

RUSHDEN TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RUSHDEN TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 28TH APRIL 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 | Steven North | Ron Pinnock |
| Andy Mercer | Colin Wright. | |

Town Clerk Vivienne Prodger

389/20 STANDING ORDERS AND MEETINGS

Amendment to Standing Order 1.a, to allow meetings to be held remotely during the Covid 19 pandemic and to consider interim meetings calendar.

RESOLUTION

To amend Standing Order 1a to allow Rushden Town Council to conduct meetings via remote video conferencing under the 'The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020' that are currently enacted for meeting on and up to 7 May 2021

390/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Janet Pinnock declared a 'bias' interest on agenda item 10 Community Grant, and left the meeting when this item was discussed and took no part in discussion and voting thereon

Councillor Sarah Peacock declared a 'personal' interest on agenda item 10 Community Grant.

Councillor Steven North declared a 'bias' interest on agenda item 11 Policy and Resources Committee update, and left the meeting when this item was discussed and took no part in discussion and voting thereon

391/20 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies

392/20 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 17th March 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

393/20 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORT

'Unfortunately, I have very little to report at this time. My civic luncheon was sadly cancelled due to Covid 19 and I have had to also delay my charity sky dive. As members are in agreement that our AGM and Mayor Making will not take place until 15th September 2020, I am hopeful that I may be able to squeeze in a civic dinner before I leave office. I will of course keep you informed about my sky dive!

I have managed to attend one civic function and this was to deliver a 100th birthday card to a lovely lady, Betty Coleman who is a resident of Rushden.

It is great that we are still able to continue our Council meetings via video link and I hope to have more to report at our next meeting.'

Stay safe.

Cesare

394/20 POLICING ISSUES

Councillor Hollomon, Chairman of JAG, informed members that Leigh Goodwin, East Northants Team Sergeant, had contacted the Town Clerk about anti-social drinking in the Town Council parks. Leigh had advised that she wished to issue a Community Protection Notice Warning (Notice Pursuant To Section 43 ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014) to individuals who were persistently flouting Covid 19 Social Distancing Regulations and were displaying anti-social behavior with their excessive alcohol consumption.

RESOLVED

Rushden Town Council supports the Police in their proposed action to issue Community Protection Notice Warnings within parks and open spaces owned by the Town Council.

395/20 LEADER'S ADDRESS

'Good evening members to a very unusual full council meeting. This is our first Zoom, virtual meeting and hopefully we will not have to do too many of these. But who knows they may be the way forward! Personally I still prefer the face to face contact with the community that is what a town council is all about.

Firstly, can I thank the clerk for setting this up for this evening and she is now well and truly "Zoomed" out!

Also whilst on the "thank you theme" I would like to say thank you to all the staff that are carrying on with their roles all within social distancing either from home or via an office rota to keep this council running with our statutory obligations. Although the office is closed to the public, Paul has also been on call answering the telephone 24/7 and some services do

not stop. Unfortunately, burials are still being carried out and the circumstances are so sad and difficult to deliver at this time. The accounts still need to be paid and Kerrie and the Town Clerk have completed our end of year last week. An onerous task at the best of times but virtual conversations with the accountant has a whole new meaning now. The parks are still inspected even though the play areas are closed but some maintenance work is being carried out where possible.

Members have carried out two planning committees with the help of Nicola and Paul. Agendas were sent out and members' feedback then collated for a response via delegated authority to ENC. Again it was homework for members and passed a few hours whilst isolating, however face to face discussion is always valued.

That said the world has not completely stopped and others are trying to keep the basic services running. Our ground maintenance contractor is still delivering the contract and as regular conversations with the clerk. The bedding plants have been ordered for June. We all need some colour to pull us through and our flower displays always do that. We have received compliments on the state of the parks which remain open as long as the public abide by the rules of social distancing.

We are using our social media to pass on important information from other statutory bodies and also to spread a little bit of good will such as our Easter Cards that went out to the care homes in the town and was picked up by the ET. There is also information about any businesses open in the town to help promote them. I only hope the support continues after this virus has gone. To some of us who are isolated that personal service has been superb. They have certainly stepped up to the mark. Other organisations are also providing support to the vulnerable within the town and our thanks go out to them too.

Our own projects have received mixed progress over this pandemic.

The Manor Park and Rugby Club /Community Facility that we submitted before Christmas have been withdrawn for the time being to allow us to get more information requested by ENC. One was a new piece of work for an archaeological dig and the other was for extra information regarding traffic flow at the A6 junction. Although traffic surveys had been carried out they were not sufficient for ENC planning officers. This is very disappointing that these concerns were not raised earlier as the traffic survey as you can appreciate at this time is a no no!

We continue to have discussions with our agents and the authorities and will resubmit as soon as possible. This is a major project for us and we remain committed to its delivery be it somewhat delayed through events beyond our control.

On a more positive note one application has been granted and that is for the new disabled toilet. The ground work for the new connection to the sewers has been completed and the clerk will look at getting tenders for the construction of this new facility.

Also the bus shelters at ASDA have at long last been repaired by Stagecoach so all is not lost. Everything comes to those who wait.

Regarding the Unitary, Cllr Russell Roberts from Kettering KBC has been appointed to lead the executive until April next year. Eight other Cllrs make up the executive with Cllrs North, D Jenney and Wendy Brackenbury representing ENC will make the key decisions for how the North Northamptonshire Unitary will be set up. This will progress with district Councillors in the role of the shadow board along with fellow Councillors from the other

authorities due to the cancellation of the May elections. How or where meetings will be held is still to be announced. They will set budgets for the new council and work out how to harmonise tax levels. Currently, the council tax rates vary across the various authorities and they need to be brought into line. More information can be found on the North Northants website.

Finally, I will keep sending out my updates when necessary and hope we all stay safe as we continue to self-isolate or work within a safe distance of others.'

396/20 CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS OF COMMITTEES MEETINGS

Planning Consultative Committee 21st April 2020

The Chairman gave a verbal report on the agenda items from the meeting held on 21st April 2020

397/20 APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

Members had been circulated with details of payments made since 17th February 2020 amounting to £232,181.47

RESOLVED

That payments amounting to £232,181.47 be approved (as attached to these minutes).

398/20 COMMUNITY GRANTS

A grant application had been received from East Northants Child Contact Services – CIC. Members considered the information submitted and it was

RESOLVED

To defer this grant application as members felt there was insufficient information to be able to make a decision. The Town Clerk to contact East Northants Child Contact Services to obtain further information.

399/20 POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Councillor Sarah Peacock, Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee reported that the two planning applications submitted for Manor Park and new Sports/Community facility had now been withdrawn. This was due to ENC requests for additional reports for both sites.

In the current climate it is obviously quite difficult to engage consultants to prepare reports, so in consultation with the Asset Management working party and our architects and agent it was agreed new applications would be submitted once the required reports had been completed. Rushden Town Council will not incur any further costs when they resubmit.

On a more positive note we have received planning permission for the disabled toilet in Hall Park. The Town Clerk will be obtaining quotations for these works to present to the Asset Management working party.

Painting and decorating is being undertaken in the Hall and the catering kitchen is being

refurbished and retiled.

Our summer Grounds Maintenance programme is now underway and we will continue to maintain our parks and open spaces to our usual high standards.

400/20 COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillor Adrian House, Chairman of the Community Services Committee reported that due to the current situation, Party in the Park had unfortunately been cancelled. Also the events for Celebrate Rushden had been cancelled although there may be a possibility of the Soap Box Derby going ahead in September. All the acts that were due to take part at Party in the Park have been informed of cancellation and have been asked to hold their bookings for 2021.

The proposed VE Day celebrations have also been cancelled but the Royal British Legion has been encouraging people to hold tea parties on their front lawns as long as they can maintain safe social distancing.

The Easter cards we managed to print and send out to all the care homes in Rushden was appreciated by all who received them.

The Events working party are considering virtual events and hopefully we will be able to organize something over the coming months.

401/20 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Planning Consultative Committee 10th March 2020

RESOLVED

That the report of the meeting of the Planning Consultative Committee held on 10th March 2020 be received and adopted

Planning Consultative Committee 31st March 2020

RESOLVED

That the report of the meeting of the Planning Consultative Committee held on 31st March 2020 be received and adopted.

Town Mayor