

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HIGHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 30th MAY 2017 AT THE TOWN HALL AT 7.30PM.**

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE: District Councillor G Harwood MBE, 1 member of the public

17/93. **APOLOGIES**

None.

17/94. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Other Interests

Cllr P Tomas, item 9.1, chq no. 300349, Mayoral expenses.

17/95. **MINUTES**

17/95.1. **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 25th April 2017 be signed by the Mayor as being a true and correct record.

17/95.2. **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on the 15th May 2017 be signed by the Mayor as being a true and correct record.

17/96. **PUBLIC FORUM (15 minutes)**

None.

17/97. **MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported on the events he had attended with his consort.

- 16th May, Rushden Mayor Making, Rushden Hall, where Councillor Barbara Jenny was elected as Mayor
- 17th May, East Northamptonshire Council AGM where Councillor Colin Wright was elected as Chairman
- 18th May, Northampton Borough Council Mayor Making at the Guildhall, where Councillor Gareth Eales was elected as Mayor
- 27th May, Garden Fair at Chichele College, with drinks and cake with the May Queen, Sophia, and her attendants. Competition prizes and certificates of achievement were presented.

17/98. **TOWN CLERKS REPORT**

Traveller Site

East Northamptonshire Council advised that a Community Protection Notice was issued

to the owner. This was to require all the “old stuff” that had been dumped there over a considerable time to be removed from the floodplain land adjacent to the bridge. After considerable pressure, and the real threat of prosecution, the ‘old stuff’ was eventually moved. East Northamptonshire Council have been in contact with the Environment Agency, and they have no urgent concerns at the present time. It has been noted that a couple of vehicles have appeared on the land since, but there is little that can be done about that. The Community Protection Notice remains in force, so if matters deteriorate again action can be taken.

Unitary Local Government

Information about Unitary Local Government has been circulated.

Market Square Car Park

As reported at the last meeting the Market Square Car Park is being billed for Business Rates. This has been backdated to 1st April 2015 and the Council has had to pay back rates of £2,651. This has been queried with East Northamptonshire Council whose response is below:-

“In order to ensure the completeness of the rating list within the East Northamptonshire Council area, we have employed a company to ensure that all assessments within the rating list are appropriately rated, and to ensure that all assessments that should be in the rating list, are in the rating list. The car park at Market Square, Higham Ferrers was found to be an assessment that should be shown in the rating list, which wasn’t shown in the rating list. The car park has now been brought into the list and should indeed have been rated for many years prior to this. Legislation prohibits the car park from being brought into the rating list prior to 1 April 2015.”

Notification of the Closure of Grove Street

Grove Street will be closed from the 6th to the 13th June between 0830-1630 to allow carriageway repairs to take place safely (Following the meeting Highways advised the wrong dates had been given and it would be early July).

Next Rushden East Stakeholder Meeting

2 possible dates have been put forward for the next Stakeholders meeting, the morning of the 22nd June or the 27th June morning or afternoon.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Clerks Report be received and noted.

17/99.

QUESTIONS

Cllr D Hamblin sought clarity regarding the ownership and maintenance of the Market Square Car Park. The Clerk advised the car park was owned by the Town Council but is adopted highway and Northamptonshire Highways are therefore responsible for maintenance. The Town Council sought recompense for the costs of maintenance previously undertaken and paid by them. No monies have been awarded but Northamptonshire Highways have advised they will look favourably on highway projects in the town.

17/100.

REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES

None.

17/101.

FINANCE

17/101.1.

To approve accounts for payment as at 30th May 2017.

RESOLVED:

That the accounts for payment total of £23,507.34 be approved for payment. Copy attached to the minutes.

- 17/101.2. **To approve the bank account reconciliation as at 30th April 2017.**
RESOLVED:
That the bank reconciliation as at 30st April 2017 be signed by the Mayor after being checked by Cllr D C Lawson MBE.
- 17/101.3. **To receive and note the budget report as at 30th April 2017.**
The Clerk advised the budget would be reviewed at the forthcoming Policy and Resources Committee given it had been drawn up last November.
RESOLVED:
That the budget report as at 30th April be received and noted.
- 17/101.4. **To ratify expenditure under the Clerk's delegated powers.**
Replace a section of flat roof, Little Steps Nursery
Further to a question the Clerk advised the work was regarded as normal wear and tear and not a matter for a buildings insurance claim.
RESOLVED:
That expenditure of £1,060 be ratified for the replacement of the section of flat roof with the leak at Little Steps Nursery.
- 17/102. **END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS**
- 17/102.1. **To receive and note the Internal Audit Report 2016/17.**
RESOLVED:
That the Internal Audit Report be received and noted.
- 17/102.2. **To approve the Annual Governance Statement 2016/17.**
The Clerk presented the statements 1 to 9 on the Annual Governance Statement.
RESOLVED:
That the Annual Governance Statements 2016/17 be approved.
- 17/102.3. **To approve the Accounting Statements 2016/17.**
RESOLVED:
That the Annual Accounting Statements 2016/17 be approved.
- 17/103. **MATURITY OF NATIONWIDE 1 YEAR BOND**
- 17.103.1 **To consider opening a 1 year Bond with Cambridge and Counties Bank with £160,000, with signatories as per existing investment accounts.**
RESOLVED:
That a 1 year Bond be opened with Cambridge and Counties bank with £75,000 and with signatories as per existing investment accounts. That the Clerk look at other investment options for the remaining funds.
- 17.103.2. **To agree that the proceeds of the Nationwide 1 year Bond be paid into the Nationwide Instant Saver account.**
RESOLVED:
That the proceeds of the Nationwide 1 year Bond be paid into the Nationwide Instant Saver account but that the Policy and Resources Committee hold a separate meeting to specifically consider the investments of the Town Council.
- 17/104. **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**
- 17/104.1. **Planning and Development Committee held on the 23rd May 2017.**
RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on the 23rd May 2017 be received and adopted.

17/104.2. **Environment and Recreation Committee held on the 23rd May 2017.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Environment and Recreation Committee held on the 23rd May 2017 be received and adopted.

17/104.3. **Recommendations**

(i) **Path near Fitzwilliam Leys Play Area**

RESOLVED:

That the Town Clerk be delegated with the authority, subject to obtaining 2 more quotes, to proceed with the repair of the footpath near Fitzwilliam Leys Play Area and that a budget of £5,007 be allocated for the work.

(ii) **Cabin adjacent Tennis Courts**

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk obtain 2 additional quotes for a design C cabin with the aim of having the cabin installed on site in September with connection to services and the cabin ready for use for the next tennis season. That a budget of £30,000 be set for the project.

(iii) **Replacement Roundabout in Saffron Road Play Area**

RESOLVED:

That a carousel S901 roundabout be purchased at a cost of £3,200 to replace the broken four seater roundabout at the Saffron Road Play Area. Funds from Asset Replacement Reserve.

(iv) **Replacement Multi Play Unit in Saffron Road Play Area**

The Clerk advised that any new equipment would be installed to the appropriate industry standards and that a post installation check would be undertaken by an independent inspector prior to allowing the equipment to be used.

RESOLVED:

That the Lisbon multi play unit and trim trail be purchased at a cost of £20,000 to replace the Woodlands multi play unit and wooden balance beams at the Saffron Road Play Area. That it be noted that the Lisbon unit and trim trail were not the lowest priced multi play unit under consideration but a steel unit was preferred by Members, taking into account a 25 year warranty on the steel parts compared to lesser warranty periods on wooden/glulam products. That the Clerk be delegated with the authority to agree the mix of elements for the trim trail. Funds from Asset Replacement Reserve.

17/105. **PLANNING**

To consider a response to the following planning application:-

17/01000/SCQ: Scoping Opinion: Outline planning for a Sustainable Urban Extension to the east of Rushden at Rushden Urban Extension.

James Wilson Planning Consultant has been instructed to review the documents and provide a draft opinion. The opinion was not available for the meeting as originally planned.

RESOLVED:

That the item be deferred and delegated to the Planning and Development Committee. That, once received, the opinion be circulated to all Councillors to allow them the opportunity to review and provide comment to the Planning and Development Committee.

17/106. **POLICE**

17/106.1. To receive the response from the Police and Crime Commissioner following a request for a meeting and to consider how to respond.

RESOLVED:

That a letter be sent to the Police and Crime Commissioner expressing dissatisfaction at his lack of support and representation at a Town Council meeting, the lack of crime figures that can be provided at the present time. The letter to ask for information on policing priorities, why policing has changed and express frustrations at the changes.

- 17/106.2. To receive and note the correspondence from Inspector Lyon and the dates for the drop-in sessions.

The Clerk will visit the Police website to ascertain how easy it is to extract the relevant information regarding crime statistics for Higham Ferrers. She was trying to arrange a face to face meeting with the Inspector.

RESOLVED:

That the correspondence from Inspector Lyon be received and noted.

- 17/107. **WHARF ROAD DEVELOPMENT**

RESOLVED:

That the Council write to:-

- Linden Homes expressing dissatisfaction with the outcome and asking for negotiations on an alternative scheme.
- Northamptonshire County Council and East Northamptonshire Council asking how this has happened with no consultation with the Town Council.

- 17/108. **CONSULTATION, RUSHDEN LAKES, PARKING RESTRICTION PROPOSALS**
SUSPENSION OF MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the meeting be suspended to allow District Councillor Glen Harwood MBE to speak regarding the item.

In reviewing the plans Cllr Harwood MBE had concerns that the restrictions did not extend far enough and had raised the matter with Jim Whiting, Northamptonshire Highways, and suggestion had been made to extend the restrictions along the Northampton Road.

RESOLVED:

That the meeting be re-opened following the temporary suspension.

RESOLVED:

That Council seek an extension to the proposed no waiting at any time double yellow line restrictions on the Northampton Road. Extension sought to include all of Northampton Road, up to the Hayway on one side and to Shelley Drive on the other side of the road.

- 17/109. **PURCHASE OF 5 WOOD STREET**

To consider the purchase of 5 Wood Street to relocate the Town Council Offices.

Councillors spoke both in favour of and against the purchase of the property. There was a recognised need that existing conditions in the Town Hall are tight for staff and that the property would be well located across the road. Works would be required to make the building fit for purpose and there were varying opinions on the practicality of the works and the use of the building as offices. Reference was made to the rebuilding of the Pavilion and this as a possible alternative for provision of office space. Consideration

was given to Local Government reorganisation and the uncertainty surrounding it and the implications for the Town Council.

Cllr B Prigmore proposed no further action be taken regarding the purchase.

Cllr J Smithers requested the recording of the vote.

RESOLVED:

That no further action be taken and there is no interest regarding the purchase or rental of 5 Wood Street.

Cllr D C Lawson MBE (For)

Cllr Mrs P H Whiting (For)

Cllr Mrs V M Newbery (For)

Cllr D Drage (For)

Cllr C P O'Rourke (Against)

Cllr A M T Reading (Against)

Cllr R J Gell (For)

Cllr R D Hamblin (Against)

Cllr Mrs T Reavey (For)

Cllr Mrs O Mayes (Against)

Cllr B Prigmore (For)

Cllr H L Jackson (For)

Cllr Mrs S Mantle (For)

Cllr Mrs A M Sauntson (For)

Cllr P Tomas (Against)

Cllr J Smithers (Against)

17/110. **STANDING ORDER 1 (z,dd)**

RESOLVED:

That due to time constraint and pursuant to standing order 1 (z,dd) the remaining items on the agenda, 18-25, be deferred for consideration at the next meeting, aside item 19, Membership of Working Parties.

17/111. **MEMBERSHIP OF WORKING PARTIES**

RESOLVED:

That the membership of the working parties is confirmed as per the Clerk's report subject to the following alterations

- Cllr A M T Reading joins the Charters Working Group
- The Mallard Close Working party be closed and a new working party be formed by the Clerk if so required by the project
- Highways and Transport Working Party membership to be included

Mayor

Date