

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HIGHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY 27TH OCTOBER 2020 AT 7.30PM
USING ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING

PRESENT:

	The Mayor (Councillor Mrs C Reavey)	
	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 V Paul		Councillor B Spencer
Councillor P Tomas		Councillor J Smithers
Councillor B Prigmore		Alicia Schofield (Assistant Clerk)
Councillor A M T Reading		David Wicks (Mayors' Sergeant)
Mrs S J Mitcham (Town Clerk)		

20/294. **APOLOGIES**

Cllr D C Lawson MBE, Cllr Mrs A Sauntson, Cllr D Hamblin, Cllr Mrs S Mantle.

20/295. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Other Interests

Cllr J Smithers – Item 15, County Councillor and Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Highways and Places. Item 11.1, planning items 5.1 (i) and (iv), location of business premises in relation to the developments proposed.

Cllr P Tomas – Item 18, District Councillor with involvement in the consultation for the Local Plan.

20/296. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 29th September 2020 be signed by the Mayor as a true and correct record.

20/297. **PUBLIC FORUM (15 minutes)**

None.

20/298. **MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported on the events she had attended.

- 13th October, visit from Paul Parsons, the High Sherriff of Northampton. Cllr Mrs Pam Whiting and I took him firstly to St Marys church where we were met by Rev Michelle Dalliston and Richard Oberman. We had a very informative walk around the Church and then proceeded to the Bede House. We then crossed over the road to Chichele College where we were met by Liz Brown and Carol Fitzgerald. He was very interested in the display in Chichele College and spent quite some time looking at the photographs. He also was able to meet some of the volunteers working in the gardens. At the end of his visit Carol presented him with a copy of Brenda Lofthouse and Gwen Tobin's book Higham Ferrers 1251 – 1914. He was delighted. He was extremely interested in the history of our town and found it most impressive that we still have our Bedesmen and Bedeswoman. In his email of thanks he calls the Church, Bede House and Chichele College 'outstanding buildings to visit'. My thanks go to all of those who were involved, particularly Pam who had to do a larger share of hosting as I wasn't very mobile on the day and Sandra as chief photographer and to Emily who had so impressed

the High Sherriff with her organisational skills.

20/299. **TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

Police Report

Link to the report for June 2020 <https://www.streetcheck.co.uk/crime/nn108bt>

41 Crimes for August: -

- Anti-Social Behaviour – 13
- Burglary - 2
- Criminal Damage and Arson – 1
- Public Order – 1
- Shoplifting – 1
- Vehicle Crime – 4
- Violent and sexual offences - 18
- Other Crime -1

Friends of St Marys Conservation Project

A project progress report has been circulated.

Plans for Remembrance

The Clerk provided an update of the latest plans following a meeting of the Remembrance Group. Remembrance is not a public service, it will be a reduced service with only key wreath layers. The Market Square including footpaths will be cordoned off and no public allowed in. If they turn up they will not be allowed in cordoned area so will not see much. The service will be about 10 minutes. The road will not be closed. Councillors and staff will be there to steward. The message to the public is 'Do not turn up. Remember from Home.'

Alternative Sparkle Update

The Assistant Clerk explained that a demonstration of the projector had resulted in issues with both options. The Sparkle Events Working Group are meeting this Monday to agree a way forward.

RESOLVED:

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

20/230. **QUESTIONS**

Cllr B Prigmore queried why the poppies that had been placed along the High Street had not been placed beyond the Market Square towards Whites Garage. The Clerk advised that the poppies were not placed by the Town Council, but the Royal British Legion and the extent and locations were at their discretion.

20/231. **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES**

Cllr Mrs A Gardner attended the JAG meeting with Cllr H L Jackson on the 20th October 2020. The priorities remain the same, namely drinking related issues and anti-social behaviour. A series of drug warrants have been issued and the Police are pleased with the results from these. The court process is delayed due to Covid -19.

Cllr Mrs A Gardner reported on her monthly walkabout with the PCSO. Contact is now well established with the schools, including Rushden Academy where a number of Higham Ferrers children attend. Anti-social behaviour is relatively quiet at present.

Cllr H L Jackson attended the Rushden East Board meeting 19th October 2020 reporting that he felt the project had not moved forward since the last meeting. Connectivity was requested and it was advised that the developer promised two footbridges and possibly an upgrade to an existing footbridge. The Planning & Conservation Manager is to investigate what finance will be available for infrastructure. When asked what next, the response was that both Councils should meet with the developer to find out what s106 funding is required. Cllr Jackson pointed out that you don't get funding from B8 storage or the new homes bonus. Concern was expressed during the meeting regarding the power the Duchy of Lancaster have over the project. The developer plans to submit the planning application late October.

20/232. **REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR**
None.

20/233. **FINANCE**

20/232.1. **To approve accounts for payment as at 27th October 2020.**

RESOLVED:

That the accounts for payment total of £37,438.06 as at 29th October 2020 be approved for payment. Copy attached to the minutes.

20/232.2. **To approve the bank account reconciliation as at 30th September 2020.**

RESOLVED:

That the bank account reconciliation as at 30th September 2020 be signed by the Mayor after being checked by Cllr Mrs P H Whiting.

20/232.3. **To receive and note the budget report as at 30th September 2020.**

RESOLVED:

That the budget report as at 30th September 2020 be received and noted.

20/234. **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

20/234.1. To receive and adopt the minutes of the following committees: -

Planning and Development Committee held on the 13th October 2020.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on the 13th October 2020 be received and adopted.

20/234.2. Policy and Resources Committee held on the 13th October 2020.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 13th October 2020 be received and adopted.

Recommendations

(i) **REVIEW OF POLICIES**

RESOLVED:

That the following policies be reviewed without change: -

Complaints Procedure

Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour

Investment Strategy

Social Media Policy

Whistleblowing Policy

Tree Management Policy

(ii) **CARD PAYMENTS**

RESOLVED:

That the Council purchase an I Zettle card machine at a cost of £29 so that card transactions can be accepted. The cost per transaction is 1.75% and 2.5% for remote payments via a weblink.

(iii) **WASTE DISPOSAL**

RESOLVED:

- That the Council purchase a higher tier Waste Carriers Licence at a cost of £154 for the first 3 years and £105 for each 3-year period thereafter. This would enable the Park Wardens to remove fly tipping from Council owned land and carry litter from other sites.
- That the Council enter a 12-month contract for a 660-litre waste bin with a fortnightly collection at a cost of £273pa subject to the Clerk agreeing a satisfactory place for the bin to be located.

20/235. **EXTERNAL AUDIT 2019-20**

RESOLVED:

That the External Auditors Report and Conclusion of Audit 2019-20 be received and noted.

20/236. **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 in January 2021.

20/237. **RUSHDEN EAST BOARD REPRESENTATION**

RESOLVED:

That Cllr C P O'Rourke be appointed as the replacement substitute representative for Rushden East Board. That Cllr C P O'Rourke attend as an observer with Cllr H L Jackson to allow him to become up to date with the project.

20/238. **CHANGE OF ZEBRA CROSSING TO PELICAN CROSSING, KIMBOLTON ROAD**

RESOLVED:

That a request be submitted to Northamptonshire Highways to change the zebra crossing on Kimbolton Road to a pelican crossing.

20/239. **MEMORIAL BENCHES**

20/239.1. **To consider a request for a memorial bench following a Covid-19 related death.**

RESOLVED:

That permission be granted for a memorial bench to be sited in the cemetery, Saffron Road play area, Saffron Road recreation ground or Phase 5 Kings Meadow. That the cost of the memorial bench be met by the applicant.

20/239.2. **To consider the adoption of guidelines to handle future requests for memorial benches.**

RESOLVED:

That guidelines be adopted to handle future requests for memorial benches.

20/240. **OFFICE IT UPGRADE**

RESOLVED:

That the Council move their office IT to MS 365 with the system being implemented and managed on an on-going basis by an external provider at a cost of £2850 for the

implementation and £2486.40pa for the on-going maintenance. That Councillor emails are established post elections at a cost of £3.95 per email per month.

20/241. **ENC CONSULTATION, LOCAL PLAN PART 2**

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be delegated to submit the response to the Local Plan Part 2 as per the Council's response to the original consultation on Rushden East but with additional comment expressing concern over the:

- Expanded boundaries.
- Impact on the highway network, connectivity and the local infrastructure of the revised site location for the 450 houses of the former Rushden Lakes West site.

20/242. **PHASE 5, KINGS MEADOW LANE**

RESOLVED:

That the transfer deed with David Wilson Homes for Phase 5 Kings Meadow Lane be sealed when the Clerk is satisfied that all remedial works are complete and the s106 funds have been transferred.

20/243. **TOWN AND FARMERS' MARKET WORKING PARTY**

20/243.1. **Town and Farmers' Market Working Party Minutes**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Town and Farmers' Market Working Party meeting held on the 6th October 2020 be received and noted.

20/243.2 **Purchase of Items to Promote the Town**

RESOLVED:

That the following items be purchased to assist with the promotion of the Town:-

- Audio trail app at a cost of £1200 development and £300pa maintenance. Development cost to be met from Heritage Lottery Fund and an anonymous sponsor.
- Range of promotional equipment to dispense leaflets, tabletop presentation boards, freestanding poster A frame, tablecloth with logo, all at a total cost of £558 to be met from the Rushden Lakes grant.
- Film to include drone footage to promote the local businesses, walking and cycling routes and local heritage with a budget cost of £3000 to be met part from the Rushden Lakes grant and part from the Town Managers budget and/or Cllr Empowerment Funds.

20/244 **CLOSURE OF THE 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.

20/245. **PERSONNEL MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Personnel Committee held on 7th October 2020 be received and adopted.

20/246. **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.

20/247. **ITEMS TO REPORT**

Cllr Mrs A Gardner reported that the Working Party formed to seek clarity regarding the offer from Snowdon Homes for the Community Room had met and Snowdon Homes had been asked to meet with them.

Cllr H L Jackson requested an agenda item to bring forward a zoom meeting with Irthlingborough Town Council with regard to the Station Road bridge.

Mayor

Date