

RUSHDEN TOWN COUNCIL

Due to the recent death of Tony Helsdown, former Town Councillor and Town Mayor, a minute's silence was observed as a mark of respect, prior to the meeting commencing.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF RUSHDEN TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 9th MARCH 2021 VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE CALL, COMMENCING AT 7.30PM

Present: Cllr Melanie Coleman, Town Mayor

Councillors:

David Coleman	Philip Humphrey	Tracey Smith
Paul Harley	Sarah Peacock	Adrian House
David Jenney	Richard Lewis	Gill Mercer
Andy Mercer	Colin Wright	Robin Underwood
Marian Hollomon	Carol Childs	Janet Pinnock
Kaye Rawlins	Barbara Jenney	Cesare Marinaro
Cameron Clarke	Steven North	

Town Clerk: Vivienne Prodger

357/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

358/21 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence

359/21 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 19th January 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

360/21 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORT

"As you can Imagine it has not been a busy calendar.

I made a video for Commonwealth day, which has been aired on social media and today we made another one to promote the Lockdown Capsule for Rushden. I was ably assisted by my videographer husband, dubbed 'Rushden's George Lucas', although he forgot to press record for the first take!

I was looking forward to attending a Zoom event held by Sylvia Hughes the Mayoress of Raunds. The International Women's day event had a very good line up of speakers from academia, business and sport, and the prepared Podcasts were most interesting. I received my presentation pack and was well prepared. Sadly my mothers fall and broken ribs put paid to me attending.

Sadly, at this time I haven't even got a new hat to report about. Hopefully that will be put right in the not too distant future."

Continue to stay safe and look forward the easing of lockdown restrictions at the end of this month.

361/21 POLICING ISSUES

Councillor Marian Hollomon gave the following report on the JAG meeting that took place on 21st January 2021. Inspector Murray joined the meeting.

1. *Introductions*

Following introductions Inspector Murray spoke about his background. He had started at Wellingborough and East Northants as Inspector at the beginning of November. His career had begun as PCSO for Corby and surrounding villages. He had then moved to be a PC as part of the response team. His next move was as Sergeant at the Force Control Room and then Neighbourhood Policing. He had been Inspector at the Force Control Room before moving to the Neighbourhood Policing Team.

2. *Apologies*

Apologies were received from, Louise Morfitt (ENC).

2. *Minutes of the Last Meeting*

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the JAG meeting held on 20th October 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

3. *Update on Agreed Priorities*

Anti-Social Behaviour within Public Parks in Rushden, Higham Ferrers and Irthlingborough: - There had been lots of patrols, but no serious issues. The police were currently looking at drug dealing in Hall Park. Drug dealing in Deacon Park had reduced due to the imprisonment of a known drug dealer. They were working with the serious crime team on other drug issues. The number of homeless people had reduced. In Irthlingborough ASB was down. PCSO Nadia Norman had been working hard in that area. They would be looking at confiscating electric scooters with no insurance in Irthlingborough In Saffron Road they had dealt with issues of people riding scooter with no helmets or insurance.

Nadia was working on a number of initiatives in Irthlingborough including, pedestrian barriers on footpaths, planting and community clean up.

Cllr Gardner spoke about the issue at the skateboard park in Higham Ferrers with the over 16 age group. She had spoken to some. They were gathering with speakers. PC Mitchinson agreed that this would be monitored by the Police for COVID breaches. The policy was now to issue tickets.

4. *Priorities for next 3 months*

It was agreed that this would remain as: -

Anti-Social Behaviour 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.

5. *Other Policing issues including COVID 19 enforcement.*

Cllr Jackson asked whether the issue with communications between the control room and CCTC had been resolved. It was confirmed that they had a direct radio link with the police and there were no issues with frequency. Any calls into the control room were risk assessed and it depended on what resource was available and the priority of incident as to whether the police could attend.

Sandra agreed to contact Chris Healey and confirm this.

Viv raise the poor relationship with their PCSO in Rushden. They do not see him. PC P Mitchinson said he would take this issue to their sergeant. The PCSOs needed to be visible. They should be dropping in ¼ times a month. They would look to set up a zoom meeting between the PCSO and the Town Council.

Clk Jackson commented on the fact that police have not requested and specific sum from the developers from Rushden East for policing. This development was as almost as big as Higham and would need extra resources. Marian Hollomon agreed to send on presentation from PCC on budgets.

Cllr Gardner - PCC Steven Mold does not give answers to questions at his sessions. What we see and what the community sees is not what the police see as a major issue. It was clear at the recent NCALC meeting with the PCC, ASB impacts directly on lives of residents in all parishes.

Cllr Gray – There needs to be more feet on the ground in rural areas as there was not enough officers.

Inspector Murray confirmed that policing in rural areas was being looked at. There was a review at Unitary level. Based at Rushden Fire Station there were 3 PCSO, 2 PC and 1 Sergeant. Since 2012 criminality has changed e.g. cybercrime was now a big issue. He reassured the group that he was looking to improve relationships with the community.

In terms of COVID enforcement, the Police were now issuing tickets and if they do not issue a ticket they have to explain why. PC Mitchinson had issued 150 tickets New Year's Eve. If they do not pay, they go to court.

6. Time and date of next meeting

15th April 2021 at 10.30am. (Irthlingborough TC to host)

362/21 LEADER'S ADDRESS

'Spring has sprung, the daffodils are coming out and the light at the end of the tunnel seems larger. The lighter nights and the knowledge that the vaccine roll out is successful gives us all hope of less restrictions in the coming months. That said we must remember we are still in LOCKDOWN. We still need to promote Wash your hands, wear your masks and keep your distance. HANDS, FACE & SPACE.

The office continues to be manned on a rota basis and this will be reviewed as and when we receive the government updates. The day to day function of the office continues with the support of all the staff, though not always easy when working from home and the files you need are at the Hall. We still have the Covid grants of £500 available if they can support any local groups till the end of this month.

Weekly comms meeting keeps the staff up to date with events and these are posted onto the website and Facebook for members and the public to follow. There is still plenty going on and the return of the bikes for Valentine's Day and St David's day brought a smile to everyone's faces. The flower bed round them is also bright and cheerful. If any member has a story of interest of an event or special occasion coming up, then please contact Michelle who will be happy to feature it on our social media and web site.

We have highlighted a dog fouling issue in the Glenfield Drive area and notices and spray signs have been applied to the path and posts. If there are any other areas in the town that could do with highlighting a similar problem, then please contact Paul.

The two defibrillators in the old telephone boxes have been completed and wrapped and look very

impressive. Hopefully their use will be limited but if used will help to save a life. Thank you to all those who supported these areas and once we have done an audit on where we have them in town, we hope to provide some more along with the support of other organizations.

One arrival to the town that I don't think anybody missed was the arrival of the e scooters. These are being promoted by NCC and Voi a private business venture and are on trial until November. The first day was a nightmare with a lot of time being spent answering questions and concerns. These have been directed to Voi and they will be responsible for any future issues. There is an update later in the agenda.

Our Spring edition of Rushden Matters will be delivered the week commencing 15th March by the post office. We have sorted out the issues of the postcodes and these areas will be delivered by ourselves. I believe Michele is sorting this. The issue is very bright and cheerful and thanks to Michelle and all those who have contributed. It gives a good overview of what this council has achieved in these difficult times. It is also asking the residents to start and take photographs of their garden and record the changes. We will then be featuring some of them in future editions and on RTC social media.

As we approach the end of this month, we will see the end of ENC. Their website will end on the 31st March. The new North Northamptonshire Council one is up and running so please if that is something you follow make sure you have them on your system. The new CEO Rob Bridge gives updates on the progress of the new authority and the Shadow Board have set the budget for 2021/22 which has been ratified by the Executive Board of NNC. They will be the authority who will be collecting the council tax. We are lucky to have Shadow Board members on this council so I am sure if you need more in-depth information, they will be pleased to answer any questions.

We have less than a couple of months before the May elections and purdah begins on 23rd March. If anybody is unsure of the rules, please contact the Town Clerk.

We still hope to deliver a few more projects before then so watch this space as they say.

Thank you for your continued support.'

363/21 CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS OF COMMITTEES MEETINGS

Community Services Committee 26th January 2021

The Chairman gave a verbal report on the agenda items from the meeting held on the 26th January 2021

Policy & Resources Committee 16th February 2021

The Chairman gave a verbal report on the agenda items from the meeting held on the 16th February 2021

Planning Consultative Committee 23rd February 2021

The Chairman gave a verbal report on the agenda items from the meeting held on 23rd February 2021

364/21 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members discussed recommendations from the Policy and Resources Committee meeting of 16th February 2021 regarding:-

- i) Internal Audit report for year ending 31st March 2021
- ii) Risk Register as at 16th February 2021
- iii) Disposal of shrub bed at Lime Street, Rushden

RESOLVED

- i) To accept the Internal Audit report for year ending 31st March 2021
- ii) To accept the current Risk Register
- iii) To dispose of the shrub bed outside 34 Lime Street, Rushden

365/21 EVENTS WORKING PARTY

The Chairman of the Events Working Party informed members that following a meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee it was agreed that Party in the Park would be cancelled for 2021.

Celebrate Rushden, the Soap Box Derby and Bark in the Park are to be considered for September 2021 subject to Covid regulations at that time.

366/21 E-SCOOTERS UPDATE

The Town Clerk reported that following the Policy and Resources meeting on 16th February 2021 and presentation from Ian Achurch, Voi and NCC will be trialing E-Scooters within Rushden from the beginning of March 2021.

Insurance and liability for the scooters will be the responsibility of Voi and any complaints or issues are to be sent directly to them. RTC have release a press release stating that whilst we 'cautiously welcome' the scooters, we do not take any responsibility for their useage.

The scooters are programmed not to operate in Hall Park, Newton Road Cemetery, Jubilee Park and the Memorial Gardens.

367/21 REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Community Services Committee 17th November 2020

RESOLVED

That the report of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 17th November 2020 be received and adopted

Policy & Resources Committee 5th January 2021

RESOLVED

That the report of the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on 5th January 2021 be received and adopted

Planning Consultative Committee 12th January 2021

RESOLVED

That the report of the meeting of the Planning Consultative Committee held on 12th January 2021 be received and adopted.

Planning Consultative Committee 2nd February 2021

RESOLVED

That the report of the meeting of the Planning Consultative Committee held on 2nd February 2021 December 2020 be received and adopted.

Town Mayor