

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HIGHAM FERRERS
TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 30th MARCH 2021 AT 7.30PM
USING ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING

PRESENT:

	The Deputy Mayor (Councillor C P O'Rourke)
Councillor Mrs P H Whiting	Councillor N Brown
Councillor H L Jackson	Councillor Mrs A Gardner
Councillor P Tomas	Councillor B Spencer
Councillor B Prigmore	Cllr Mrs S Mantle
Councillor A M T Reading	Alicia Schofield (Assistant Clerk)
Councillor V K Paul	David Wicks (Mayors' Sergeant)
Mrs S J Mitcham (Town Clerk)	

IN ATTENDANCE: District Councillor, Ms Harriet Pentland and 1 member of the public.

21/49. **APOLOGIES**

The Mayor (Councillor Mrs C Reavey), Cllr D C Lawson MBE, Cllr A Sauntson, Cllr D Hamblin, Cllr J Smithers.

21/50. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

21/51. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 23rd February 2021 be signed by the Deputy Mayor as a true and correct record.

21/52. **PUBLIC FORUM (15 minutes)**

None.

21/53. **MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor submitted a written report on her activities since the last meeting as follows:-

- 8th March I attended a virtual event hosted by the Mayor of Raunds to mark International Women's Day. The event went well, attendees were sent a beaker, teabag, packet of biscuits, pad and pencil. You could say that it was a very inclusive isolated gathering!
- 11th March saw the planting of 5 Swedish White Beam trees on Saffron Road Recreation Ground. I'm pleased to report (with fingers crossed) that apart from one having a stake removed that first night they remain intact.
- 26th March I had a socially distanced meeting with Carrie the woodcarver to select some pictures that were drawn by the primary aged children in our schools. She has taken with her the shortlisted ones so that she can choose which will be most suitable for her to use as designs on the back of the chairs which are to go in Nightingale Way play area. Thank you to Bert for enabling us to use the council chamber.
- 26th March also saw the emplacement of the headstone in the 'scattering of ashes' area in the cemetery. If you're passing its worth going to see.

21/54. **TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

Police Report

The link to the report for January 2021 <https://www.streetcheck.co.uk/crime/nn108bt>
42 Crimes for January: -

- Anti-Social Behaviour – 12
- Criminal Damage and Arson – 5
- Public Order – 5
- Shoplifting – 1
- Vehicle Crime – 1
- Violent and sexual offences - 13
- Other Theft – 2

The town is experiencing issues at Saffron Road Recreation Ground and Riverside Park with Anti-Social Behaviour. Any crimes including Anti-Social Behaviour must be reported online or phoned via 101. If not, they do not appear with the statistics above which influences policing resources.

East Northamptonshire Greenway Board

Letter thanking the Town Council for their work and support has been received.

Northamptonshire E-Scooter Trial

Higham Ferrers & Rushden stakeholder update circulated.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Clerk's Report be received and noted. The Clerk will contact Northamptonshire County Council to ask what benefits the e-scooters are providing to the community.

21/55. **QUESTIONS**

None.

21/56. **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES**

Cllr Mrs A Gardner reported her virtual attendance on the 23rd March at the Police Crime Commissioners meeting. A new PCSO is to be working alongside PCSO Stephanie Bacon and a new PO will be operating out of the Rushden Station. On the 22nd April Cllr Mrs A Gardner will be joining the scheduled online NCALC meeting with regard to the role as Police Liaison Representative. She continues to join PCSO Bacon regularly on a round. Graffiti including obscene and racist graffiti incidents have occurred of late. Cllr Mrs A Gardner reminded of the need to report such incidents to the Police online or via 101. CCTV images were helping with the investigations into the graffiti incidents. E-scooters have been associated with drug distribution. The Police have been made aware of the ability of children to use false licence information obtained from the internet to log on and use the scooters.

21/57. **REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

Cllr H L Jackson reported following the online Rushden East Board meeting of the 15th March. He referred to the minutes from the last meeting. Higham Ferrers do not have an allotment society so if they acquire a plot for allotments, they would need to manage the allotments. There is an allotment plot close to Higham Ferrers. There was a need for re-

wording regarding the provision of a cemetery. It was acknowledged Higham Ferrers would require funding for their own cemetery. He suggests that Council obtain a plan of non-Duchy land so the new council can find a site, possibly off the Newton Road. It is not clear who will be leading on this project for the Unitary Authority.

21/58. **FINANCE**

21/58.1. **To approve accounts for payment as at 30th March 2021.**

RESOLVED:

That the accounts for payment total of £51984.57 as at 30th March 2021 be approved for payment. Copy attached to the minutes.

21/58.2. **To approve the bank account reconciliation as at 28th February 2021.**

RESOLVED:

That the bank account reconciliation as at 28th February 2021 be signed by the Deputy Mayor after being checked by Cllr Mrs P H Whiting.

21/58.3. **To receive and note the budget report as at 28th February 2021.**

RESOLVED:

That the budget report as at 28th February 2021 be received and noted.

21/58.4. **To approve the following expenditure: -**

(i) **Annual membership of Northants ACRE.**

RESOLVED:

That membership of Northants ACRE be renewed for the year at a cost of £35.

(ii) **External decoration of the Town Hall.**

RESOLVED:

That the external decoration of the windows and doors of the Town Hall be undertaken at a cost of £1300.

(iii) **Additional fencing and second gate to the Dogs Off Lead area.**

RESOLVED:

That additional fencing and a second gate to the Dogs Off Lead area be installed at a cost of £795.

(iv) **Heritage Trail Interpretation Panel, Market Square.**

RESOLVED:

That an interpretation panel with heritage trail information be placed in the Market Square alongside the Town Council notice board at a cost of £1895.

21/59. **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

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

21/59.1. Planning and Development Committee held on the 16th March 2021.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on the 16th March 2021 be received and adopted.

21/59.2. Environment and Recreation Committee held on the 16th March 2021.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Environment & Recreation Committee held on the 16th March 2021 be received and adopted.

Recommendations

(i) **BEDE CLOSE BOUNDARY HEDGE AND ACCESS TO THE OPEN SPACE TO THE REAR**

RESOLVED:

That a licence with an annual fee of £25 be granted to the resident of No. 25 Bede Close.
That the licence permits the removal of the hedge and installation of a fence to block off access to the open space.

(ii) **UPGRADE OF PATH TO TENNIS COURTS**

RESOLVED:

That a budget of £9000 be set to allow for the upgrade of the path by the tennis courts, improved ramp access and renovation of concrete area. Costs to be met from s106 Reserve for Off Site Recreation.

21/60. **COVID-19 UPDATE**

RESOLVED:

That the written report from the Clerk on the current status of services and facilities delivered by the Town Council affected by covid be received and noted.

21/61. **REVIEW OF DELEGATED POWERS**

RESOLVED:

That the time period of the delegated powers given to the Clerk as a response to the Covid-19 outbreak be extended with a review date of June 2021.

21/62. **REQUEST TO BLOCK HOLES AT THE DOGS OFF LEAD AREA**

RESOLVED:

That no action be taken with regard to the animal holes at the Dogs Off Lead area and they be left in their natural state.

21/63. **TOWN WORKING PARTY**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Town Working Party meeting held on the 24th March 2021 be received and noted.

Recommendation

HERITAGE DAY

That the Council go ahead with Heritage Day as a joint effort with Rushden Town Council

21/64. **CHARTER WORKING PARTY**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Charter Working Party meeting held on the 11th March 2021 be received and noted.

21/65. **CONSULTATION ON PAVEMENT LICENCE**

To consider a response to the consultation on:-

Pavement Licence: The Garrison - Gentlemens Hair Tailors, 1C Wharf Road, Higham Ferrers.

RESOLVED:

That the Council object to the pavement licence given concerns regarding the proximity of the premises to the Nursery and Infant School and the Junior School also the limited width of the pavement available for the seating.

21/66. **CLOSURE OF MEETING TO THE 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.

21/67. **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on the 23rd March 2021 be received and adopted. That the Town Manager be thanked for her dedication to the role and all her work for the Town Council.

21/68. **RE-OPEN THE MEETING TO PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED:

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

21/69. **ITEMS TO REPORT**

Cllr C P O Rourke spoke of the parking on Chichele Street and the poor visibility for drivers when trying to pull out of the junction on to the Kimbolton Road. The Clerk reminded that cars parked fully blocking the pavement should be reported to the Police. Northamptonshire County Council is responsible for parking enforcement if cars are parked on yellow lines.

Mayor

Date