

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HIGHAM FERRERS
TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 25TH JUNE 2024 AT 7.30PM
AT THE TOWN HALL

PRESENT:

	The Mayor (Councillor V K Paul)	
	The Deputy Mayor (Councillor G Salmon)	
Councillor Mrs P H Whiting		Councillor H L Jackson
Councillor B Spencer		Councillor A M T Reading
Councillor Mrs C Reavey		Councillor S Prosser
Councillor C O'Rourke		
Miss Alicia Schofield (Town Clerk)		David Wicks (Mayor's Sergeant)
Mrs Emily Arrow (Assistant Clerk)		

2 members of the public

24/647. **APOLOGIES**

Cllr P McCann, Cllr Mrs J Bone, Cllr B Prigmore, Cllr Mrs A Gardner, Cllr G Kelly, Cllr N Brown, Cllr P Tomas

24/648. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Other Interests

Cllr H L Jackson – as a member of the Unitary Council he will consider all matters at Unitary level taking into account all relevant evidence and representations at the Unitary tier. Therefore, he cannot be bound in any way by any view expressed in the parish tier or by the decisions of this Council.

24/649. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 28th May 2024 be signed by the Mayor as being a true and correct record.

24/650. **PUBLIC FORUM**

None.

24/651. **MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported attendance at the following events: -

- 1st June – Raunds Mayors Show.
- 6th June – Beacon lighting for the D-Day 80th Anniversary on the Market Square.
- 8th June - D-Day Service of Commemoration on behalf of RBL Northamptonshire.
- 9th June – Mayor's Green Trail Day.
- 13th June – Afternoon tea with Lord Lieutenant at Rockingham Castle.
- 15th June – Northants Veterans Breakfast Club BBQ at Rushden Athletic Club.
- 19th June – Rotary of Rushden AGM.
- 23rd June – Beat Route Radio interview followed by NNC's Civic Service with Cllr Lora Lawman.

24/652. **TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**
Police Report

Link to crimes for April 2024.

[Local Crime Information for Market Square, Higham Ferrers, Rushden, NN10 8BT - April 2024 \(streetcheck.co.uk\)](https://streetcheck.co.uk)

Please also see attached spreadsheet that tracks this months' crimes against previous months.

65 crimes for the month of April: -

- Anti-social Behaviour - 12
- Criminal Damage / Arson – 1
- Other theft - 4
- Possession of weapons - 2
- Public Order – 5
- Robbery - 1
- Shoplifting – 25
- Vehicle crime -1
- Violence / Sexual offences - 14

RESOLVED:

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

24/653. **QUESTIONS**

None.

24/654. **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES**

None.

24/655. **REPORTS FROM UNITARY COUNCILLORS**

A report had not yet been received but will be circulated upon receipt.

24/656. **FINANCE**

24/656.1. **To approve accounts for payment as at 25th June 2024**

RESOLVED:

That the accounts for payment of £39,975.31 as at 25th June 2024 be approved for payment.

24/656.2. **To approve the bank account reconciliation as at 31st May 2024**

RESOLVED:

That the bank account reconciliation as at 31st May 2024 be signed by the Mayor after being checked by Cllr Mrs P H Whiting.

24/656.3. **To receive and note the budget report as at 31st May 2024**

RESOLVED:

That the budget report as at 31st May 2024 is received and noted.

24/656.4. **To approve the following expenditure:-**

RESOLVED:

That a replacement desktop device including supply and remote set up is purchased for the Administration and Communication officer at a cost of ££763.50..

24/657. **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

To receive and adopt the minutes of the following committees: -

24/657.1. **Planning and Development Committee held on 11th June 2024**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on the 11th June 2024 be received and adopted.

24/657.2. **Policy and Resources Committee held on 11th June 2024**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 11th June 2024 be received and adopted.

(i) **REVIEW OF POLICIES**

RESOLVED:

That the following policies be reviewed and approved without change:-

- Bad Debts Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Leader Protocol
- Mayor's Handbook
- Dignity at Work – Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Grievance Policy
- Lone Worker Policy
- Recording of Delegated Decisions

(ii) **FLAGSTONE CASH DEPOSIT PLATFORM**

RESOLVED:

That following review of the performance of the Flagstone cash deposit platform and the bank and building society account investments, that £100,000 be withdrawn from the Unity Trust Bank and placed on instant access through the Flagstone cash deposit platform.

24/658. **HERITAGE DAY 2024**

24/658.1. **RESOLVED:**

That the date for Heritage Day be confirmed as Sunday 22nd September and the framework for the day be in keeping with the format of previous years.

24/658.2. **RESOLVED:**

That the event detail is to be finalised by the Town Clerk in conjunction with Rushden Town Council.

24/658.3. **RESOLVED:**

That authority is delegated to the Town Clerk to incur expenditure for Heritage Day within a budget of £2500 in line with funding confirmed from Rushden Lakes Savills.

24/659. **RENEWAL LEASE FOR THE BOWLS PAVILION**

RESOLVED:

That the renewal lease for the Bowls Pavilion with Higham Ferrers Bowls Club be sealed.

24/660. **COMMUNITY LIBRARY AND WELLBEING HUB**

The Clerk advised the project kick started in January when the Community Connector commenced her employment at 15 hours per week. The soft opening was 6th February with formal opening by the Mayor 5th March. The Community Connector outlined the opening times and the under 5's and wellbeing sessions in place. An update was given regarding volunteer recruitment and onboarding. A promotional campaign is underway. Councillors were invited to consider means of promotion and were encouraged to directly assist with promotion by word of mouth.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation from the Community Connector and the Town Clerk regarding the first 6 months of the Community Library and Wellbeing Hub project be received.

- 24/661. **STREET NAMING PROJECT, LAND TO THE WEST OF THE FERRERS SCHOOL**
RESOLVED:
That a budget of £600 and some office support is approved for a street naming project for the 10 new roads on the housing estate off the A6-A5001 roundabout and an exhibition supporting the names of the individuals chosen.
- 24/662. **PUBLIC TOILET REFURBISHMENT**
RESOLVED:
That a working party is established to assist with the delivery of the project to refurbish the public toilets. That the working party consists of Cllr B Spencer, Cllr H L Jackson and Cllr G Salmon. All councillors not in attendance are to be contacted to ask if they would like to be on the working party. If no other councillors come forward, Cllr Mrs P H Whiting will also join the working party.
- 24/663. **5 AND 5A COLLEGE STREET WINDOW REPLACEMENT**
RESOLVED:
That the council proceeds with the full replacement of the timber windows on both the ground and first floors. That quote 1 is accepted at a cost of £31,804.76 for acoya windows with a 50 year guarantee, noting that it is not the lowest price and is accepted because of the preference to use acoya. Cost to be met from EMR Asset Maintenance / Refurbishment.
- 24/664. **ELECTRICITY AND GAS CONTRACTS**
RESOLVED:
That the Clerk be delegated authority to enter council into 2 year fixed term contracts, commencing 1st February 2025, for the supply of electricity and gas for the council buildings and facilities in line with the preferred option presented at the meeting. That as per the adopted Sustainability Policy the contracts entered are for renewable energy supply.
- 24/665. **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 Public be excluded from the meeting for the next item.
- 24/666. **INSURANCE CLAIM, POTENTIAL TREE DAMAGE TO A RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY**
RESOLVED:
That this matter is deferred until a response has been received from the insurance company.
- 24/667. **REOPEN MEETING TO PUBLIC AND PRESS**
RESOLVED:
That, the confidential business having been concluded, the Press and Public be readmitted to the meeting.
- 24/668. **ITEMS TO REPORT**
None.

Mayor

Date