffron Road Recreation Ground**

RESOLVED:

That the whole length of the footpath across the Saffron Road Recreation Ground be resurfaced. That a budget of £4,825 be set for the resurfacing work. That the Clerk obtain additional quotes and the work be authorised subject to it being within the agreed budget.

(ii) **Play Area, Mallard Close/Nightingale Way**

Further to question from Cllr B Prigmore the Clerk advised that £22,000 of the Section 106 monies was for off-site recreation and thus the play area, £100,000 is for on-site maintenance.

RESOLVED:

That a budget of £40,000 be set for the works, with £22,000 to be met from s.106 monies from the Station Road development with the balance from the Higham Ferrers Improvement Fund. That the Clerk obtain quotes in line with the agreed budget. That further to the consultation responses the half court be excluded from the design at this time. That the design and quotes be presented back to Committee following which consultation will be undertaken with the schools.

(iii) **Repair and Improvement Works to the Skate Park**

The Assistant Clerk advised of an 8-10 week lead in time for the work following instruction with 2-3 days for the duration for the works.

RESOLVED:

That stone and topsoil be imported, compacted and overlain with bonded rubber mulch on the end banks and top length of bank. That a budget of £4,875 be agreed for the work and the Clerk obtain additional quotes.

Play Equipment, Saffron Road Recreation Ground

RESOLVED:

- (iv) That quote A in the sum of £20,695 be accepted for the supply and installation of the 3 items of equipment of a cableway, rope swing and overhead carousel for older children at Saffron Road Recreation Ground.

Glebe Farm

RESOLVED:

- (v) That the verbal update on the legal case be received and noted. That expenditure of £1,000 be ratified for legal fees for a Barristers opinion.

18/051. **BLUE TOURIST PLAQUES**

Councillors had a number of questions and raised concerns including the number of plaques intended, method of fixing, identification and reason for and worthiness of a property to receive a plaque.

18/051.1. **RESOLVED:**

That agreement of a budget for the supply and installation of blue tourist plaques be deferred to allow time to address the concerns raised.

18/051.2. **RESOLVED:**

That agreement to the installation of plaques on buildings owned by the Town Council be deferred to allow time to address concerns raised.

18/052. **HERITAGE LEAFLET**

18/052.1. Councillors made a series of observations regarding the wording on the draft leaflet circulated.

RESOLVED:

That a revised draft noting the observations made by Councillors be circulated to Councillors for comment in advance of the meeting to try and ensure that the next draft presented to Council is as near as possible to a final draft for approval.

18/052.2. **RESOLVED:**

That the approval of the cost of printing Heritage Trail leaflets be deferred pending approval of the leaflet.

18/053. **CHRISTMAS SPARKLE**

18/053.1. **RESOLVED:**

That the Council accept the offer of £800 sponsorship from Wilson Browne to help with the provision of a purpose-built stage.

18/053.2. **RESOLVED:**

That the Clerk be delegated authority to incur expenditure for the Christmas Sparkle subject to it being within the net budget of £3,000.

18/054. **PUBLIC ARTWORK PROJECT WITH HENRY CHICHELE SCHOOL**

Consideration was given to a proposal for a joint project with Henry Chichele School to install a piece of public artwork or similar outside Henry Chichele School. Cllr D Drage proposed, seconded by Cllr R Gell, that no further action be taken on the project. Cllr J Smithers requested the recording of the vote. Following a vote the motion failed.

Councillor D Drage (For)	Councillor C P O'Rourke (Against)
Councillor R Gell (For)	Councillor Mrs C Reavey (Against)
Councillor R D Hamblin (Against)	Councillor A M T Reading (Abstention)
Councillor H L Jackson (Against)	Councillor Mrs A Sauntson (Against)
Councillor Mrs P H Whiting (Against)	Councillor P Tomas (Against)
Councillor Mrs V M Newbery (Against)	Councillor J Smithers (Against)
Councillor B Prigmore (Against)	Councillor Mrs A Gardner (Against)

RESOLVED:

That engagement continue with the school. That the school be asked to provide more detail regarding the design and financing for the artwork.

Cllr J Smithers requested the recording of the vote.

Councillor D Drage (Against)	Councillor C P O'Rourke (For)
Councillor R Gell (For)	Councillor Mrs C Reavey (For)
Councillor R D Hamblin (For)	Councillor A M T Reading (For)
Councillor H L Jackson (For)	Councillor Mrs A Sauntson (For)
Councillor Mrs P H Whiting (For)	Councillor P Tomas (For)
Councillor Mrs V M Newbery (For)	Councillor J Smithers (For)
Councillor B Prigmore (For)	Councillor Mrs A Gardner (For)

18/055. **GREENWAY CONTRACT SUPERVISION**

RESOLVED:

That expenditure of £2,300 is agreed for Greenway Contract supervision for 12 site visits, 2 CDM visits and a final visit and report.

18/056. **NN10 COMMUNITY VOICES CHOIR REQUEST FOR CONTRIBUTION**

RESOLVED:

That as a Rushden based choir performing a concert in Northampton it was felt that on this occasion it was not appropriate to make a contribution to NN10 Community Voices Choir fundraiser concert Saturday 23rd June 2018.

18/057. **REQUEST TO PLACE A COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE ON THE TOWN HALL/ WITHIN THE TOWN**

RESOLVED:

That it is not appropriate to place a holocaust commemorative plaque on the Town Hall. That the Ferrers School be suggested for the placement of a plaque.

18/058. **HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND APPLICATION TO RESTORE THE TOWN CHARTERS**

RESOLVED:

That a re-application be made to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant for the project to restore the Town Charters.

18/059. **LIBRARY WORKING PARTY**

Cllr P Tomas and Cllr C P O'Rourke, having declared an interest, withdrew from the discussion and vote. The item was chaired by the Deputy Mayor, Cllr J Smithers. During the discussion Cllr D Drage expressed support for the library. Cllr D Drage therefore withdrew from the vote.

- 18/059.1. **RESOLVED:**
That the report from the Library Working Party meeting held on the 13th March 2018 be received and noted.
- 18/059.2. **RESOLVED:**
That the Council submit an expression of interest to run an independently managed library. Until full information was available to make a final decision it was unreasonable to not keep the dialogue open with NCC.
- 18/060. **INDEPENDENT INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2018**
That the report from the Independent Internal Auditor for the year ending 31st March 2018 be received and noted.
- 18/061. **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.
- 18/062. **RUSHDEN EAST**
RESOLVED:
That the report from the Rushden East Board meeting held on the 27th February 2018 be received and noted
- 18/063. **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.
- 18/064. **ITEMS TO REPORT**
Cllr D Hamblin expressed concern and queried how the Council would protect their assets should there be the creation of 2 unitary authorities. The Clerk reminded that it was not a reorganisation of the Town and Parish Councils and that it was often the case that the Towns and Parishes acquired more assets and devolved services.
Cllr D Drage referred to the Travellers Site with concern the highway may be blocked. The Clerk is to liaise with Cllr D Drage so the matter can be reported to the District Council.

Mayor

Date