

RUSHDEN TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF RUSHDEN TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT RUSHDEN HALL, RUSHDEN ON TUESDAY 14TH MAY 2019 COMMENCING AT 7.30 PM.

Present: Councillor: Cllr Cesare Marinaro – Town Mayor

Councillors:	Sarah Peacock	Carol Childs	Richard Lewis
	Marian Hollomon	Philip Humphrey	Tracey Smith
	David Jenney	Janet Pinnock	Ron Pinnock
	Gill Mercer	Andy Mercer	Steven North
	Kaye Rawlins	David Coleman	Melanie Coleman
	Paul Harley	Adrian House	Barbara Jenney

1/20 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR

It was proposed by Councillor Gill Mercer, seconded by Councillor David Jenney and

RESOLVED

That Cesare Marinaro is to be elected as Town Mayor of Rushden for the forthcoming Council Year 2019/2020.

2/20 DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Councillor Cesare Marinaro signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office and having done so took the Chair.

3/20 MAYOR'S ADDRESS

'Today is a very special day for me. I feel very proud and honoured to become the mayor of Rushden. After living in Rushden for 27 years, I am proud to call this town my home.

I am excited to be a part of all of our town's events over the coming year. In particular, the fireworks display as it means a night off on one of our busiest nights of the year! I will do my utmost to represent the town to the best of my ability.

I thank all of the local councillors for putting their trust in me to fulfil this role and ensure that we have a great year!

Thank you very much.'

4/20 VOTE OF THANKS TO RETIRING MAYOR

Councillor Marian Hollomon moved a vote of thanks to the retiring Mayor, Councillor David Coleman who had worked tirelessly during her mayoral year.

Councillor Andy Mercer seconded the motion and when put to the vote, it was

RESOLVED

That a vote of thanks to the retiring Mayor Councillor David Coleman be recorded.

Councillor Marian Hollomon gave the following vote of thanks:

'David has been a fantastic Mayor this year. Together with his consort Melanie, he has attended so many local events, to make sure he has fully represented the Town.

David has had an extremely busy civic year and he has hosted some superb Mayoral events, including a wonderful Civic dinner with a very special cabaret. I would like to thank you for

representing Rushden with such enthusiasm and commitment. You have been a real credit to the town and the Town Council and should be very proud of your term in office.'

'Councillor David Coleman responded with the following:

As my Mayoral Year has now come to a close, may I thank all who elected me 12 months ago. That was on the 15th May so I will not have done a full year!. I'm grateful for your faith in me and hope I've maintained the high standards of my predecessors in fulfilling this Civic duty.

From my first engagement – last year's ENC Annual Meeting at Thrapston to my final event this morning in Peterborough with the RAF Wittering Freedom Parade, it's been a wonderful year and I've been blessed with a number of special occasions, highlights include the many moving events commemorating the end of the Great War with a special thanks to our good friends from the Royal British Legion for all their good works. The Remembrance Sunday Parade and Service seems to grow annually and was particularly well supported this year.s year.

Celebrate Rushden Week was also a highlight, meeting so many groups and individuals from across our wonderful town – our thanks should go to the team who delivered the programme and I'm looking forward to this year's event and the opportunity of dipping in to some of the varied offerings across the town.

Although we have travelled approaching 4,000 miles with navigation from Melanie, attending close to 200 events, I must say the most satisfying were supporting organisations and groups within Rushden itself. We should have great Civic pride in our Town and what it has to offer, not least being the works and impact of this Council.

I have a number of thanks to make.

Firstly to my predecessor Cllr Barbara Jenney and David for advice and giving an example of how it should be done.

It would be unwise for me not to mention Melanie for all her assistance and also advice – not necessarily always taken. Hopefully her wardrobe is now sufficient to meet the fashion demands of the coming year.

To my fellow Councillors and friends. thanks for your support and help in delivering Mayoral events including my Cabaret Evening (thanks to Cesare), a Celebration of Christmas, Civic Service, Proms in the Park etc. I understand we have made just over £3,400 for the Mayor's Charities over the year. We still have a box of raffle prizes at home – mainly shower gel and soaps left.

I mustn't forget the engine room of the Council, our Officers and staff behind the scenes . My thanks to Viv for her wise guidance when required and last but not least, my special thanks and gratitude to our Jemma. Her efficiency in handing the Mayor's Diary, arranging engagements and generally keeping me on the straight and narrow has been second to none. No doubt you're flowers here – sorry – as Melanie knows, I'm not a flower person but please accept this with my gratitude.

It's been a truly wonderful year and we have established a number of new friends from across the region and the "Rusty Chain" gang already have a number of reunions planned in coming months, indeed meeting up with a few on Thursday evening at a Quiz Night in Raunds.

To conclude, may I wish Cesare and Sabina a full and memorable Mayoral Year – I'm sure it will be enjoyable and that you'll meet some lovely people. Good luck in all you do and enjoy. There's a wealth of experience in this room should you require help or advice, which I'm sure will be forthcoming.

I've felt humbled by the experience and wish to give thanks for your support over the year and particularly Melanie for her patience. Now, on with the diet and the decorating

'Congratulations Mr Mayor on your election to office.

As I hand over the baton, my time has seemed all too short. It has been a busy time but I have no regrets.

Melanie and I have had a busy time over the last year and we have travelled far and wide. It has been a struggle to maintain my slim waistline, having attended many Civic and Social events! Despite our enjoyable travels and the opportunity to meet people from the wider area, it has given us the greatest pleasure to be involved in events in Rushden itself. I have attended so many local events within the town and I must say I feel extremely privileged to have been selected to represent the town.

Finally, I would like to thank Melanie for her unstinting support throughout the year and look forward to being her consort as she takes the role of Deputy Mayor for the forthcoming year. Many thanks to all for your support.'

5/20 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

Councillor Cesare Marinaro, Town Mayor asked for nominations for the Deputy Mayor.

It was proposed by Councillor Cesare Marinaro that Councillor Melanie Coleman be appointed Deputy Mayor of Rushden for the year 2019/2020 and seconded by Councillor Kaye Rawlins

It was

RESOLVED

That Councillor Melanie Coleman will be elected as Deputy Mayor of Rushden for the forthcoming Council Year 2019/2020.

6/20 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf Councillors Robin Underwood and Colin Wright.

7/20 ELECTION OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Mayor, Councillor Cesare Marinaro asked for nominations for the Leader of the Council.

It was proposed by Councillor Andy Mercer that Councillor Sarah Peacock be appointed Leader of the Council for the year 2019/2020 and seconded by Councillor Ron Pinnock. It was

RESOLVED

That Councillor Sarah Peacock be appointed Leader of Rushden Town Council for the forthcoming Council Year 2019/2020.

8/20 LEADER'S ADDRESS

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Sarah Peacock made the following address:

'Good evening everyone. Can I too, add my thanks to Cllr David Coleman and his consort Cllr Melanie Coleman for once again going above and beyond their duties as Mayor and representing this Council. I would say, you can now have a well-earned rest, but sorry, you are both going to be busy for the next couple of years in a civic role. You will be a great support for our new Mayor I am sure.

On that note I would like to congratulate Cllr Cesare Marinaro and his consort Sabina and wish them well for their year ahead. I am sure we will be seeing a lot of them both around the town promoting both this council and the organisations they attend.

Well, I know I say this every year but where does the time go. This year has been no exception. This council has once again provided the residents of the town with improved facilities through regeneration and development of new projects.

With the support of section 106 monies and councillor empowerment funds from our ENC Cllrs, we have been able to improve and add play equipment to many of our play areas. (The most recent being Fosse Green.) These facilities are vital to the wellbeing of this town and give the children a safe & healthy environment to play in. A lot of these areas have been inherited however funding support has now come to an end meaning we have to include them in our budgets.

We continue to provide small grants to local groups to enable them to offer a variety of activities within the town.

Shop front grants are available to the value of £750, have helped many shops to spruce up their fronts with a new coat of paint and add vitality to our High St. and other shopping areas. Look out for the window stickers to see who we have supported.

The day to day running of the council becomes more involved as we grow and provide more options for our residents.

The planning committee has had a varied agenda this year from signs to major developments with some being very contentious too.

However, with the adoption by RTC & ENC of our Neighbourhood plan in June last year gives us some support when making these difficult decisions. It must also be remembered that we are consulters' only and that ENC make the decisions. These decisions should be made with all policies and plans in mind.

Whilst on the subject of planning Cllr David Coleman & I continue to represent this council on the board of Rushden East and hopefully this project is nearing a Master plan to move forward. This is being led by ENC and has had many challenges along the way due to numerous reasons, some out of our control.

We have now worked through our Business plan of 2016-2019 and have either completed or started all of our promises. We will continue to deliver and draw up a new plan until the next elections. This will enable us to complete any projects that may be outstanding or move other projects forward.

Some of the projects that have been completed are:-

- *The increase in CCTV around the town.*
- *New benches at the Lightstrung bus stop*
- *The War memorial has had a face lift with new seats, bins, painted fencing and the addition of an information board in association with the Rushden History Society. These were all in place for the Bernard Vann VC commemorations in September which brought the whole town together. The unveiling of the VC slab is something that this town is very proud of and was a superb day. The family were overwhelmed by the turnout and the whole event. Well done to all those involved.*
- *The nature trail will see the story tellers seat arrive shortly after a few issues with the timber and the addition of information boards showing the trees and birds in the park. This is a well-used educational facility used by the schools all year round and ticks many of the curriculum boxes and supports our application for the Green Flag. We continue to add value to the park and the toilets are the next on the list.*

The resurrection of the JAG meetings gives us a direct contact with the police and is also attended by Higham Ferrers Council and other bodies in order to make our town safer. They identify three priorities for the police to work on. At the moment these are antisocial behaviour (at the toilets & war memorial), drug related issues and areas of H/F that are suffering with antisocial behaviour too.

On the tourism front we continue to promote the town whenever the opportunity arises and have attended a number of events at the Rushden Lakes and Destination Nene Valley all accompanied by our town mascot Cyril. We promote our Heritage by supporting an exciting project on the Greenway called "Out of Water into History" this is forming a link between the Lakes and the town. It has some innovative ideas called Art Codes which should appeal to all ages. It is a 5 year project which we are half way through, and in June opening a work of art under the Washbrook Rd tunnel. This has been developed by the children of the town with art work & poems. Watch this space.

The events put on by the town council, Celebrate Rushden, Party in the Park and the Christmas lights to name just a few are still as popular as ever and I thank Councillors and volunteers for the time and energy they put into them. Also the staff has taken ownership of the Family Dog Show and raise funds for various charities. Not many Councils can claim such "hands on" enthusiasm.

The council has also agreed to extend the lease to Rushden Museum for a further 5 years. This was greatly appreciated by the trustees and the friends. It is run by a small group of volunteers preserving the social history of the town and over the years has won many Heritage awards when competing with the larger heritage sites in Northamptonshire.

Support has also been given to the larger museum at the other end of town the RHTS with its rolling stock and its very large goods shed. This is already proving to be a venue for some great events and will be a superb asset for the town in the future.

The Town manager has also been involved in some new ideas. We held our first NN10 fun run around the town which was a great success and hope it will become a regular event.

She also will be leading two new working parties, which have been set up to address the issues of the High Street and local businesses, which involve all councillors. The public have already had an input by voicing their ideas of a way forward. A town square was a popular request.

As I draw to the end of my report many of you are aware that this year we should have had an election but due to the Unitary Council we have an extended year. This is something that we are welcoming as it allows us to continue with our business plans. With the Unitary now confirmed by the government it will have little effect on us as a town council but may bring more responsibilities. We will sadly lose our District Council at East Northants which many of us have represented for a number of years. We will continue to work with the district and protect our assets and continue to deliver our exciting projects. One of these being our Sports Hub which is still progressing, a little slower than anticipated, but we need to make sure we get it right.

I would like to thank Cllrs' Lewis & Humphrey for their support during the past year and to all Councillors who have helped to keep the Council on track during my illness. The Clerk and staff who work behind the scene are a very important part of this council too and together we are a great team.

The "cyclists" have become a new publicity tool. These have been taken over by the staff and really put us on the map with their great ideas, ranging from Easter Bunnies to St George. I can't wait for the next one.

Moving into our new civic year 2019/2020 we will be:-

- *Finishing off Spencer Park and improvements to the tennis courts and MUGA areas this will complement the superb refurbished pavilion.*
- *Updating the Hall Park toilets and providing Disabled toilets that will be accessible from the park.*
- *Continue with the Hall restorations.*
- *Develop the Sports Hub.*
- *Deliver a new Grounds Maintenance contract.*
- *Provide New Bus Shelters across the town within our ownership.*
- *It has been agreed to Provide VAS speed camera along Avenue Road, after a request from residents. These will be moveable so can be also used in other areas of concern*
- *Installation of defibrillators in strategic parks.*

Thank you once again as this Council continues to “Look to the Future”.

9/20 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of Rushden Town Council held on 19th March 2019 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

10/20 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES 2019/2020

- (a) Appointment of Standing Committees

RESOLVED

- (a) That the Standing Committees for 2019/20 be:
- Policy & Resources Committee
 - Planning Consultative Committee
 - Community Services Committee

- (b) Membership of committees:

RESOLVED

That membership of the committees be as follows:

Policy & Resources Committee

Sarah Peacock, Philip Humphrey, Gill Mercer, Richard Lewis, Steven North, David Jenney, Ron Pinnock, Janet Pinnock, Colin Wright, Robin Underwood, Barbara Jenney, Adrian House, Andy Mercer, David Coleman and Cesare Marinaro.

Planning Consultative Committee

Paul Harley, David Coleman, Cesare Marinaro, Philip Humphrey, Sarah Peacock, Richard Lewis, Marian Hollomon, Carol Childs, David Jenney, Kaye Rawlins and Tracey Smith.

Community Services Committee

Adrian House, Tracey Smith, Barbara Jenney, Janet Pinnock, Richard Lewis, Carol Childs, Marian Hollomon, Sarah Peacock, Gill Mercer, Melanie Coleman, Paul Harley, David Coleman and Cesare Marinaro.

11/20 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Members were circulated with details of proposed representatives to outside bodies as follows:

Rushden Parochial Charities

Councillor Sarah Peacock to serve until 26th May 2022 (subject to approval at the next Rushden Parochial Charities meeting)

Councillor Kaye Rawlins to serve until 20th May 2021

Councillor Barbara Jenney to serve until 20th May 2020

Councillor Andy D Mercer to serve until 20th May 2020

Councillor Robin Underwood to serve until 20th May 2020

Joint Action Group

Councillor Marian Hollomon
Town Clerk, Vivienne Prodger

Northants County Association of Local Councils

Councillor R Lewis

Northamptonshire Larger Councils Partnership

Councillor Sarah Peacock
Town Clerk, Vivienne Prodger

Rushden East Project Board

Councillor Sarah Peacock
Councillor David Coleman

Rushden Town Partnership

Councillor Barbara Jenney
Town Manager, Julie Thorneycroft

RESOLVED

That the list of appointments to outside bodies as mentioned above be approved.

12/20 MEETINGS OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES

The proposed calendar of meetings of the Council and its Committees for 2019/2020 had been previously circulated to members and it was

RESOLVED

That the calendar of meetings as appended to these minutes be approved.

13/20 BANKING ARRANGEMENTS

Members were advised of the list of current signatories. It was

RESOLVED

That cheques and orders for payments continued to be signed by any two from the following:
Cllr Mrs S Peacock, Cllr R Lewis, Cllr Mrs G Mercer, Cllr Mrs M Hollomon,
Cllr R Pinnock and Cllr P Humphrey.

Chairman