

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HIGHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON TUESDAY 29TH SEPTEMBER 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 Mrs S Mantle		Councillor B Spencer
Councillor B Prigmore		Councillor J Smithers
Councillor A M T Reading		Alicia Schofield (Assistant Clerk)
Mrs S J Mitcham (Town Clerk)		David Wicks (Mayors' Sergeant)

20/273. **APOLOGIES**

Cllrs D C Lawson MBE, Mrs A Sauntson, Cllr D Hamblin. Cllr V Paul and Cllr P Tomas

20/274. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Other Interests

Cllr J Smithers – Item 20, County Councillor. The consultation is being undertaken by the County Council.

Cllr H L Jackson – Item 15, District Councillor. As a member of both Town and District Council he will reconsider all matters at a District level taking into account evidence and representations at the District tier. Therefore, he cannot be bound in any way by any view expressed in the parish tier or by decisions of this Council

Cllr B Prigmore, Item 15, He suggested Snowdon Homes write to the Council regarding the community room.

Cllr Mrs S Mantle, Item 15, Her daughter is a partner of one of the Directors of Snowdon Homes.

20/275. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 25th August 2020 be signed by the Mayor as a true and correct record.

20/276. **PUBLIC FORUM (15 minutes)**

None.

20/277. **MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported on the events she had attended.

- 3rd September: The Red Ensign to mark Merchant Navy day was raised to honour the men and women who have lost their lives at sea. The Mayor thanked those who came and gave their support.
- Evening of 9th September; the Mayor was invited by Rotary to unveil the defibrillator which has been sited outside the Carriage House. She has been asked by Rotary to convey their thanks to Council for agreeing to the maintenance and upkeep of the defibrillator.
- 16th September: The Mayor joined a very select group in Castle Fields to unveil the Three Oaks benches. Due to the covid19 restrictions this was not the grand occasion that had been planned, indeed it was not what the benches deserve. It must have been very disappointing to those involved not to be able to be present;

and the Mayor felt very honoured to be part of the occasion. It is hoped that many of you have been to see the benches. They have been well received by all ages in the community.

20/278. **TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

Police Report

Link to the report for June 2020 <https://www.streetcheck.co.uk/crime/mn108bt>

43 Crimes for June: -

- Anti-Social Behaviour – 14
- Criminal Damage and Arson – 1
- Drugs – 1
- Possession of Weapons – 1
- Public Order – 3
- Burglary - 1
- Shoplifting – 7
- Vehicle Crime – 1
- Violent and sexual offences - 12
- Other Crime - 3

The link does give some information on how the crime is being dealt with.

Below is the response from the Sergeant on detection rates: -

Statistically it is very difficult to tie detected crimes to their convictions – because there are many cases still going through (some court dated in January 2021) etc and therefore this is not a statistic that we could produce.

In relation to the crimes that we as a force detect – what I have asked is for the data analysts to try and produce a report in relation to this that would be sent directly to you as a town council. I am hoping they might be able to produce this for your meeting but I am bound by the capacity of another department at the moment.

For general crime stats police.uk would be the place to visit and get the total number recorded and then minus the 'ASB' reports (as they are not crimes).

Rushden East

The Rushden East Masterplan will now form part of the Local Plan part 2 which will be out on consultation from Monday 5th October.

Co-op Bus Lay-by Covid-19 Temporary Measures

The County Council, with the assistance of Government funding, is looking to install temporary measures to the highway to allow improved social distancing on a narrow and busy part of the High Street where there is queueing for the bus stop and the Co-op.

RESOLVED:

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

20/279. **QUESTIONS**

Cllr H L Jackson asked if approach had been made to Irthlingborough Town Council with regard to the A6 Station Road bridge and the meeting to discuss more permanent options for the future of the bridge. The Clerk is awaiting dates for the meeting. The coping stones had been reinstated on the Higham side of the bridge.

20/280. **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES**

Cllr Mrs A Gardner reported on her monthly walkabout with the PCSO. The car parking issues at school drop off and pick up times along School Lane and around Henry Chichele School have returned now that children are back to school. The PCSO has offered to help with the parking problems in this area.

- 20/281. **REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR**
District Councillor H L Jackson referred to his attendance at the Rushden East Board meeting and his voiced concern that B8 storage is not exempt from the Core Strategy and will be included in the forthcoming planning application.

District Councillor Ms H Pentland is a member of the working party looking at the design of the logo for the new Unitary Authority. Work continues with staff and other councils on the process of transition.

20/282. **FINANCE**

- 20/282.1. **To approve accounts for payment as at 29th September 2020.**

RESOLVED:

That the accounts for payment total of £71604.75 as at 29th September 2020 be approved for payment. Copy attached to the minutes.

- 20/282.2. **To approve the bank account reconciliation as at 31st August 2020.**

RESOLVED:

That the bank account reconciliation as at 31st August 2020 be signed by the Mayor after being checked by Cllr Mrs P H Whiting.

- 20/282.3. **To receive and note the budget report as at 31st August 2020.**

RESOLVED:

That the budget report as at 31st August 2020 be received and noted.

20/283. **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

- 20/283.1. **To receive and adopt the minutes of the following committees: -**

Planning and Development Committee held on the 15th September 2020.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on the 15th September 2020 be received and adopted.

- 20/283.2. **Environment and Recreation Committee held on the 15th September 2020.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Environment and Recreation Committee held on the 15th September 2020 be received and adopted.

Recommendations

- (i) **HIGH PRESSURE WASHING AND MOSS TREATMENT OF THE TENNIS COURTS**

RESOLVED:

That Council enter a 3-year contract for the annual provision of high pressure washing and moss treatment of the tennis courts and MUGA at a cost of £1280 per annum subject to the Clerk's satisfaction that the pressure washing will not cause damage to the new MUGA surface and that the works will not affect any warranties to the new surface.

- 20/284. **CONSULTATION, GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER – PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**

Cllr Mrs A Gardner reported the key discussion points following her attendance on the NCALC event reviewing the consultation.

RESOLVED:

That authority be delegated to the Clerk to work in conjunction with Cllr Mrs A Gardner to complete the consultation questions on the Government White Paper – Planning for the Future and that the response be circulated to Councillors for review prior to submission.

20/285. **REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN**

RESOLVED:

That consideration of a review and update of the Community Plan be deferred pending establishment of the Unitary Authority to allow scope to engage with them as part of the process.

20/286. **REVIEW OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

RESOLVED:

That the project to review the Neighbourhood Plan be deferred for 6 months or until it is better known what is happening with the future of the planning system given the Government White Paper consultation currently being carried out.

20/287. **SNOWDON HOMES OFFER OF COMMUNITY ROOM**

Having declared an interest Cllr Mrs S Mantle withdrew to the zoom waiting room for the discussion and vote.

RESOLVED:

That a working party be formed to seek clarity regarding the offer and to explore the options available to the Council. That the working party membership comprise Cllr Prigmore, Cllr Jackson, Cllr Spencer and Cllr Gardner.

20/288. **INCREASE IN DEDICATED WILD FLOWER AREA AT THE CHURCHYARD**

RESOLVED:

That agreement be given to the request from the Friends of St Mary's Church and St Mary's Church Eco Team to allow an increase in the dedicated wildflower area at the churchyard.

20/289. **CHRISTMAS SPARKLE 2020**

20/289.1. **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the Events Working Party meeting held on the 21st September 2020 be received and noted.

20/289.2. **Confirmation of plans for alternative Sparkle 2020**

RESOLVED:

That alternative Sparkle is based on the principle of encouraging people to the town centre. We look to provide more visual 'sparkle' stimulation that people can appreciate in their own time and as often as they want in the lead up to Christmas. It is seen as a means to help promote the town, principally shop local for Christmas but also to encourage a wider awareness of town centre businesses and heritage.

- Projection - Christmas advent themed projection on main window of Town Hall for the month of December, static and moving images, can include images of local competition entries.
- Christmas Tree – located in the Market Square for month of December. Star to the top of the tree and cascading twinkling warm white lights.
- Yarn bombing - locals groups and individuals encouraged to knit/crochet Christmas themed items that can be used to decorate the safety barriers around the Christmas Tree. Christmas competition entries to be displayed on barriers.

- Proposed light switch on: - By 20th November – Christmas street lights and Tourism trees. By 1st December – Projection and Market Square Christmas Tree. Events to be video recorded for sharing.

20/289.3. **Sparkle Expenditure 2020**

RESOLVED:

That authority be delegated to the Clerk to spend within the approved Sparkle budget of £4000.

20/290. **COVI9-19 WORKING PARTY**

Cllr J Smithers referred to general mental health and wellbeing issues relating to Covid-19 due to altered working situations and environments and queried the level of external support available to Council employees. The Clerk will carry this point to the next Personnel Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Covid-19 Working Party meeting held on the 1st September 2020 be received and noted.

20/291. **PLANS FOR REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY**

RESOLVED:

That the feedback from the Remembrance meeting held on the 24th September 2020 be received and noted. That the presented Plan C be agreed for Remembrance Sunday.

20/292. **CONSULTATION, PUBLIC HEALTH NCC, HEALTH AND WELLBEING SERVICES**

RESOLVED:

That authority be delegated to the Clerk to respond to the consultation on the Health and Wellbeing Services and that the response be circulated to Councillors to review prior to submission. That Councillors be reminded that in their capacity as members of the public they may also submit an individual response.

20/293. **ITEMS TO REPORT**

None.

Mayor

Date