

RUSHDEN TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RUSHDEN TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 26TH MAY 2020 VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE CALL, COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllr Cesare Marinaro, Town Mayor

Councillors:

David Coleman	Melanie Coleman	Barbara Jenney
Tracey Smith	Paul Harley	Sarah Peacock
Adrian House	Marian Hollomon	David Jenney
Philip Humphrey	Richard Lewis	Kaye Rawlins
Janet Pinnock	Gill Mercer	Robin Underwood
Carol Childs	Ron Pinnock	Andy Mercer
Colin Wright.		

Town Clerk: Vivienne Prodger

1/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors David Jenney and Sarah Peacock declared an 'other interest' in consideration of agenda item 11 shop front grant for Barry Miller.

Councillor Philip Humphrey declared a 'bias' interest for agenda item 11, shop front grant for Barry Miller, and left the meeting when this item was discussed and took no part in discussion and voting thereon.

Councillor Janet Pinnock declared a 'bias' interest on agenda item 10a East Northants Child Contact Services community grant, and left the meeting when this item was discussed and took no part in discussion and voting thereon.

Councillors Sarah Peacock, Richard Lewis and Marian Hollomon declared an 'other interest' in the consideration East Northants Child Contact Services community grant.

2/21 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Steven North.

3/21 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 28th April 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

4/21 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORT

'Thank you for all attending our second virtual Council Meeting.

As lockdown continues my Mayoral duties have been very limited. I have attended the weekly 'claps' for key workers at local care homes within Rushden and have enjoyed giving my support to the committed, hardworking staff who are taking care of the elderly and

vulnerable residents of Rushden.

Our 'essential' local shops continue to provide excellent service to the community during the Covid crisis and deserve our praise for their continuing efforts.

Hopefully at our next meeting I will have more to report and we will be returning to some normality'

Best wishes from your Mayor in lockdown'

5/21 POLICING ISSUES

Following our resolution at the last Council meeting regarding Community Protection Notice Warnings, three notices have now been issued by the Police to three Rushden residents.

Most people are adhering to the social distancing regulations and we have had a marked decrease in complaints about anti-social behavior.

The Police are still continuing with their work in relation to drugs and drug dealing. They had a successful outcome from covert work carried out within Hayden Ward resulting in the confiscation of Class A drugs.

6/21 LEADER'S ADDRESS

'Good evening members.

The council is still delivering its statutory duties and has adapted to the rules of Covid 19 and all that goes with it, social distancing and sanitisation being the main drivers.

The Staff has zoom meetings once a week and it keeps them all up to date with each other. It is an ideal way to keep in the loop of what is happening and gives the clerk a chance to update them all of any new developments. It is hoped that during the week the staff will be able to come back into the office on a more regular basis and start to get back to normal. Whatever "NORMAL" is going to be. At present the office will remain closed to the public though the phone lines are still manned during office hours or messages can be left on the answer machine and are picked up regularly.

The Town Meeting went well last week and we have completed it in the set time frame. Thank you to all the Chairmen for their reports and to members and staff for their input throughout the year.

The Hall was lit up in Blue as our tribute to all NHS staff and carers. It also had the colours of the rainbow brazened across the front. Very impressive, and a fantastic backdrop for the Thursday evening clapping.

We are still trying to lift the spirits of our residents when we can and the VE celebrations, though somewhat muted, ticked those boxes. The Bikes were back out draped in the Union Jack and were very well received. They had been missed. Street parties in front gardens allowed neighbours to socialise at a distance. I know a few of us had some lovely afternoons and evenings.

The War Memorial was decked in bunting and with the help of Lightning Lloyd the war memorial and the church were the back drop for another impressive light display, along with Rushden Station. We have such talent in the town.

The social media side of the council has been keeping the Website and Facebook pages up to date with information coming from outside bodies. These may be offering food banks or business support, along with mental health contacts. For those of us in lockdown it can be a nightmare when you have nobody to talk too and on many occasions no outside space to stretch your legs. If any member have any concerns then please contact the authorities for support. We are fortunate to have a well organised group in our area. (0300 126 1000 - option 5)

Michelle with the help of Julie, Town Manager and Cllr Barbara Jenney has set up a Facebook, Business & Community Group page so as not to flood our main page. This concentrates on useful information for business during these Covid 19 times. The information varies from grant information to where to get PPE from to make your business safe.

A Business Directory (updated weekly) is also on our website. This shows which shops are open for business during the lockdown showing how they are functioning, opening hours and delivery service details. Hopefully this will start and grow as lockdown is lifted.

Moving forward our High Streets are going to look a lot different. Some shops have been able to stay open and provide a service second to none, whilst others are just beginning to open their doors once again.(All within Covid 19 restraints.) Now is the time for us to shop local. As a nation we are used to queuing so it will not be too hard.

ENC are also the main contact for any grant support for businesses, though I do believe most have been contacted and payments received.

The new unitary is still moving forward and the North Northamptonshire Shadow Authority is due to hold its first meeting next week, on Thursday 4th June @7pm. The meeting will be open to 152 members so that will be quite some virtual meeting! They need to adopt a constitution and appoint interim statutory officers. For updated information go to the website futurenorthantsnorth.org/

Our virtual meetings will continue as planned and we hope to organise an Asset working party one with our agents to get updates and to see how we can move forward with our applications.

It has been announced that all the DNV events have been cancelled for this year, so our Rushden Lakes event will not take place. However, they are launching virtual events throughout the summer and offering support for all tourism and small businesses. Please check their website. Nenevalley.net. This week is English Tourism Week. My how different it is, asking people to stay away in order to protect the future of tourism.

The town council launched a competition for the bank holiday weekend asking residents to take pictures of their gardens before and after so it will be interesting to see the response, and to see what we have up our sleeves. Unfortunately, it has been a rather windy one but I am sure the gardeners amongst us will have battled on.

The Hall Park continues to be a source of respite for many of our residents with some posting pictures for those who are not able to venture out. The beautiful herbaceous border and the blossoming trees give everybody a lift and think of better times to come. They are saying we are all beginning to appreciate our wildlife and nature and the bird song seems louder than ever with less traffic on the road. I for one have enjoyed watching the Great tits nesting in my garden and seeing the babies fledge.

Thank you to everyone for keeping this council open and although some of the lockdown barriers are being removed please take care and stay safe we still have a long way to go.

7/21 CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS OF COMMITTEES MEETINGS

Planning Consultative Committee 12th May 2020

The Chairman gave a verbal report on the agenda items from the meeting held on 12th May 2020

8/21 APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

Members had been circulated with details of payments made since 14th April 2020 amounting to £85,155.93

RESOLVED

That payments amounting to £85,155.93 be approved (as attached to these minutes).

9/21 COMMUNITY GRANTS

Members considered grant applications from

- a) East Northants Child Contact Services – CIC.
- b) Rushden Hall Ladies

RESOLVED

- a) To award a Community Grant of £1000.00 to East Northants Child Contact Services CIC.
- b) To defer this grant application until meetings resume at Rushden Hall.

10/21 SHOP FRONT GRANTS

Members considered the following shop front grant applications:

- a) Barry Miller

RESOLVED

- a) To award a shop front grant of £750.00

11/21 RUSHDEN MATTERS

It was disappointing to learn that a number of members did not receive their copy of the recent Rushden Matters. The Town Clerk informed member that distribution had been undertaken by a different company on this occasion. After further discussion it was

RESOLVED

The Town Clerk and Communications Officer to look into this matter further and investigate

how tracking was carried out regarding delivery.

12/21 POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Councillor Sarah Peacock, Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee reported that Neil and Sean have been continuing to inspect the parks and carry out routine Maintenance on a daily basis. Grounds maintenance and grass cutting is continuing as usual and some essential tree works have been carried out.

Some office staff are continuing to work from home, whilst others are now back in the office on a part time basis. We are fortunate that we have a number of large offices and plenty of toilets so social distancing is not too difficult.

We are continuing to work with our Agent and Hinton Cook to move forward the two withdrawn planning applications. At times it is proving quite difficult to obtain information but now people are more used to using virtual meetings and working from home, we should be able to progress to a new application submission within a realistic timescale.

13/21 COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillor Adrian House, Chairman of the Community Services reported that most acts booked for Party in the Park are happy to retain the bookings for 2021. We are still hoping that the Dog Show and the Soap Box Derby may be able to take place in September but obviously this will be subject to government advice nearer the time.

Members discussed the possibility of compiling a list of 'heroes' who have stepped up during the Covid 19 crisis. It was agreed that this work should be undertaken by the Community Services Committee and a meeting will be scheduled in due course.

The Events working party will be holding a Zoom meeting shortly to discuss ideas for virtual events and this will be reported back to Council in the usual way.

14/21 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Planning Consultative Committee 21ST April 2020

RESOLVED

That the report of the meeting of the Planning Consultative Committee held on 21st April 2020 be received and adopted.

Chairman