

RUSHDEN TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RUSHDEN TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT RUSHDEN HALL ON TUESDAY 22ND JUNE 2021, COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllr Melanie Coleman, Town Mayor

Councillors:	David Coleman	Phillip Humphrey	Tracey Smith
	Paul Harley	Adrian House	David Jenney
	Richard Lewis	Gill Mercer	Andy Mercer
	Carol Childs	Janet Pinnock	Kay Rawlins
	Barbara Jenney	Cameron Clarke	Cesare Marinaro
	Adrian Winkle		

Town Clerk: Vivienne Prodger

59/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

60/22 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Sarah Peacock, Marian Hollomon, Steven North and Colin Wright.

61/22 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 18th May 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

62/22 MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORT

“It does not seem possible that we have had the longest day this year and that this Friday is the 6th month Christmas alternative. As you can guess, the Mayoral diary has not exactly been brimming over with activities. Sadly, the delay to the final Covid step out of lockdown has put paid to many events and sadly made people more cautious about planning future events.

However, I have managed several doorstep visits to help some lovely couples celebrate Anniversaries. The Presland’s celebrated 60 years as did Roy and Margaret Cave and The Kimpson’s notched up 50 years. They were all lovely couples with some fun stories to tell of their early lives together. David and I have only 13 years to go before we receive a visit.... Cameron, put it in your diary now.

Oak Apple Day was the only out of town event which saw the Northampton Mayor crown Charles 2nd with a wreath of oak. It took a few attempts as the new Mayor is not very tall. I have also had a highly informative and interesting talk with Paul McKay the new Chair of the RNI. Who is organising an event to mark the Falklands War.

We have managed a rusty chain gang get together for David which was most enjoyable, so hopefully I might manage a few events to make friendships with this year's Civic group myself.

Finally, I do have a Mayoral task to perform. It gives me great pleasure to present a paperweight as a token of our thanks for all his hard work and input into the Council over many years. It seems strange not seeing this gentleman at meetings anymore but it a pleasure to welcome back Robin.... known as Cllr Underwood for so long... and ask you to accept this small gift for services to the Town of Rushden."

63/22 POLICING ISSUES

The Town Clerk presented the following minutes from the JAG meeting held on 13th May 2021 via zoom.

- 1. Introductions**
Following introductions Sergeant Leigh Goodwin spoke about her background in East Northants police
- 2. Apologies**
Apologies were received from, Cllr Angela Gardener (Higham Ferrers Town Council), Cllr Jon Gray (Irthlingborough Town Council and Sarah Barnwell (Highways Officer)
- 3. Minutes of the Last Meeting**
RESOLVED That the minutes of the meeting of the JAG meeting held on 21st January 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.
- 4. Update on Agreed Priorities**
Sgt Leigh Goodwin advised the JAG members of the retirement of PC Paul Mitchinson. The Police had carried out multi stop-searches in connection with drug/knife issues in Rushden which had proven a great success. A stop-search at Risdene Court had resulted in an arrest, this is currently awaiting a court date to seek a closure order. Intelligence had been received regarding drug dealing in the Cemetery which had resulted in a car chase through the Cemetery, the stop-search had proved negative on this occasion. A foot chase through Rushden had also resulted in a negative stop-search in relation to drugs.

The previous dealing in Hall Park has now stopped, it was believed that the arrest in Risdene Court was linked to the drugs in Hall Park and the Cemetery.

Sgt Leigh Goodwin is aware of a current drugs issue in Alfred Street and this is being dealt with, no arrests have been made to date but this is on the Police radar.

At a previous meeting Cllr Gardner had spoken about the antisocial behaviour issue at the Skatepark in Higham Ferrers with the over 16's. Despite Police patrols monitoring the area they have not been able to see any problems at the skatepark but would continue to monitor the area.

They had however had a success with raiding two cannabis factories in Higham Ferrers after receiving intelligence.

Sandra Mitcham asked whether the Riverside Recreation Park in Higham Ferrers had been included on their patrols as she was aware of problems with anti-social behaviour

in this location. Cllr Jackson requested this area be added to the agreed priority to prevent the vandalism and litter problems being encountered.

Sgt Leigh Goodwin advised that small fires were emerging in Higham Ferrers and asked that anyone with any information to report this to the local PCSO Stephanie Bacon.

Some good news was that the Northants Police Recruitment campaign was now resulting in increasing Police numbers for Sgt Leigh Goodwin's Team. She hoped, by the end of June, to have a PC starting in Irthlingborough to work alongside PCSO Nadia Norman and a further PC, yet to be deployed. Her future plan is to increase the numbers to 3 PCs and 3 PCSOs in Rushden, with a PC and PCSO for each of Higham Ferrers and Irthlingborough, this would obviously be dependent on resultant operational requirements.

Christine thanked Sgt Leigh Goodwin for her help with the reported issues at Alfred Street and Grangeway.

5. Priorities for next 3 months

Sgt Leigh Goodwin had been informed by Mike Greenway of North Northants of a county wide decision to change the way in which locally identified priorities would be agreed. In future these will be determined by the wider community and not at JAG meetings by members. Surveys will be sent to allow residents to highlight their issues and concerns, these will inform the Police on issues to be identified as priorities. Publication of these surveys was discussed; Sgt Leigh Goodwin would be attending a meeting on 24th May which would give greater detail of the new scheme. It was thought that distribution would be via the Police and towns social media portals and inclusion in newsletters. It is expected that this system will "go live" by the end of May.

Cllr Bert Jackson advised that the campaigning carried out prior to the recent local elections highlighted many of the residents concern and this could be a good starting point for the Police.

It was agreed that for the time remaining prior to the introduction of the new system, the priorities would remain as previously agreed:

Anti-Social Behaviour/Drugs within Public Parks in Rushden, Higham Ferrers and Irthlingborough with the aim that CCTV would be utilised more and have proactive rather than reactive policing.

6. Other Policing issues including COVID 19 enforcement.

It was reported that COVID-19 enforcement was going well. It was expected that there would be more group gatherings for social events/barbecues etc in the public parks with Summer approaching but the Police will continue to monitor the situation.

7. Highways Issues

Cllr Jackson asked for assistance with a problem reported to him with a property in Elm Walk carrying out vehicle repairs from home. The cars are parked on the Highway, they are not roadworthy and it is believed they have no tax or insurance, he requested the assistance of the Police and an ANPR vehicle. Sgt Leigh Goodwin advised that this issue be reported to PCSO Stephanie Bacon who could then investigate the matter.

Viv Prodger reported incidences of people riding bikes the wrong way up Rushden High Street, this was a safety concern with pedestrians. Sgt Leigh Goodwin requested that Rushden Town Council advise on social media that Rushden High Street is a one-

way street, to attempt to educate those riding the wrong way. Once the policing numbers have increased for Rushden a patrol could be arranged.

8. VOI Scooters

Cllr Marian Holloman asked Sgt Leigh Goodwin whether many issues had been reported with the introduction of the VOI scooters. She advised that following the early glitch where underage riders had been able to register, this had since been fixed and she had not received any further complaints.

It was raised that the numbers of private electric scooters had increased since the introduction of VOI as riders were not aware of the different laws for private users. Although VOI users were insured to ride on the roads, this was not the case for private users.

Paul Wilcox asked whether the VOI scooters could have GPS tracking. At present when reporting an issue, a scooter serial number is required, he advised that this was very difficult to obtain with it being on the footplate or rear of the scooter, when these are travelling at speed it is not possible to capture this. A VOI operator was captured on CCTV riding through Hall Park which is an exclusion zone. This will be fed back to VOI.

9. Any other business

Cllr Marian Holloman asked for an update regarding the reported shop lifting in Rushden. Sgt Leigh Goodwin reported that the crimes in Rushden, Higham Ferrers and Irthlingborough were all linked, a person had been arrested and remanded, whilst seeking a criminal behaviour order.

Chris Healey was very pleased with the partnership working between the Police and CCTV operators, he felt it had improved significantly and they were able to offer greater assistance to the Police. He reported that it had been very busy lately, Crimesecure had assisted with arrests and he had received good communication from both PCSOs Norman and Bacon.

Viv Prodger had noticed that drinkers were again gathering at the war memorial. Sgt Leigh Goodwin advised that the Police were aware and are monitoring the situation daily, it was still on their radar and they are collating breaches.

Viv Prodger thanked Chris Healey for his tip-off regarding a person carrying out graffiti at Hall Park, thanks to his early phone call Paul Wilcox had managed to catch the person and the matter had been dealt with.

Cllr Bert Jackson asked whether Chris Healey could visit the Riverside Park at Higham Ferrers to advise whether a signal could be received there should the Town Council wish to install a CCTV camera in that area. Chris Healey agreed to visit and contact Sandra Mitcham with his findings.

Christine MacKenzie had written an article promoting the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and asked whether this would be of interest to meeting participants, all Town Clerks asked for it to be forwarded to them to enable them to publicise on social media/newsletters.

Cllr Marian Holloman advised Sgt Leigh Goodwin of an ongoing problem with a tractor on Rushden High Street, she would send details following the meeting.

10. Time and date of next meeting

It was agreed the next meeting would be held at Rushden Town Council on 12th August 2021 at 10.30am.

64/22 LEADERS ADDRESS

“Sorry I am unable to be with you this evening but hopefully this address is being read out on my behalf by Cllr Lewis.

Firstly, welcome to Cllr Jenny Bone who is attending in her role as Unitary Cllr. This will be a regular invitation and we will meet the others over the coming months and receive updates on the progression of the new North Northants Council.

Since the AGM and our hopes of opening from Covid restrictions, these have unfortunately not happened, and we remain unaltered in our progression towards normality. That said the vaccination numbers are rising and this is all contributing to fewer serious cases of Covid and less pressure on our hospitals and other services.

The Covid restrictions within this council remain the same and are still being monitored. We have however, been able to hold our committee meetings face to face (masked when required of course) and temperatures taken with sanitizer to hand and windows wide open. I still feel that Zoom committee meetings would be an advantage but as we all know we have been overruled by the powers that be. That said Working Parties and some other meetings will continue in the Zoom format.

Some of the projects have been completed over the last few weeks and the bus shelters look very striking. We are in the process of looking at new projects for the wards so if you have any ideas you would like to put forward then please contact me and it can be discussed by the appropriate committee. Jubilee Park is one on the next open spaces the Asset Committee will be looking at to improve.

The Rushden Matters was delivered last week so if any of you have not received it then please contact Michelle.

I know Michelle is busy collating the Garden pictures for the next virtual event. So, if you have any ready then please forward them to her on Competitions@rushdentowncouncil.gov.uk

Hopefully, before the next Full Council at the end of July the lockdown will be ended, and we can start and regroup for all our events in September, October and December. Until then please stay safe and remember hands, face and social distance.”

65/22 CHAIRMAN’S REPORTS OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Policy & Resources Committee 1st June 2021

The Chairman gave a verbal report on the agenda items from the meeting held on the 1st June 2021

Community Services Committee 8th June 2021

The Chairman gave a verbal report on the agenda items from the meeting held on the 8th June 2021

Planning Consultative Committee 15th June 2021

The Chairman gave a verbal report on the agenda items from the meeting held on 15th June 2021

66/22 CODE OF CONDUCT

Member considered the Code of Conduct for Town and Parish Councils recommended by North Northamptonshire Council and it was

RESOLVED

To adopt the current Code of Conduct for Town and Parish Councils as recommended by North Northamptonshire Council.

67/22 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members discussed recommendations from the Policy and Resources Committee meeting of the 1ST June 2021 regarding;

- i)
 - a) Safe Guarding
 - b) Grant Aid
 - c) Risk Management
 - d) Press and Media

RESOLVED

- a) Safe Guarding Policy – to approve this policy and it was duly signed by the Mayor.
- b) Grant Aid – to approve this policy and it was duly signed by the Mayor.
- c) Risk Management – to approve this policy and it was duly signed by the Mayor.
- d) Press and Media – to approve this policy and it was duly signed by the Mayor.

- ii) Melloway Toddler Area

The Policy and Resources Committee recommended that a new toddler play area should be installed at Melloway Park. Members considered this recommendation and it was

RESOLVED

The recommendation for a new toddler play area at Melloway Park be accepted.

iii) Zip Wire – Spencer Park

The Policy and Resources Committee recommended that Zip Wire should be installed at Spencer Park. Members considered this recommendation and it was

RESOLVED

The recommendation for a Zip Wire at Spencer Park be accepted.

iv) Future Banking arrangements

Following the announcement that Barclays Bank Rushden Branch is to close on 1st July 2021, The Policy and Resources Committee recommended that Rushden Town Council should engage Unity Trust Bank for their future banking requirements. After consideration members

RESOLVED

To engage Unity Trust Bank for Rushden Town Council's future banking requirements.

68/22 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Community Services Committee 30th March 2021

RESOLVED

That the report of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 30th March 2021 be received and adopted

Planning Consultative Committee 6th April 2021

RESOLVED

That the report of the meeting of the Planning Consultative Committee held on 6th April 2021 be received and adopted

Policy and Resources Committee 22nd April 2021

RESOLVED

That the report of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held of the 22nd April 2021 be received and adopted.

Planning Consultative Committee 27th May 2021

RESOLVED

That the report of the meeting of the Planning Consultative Committee held on 27th May 2021 be received and adopted.

Planning Consultative Committee 20th May 2021

RESOLVED

That the report of the meeting of the Planning Consultative Committee held on 20th May 2021 be received and adopted.

Planning Consultative Committee 25th May 2021

RESOLVED

That the report of the meeting of the Planning Consultative Committee held on 25th May 2021 be received and adopted.

69/22 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2021

a) Annual Governance Statement 2020/2021

Members had been circulated with a copy of the Annual Governance Statement for 2020/2021 and the Town Clerk went through this in detail. After consideration it was

RESOLVED

That the Annual Governance Statement for year ending 31st March 2021 is approved by this Council

b) Annual Accounting Statements 2020/2021

Members had been circulated with Accounting Statements for 2020/2021 and these were considered. After consideration it was

RESOLVED

That Accounting Statements for year ending 31st March 2021, is approved by this Council

c) Statement of Accounts 2020/2021

Members had been circulated with Statement of Accounts for year ending 31st March 2021.

RESOLVED

That the Statement of Balances as @ 31st March 2021 and Bank Reconciliation as @ 31st March 2021 are approved by this Council

70/22 HIGH STREET AREA IMPROVEMENTS/BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Following a recent Zoom meeting with Troy Planning, the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the High Street and Business working parties and the Leader all recommended that Troy Planning are engaged to assist both working parties.

After further discussion it was

RESOLVED

That Troy Planning are engaged as consultants to assist both the High Street Area Improvements and Business/ Economic Growth working parties.

71/22 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

To resolve 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.

72/22 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Policy and Resources Committee [confidential section] 22nd April 2021

RESOLVED

That the confidential section of the report of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee [confidential section] held on 22nd April 2021, be received and adopted.

Town Mayor