

RAUNDS TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes: 26 April 2016: Start Time 7.30pm.

PRESENT

Cllr L Wilkes (Chair), Cllr H Howell, Cllr R Beattie.

IN ATTENDANCE

Ms Kate Houlihan, Town Clerk (Minutes)
Miss Joanne Coduri, Assistant to the Clerk

703.15 To Receive Apologies For Absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr D Hughes and Cllr R Levell

704.15 Notification of requests from members of the public to address the meeting in compliance with adopted protocol.

None received

705.15 Notification of members questions in compliance with the council's standing orders.

None received

706.15 Declarations of Interest.

COUNCILLORS ARE REMINDED THAT IF THEY HAVE EITHER A DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST OR OTHER INTEREST IN ANY ITEM THEN THEY SHOULD DECLARE THE INTEREST AND LEAVE THE MEETING FOR THAT ITEM
None received

707.15 Minutes: Confirm the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held 15 March 2016 (copy herewith).

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held 15 March 2016 be confirmed as a true record.

708.15 To receive a progress report on P&R projects.

Members of the committee considered the report of the clerk as shown in appendix 1. It was agreed by all that it was useful to have this presented to each meeting.

RESOLVED to receive and note the report.

709.15 Formation of a Community Interest Company: To receive a report on the formation of a community interest company.

This item was deferred as the clerk was awaiting a written report from LGSS law.

Commented [C1]: I have comments from the councils solicitor to be considered by P&R on the draft articles we prepared.

710.15 Future High Street Summit: To receive a report on the recent seminar attended by Cllr R Levell and the Town Clerk.

Members received the report of the clerk as shown in appendix 2. It was agreed by all that the information gained from the seminar will have a practical application with all the work the council are trying to do to improve the town centre.

Commented [C2]: Richard and I attended an excellent seminar, Footfall, footfall, footfall!

It was agreed that the HSUK2020 model would have a practical application when considering future improvements to Brook Street.

RESOLVED to receive and note the report and that the HSUK2020 model be used when assessing possible improvements to Brook Street.

711.15 Raunds Middle Co-op:

- a. To receive a verbal update on quotations for the refit of the Raunds middle coop.

The clerk gave a verbal update on quotations received to date. Both quotations received are in excess of £300,000. A further quotation is being sought.

RESOLVED to note the report.

- b. To receive details of grant funding opportunities.

This item was deferred until the final quotations had been received.

Commented [C3]: I'll chase Chris Gaskell ahead of the meeting and if needs be we could pull this item on the basis of quotes not received if any information is too commercially sensitive to put in public domain at that time.

712.15 Flag Flying Policy

- a. To consider correspondence regarding flying of the Red Ensign on Merchant Navy Day.

Members considered correspondence from Councillor Reading of Higham Ferrers Town Council as shown in appendix 3 and it was...

RESOLVED to recommend to the Full Council that Raunds Town Council recognise Merchant Navy Day on 3rd September 2016 and in subsequent years by the flying of the red Ensign.

- b. To review the council's flag flying policy

Members reviewed the Flag Flying Policy and amendments were made as shown in appendix 4.

RESOLVED to recommend to the Full Council that the flag flying policy be amended as shown in appendix 4.

Commented [C4]: Self-explanatory we have had a request from a councillor at Higham that all councils support Navy Day by flying the flag.

713.15 Review of Communication Plan: To review the council's communication plan and to consider any revisions.

Members reviewed the communication plan as shown in appendix 5.

It was noted that the town council had been successful in gaining press coverage in the local newspapers: Nene Valley News, Northants Evening Telegraph and the Reporter.

Members recorded their thanks to Assistant to the clerk Emma Williams, who had very successfully increased the council's presence on social media.

Commented [C5]: I thought it would be good to record our success- on social media-we've increased our twitter followers by nearly 200 in the last year, revamped our facebook pages, We can also consider if there are any items that we wish to add / revise/delete from the plan.

It was agreed that advertising of Saxon Hall would be split between the Raunds Round Up and The Reporter.

RESOLVED to note the report.

714.15 Land register: To consider a verbal report on site visits to land on the West side of Windmill Grove, land to the rear of Rotton Row and open space at De Ferneus Drive.

Members considered the open spaces against the town council policy on holding land.

RESOLVED that...

- a) **All land owned by the town council is assessed for its amenity value.**
- b) **If the land has no amenity value the council should consider disposal. Where land is to be disposed of it maybe through:**
 - (i) **The sale of land to local residents (e.g garden extension)**
 - (ii) **Gifting or leasing the land to another organisation**
 - (iii) **The sale or lease of the land for commercial purposes**

It was considered that each parcel of land:

- land on the West side of Windmill Grove,
- land to the rear of Rotton Row
- and open space at De Ferneus Drive.

All had amenity value. Each parcel of land supported the council objective of greening the town and ensuring that the most urban areas were pleasant places to live.

715.15 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The press and public will be excluded from Agenda item 716.15 due to the confidential (commercially sensitive) nature of the business under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 S.1 (sub section 2)

RESOLVED to exclude the public and press.

716.15 Land register: To consider valuations for town council land.

Members considered the valuation report and it was...

RESOLVED to ask that the parcels of land be re valued on a commercial basis rather than just as amenity land.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 8.32pm

Approved: (Town Mayor)

Meeting date: 12 April 2016..... (Council)

Approved: (Chairman)

Meeting date: (Committee)

Appendix 1: Progress Report

Minute	Resolution	Action/Progress	Complete	Notes
75.15	Rebonds Middle Co-op creation of a business plan			existing funding opportunities considered
76.15	Appointment of councillor champions	Councillors appointed as champions for various sectors	✓	
79.15	Asset management plans		✓	Plans in place for Town Hall and Saxon Hall
81.15	Asset management plans	Approved by council	✓	
109.15	preparation of a business plan		✓	
109.15	Town Hall Lease review		✓	Completed/stowed by rate review process
200.15	Prepare a communication strategy and communications plan	Approved by council	✓	
203.15	Create a register of town Town Council Land and assess against policy			Register prepared. Assessment of land on-going
204.15	NALC campaign for public toilets to be exempt from business rates		✓	Letter sent supporting removal of public toilets from business rates regime
274.15	Review of internal audit processes	Approved by council	✓	
275.15	Budget 2016/17	Approved by council	✓	
277.15	Standing Orders - review of standing orders	Approved by council	✓	
278.15	The use of the town hall as a wedding venue		✓	
353.15	Review of Mayors Handbook		✓	
354.15	Money Handling Policy		✓	
355.15	Open spaces charging policy			Bench marking exercise with other local sites to be completed
358.15	Business Rates	In hands of valuation office/ENC		Review led by valuation office
419.15	Formation of a community interest company			Draft articles prepared
508.15	Risk Assessment Management		✓	
510.15	Grant Awarding policy		✓	Completed, simplified and made more accessible to groups
512.15	Agenda Management		✓	
560.15	Lettings at the Hall, Rounds	Refurbishment of council chamber / licensed as wedding venue	✓	
570.15	Brooke Street Rounds	Assessment to improve the look of Brooke Street		
571.15	Policy and Resources Objectives 2016/17	Approved by council	✓	Also created priorities for other committees by linking objectives to business plan
574.15	Annual Review of Insurance	Completed - savings made by ensuring insured values of building linked to valuations	✓	
648.15	Land from Hogg's Dyke to Meadow Lane	Consultation approved by council		Consultation to run until the end of June
651.15	Lettings and Promotion of the Hall/Saxon Hall as a wedding venue	Promotional plan approved by council to be implemented		
	Preparation of case study on E1596		✓	Used to lobby T. Purgova MP, Northants CALC, and successfully used in planning responses

Appendix 2: Future High Street Summit

<p>Summary: A report on: Future High Street Summit 2016</p>	
<p>Attachments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) High street good practice links (BRC) 2) Graph showing growing and declining sectors on the high street (ACS) 3) HSUK 2020 model factors influencing vitality and viability 	
<p>1.0</p>	<p>Overview</p> <p>The "Future High Street Summit" was attended by Cllr Richard Levell and the Town Clerk.</p> <p>The event aimed to give local councils, town centre managers and business a clear understanding of the current economic situation for high streets, as well as presenting case studies and ideas for improving the high street.</p> <p>The speakers at the event were of a high calibre, overall the event was well worth attending.</p>
<p>2.0</p>	<p>Summary of key presentations:</p>
<p>2.1</p>	<p>Helen Dickinson: Director General of the British Retail Consortium.</p> <p>Spoke about the Great British High street competition. The competition highlights the diversity in what makes a good high street. A number of very small towns enter and gain good publicity from the competition.</p> <p>Helen also signposted people to a number of good practice guides. (links to which are shown in attachment 1)</p>

2.2	<p>Nigel Wilcox: Executive Director, Institute of Economic Development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacancy rates are currently in decline, however some harder to let units may remain vacant forever. • Discount retailers are leading the recovery in the high street. • The introduction of local authority business rate retention is likely to lead local authorities being proactive in seeking retail development. • Changes to the largest retail superstores is likely to create a new threat to the high street (E.g. Tesco's agreement with Arcadia group to have Dorothy Perkins, Sock Shops and Claire's Accessories concessions in store.)
2.3	<p>Diana Wehrle: Springboard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diana spoke about the continuing importance of footfall. Whilst footfall has declined on the high street it is still the key driver in increasing retail sales. • Local authorities have a place to play in increasing footfall, events, promotion etc. • There is potential to increase footfall in the early evening (5pm-8pm) • Convergence is a key trend; the book shop with a coffee bar, the café with a live band. • On-line sales are growing, but retail sales still account for around 85% of all sales.
2.4	<p>James Lowman: Chief Executive, Association of Convenience retailers,</p> <p>Research by the ACS had identified that the following stores had the most positive impact on the local economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post office • Convenience stores • Pharmacies • Coffee Shops • Specialist food shops • Restaurants • Pubs • Banks • Takeaway <p>The three most wanted services were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist food shops • Banks • Post offices <p>He shared a graph showing declining and growing retail sectors (see attachment 2)</p>
2.5	<p>Cathy Parker: Professor of Place Management, Manchester Metropolitan University.</p> <p>Identified three types of high streets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparison town: wide retail choice, strong retail anchors, high spike in sales at Christmas. • Speciality towns: attract visitors, may have heritage anchors, longer dwell time, promote themselves well, sales are driven by events, festivals and are seasonal. • Convenience or community towns: focused on local community offer, sales remain steady throughout the year. <p>Many community towns aspire to be speciality towns, unfortunately no road map was given as to how to move from a to b!</p> <p>Prof Parker identified factors that influence vitality and viability of town centres, these factors were broken down into categories of those that are changeable and those that are more difficult to address. (Attachment 3: HSUK 2020 model)</p>
2.6	<p>Professor Kim Cassidy Nottingham Trent University</p> <p>Prof Cassidy spoke about how retailers are increasingly offering "theatre" as part of the retail experience. This could be in the form of talks, events, debates but something the customer can be involved in. Kim then gave a detailed analysis of theatrical styles and how these can be interpreted in a retail environment! Whilst an engaging speaker, the reality of trying to incorporate political realism or comedy of the absurd into a small flower shop may be a stretch too far!.....</p>

	However the key message was of involving the customer and make shopping an experience. E.g. the bakery that offers cookery classes, the café where you can make your own pizza.
2.7	Parking! None of the speakers focused on this issue, but it seemed impossible to spend the day at a high street conference without parking being raised on many many occasions. Unfortunately no-one was able to offer a solution of how much parking you need or where it should be!
3.0	Conclusions A useful day with a number of factors for the town council to consider in moving forward in work to revitalise the town centre.

Appendix 3: Email from Cllr Reading, Higham Ferrers Town Council

On Wed, 6 Apr 2016 11:09:08 +0100, Anthony Reading wrote:

From: Councillor Anthony Reading, Higham Ferrers Town Council

At the Higham Ferrers Town Council Meeting on February 23rd 2016 I proposed the following motion "That Merchant Navy Day, 3rd September, be recognised by this council by the flying of a Red Ensign outside the Town Hall this year and subsequent years". The motion was passed unanimously.

This follows a successful campaign led by Seafarers UK last year to get the Red Ensign flown by as many public and private bodies as possible and after hundreds councils responded Seafarers UK have formerly requested the Government to make September 3rd one of the recognised "flag flying" days. As we all know Government moves slowly and I would like to see local Councils make their own decisions on this so I'm asking the Councils near to Higham Ferrers to consider debating and voting on a motion similar to the one above. As many of you will have contacts in other Councils it would be great for this to be sent on and let's see if we can't start our own campaign ahead of any Government decision.
regards

Anthony Reading

Notes:

1. Seafarers UK was previously the King George's Fund for Sailors.
2. Seafarers UK was supported in this campaign in 2015 by the Merchant Navy Association.
3. 3rd September was adopted as Merchant Navy Day in 2000.
4. 3rd September 1939 was the first day of World War 2.
5. The SS *Athenia* was torpedoed at 1940hrs 3rd September 1939 becoming the first UK vessel loss of the Second World War. 128 civilians and crew lost their lives as a result. The attack took place less than 9 hours after declaration of war.
6. Merchant Navy Day is also formally observed in Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Appendix 4: Flag Flying Policy as amended:



RAUNDS TOWN COUNCIL

Council Offices, The Hall, Raunds, Wellingborough, Northampton. NN9 6LT

Telephone: (01933) 622 087, Fax: (01933) 622 622

E-mail:- info@raunds-tc.gov.uk, Website: www.raunds-tc.gov.uk

Flag Flying Policy

Town Flag

The Town Flag shall be flown from the town flagpole, at full mast, at all times unless:

- The Union flag should be flown
- The Cross of St. George should be flown
- The Armed Forces Day Flag should be flown
- The flag should be flown half-mast (see below)
- The flag may sustain damage (storm, Christmas Tree etc).

The Town Flag shall be flown half mast in the following circumstances:

- On the death of present or former Town Councillors.
- On the death of present or former District or County Councillors representing the town.
- On any other occasion where a simple majority of the Members of the Council agree and where this has been first indicated to the Clerk.

The period the Town Flag will fly half mast shall be:

- For past or present councillors: a period of seven days or until the day following the funeral (**whichever period is the greater sooner**).
- On any other occasion: for a number of days not exceeding seven, determined by a simple majority of Members of the Council.

However, the period of flying shall be reduced where the period coincides with the flying of the Union Flag (see below).

Union Flag

The Union flag will be flown to mark the following occasions:

- 6 February Her Majesty's Accession
- 21 April Birthday of Her Majesty
- 2 June Coronation Day
- 15 June Official celebration of Her Majesty's Birthday
- 2nd Sunday November Remembrance Sunday
- 11 November Remembrance Day (if different)
- 20 November Her Majesty's Wedding Day

The flying of the Union Flag shall take precedence over all other flags.

The Union Flag shall be flown half-mast on the death of a Member of the Royal Family and, in accordance with guidance issued by the Government, for any other public dignitary.

Commonwealth Day

Commonwealth Day flag will be flown on the 2nd Monday March

St Georges Cross Flag

St Georges Cross flag will be flown annually on the 23 April

Armed Forces Flag

Armed Forces Day flag will be flown on the last Saturday in June.

Merchant Navy Day

The Red Ensign will be flown on the 3rd September

Notes to the policy:

1. Half-mast means the flag is flown two-thirds of the way up the flagpole with at least the height of the flag between the top of the flag and the top of the flag pole.
2. The Union Flag must be flown the correct way up. This is with the wider diagonal white stripe above the red diagonal stripe in the half nearest to the flag pole. The wider diagonal white stripe should be above the red diagonal stripe at the top left hand side of the Flag nearest the flag pole.
3. It is unlawful to fly or use a flag of the arms of any local authority save on sites or premises occupied by that authority.

Re-Written & Adopted: November 2014.
To be reviewed bi-annually.

Reviewed April 2016

Appendix 5: Communication Plan:

Primary Audience	Communication Objectives	Channel	Timing
Local Residents. Business. Other local authorities. Other town council. partners	To inform stakeholders of town council responses to all consultations that affect the town and its residents. (Examples may include Planning Applications, Planning Policy, Policing and other matters)	Responses to planning applications are recorded in published minutes Responses to significant or applications will be published in minutes ,on the website and on social media. Press releases will be created for the most significant consultations	Monthly Immediate (as required)
Local	To inform stakeholders of		

Residents. Business. Other local authorities. Other town council. partners	the town councils successes and work in lobbying other tiers of government and partner organisations on issues that affect Raunds.	Success in lobbying will be published in council minutes and social media where significant	Immediate as required.
Local Residents. Business. Other local authorities. Other town council partners	To publicise excellent standards of governance on achieving the gold standard in the Local Council Award Scheme by October 2016	Press release Social Media/website Branding including quality council logo on letterheads and website.	On achieving quality status
Local Residents. Business. Other local authorities. Other town council. partners	To ensure that staff are well trained and effective through the use of annual staff appraisals and development programme	Training achievements e.g. external courses will be published in council minutes. In exceptional circumstances e.g. if staff won an award then this may be published on council website and social media and through press release	Qtly through personnel minutes.
Local Residents. Business. Other local authorities. Other town council. partners	To work with partners to reprint the Heritage Sites leaflet by the end of 2016	Hard copies to be distributed through library and local businesses, town council offices and Saxon Hall. Publication of the leaflet will be promoted through social media, website and press release	On publication of the leaflet
Local residents	To raise the profile of the office of Mayor by	All events attended will be recorded on the town	Immediate

Businesses	ensuring that 100% of events attended are recorded on the town council website and social media.	council website and on social media. Press releases will be written for the Mayors own civic events.	As required
Local residents Businesses	Publicise events Town Council events held in the town.	Social media Website Printed materials Press releases	On-going campaign to be created. Press releases will be sent in a timely manner to ensure they meet publisher's deadlines.
Local Residents. Business. Other local authorities. Other town council. partners	To promote links to Stanwick lakes by ensuring appropriate signage is in place at each end of Meadow Lane by Summer 2016.	Social media Website Printed materials Press releases	Sustained campaign to promote links.
Local Residents. Business. Other local authorities. Other town council. partners	To work with Raunds History Society to create two "pop-up" museum events per annum from 2016 onwards	Social media Website Press releases	To promote the event
Business. Other local authorities. Other town council. partners	The Town Council will promote the business forum through continued use of Saxon Hall and regular attendance (100%) at the forum by council officers and members to update the forum on council matters	Promote business forum meetings via social media	7 days, 3 days 1 day before each business forum meeting.

	and to receive feedback on matters relating to the town council		
Local Residents. Business.	Promote success from participation in JAG group.	Town council minutes Press release used if a particular campaign is required.	Bi-monthly Ad-hoc
Local Residents. Business. partners	Reduce speeding in the town through participation in the Speedwatch campaign during 2015/16	Press release, social media, website	1) to encourage participation 2) after event to promote success
Potential residents Potential business	To introduce a welcome pack and CLIP for distribution to new residents by July 2016.	Press release, social media, website	1) main campaign on launch 2) repeated regularly to signposted to welcome pack.
Local residents	To ensure that regular groups, classes and clubs that meet at council owned premises are promoted through the town council website and social media.	Social media / website (Saxon Hall has its own Facebook page)	Regular tweets -pick a group per week, tweet on 3 occasions for that group.
Local residents	To promote what the council is doing to reduce dog fouling and littering in the town by the introduction of a poster campaign designed by young people and promotion of the green dog club	Press release, social media, website	Regular activity 3 times per annum create social media /poster activity on dog fouling

Local residents	Create awareness of the Neighbourhood plan and to seek support for the referendum.	Press release, social media, website	In run up to referendum on Neighbourhood plan. Sustained campaign.
Local residents Business	Works with our partners to reduce ASB and the perception of ASB particularly in young people	Social media campaign	Regular activity 3 times per annum create social media campaign – minimum of 3 tweets per week for two week period
Local residents	To work with CANDO and other adult social care providers to promote high quality care and adult services within Raunds	Social media campaign	Regular activity 3 times per annum create social media campaign- minimum of 3 tweets per week for two week period
Local residents Local residents	The Town Council will promote healthy life choices. The Town Council will lobby for good public transport links for Raunds.	Social media / websites Press release will be used if a particular campaign	
Local residents	The council will promote the refurbish all leisure areas within the lifetime of this business plan.	Social media / websites Press release	When play area is refurbished this will be promoted ad-hoc
All	The council will maximise revenues from the Town Hall and Saxon Hall through maintaining the buildings to a high standard and appropriate and innovative uses of the buildings.	Promotion of weddings agreed in separate report to Policy and Resources Committee April 2016. Social Media and print advertising will be used to promote hire of Saxon Hall.	On-going Monthly adverts in Raunds round-up
Local Residents.	To improve communications	Monthly report prepared for Raunds Round –up	Monthly

Business. Other local authorities. Other town council. partners		Also sent to Reporter	
Local Residents. Business. Other local authorities. Other town council. Partners.	Annual report	Printed/Website	Annually.