

## RUSHDEN TOWN COUNCIL

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RUSHDEN TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT RUSHDEN HALL ON TUESDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2021, COMMENCING AT 7.30PM**

Present: Cllr Melanie Coleman, Town Mayor

Councillors: Sarah Peacock            David Coleman            Richard Lewis  
Phillip Humphrey            Marian Hollomon            David Jenney  
Adrian House            Tracey Smith            Paul Harley  
Gill Mercer            Andy Mercer            Barbara Jenney  
Cameron Clarke            Kaye Rawlins

Town Clerk            Vivienne Prodger

#### **254/22      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **255/22      APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Cesare Marinaro, Colin Wright, Adrian Winkle, Carol Childs, Steven North and Janet Pinnock.

#### **256/22      MINUTES**

##### **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

#### **257/22      MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORT**

*'It has been a bit of a roller coaster time with events on and off for varying reasons. But what we have attended have been memorable.*

*We attended the All-Saints Day at All Saints Northampton; this was stunning as the choir were back and beautifully rehearsed at a delightful evening service.*

*On the 31<sup>st</sup> of October we headed off to Stamford for the Civic service of Breda-Rae of South Kesteven. It was a charming event finishing with afternoon tea.*

*A long weekend in Plymouth was one of the most memorable times we have experienced so far. This was instigated from a casual meeting with Paul Mackay who was setting up the Falkland Veteran Foundation, triggering several other events.*

*We were fortunate enough to meet the attaché from the Falklands Islands and the Lord Mayor of Plymouth along with several Navy and forces representatives. David visited HMS Drake the Naval establishment and had a tour of HMS Bulwark undergoing a refit. The ladies visited a museum and had a guided tour of the city. We had a fabulous reception at the Plymouth Gin factory along with some amazing meals out, lovely company, the whole weekend was really special. We have since been discussing a Falkland flag raising and reinstating Forces Day altogether a successful time. Back home Cllr Sarah Peacock attended the fireworks display which I am told was a great success. Thank you, Sarah.*

*Moving into the Remembrance. The Garden of Remembrance on the Wednesday was well attended and very touching. Armistice day was honoured in a very respectful day. I Thank Sarah for attending Madingley in my absence. Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> sadly we were unable to have our Parade, but we still managed to pay our respects and were honoured by the presence of the Deputy Lord*

*Lieutenant. It was amazing to hear the spontaneous applause at the end to honour those who gave their lives. Hopefully we will have the Parade next year as I wasn't the only one that missed this. In the evening we travelled to the Derngate for a performance by NMPAT. A thoroughly enjoyable and varied programme from these talented musicians.*

*The 15<sup>th</sup> saw the second of two services recognising the work of the St Johns Ambulance, this time at Earls Barton. The last time I was in this beautiful Church was many years ago I was part of a full-length Ballet e to Vaughn Williams music, representing the story of Job..... I was an angel... no comment thank you.*

*The 20<sup>th</sup> saw my first full scale event. Dinner and Cabaret at Caesar's. Thank you to everyone who supported me, the Chain Gang were out in force and quite surprised by an extra performance of 'Hey Big Spender' from the previous Miss Garner!! (Who I must add had a wonderful evening)*

*Alconbury for the Pie Social. A short service in the Chapel followed by an overloaded table of... you have guessed it pies. Pumpkin, pecan, apple, cherry and many more.*

*A freezing wet morning saw the start of our light switch on, the 27<sup>th</sup> of November. The morning did not look very hopeful. Would Titan be allowed to perform? Would anyone turn up? Happily, yes and the whole 'jam-packed' event was a total success and credit to the Town. Thank you to Cllr Janet Pinnock, the events group, lighting elves and staff for the hard work. I loved the ride on the sleigh, a bit of a shake up, and I know Father Christmas did too. I have it on good authority that Mrs Christmas and the elves looked after him well in his Grotto as many Children visited him.*

*On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December we were invited to watch Sleeping Beauty at the Castle, and whilst not a Mayoral visit, the Mayor of Wellingborough invited us to join her to meet the cast. Well worth a visit.*

*5th December we attended the Gala at the newly refurbished Museum in Northampton. An impressive make over into an amazing multi-purpose space.*

*That concludes my 'diary'. I would like to wish you all a very safe and Happy Christmas and New Year. Whilst my original plan was to invite everyone back to our house, I feel that would be inappropriate in present times so I am hoping you will join me in a drink and mince pie after the meeting.'*

## **258/22     POLICING ISSUES**

To receive the minutes of the last JAG Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2021 as follows:-

Cllr Marian Hollomon – Chair (Rushden TC), Vivienne Prodger (Town Clerk, Rushden TC)  
Paul Wilcox (Amenities & Contracts Supervisor, Rushden TC)  
Cllr Bert Jackson (Higham Ferrers Town Council)  
Angie Daly (Town Clerk, Irthlingborough TC), Sgt Leigh Goodwin – East Northants Neighbourhood Team  
Christine MacKenzie – East Northants Neighbourhood Watch Scheme Administrator  
Kathy Mackenzie - East Northants Neighbourhood Watch Scheme Co-ordinator  
Chris Healey – Crimesecure CCTV, Sarah Barnwell – Northamptonshire Highways  
Jon Gray (Irthlingborough Town Council)

- 1. Introductions** - The Chairman welcomed all and everyone in room introduced themselves.
- 2. Apologies** Apologies were received from, Cllr Angela Gardener (Higham Ferrers Town Council), Sandra Mitcham (Higham Ferrers Town Clerk), Mike Greenway (NNC), Louise Morfitt (NNC).

### **3. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

#### **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting of the JAG meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 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 following activity

New staffing levels:

1 x PC and PCSO for Irthlingborough now.  
1 x PC and PCSO - PC to arrive soon post tutoring.  
3 x PC and 4 x PC for Rushden

Warrants – Mis-use of Drugs act in Higham Ferrers - looking at Anti-Social Behaviour legislation to surround this.

2 x arrested and investigation ongoing for Possession with intent to supply in Irthlingborough - substantial amount of drugs on person, cash and offensive weapons.

Warrant - Palace Court, Rushden – Possession with intent to supply investigation ongoing. Applied for closure order but tenancy given up on day of court hearing. Same male recently arrested for further PWITS offences.

Warrant - Risdene Court - subsequent closure order at 19. Further closure order at 29. Further work ongoing in Risdene Court.

The police survey was completed by 527 people within East Northamptonshire and the results were as follows - 49.2% for road safety and 32.5% for drug dealing.

A drug detection dog had been funded by Rushden Town Council and this had brought some good results in terms of finding and seizing drugs at various locations within Rushden.

Irthlingborough had been offered a lot of re-assurance in wake of the tragic teenage fatal stabbing in Wellingborough. This incident had connections with Irthlingborough and the police did spend considerable time working with residents and offering support.

There had still be concerns about anti-social behaviour and drug dealing in the alleyway at Alfred Street Rushden. One of the new PCSO's has been assigned to this problem and will be working closely with residents to try and resolve these problems.

Vivienne Prodger, Rushden Town Council advised that PCSO's had been using Rushden Hall as a mobile office over the past few weeks. This seemed to be working well and enabled the Town Council and Officers to share information regularly.

### **5. Priorities for next 3 months**

Top Priorities next quarter following the East Northants survey:-

**Road Safety & Road Traffic Offences**  
**Drug Dealing & Drug Misuse**

Moving forward - team effort working together. Situational and environmental awareness to reduce issues. Funding for VAS signs via OFPCC. Cutting down hedgerows etc, improve lighting etc. Streetwatch/NHW schemes.

Everyone to provide an update at the JAG as to what they have done toward the LIP's. JAG meeting to specifically be around the LIP's – Any other business needs to be brought to police attention outside of the meeting via PLR or email to the team inbox/direct to local officer.

## **6. Other Policing Issues**

Bert Jackson queried whether anything could be done regarding noisy vehicles. He asked whether drivers could face prosecution for having a vehicle that omitted noise above a certain decibel level. Sgt Good wind explained that if the vehicle had a valid MOT certificate it was very difficult to charge anyone with an offence.

## **7. Highways Issues**

Alfred Street, Rushden – following the problems that had been experienced here, Paul Wilcox RTC requested that Sarah Barnwell, Balfour Beatty look at the possibility of installing a CCTV camera on one of the lampposts. Sarah agreed to look into this matter.

The problem of lorries manoeuvring parked cars when trying to deliver to Home Bargains, Rushden was discussed. It was suggested that yellow lines be introduced to restrict on road parking – Sarah Barnwell to look into this to see if it is feasible.

Jon Gray, ITC commented on the ongoing water leak in Irthlingborough High Street, which he felt had now become a permanent 'water feature' as it had been present for such a long time! SB to investigate this.

## **8. VOI Scooters**

Paul Wilcox reported the method for eliminating the scooters from certain areas did not appear to be working, as RTC had requested the scooters be excluded from Hall Park and they were now being ridden in the park on a daily basis. RTC had reported this to VOI on a number of occasions.

Both Rushden and Higham Ferrers Town Councils reported that the scooters are still being misused. People under the age of 18 are using the scooters, riding with two on a scooter and riding on the footpaths instead of using the highway. Sgt Goodwin said they are aware of this and all misuse needed to be reported to Voi. She also added that the trial period for the scooters has now been extended into 2022.

## **9. Any other business**

Sgt Goodwin informed everyone that the new Electoral Boundaries will have an impact on how the JAG groups are considered. It is possible that Raunds may be included within this JAG instead of with Thrapston when the boundaries are confirmed. Members felt this was disappointing as the dynamics of this JAG group now worked really well.

Christine MacKenzie gave a report on the work of the Neighbourhood Watch. RTC invited them to their next Community Services meeting to allow them to report to members the invaluable work they carry out.

## **259/22      LEADERS ADDRESS**

*'Good evening.*

*Firstly, The Remembrance Parade though different this year, which unfortunately I was unable to attend, went well and hopefully will be back to normal next year. Thank you to the Clerk and all those involved in pulling it together a short notice. This will be an RTC event moving forward after the British Legion are unable to cover the insurance required.*

*Next, can I add my thanks to everyone involved in the light switch on. From our lighting elves who work all year round to get the lights ready and the purchase new ones. All the fluffers and crew for putting things up and down, and helpers on the day. A fantastic team effort. Once again RTC delivered a fantastic event. The Santa's grotto was very moving. The children's faces which ranged from 3 weeks old to grandparents were a picture. One group of 11-year-olds asked if they could come in after queuing for 30 mins as they were going to be too old next year! Families carrying on the tradition of generational photos with Santa were continuous. Mrs Santa's photography skills were well tested. Titan also caused a stir when he arrived. Some Councillors even got a little damp from his antics. The comments from the community were all positive. Well, done. This is a lovely family event.*

*Business continues as usual in the lead up to Christmas and a promotional video of the High St will be put out next week. Unfortunately, Rushden did not feature on NNC promo "Hi Street" which was disappointing. We will be promoting our shops and the bumper raffle for the superb hamper with items purchased from our High St. This is already on social media and the clerk went round with leaflets at the light switch on so hopefully we will have a lot of entries and give some support to local businesses.*

*We will continue Covid temperature checks on arrival for meetings, hand sanitising and masks at your discretion. We will review this as and when required. It is still out there but hopefully by taking sensible precautions we will keep ourselves safe.*

*Finally, somewhat premature I feel, can I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year.'*

## **260/22      UNITARY COUNCIL**

Cllr A Mercer reported that 6 new strategy documents had been adopted together with a policy for small grants. Cllr Mercer was also pleased to report that the application for development at the historic Birches Bus Garage site on Higham Road was turned down at appeal.

Cllr B Jenney reported that unfortunately the work on the yellow lines has still not been undertaken. Cllr Jenney will continue to chase this matter and hopefully it will be completed in the new year.

Cllr D Jenney informed members that he had now been appointed Assistant Cabinet Member for Transformation. Cllr Jenney also reported that he is still awaiting a reply from Joe Bailey (Freedom Leisure) regarding the equipment for Rushden Swimming Club.

Cllr Bone - As a member of the Executive Advisory Panel for climate change, environment and growth, we held our regular monthly meeting by Zoom the day after NNC's first climate conference. I would recommend anyone interested in this topic to view the conference on YouTube. It was a thought provoking day with speakers and presentations. As ward councillors we met with three police officers in Spencer Park to discuss the recent knife attacks, how we can assist the police in crime prevention and improve lines of communication. Their recent knife amnesty had been fairly successful and it was good to hear directly from the officers. We have continued to respond to residents concerns. Issues that have been raised include barriers outside the Co-Op, the crossing near the school and in Kimbolton Road, and opposition to the Shirley Rd planning application.

Cllr Jackson: - The first section of fence along Queensway, outside the Ferrers School, has been damaged for a long time with brambles growing through the fence, the brambles are still overhanging the greenway as you walk towards Rushden in one or two places, and the brambles need cutting back wider all along. The path that leads off from the greenway at the Hedges, towards the John Clark Way Roundabout, needs cutting back all along it, and the greenway between the Hedges and the Railway needs the same improvement. The verges on both sides of John Clark way, also need cutting back more, if this work was carried out now in the winter, it would not only improve the looks now but in the growing season, as the brambles grow again, they would not overhang the paths so far. I also feel we need to have a system that ensures that we get the correct number of cuts, not only to this section but all the verges and footpaths and main roads to maintain a good visibility for both pedestrians and motorists, but also improve the appearance of the Towns.

Cllr Pentland - A couple of weeks ago, NNC held its virtual conference 'NNClimate21' which showcased businesses, organisations and council initiatives focused on climate change locally. The day saw great participation from viewers and the conference can be watched on YouTube. The week before last, I was also pleased to plant an apple tree native to the County at Fermyn Woods as part of the Queen's Green Canopy, which will see 1000s of trees planted in North Northamptonshire. I have attended a number of other important meetings, including a meeting where residents opposing the Shirley Road/Prospect Avenue application spoke, and events in my council capacity but hope that this gives a snapshot for this month.

### **261/22 BUDGET AND PRECEPT FOR 2022/2023**

Members had been circulated with a draft budgets for 2022/2023. Members considered the proposed draft budget and precept for 2022/2023 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 2022/2023 as presented to Rushden Town Council would be approved.
- b) The amount of £1,172,924 to be precepted from North Northamptonshire Council for the year 2022/2023

### **262/22 CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

#### **Community Services Committee 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

The Chairman gave a verbal report on the agenda items from the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021

#### **Policy & Resources Committee 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2021**

The Chairman gave a verbal report on the agenda items from the meeting held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2021

#### **Planning Consultative Committee 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

The Chairman gave a verbal report on the agenda items from the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021

### **263/22 DOCUMENTS FOR SIGNING**

#### **RESOLVED**

That the Land Transfer for the sale of land at Lime Street, Rushden is signed by the Mayor.

### **264/22 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Members discussed recommendations from the Policy and Resources Committee meeting of the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2021 regarding;

**RESOLVED**

To purchase 4 VAS cameras subject to clarification of no hidden maintenance costs

**RESOLVED**

Celebrate Rushden to be funded as per the 2022/2023 budget. Funding for Queen's Jubilee to be discussed. There is funding available in other budget headings to cover this.

**265/22      REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

Community Services Committee 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021

**RESOLVED**

That the report of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021 be received and adopted.

Policy and Resources Committee 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021

**RESOLVED**

That the report of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held of the 12th October 2021 be received and adopted.

Delegated Powers Planning Committee 14<sup>th</sup> October 2021

**RESOLVED**

That the report of the meeting of Planning Committee held on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2021 be received and adopted.

Planning Consultative Committee 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021

**RESOLVED**

That the report of the meeting of the Planning Consultative Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021 be received and adopted.

Planning Consultative Committee 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021

**RESOLVED**

That the report of the meeting of the Planning Consultative Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 be received and adopted.

**266/22      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.

**267/22      REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

Policy and Resources Committee [*confidential section*] 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021

**RESOLVED**

That the confidential section of the report of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee [*confidential section*] held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021, be received and adopted.

Town Mayor