

MINUTES OF A STATUTORY MEETING OF HIGHAM FERRERS
TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 27TH AUGUST 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 C O'Rourke		Councillor B Spencer
Councillor Mrs C Reavey		Councillor A M T Reading
Councillor B Prigmore		Councillor N Brown
Councillor G Kelly		
Miss Alicia Schofield (Town Clerk)		David Wicks (Mayor's Sergeant)
Mrs Emily Arrow (Assistant Clerk)		

4 members of the public

24/688.

PRAYERS

The meeting was opened with prayers led by Mother Louise Bishop.

24/689.

APOLOGIES

Cllr P McCann, Cllr P Tomas, Cllr Mrs J Bone, Cllr Mrs A Gardner, Cllr S Prosser

24/690.

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.

Cllr H L Jackson – item 13 - Cllr Jackson is a member of the Tourism group who have commented on this item.

Cllr B Prigmore – item 19 – Operates the Book Exchange and is a regular user of the pavilion.

24/691.

MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 30th July 2024 be signed by the Mayor as being a true and correct record

24/692.

PUBLIC FORUM

A member of the public spoke in support of the book exchange that operates out of the Sports Pavilion. They expressed an interest in knowing more about the plans being considered for the renovation of the building and what this will mean for the future of the book exchange. The Clerk offered an appointment to review the plans.

24/693.

MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported from the following engagements in July and August:-

- 7th July – NMPAT performance and reception
- 12th July – Nene Valley District Scouts AGM
- 13th July – The Shrubbery's Strawberry Fayre
- 13th July – Welcomed the visitors from our twinned town of Hachenburg to

Higham Ferrers

- 13th July - Party in the Park in Rushden
- 14th July – Hosted a reception for the Hachenburg guests and the Twinning Association.
- 14th July – Attended a BBQ lunch held at Chichele College for the Hachenburg guests.
- 25th July – Led a council team in croquet playing for a cup in memory of Margaret Tuffnail
- 27th July – Attended the monthly Farmers Market
- 2nd August – Attended the Higham Ferrers Business Forum
- 18th August – Brackley Car Show
- 22nd August – Tourism luncheon and film showing
- 22nd August – Led the council team in a second round of croquet at Chichele College

24/694.

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

Police Report

Link to crimes for June 2024.

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

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

48 crimes for the month of June: -

- Anti-social Behaviour - 11
- Burglary -1
- Criminal Damage / Arson – 7
- Drugs – 1
- Other theft - 4
- Public Order – 2
- Shoplifting – 2
- Vehicle crime -1
- Violence / Sexual offences – 15
- Other crime -2
- Possession of weapons -1

Grant Funding

£5780 received from Locality to support consultancy costs for the Neighbourhood Plan Review.

Voi Scooters

The key statistics for voi scooters has been circulated. The statistics are for the whole of Northamptonshire.

Community Governance Review Update from North Northamptonshire Council

Council expressed an interest in undertaking the Community Governance Review of the town council arrangement. NNC have produced a draft timetable for the review which proposes consultation commencing in 2025 with each consultation period lasting for around 12 weeks. It is envisaged the review will be complete by 2026. The town council has already established a working party in readiness for the review.

Assistance required at Heritage Day and Farmers' Market.

Help was sought from councillor with the manning of the town council gazebo at both events. Promotion to focus on the Town App and the Community Library and Wellbeing Hub.

RESOLVED:

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

24/695.

QUESTIONS

None.

24/696.

REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES

None.

24/697.

REPORTS FROM UNITARY COUNCILLORS

A report was circulated to councillors.

24/698.

FINANCE

24/698.1.

To approve accounts for payment as at 27th August 2024

RESOLVED:

That the accounts for payment of £22,100.05 as at 27th August 2024 be approved for payment.

24/698.2.

To approve the bank account reconciliation as at 31st July 2024

RESOLVED:

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

24/698.3.

To receive and note the budget report as at 31st July 2024

RESOLVED:

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

24/698.4.

To approve the following expenditure:-

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Assistant Clerk attend the SLCC 2 day National Training Conference at a cost of £585 be approved.
- (ii) That additional fencing works to supplement replacement fencing work to the boundary of the footpath at Higham Heights be approved at a cost of £1185.
- (iii) That 5 sets of Christmas lights sets for the Christmas Tree and 5 sets of Christmas lights for the Market Square trees be purchased at a cost of £565.

24/699.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

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

24/699.1.

Planning and Development Committee held on the 13th August 2024

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on the 13th August 2024 be received and adopted.

24/699.2.

Policy and Resources Committee held on the 13th August 2024

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 13th August 2024 be received and adopted.

RESOLVED:

24/699.2.1

REVIEW OF POLICIES

(i)

Flag Flying Policy

That the Flag Flying Policy be approved with addition as follows:-

Section ‘Union Flag’

Addition to the list of when the Union may be flown:-

Last Saturday of June – Armed Forces Day (Armed Forces Day Flag)

New Section ‘Twinning Flag’

Additional section at the end of the policy as follows:

Twinning Flag

According to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government’s Plain English Guide to Flying Flags, the Council does not need consent to fly any country’s national flag.

Higham Ferrers Town Council is twinned with Hachenburg in Germany. The German national flag may be flown when Higham Ferrers receives visitors from Hachenburg.

(ii) **Media Policy**

That the Media Policy be approved subject to the removal of the words ‘where possible’ in the second sentence.

(iii) That the following policies be reviewed without change:-

Graffiti Policy.

Memorial Safety Policy.

PAT Policy

Grant Award Policy.

24/699.2.2 **FLAGSTONE CASH DEPOSIT PLATFORM**

That authority be delegated to the Clerk to move funds between the instant access accounts on the Flagstone cash deposit platform. That the Clerk will review the accounts performance at least once a month. That fund movement will be spread across the instant access accounts to best maximise interest payments, whilst placing funds in any one instant access account of no greater than £85,000 to align with the financial services compensation scheme.

24/699.2.3 **BUSINESS FORWARD PLAN**

That the ‘Mission Statement’ and the ‘Objectives’ of the Business Forward Plan be reviewed without change.

24/700. **BLUE PLAQUES**

24/700.1. **RESOLVED:**

That the council does not support the request for the supply and install of a blue plaque to 12 Market Square to honour Edward Dixon Crew. That future street naming be suggested as a more appropriate means of honour.

24/700.2. **RESOLVED:**

That the council purchase a blue plaque for 67 High Street subject to the owner installing it at their own cost and liability and subject to approval of the necessary consents.

24/701. **COMMUNITY LIBRARY AND WELLBEING HUB, VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT**

24/701.1. To support the use of volunteers to carry out Community Library and Wellbeing Hub administrative work to assist the Community Connector

RESOLVED:

That the agenda item be taken to Personnel Committee for consideration.

24/701.2. To incur expenditure for a new email address,

communityhub@highamferrers-tc.gov.uk

and for a Microsoft 365 business premium account at a cost of £18.10 per month.

RESOLVED:

That this agenda item be taken to Personnel Committee for consideration.

- 24/702. **LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME**
RESOLVED:
That the council submits an application for the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Local Council Award Scheme Foundation Level.
- 24/703. **BLEED KIT CABINET, SPORTS PAVILION**
RESOLVED:
That the council supports the proposal to site the bleed kit cabinet somewhere in the vicinity of the town centre. That discussions are held with the requester with regard to the most suitable location for the cabinet.
- 24/704. **CHRISTMAS SPARKLE WORKING PARTY**
RESOLVED:
That the minutes of the Christmas Sparkle working party meeting held on the 19th August 2024 be received and noted.
- 24/705. **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW STEERING GROUP**
RESOLVED:
That the minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Review Steering Group meeting on the 12th August 2024 be received and noted.
- 24/706. **PAVILION WORKING PARTY**
24/706.1. **RESOLVED:**
That the minutes of the Pavilion Working Party meeting held on the 30th July 2024 be received and noted.
- 24/706.2. **RESOLVED:**
That the minutes of the Pavilion Working Party meeting held on the 20th August 2024 be received and noted.
- (i) **RESOLVED:**
That a budget of £2000 be agreed for instruction of a surveyor for budget costings on 2 of the 3 options presented by Sidey Design.
1. Renovation within existing footprint, viewing area in roof to be removed, roof pitch to remain as existing. Car parking, external layout and cladding as presented on the plans.
 2. Renovation within existing footprint but with new steeper roof pitch to create provision for first floor space. Car parking, external layout and cladding as presented on the plans.
- 24/707. **PUBLIC TOILETS WORKING PARTY**
RESOLVED:
That the minutes of the Public Toilets working party meeting held on the 25th July 2024 be received and noted.
- 24/708. **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.
- 24/709. **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**
RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on the 20th August 2024 be received and adopted.

24/710. **REOPEN MEETING TO PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED:

That, the confidential business having been concluded, the Press and Public be readmitted to the meeting.

24/711. **ITEMS TO REPORT**

None.

Mayor

Date