

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HIGHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 31ST MARCH 2015 AT THE TOWN HALL AT 7.30PM.**

PRESENT:

The Mayor (Councillor G Whiting)
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor R J Gell)

Councillor M Beesley	Councillor A Dunn
Councillor Mrs K Dunn	Councillor Mrs C Ingram
Councillor H L Jackson	Councillor D C Lawson MBE
Councillor Mrs S Mantle	Councillor Mrs V M Newbery
Councillor Mrs A Sauntson	Councillor P Tomas
Councillor Mrs M Tuffnail	Councillor Mrs P H Whiting
Councillor S Wiles	Mr D Wicks (Mayor's Sergeant)
Mrs S J Mitcham (Town Clerk)	

IN ATTENDANCE: Police Inspector J Mead, District Councillor G Harwood and 1 member of the public.

15/49. **APOLOGIES**

Cllr A M T Reading.

15/50. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr G Whiting – Item 11.1.chq no 501384 –Recipient.

Cllr Mrs P Whiting – Item 11.1 chq no 501384 – Husband Recipient.

Cllr Mr M Tuffnail – Item 11.1 BP 71– Daughter-in-Laws Salary.

Cllr Mrs C Ingram – Item 12 – Lives in VineHill Drive

Cllr Mrs V Newbery, Cllr H L Jackson, Cllr Mrs A Sauntson – Item 17 – Members of Twinning Association.

Cllr R Gell – Item 22 – Member of Ramblers Association.

15/51. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th February 2015 be signed by the Chairman as being a true and correct record, following an amendment of the amount on page 4475 under item 15/48 from £21000 to £2000.

15/52. **POLICING**

Inspector Julia Mead introduced herself as the New Sector Inspector appointed in January. She had been in the service for 23 years and hoped to spend the remainder of her service in the current role. She spoke about the 'Futures Programme' and the funding difficulties being faced by the police. A 'knock and drop' exercise was to take place in Higham Ferrers towards the end of April to try and recruit Specials and other volunteers to work with the police. This type of activity had worked well in Oundle.

She was questioned about the issues near the pavilion and skateboard park. She was to look at getting some detached youth workers to the area. She would speak to PC Brown about locking the car park at night.

15/53. **PUBLIC FORUM (15 minutes)**

A resident spoke about her concerns about the crossing of the Greenway over School Lane. Visibility is poor and the cars speed along the road. She hoped the Town Council would support some improvements in the area.

15/54. **MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

The Mayor gave the following report:-

March 9 th	Huntingdon for Commonwealth Day Flag Raising
March 13 th	Chairman of County Council Dinner at Hellidon Lakes near Daventry
March 14 th	Burton Latimer Civic Dinner at Wellingborough Golf Club
March 21 st	Wellingborough Civic Dinner at Wicksteed Park
March 28 th	Huntingdon Civic Dinner
March 29 th	Joint Tea Party with Mayor of Rushden in The Bede House
March 29 th	Chairman of County Council Fund Raiser at the Bengal Restaurant in Northampton

Note that tickets are now on sale for the Band Concert by the RAF Band. This is a joint venture between the RAF Association, Rushden Town Mayor and myself. This will be held on Friday 24th April at the Rushden Town Bowls Club. Tickets are priced at £15 each

15/55. **PLANNING.**

15/55.1 To consider responses to the following planning applications received:

- (i) **15/00327/FUL: Installation of external wall insulation to all external elevations of the property:13 Grove St, Higham Ferrers**

RESOLVED:

That no comments or objections be made.

15/55.2. **To note determinations on planning applications.**

RESOLVED:

That the report on determinations of planning applications previously considered be noted.

15/55.3. **To consider a request from David Wilson Homes to vary the s106 agreement for the Station Road site.**

RESOLVED:

That the request to vary the s106 agreement to fix indexation at the point of transfer of the open space be refused.

15/56. **TOWN CLERKS REPORT**

15/26.4.Rushden East Project Board

In response to the request for an extra member the response received is below:-

‘The board is of a considerable size already and Higham Ferrers representation seems to have worked well so far. However, Steven (North) does accept that as the site becomes identified more clearly it may be beneficial to review the representation of Higham Ferrers.’

15/30. Methodist Church.

Following on from the last meeting when it was agreed that the Clerk should set up a meeting with the Minister for the working party, this is the response received:-

“Thank you for your kind invitation to meet with some of the town councillors of Higham Ferrers to discuss ideas for the Higham Ferrers Methodist church property. I have received three phone calls from one of your councillors and I spoke with him at length. As I tried to explain to him the church has no firm plans at the present time as to how to move forward. We are undertaking some remedial work at the property and had a conversation with officers of East Northants CC regarding permissions necessary etc and work we were going to do in the near future. All that is planned was agreed with them. At such time as we move forward I am sure we will be pleased to talk with yourselves but at the moment there is nothing to add to this and so a meeting will achieve nothing.”
Cllr Mrs K Dunn reported that she had obtained the contact details to assist the Clerk. Cllr A Dunn confirmed that he had spoken to her on 1 occasion.

School Crossing Patrol

A meeting has been held with the officer from Northamptonshire County Council. She has gone away to talk to surrounding counties to see if they can provide the requisite training and supervision. This resource is no longer available within Northamptonshire County Council. She will also do some research to see if those previously employed as a School Crossing Patrol person would be interested in taking another position. Cllr D C Lawson MBE agreed to speak to the schools to see if they could assist with future funding of the training and the salary. Another meeting is planned for 1st April.

Recruitment of Parish Special Constables.

As part of the recruitment drive the Police are going to conduct a ‘knock and drop’ in Higham Ferrers the week commencing 20th April. They hope to knock on every door in the town over the course of the afternoons of Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday that week, to be followed on the Saturday morning (25th April) with a ‘find out more’ event at one of the town’s local pubs.

Street Cleansing

Following complaints about street cleaning by Kier, this is the response received:-

‘As mentioned previously our contractors Kier have been trying to manage their resources to try and work as efficiently and effectively as possible in combatting high levels of litter within the District. Higham Ferrers has been receiving a cleansing resource each day via the Mobile Crew and mechanical sweeper and all bins have been emptied on schedule, litter cleared etc. and as mentioned, we do not believe the standard of cleansing has reduced as a result of the barrow not being deployed. Obviously, cleansing standards are perception based so people can think the Town is not as clean as it was simply because they are not seeing the regular man and barrow and it’s key for us to know of the areas of concern so we can address these, so I’d be grateful if you could let me know as and when any complaints are received and we’ll be happy to look at these. That said, having spoken with my Cleansing Supervisor at Kier on this matter again today, they will be deploying the man with his barrow again starting this week to give you confidence the Town is being cleansed as you expect it to be.’

Freedom of Information Requests

The following requests have been received since the last meeting.

Date Received	Details	Date Answered/Target Date
11/03/15	Cost of skateboard park to date and forecast annual cost.	18/03/15
19/03/15	Details of impasse with the Methodist Church over the site on Queensway.	17/04/15
23/03/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost of repairs to date including cost of replacement sign and installation following vandalism of original.• Repair to broken fence rail.• Annual insurance premium.• Cost per day for litter picking	21/04/15

Phase 5

Response from David Wilson Homes.

“We are aware of the current issues with the POS and much of the soft landscaping elements were addressed. The footpath is currently showing signs of slippage and we have erected heras fencing whilst this is investigated. Unfortunately this has come to a bit of a standstill. This is because Anglian Water are having to do some works to their rising main and this cuts right through the public open space. They have notified us in the last few weeks that they intend to start this work within 3 months and will notify us

nearer the time with an exact timeframe; we are waiting to hear. Once this work is completed we will look to pick up the remainder of the outstanding issues with the POS and progress the transfer.”

RESOLVED:

That the Town Clerks report be received and noted.

15/57. **QUESTIONS.**

None.

15/58. **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES.**

Cllr Mrs V Newbery confirmed the final arrangements for the Twinning visit at the end of July.

15/59. **FINANCE.**

15/59.1. **To approve accounts for payment as at 31st March 2015 and 1st April 2015.**

RESOLVED:

That the accounts for payments totals of £43118.70 (31st March 2015 and £9412.07 (1st April 2015) be paid.

15/59.2. **To approve the Bank Account reconciliation as at 28th February 2015.**

RESOLVED:

That the bank reconciliation as at 28th February 2015 be signed by the Mayor after being checked by Cllr D C Lawson MBE.

15/59.3. **To receive and note the budget report as at 28th February 2015.**

RESOLVED:

That the budget report as at 28th February 2015 be received and noted.

15/59.4. **To consider following items of expenditure:**

(i) **Safeguarding Training.**

RESOLVED:

That expenditure of £30 on online Safeguarding training be approved.

15/59.5. **RESOLVED:**

To ratify expenditure under Clerk's delegated powers.

RESOLVED:

That the following expenditure under the Clerks delegated powers be ratified:-

All figures include VAT.

Wheelscape Ltd – Skateboard Park opening prizes = £120 (Covered by Cllr Empowerment Funds)

East Northamptonshire Council – Annual Premises Licence Fee - £70

Northants Fire Ltd – Fire Alarm Service - £162

Northants Fire Ltd - Fire Extinguisher Check and Replacement - £222.24

Colemans – Stamps - £59.64

Colemans – A3 Colour Copy - £2.98

Colemans – Comb binding - £5.98

Stephen Pell – Repair locks - £104

Stephen Pell – Repair fence posts – Fitzwilliam Leys - £120

15/59.6. **To receive the Independent Internal Auditors' Report.**

RESOLVED:

That the Independent Internal Auditors Report dated 19th March 2015 be received and noted.

15/60. **FOOTPATH, LANDSCAPING AND FENCING AROUND THE SKATEBOARD PARK.**

A report had been circulated outlining details of works to finish off the area around the skateboard park and install a path that would be used to get to the football pitch. There was £3505.58 left in the skateboard park budget.

RESOLVED:

- That the knee rail fence be removed and replaced with a 1m high black galvanised 'Blueberry Belle' vertical bar fencing to match existing with an entrance from the car park.
- That a 1.2m wide path be installed in 'Path Bond' from the car park to far end of the Skateboard Park at cost of £1794.
- That the remainder of the area be turfed. Clerk to obtain the best price.
Works to be funded from skateboard park budget, County Councillor Empowerment monies and reserves.

15/61. **COMMITTEES**

15/61.1. **Planning Committee held on 10th March 2015.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 10th March 2015 be received and adopted.

15/61.2. **Policy and Resources Committee held on 10th March 2015.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 10th March 2015 be received and adopted.

Recommendation.

It was confirmed that the primary use of the 'Civic Events budget was for the Civic Service. It would only be civic events organised by this Town Council.

RESOLVED:

That the Mayors Allowance is increased by RPI each year and that a new budget is set for Civic Events at £400 with effect 1st April 2015.

15/61.3. **Events Committee held on 16th March 2015.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Events Committee held on 16th March 2015 be receive and adopted

Recommendation

RESOLVED:

That the budget for the Christmas Sparkle is increased to £4000.

15/62. **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

The Town Clerk reported that the period of consultation under regulation 14 had just closed. There were in the region of 40 responses from residents and some from statutory agencies.

15/63. **HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT**

This item was deferred as the plan for the second option for the High Street in the region of the bus stop and possible additional on street parking was not available.

15/64. **BUSINESS/FORWARD PLAN**

RESOLVED:

That the plan as drafted be adopted. It was noted this was a living document and would be subject to regular reviews.

15/65. **TWINNING**

An image of the proposed double sided coin had been circulated.

RESOLVED:

That 50 coins as per the sample image be purchased at a cost of £5.76 each plus delivery and VAT. Total £303.80. Orders would be taken for Councillors to purchase 1 at cost if they wished.

15/66. **PRAVERS AT MEETINGS**

A copy of an email had been circulated questioning the including of prayers at the start of meetings.

RESOLVED:

That the following response be agreed and sent:-

‘That whilst they still have the General Power of Competence the Town Council will continue to uphold the tradition of having prayers at the start of meetings in February, May, August and November. They respect the fact that not everyone may agree with this and it is not mandatory to take part. As is the practice at other Councils there is the opportunity for people to join the meeting after prayers if they so wish. The Council also noted that the Local Government (Religious etc. Observances) Act 2015 received Royal Assent on 26th March 2015.’

15/67. **SKATEBOARD PARK**

15/67.1. **To discuss strategies to deal with issues about the Skateboard Park.**

RESOLVED:

That the Skateboard working party reconvenes to look at the issues and possible solutions. The view from the police on locking the car park to be taken into account.

15/67.2. **To agree a response to an email received re the Skateboard Park.**

RESOLVED:

That the Town Council note the email and concerns raised, and the Town Clerk to send a response on behalf of the Council.

15/68. **LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME**

A copy of the application form had been circulated to Councillors.

15/68.1. **To confirm that the Council publishes online the items as detailed in the report.**

RESOLVED:

That the Council confirms it publishes online the items as required and detailed in the application form.

15/68.2. **To confirm that the Council has the items as detailed in the report.**

RESOLVED:

That the Council confirms it has the documents and items as required and detailed in the application form.

15/69. **ADOPT A KIOSK**

A letter had been received from BT about the possible adoption of a BT Telephone Kiosk.

RESOLVED:

That the Council not proceed with the adoption of a telephone kiosk as it would mean the disconnection of the phone.

15/70. **IRTHLINGBOROUGH MEADOWS**

Details had been received about the proposed Creation Agreement at Irthlingborough Meadows.

RESOLVED:

That the Council have no objections to the proposals. The formal response to point out that following the Parish Boundary review more of the site now falls in the parish of

Irthlingborough.

15/71. **STREETLIGHTING**

A report had been circulated outlining the cost for upgrading the lights in the Market Square to heritage lights when the planned works to upgrade lights in the area was being undertaken by Balfour Beatty. 7 lights would be needed to ensure adequate lights. Cost has also been obtained to include electric fittings to the lights along High St, Market Square and College Street as this would enable then to power Christmas lights in the future. Higham Ferrers Tourism had agreed to donate £2000 to the project.

Alternative quotes had not been obtained as the works were specialist and had to be undertaken as part of the PFI agreement with Northamptonshire County Council. The Town Council were funding the difference between a standard light and a Heritage light.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Council agree to fund the following from the Higham Ferrers Improvement Reserve:-

- 7 Heritage Lights in the Market Square - £12000
- Electrical fixing such as sockets, timers and circuit breakers (to power festive lights) to 15 Lights at cost of £150 = £2250
- Contribute to the maintenance and energy cost of heritage lights - £480 pa (index linked)

15/72. **DEFIBRILLATOR**

RESOLVED:

That the item be deferred until a decision is made on whether it can be located on the wall of Higham Ferrers Surgery.

15/73. **DUCHY OF LANCASTER**

RESOLVED:

That arrangement be made for a meeting in early June with the representative from the Duchy of Lancaster.

15/74. **INVESTMENTS**

RESOLVED:

That the Council invest £75000 with The Local Authorities' Property Fund. Authorised signatories to be two Councillors.

15/75. **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 and sensitive nature of the following item of business, the Press and the Public be excluded from the meeting.

15/76. **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Personnel Committee held on 17th March 2015 be received and adopted.

Recommendation:

RESOLVED:

- That the role of Town Clerk be regraded as LC3 SCP 39 -42.
- That a revised contract be signed with Sandra Mitcham with a starting grade of SCP 39 with effect from 1st April 2015.

15/77. **CCTV**

A report had been circulated outlining the cost of upgrading the CCTV system and moving the monitoring to Daventry. Annual monitoring cost would be cheaper than the current provider. As this was a specialist service a further quote was not obtained.

RESOLVED:

- That the Council agree to move monitoring and recording of CCTV to Daventry for 3 years under the system supplied by Crime Secure Ltd at cost of £14000 pa.
- That an additional camera at Westfield Terrace be included at a cost of £1485. This was funded by S106 monies.
- Incorporate the cameras at Saffron Road Recreation Ground into the system - £3950.
- Upgrade 6 cameras to digital LED cameras - £1198 per camera.
- 90 days notice be given to the current provider to move the service.

This would be funded by the CCTV budget and S106 monies held for CCTV provision.

15/78. **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.

15/79. **ITEMS TO REPORT.**

Mayor

Date

