

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

PRESENT:

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

18/246. **PRAYERS**

The meeting was opened with prayers led by the Town Clerk.

18/247. **APOLOGIES**

Councillor Mrs A Sauntson, Councillor B Prigmore, Councillor V Newbery.

18/248. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Other Interests

Cllr Mrs P Whiting, item 16, Member of Planning Policy Committee at District Council.

Cllr P Tomas, item 11.4(ii) and item 12.2(iv), Resident of Mallard Close.

Cllr D C Lawson MBE, item 11.4(ii) and item 12.2(iv), Resident of Mallard Close.

18/249. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 30th October 2018 be signed by the Mayor as being a true and correct record.

18/250. **PUBLIC FORUM (15 minutes)**

Mr Tomas spoke, not in his capacity as a Town Councillor, but as a member of the public. He expressed concern at the direction the Town Council was taking. He asked Council to be mindful of what was happening at the County Council where essential services are under threat. He felt some items of Town Council expenditure were not essential. He referenced adult and child social services at the County Council. In the future the Town Council will be working with the new Unitary Authority. Council can't allow services to be cut and must think about the direction they are to take.

18/251. **MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported on the events he had attended.

- 6th November, United Charities meeting at Wilson Browne solicitors.
- 8th November, Mayor of Kettering's charity tour of Harrington Warner Edwards Gin Distillery.
- 11th November, Service of Remembrance and laying of wreath laying, Market Square, Higham Ferrers.
- 11th November, Battle's Over, A Nation's Tribute, WW1 Beacon of Light, Brackley Town Council.
- 16th November, Civic Ball for the Mayor of Kettering, Cllr James Burton, Wicksteed Park.

- 17th November, Christmas Sparkle. The Mayor expressed sincere thanks to the staff and all the volunteers who made the day such a success.
- 13th November, Raunds, judge for the Christmas Wreaths.
- 25th November, Civic Service for the Chairman of Northamptonshire County Council, St Lawrence's Church, Long Buckby.

18/252. **TOWN CLERKS REPORT**

Police Report

- Entry gained to garage in Simpson Avenue, Higham Ferrers between 7pm Sunday 4 November and 7.40am Monday 5 November property stolen
- Burglary of a property in Kings Avenue, Higham Ferrers between midnight Monday 29 October and 12.45 Tuesday 6 November items taken
- Entry gained to an insecure motor vehicle parked on the driveway of a property in Chichele Street, Higham Ferrers at 11.50pm on Monday, 12 November. Items stolen from within.
- Unknown male looked through the windows and tried the locked door handle of a motor vehicle parked on the driveway of a property in Patenall Way, Higham Ferrers at 23 minutes after midnight on Wednesday, 14 November. Suspect then left after noticing CCTV on the garage. No damage to vehicle or entry gained.

Response to the Town Council letter to the Police and Crime Commissioner

The response emails from the Police and Crime Commissioner dated the 5th and 9th November were circulated.

Feedback on Remembrance Service

Just wanted to say thank you for such a poignant service on Sunday. Very well organised. Being a member of an organisation myself, I know how many hours can go into organising an event. You should all be congratulated.

Feedback on the Poppy Display

A thank you letter from a resident regarding the poppy display was circulated.

Bus Service Changes

Information circulated regarding changes to some of the local bus services from 6th January.

Feedback on Christmas Sparkle

Comments received following Christmas Sparkle have been compiled and a copy circulated.

Lighting in the Council Chamber

Candle bulbs have been sourced that have a higher lumen level. Delivery time from order is 3 to 4 weeks. Given the cost of the bulbs a set are to be ordered for the central chandelier. Council may then assess the level of light and if they wish to purchase for the remaining chandeliers.

Exhumation of Cremated Remains Ashes.

An exhumation will take place early morning on Wednesday 5th December.

RESOLVED:

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

18/253. **QUESTIONS**

None.

18/254. **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES**

None.

- 18/255. **REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR**
 District Councillor Harriet Pentland sent the following report:-
 Business at East Northamptonshire Council has been fairly quiet recently and my report reflects that. As you may be aware, I am on the Transformation Committee, which looks at the workings of the Council as we move forward towards a unitary set-up.
 Our last meeting was particularly interesting as we looked at where the Council is looking to work jointly with other local councils. This does not mean a change in service to residents, but, in my opinion, means service levels can be improved as we draw upon the best practices of our fellow councils.
 In relation to the unitary proposal more broadly, over the next couple of weeks councillors from across the county will have the opportunity to attend a seminar detailing the process for transitioning to unitary. This will be hosted by the LGA and will feature speakers from other councils which have made the move to unitary. I am hopeful that this will be a useful session, standing us in good stead for when the Secretary of State makes his announcement.
- 18/256. **FINANCE**
- 18/256.1. **To approve accounts for payment as at 27th November 2018.**
RESOLVED:
 That the accounts for payment total of £30,258.48 be approved for payment. Copy attached to the minutes.
- 18/256.2. **To approve the bank account reconciliation as at 31st October 2018.**
RESOLVED:
 That the bank reconciliation as at 31st October be signed by the Mayor after being checked by Cllr D C Lawson MBE.
- 18/256.3. **To receive and note the budget report as at 27th November 2018.**
RESOLVED:
 That the budget report as at 27th November be received and noted.
- 18/256.4. **To approve the following expenditure:-**
- (i) **Condition Survey of 5 and 5A College Street**
RESOLVED
 That the item be deferred pending receipt of additional quotes.
- (ii) **Tidy up works at Mallard Close Open Space**
 Cllr P Tomas and Cllr D C Lawson MBE, having declared an interest, withdrew from the discussion and vote.
RESOLVED:
 That the work to undertake the remaining vegetation and waste clearance of the Mallard Close Open Space be undertaken at a cost of £1,290.
- 18/257. **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**
- To receive and adopt the minutes of the following committees: -
- 18/257.1. **Planning and Development Committee held on the 13th November 2018.**
RESOLVED:
 That the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on the 13th November 2018 be received and adopted.
- 18/257.2. **Environment and Recreation Committee held on the 13th November 2018.**
RESOLVED:

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

Recommendations

(i) **Cemetery Fee Review for 2019/20**

That the following cemetery fees for 2019/20 remain the same at:-

- Purchase of a child plot - £100
- Burial of stillborn child - £0
- Burial of child under 12 years- £135
- Headstone (1.4m in height) - £85, each additional 0.1m - £10
- Additional inscription - £45
- Flower vase with/without inscription - £45
- Purchase of cremation plot - £140
- Interment of ashes single depth - £185
- Interment of ashes double depth - £200
- Memorial stone, horizontal or vertical - £50
- Administration fee (no undertaker for ashes interment) - £50
- Registration of transfer of burial rights - £50
- Searches and certified copies/extracts - £30

That the following cemetery fees for 2019/20 be amended:-

- Purchase of Burial Plot (at time of death) - Increase of £10 to £320
- Burial of person over 12 single depth - Increase of £5 to £425
- Burial of person over 12 double depth - Increase of £5 to £525
- Single kerbset – Increase of £5 to £90
- Double kerbset -Increase of £5 to £125

That an additional cemetery fee for 2019/20 be introduced for the purchase of a burial plot in advance of the time of death.

- Advance Purchase of a Burial Plot - £420.

(ii) **Fees Review for 2019/20**

Sports Club Fees

RESOLVED:

That the following fees for 2019/20 remain the same at:-

- Football Clubs: Football Pitch - £16 per match, Changing Rooms - £25 (plus VAT) per match.
- Cricket Club: Pitch - £220 per season, Changing Rooms £300 (plus VAT) per season
- Tennis Club are £162.50 per quarter to include all matches, club and coaching sessions and use of the cabin.

Hire of Castle Fields for fairs

RESOLVED:

That the fee for 2019/20 for the use of Castle Fields for fairs etc remain the same, subject to negotiation by the Clerk, with a minimum fee of £500.

Casual hire of Tennis Courts and MUGA

RESOLVED:

That the fees for 2019/20 remain the same at:-

- Hire of Tennis Courts - £5 (inc VAT) per hour. (Half price if a Tennis Club Member)
- Regular users - seasonal fee of £50 per annum and a 20% reduction (£40) for tennis club members. (Courts still need to be booked and keys collected.)
- MUGA - £10 (inc VAT) per hour.

School use of facilities

RESOLVED:

That the fee for 2019/20 remain the same at £1,250 per annum (plus VAT) taking account of the use of the cabin.

Pavilion hire

RESOLVED:

That the fees remain the same for 2019/20 as follows:

Category of Hire	Room Type	Price per Hour (£) (Mondays – Saturdays inclusive)	Price per Hour (£) (Sundays/Public Bank Holidays)
Commercial	Hall 1	£12.50	£18.75
Charity	Hall 1	£10	£15
Community	Hall 1	£9.50	£14.25
Under 13's Party	Hall 1	£8.50	£12.75
Private Function / Party	Hall 1	£11	£16.50

(iii) **Notice Board at the Cemetery**

RESOLVED:

That a notice board be purchased for location on the side of the Cemetery Chapel at a cost of £1,807 supply and delivery. That the notice board be 1.2m wide x 1m high, black with gold text, border and Higham Ferrers crest to match existing within the town.

(iv) **Interpretation Panel for Mallard Close Open Space**

Cllr P Tomas and Cllr D C Lawson MBE, having declared an interest, withdrew from the discussion and vote.

RESOLVED

That an interpretation panel be installed at Mallard Close Open Space. That a budget of £1,450 be agreed to progress with the artwork and layout and a budget of £1,100 be agreed for the purchase and installation of the panel.

18/258. **PURCHASE OF A BRANDED GAZEBO**

RESOLVED:

That a branded gazebo be purchased for use at events at a cost of £710.57. That the branded gazebo include printing on the back wall and be blue in colour.

18/259. **PLAY AREA OFF LINDEN AVENUE**

RESOLVED:

That the Council do not support the request from Sovereign Fields Management Company to remove the play equipment at the play area off Linden Avenue. That a request is made to the Sovereign Fields Management Company to maintain and improve the play area.

18/260. **EXTENSION TO THE GREENWAY**

The Education and Funding Skills Agency (EFSA) have rejected the Licence Agreement and it will not be signed off by the Secretary of State. This is despite the fact the Agency were previously in agreement with the principal and Council had agreed their amendments. It is understood the EFSA will agree a 25 year lease with a break clause at 10 years by either party. Legal fees to date are in the region of £3,000 with another £3,000 to £4,000 anticipated. The Clerk confirmed the Greenway contracts had not been signed. An extension to the grant funding has been given by East Northamptonshire Council to the end of March but work needs to commence on site by January due to the bird nesting season. If the lease is agreed it is understood it will move forward as a matter of urgency.

RESOLVED:

That given the work to date and the ultimate wish for the Extension to the Greenway the Clerk progress with the work required to seal a lease between the Council and Ferrers School, with delegated authority to spend up to the £10,000 allocated within the contingency budget for the project.

18/261. **EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION**

Cllr Mrs P H Whiting, having declared an interest, withdrew from the discussion and vote.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk draft a response to the consultation on the East Northamptonshire Local Plan that incorporates the view that it is considered a fair and reasonable document. Policy EN37 is to be welcomed but concern is expressed regarding the detail for the access and how the arrangement would work. The layout and design for the 120 houses proposed must fit with the Neighbourhood Plan policies. The Council would like to be involved in the master planning for the site.

18/262. **CORRESPONDENCE PRIORITIES**

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk respond to the letter received regarding the Council's priorities as per the draft that had been circulated.

18/263. **ANNUAL RETURN AND AUDIT 2017-18**

RESOLVED:

That the External Auditors Report and Conclusion of Audit 2017-18 be received and noted.

18/264. **LIBRARY UPDATE**

Cllr Mrs A Gardener reported that the Library Community Group had considered the 2 offers made by the County Council, namely, offer 1, Library Access Point or offer 2, Library Access Point Lite. The group had decided to try and proceed with offer 1, the library Access Point which provides the book lending service as well as additional services. The Library Community Group are liaising with the County Council direct regarding the offer and the communication channels between the group and the County Council are regarded as being good with the group working and conducting their business as had been hoped.

RESOLVED:

That the update on the Library be received and noted.

18/265. **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.

18/266. **CCTV CONTRACT**

RESOLVED:

That the CCTV contract be renewed with Crimesecure for a 3 year period at a cost of £3,875 per quarter.

18/267. **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.

18/268. **ITEMS TO REPORT**
None.

Mayor

Date