

RUSHDEN TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RUSHDEN TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT RUSHDEN HALL ON TUESDAY 21ST JANUARY 2025, COMMENCING AT 7.30 PM

Present: Cllr David Coleman, Town Mayor

Councillors: Richard Lewis Melanie Coleman Janet Pinnock
Philip Humphrey Adrian Winkle Barbara Jenney
Andy Mercer Marian Hollomon Tony Spooner
Kaye Rawlins Adrian House Gill Mercer

Clerk: Vivienne Prodger

269/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

270/25 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Cameron Clarke, Cesare Marinaro, Carol Childs, King Lawal, Paul Harley, Steven North and Philip Bettles.

Councillor Tracey Smith non- attendance.

271/25 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Full Council held on 28th October 2024 and 3rd December 2024 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

272/25 MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORT

“Good evening Councillors

Welcome all and here may I present my first Mayor’s Announcements and Report for 2025, a defining year for this Council. Christmas now seems a distant memory and I hope you have avoided the many bugs seeming to go around and to be lingering.

On with my Report. The pre-Christmas period saw numerous engagements commencing with my Mayor’s Community Carol Service at Park Baptist Church, an extremely well supported occasion despite the inclement weather on the evening. A sincere thanks to those who supported the event, to the excellent Whitefriars School Choir who came out in force and gave a lovely performance and to Reverend Mark Duggan and The Church for their support. All much appreciated.

This saw an acceleration of the build up to the Christmas Festivities. Other Concerts and Carol Services in the Town included the Whitefriars Primary School Concert, again at Park Road Baptist Church, the St. Mary’s Church Carols by Candlelight Service and the entertaining “Singing for Fun” Christmas Concert at St. Peter’s Catholic Church. We were also pleased to continue our support of Whitefriars Primary School, attending both their

Years 1 and 2 and 5 and 6 Christmas Nativity Concerts – a pleasure to witness such talented youngsters.

Further afield, our travels saw us attending Civic Carol Services supporting Huntingdon Town Council, Peterborough City Council and Bedford Borough Council. It was also uplifting, attending the Principal Grand Lodge Masonic Carol Service at Peterborough Cathedral. A surfeit of mince pies saw the waistline expanding.

This was not helped by invitations to the Royal British Legion Christmas Dinner at the Masonic Hall and the Northants Veterans Breakfast Club Christmas Dinner at the Needle and Awl, both extremely enjoyable events.

It was also lovely to attend Victoria House to present their Annual Long Service Awards and to meet many elderly local residents. I'm sure they all had a good time with an extensive buffet again in evidence.

Well, as we move into the New Year, I wish you all a healthy, happy and successful 2025. After a quiet start, The Mayoral Diary is rapidly filling, and I look forward to meeting and supporting local community groups and individuals in my few remaining months before May.

Something to look forward to and thank you to those who are supporting the event. Our fund-raising Indoor Curling Night at the Heritage Church and Halls on Saturday 1st February. Something different and it promises to be an enjoyable occasion.”

273/25 POLICING MATTERS

Cllr Hollomon reported that she will now be attending monthly meetings with PCSO Peter Littleton. This gives an opportunity to bring forward issues in the same manner we used to do at the JAG meeting. If members have any matters they would like raising can they please forward details to Marian.

Cllr Hollomon and the Town Clerk will be attending the IAG on 6th February 2025.

No further Policing matters were discussed at this time.

274/25 LEADER'S ADDRESS

“Good evening,

I would like to start by welcoming Cllr Bettles to our meeting, newly elected to Hayden Central.

Robert Churcher is a local running coach who wants to get involved with organising a summer walk. He will be sending information for an article to be circulated to gain interest.

On the walking front we are delighted to be supporting the Twilight Walk for the Brain Tumour Charity. The walk will start in Hall Park and is a well deserving charity to support.

Sadly, we have received no more information about the High Street from NNC about helping us and realistically I can't see this happening any time soon. I will continue to chase and have put forward another email to try and get a response. I am hoping the Design Code and updated Neighbourhood Plan will make them see how vital their help is.

On a positive note B&M are opening in March. The carpark has been upgraded which is also good news. Eaton Walk is coming back to life!

As you are aware the Ritz sold at auction and we await the planning application to see what it has in store. We have heard it will be retail and apartments with a sympathetic frontage. Elsewhere, development has commenced at Birches Bus Garage.

Plans are under way for VE day in May so whatever happens on May 1st our Town of Rushden will mark and honour this historical day.

Sewage repairs at Rushden Lakes are a serious concern as Anglian Water have said the issue is both serious and complex. So, if you were wondering what all the tankers are doing near the Greenway, you have your answer.

LCWIP, Local Plan and Design code.

Having attended workshops for the LCWIPs Cllr G Mercer and myself had a meeting with David Prior to express our concerns that a planned route on Wellingborough Road would have a damaging effect to the trees. They listened and we hope they have strengthened the arguments including putting forward an alternative route. This won't be happening any time soon as there is no funding.

Our consultation for the Neighbourhood Plan update and the Design Code is happening next month and it would be lovely to see the residents come down to have their say. It is good to see this project coming to an end and hopefully puts us in a better place to have projects to access funding and grants.

Finally, having received a strong letter of complaint about the issue of the High Street, I replied to the resident being totally honest about our frustrations too. I have since received a lovely reply. It really does make a difference to engage with our residents and keep them in the picture.

On that topic I have another meeting with the leader of NNC and CEO along with Cllr Winkle to discuss support for our High Street. It really isn't for lack of trying, we keep asking, hopefully soon we will be heard and receive support."

275/25 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members considered three recommendations made by the Policy and Resources Committee on 7th January 2025.

The Policy and Resources Committee recommended that Lost/Found Child Policy for events policy be accepted and signed.

RESOLVED

To accept the above recommendation from the Policy and Resources Committee meeting, 14th January 2025, the policy was duly signed by the Mayor.

The Policy and Resources Committee recommended that Safeguarding policy be accepted and signed.

RESOLVED

To accept the above recommendation from the Policy and Resources Committee meeting, 14th January 2025, this policy was duly signed by the Mayor.

The Policy and Resources Committee recommended that Policy for Dealing with Press and Media be accepted and signed.

RESOLVED

To accept the above recommendation from the Policy and Resources Committee meeting, 14th January 2025, this policy was duly signed by the Mayor.

276/25 CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Personnel Committee 18th October 2024

The Chairman gave a verbal report on the agenda items from the meeting held on 18th October 2024

Policy & Resources Committee 14th January 2025

The Chairman gave a verbal report on the agenda items from the meeting held on 14th January 2025

Planning Consultative Committee 14th January 2025

As neither the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Planning Consultative Committee was present a verbal report was not given.

277/25 BUDGET AND PRECEPT FOR 2025/2026

Members had been circulated with a draft budget for 2025/2026. Members considered the proposed draft budget and precept for 2025/2026 and the recommendation from the Policy and Resources Committee to approve these figures. This recommendation and figures were considered and it was

RESOLVED

- a) That this Budget for 2025/2026 as presented to Rushden Town Council would be approved.
- b) The amount of £1,418,890.00 to be precepted from North Northamptonshire Council for the year 2025/2026

278/25 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Leader proposed that newly elected Councillor Philip Bettles becomes a member of the Community Services Committee for 2024/2025

RESOLVED

Councillor Philip Bettles elected as a member of the Community Services Committee for 2024/2025

279/25 UNITARY COUNCIL

Cllr Melanie Coleman – Since our last Council meeting I have attended EAP Sustainable Communities, Place and Environment Scrutiny and Full Council meetings. I also attended an LCWIP meeting with Cllr Gill Mercer.

Cllr Andy Mercer – in the last few weeks I have attended Full Council, Corporate Scrutiny Committee, Planning Committee (South) and Prosperous Communities Committee meetings. I have also chaired a meeting of the Democracy and Standards Committee.

Cllr Barbara Jenney - Since our last Council meeting I have attended Health Scrutiny, Planning Committee (South), Employment Committee, and Full Council meetings.

Cllr Gill Mercer- During the last 6 weeks have attended two Executive Board meetings. I have chaired a meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Committee. I have also attend EAP Active Communities Full Council and an LCWIP meeting.

280/25 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Policy and Resources Committee 19th November 2024 [non confidential]

RESOLVED

That the report of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on the 19th November 2024 be received and adopted.

Planning Consultative Committee 26th November 2024

RESOLVED

That the report of the meeting of the Planning Consultative Committee held on 26th November 2024 be received and adopted.

Planning Consultative Committee 17th December 2024

RESOLVED

That the report of the meeting of the Planning Consultative Committee held on 17th December 2024 be received and adopted.

Town Mayor

