



Rugeley Town Council

Minutes of Rugeley Town Council Full Council held online at
7.30pm Wednesday 6th January 2021.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

Mrs P Ansell (Chair)	Mrs A Cooney
D Gaye	G Grant
C Green	I Gunner
I Hodgson	R Hughes
Ms N Mahon (Vice Chair)	Mrs C Martin
N Stanley	Mrs C Panter-Hood
Mrs G Turner	Ms A Szklarczyk
J Williams	

Also Present:

H Goodreid (Town Clerk)

Min No	Item	Action
91 91.1	Apologies Apologies were received from Cllrs Dipple, Lyons and Tait-Green.	
92 92.1	Declaration of Personal and Prejudicial Interests None were declared.	
93 93.1	To receive any requests for dispensation None.	
94 94.1	Chair to close the meeting for the public session There were no members of public in attendance at the meeting and no questions had been presented to the Town Clerk.	
95 95.1	Chair to reopen the meeting There being no members of public, the Chair reopened the meeting.	
96 96.1	To consider approving and Signing the following council minutes. Full Council Meeting on 2nd December 2020 It was proposed that the minutes be approved. <i>Proposed: Cllr Ansell; Seconded: Cllr Grant</i> It was agreed that the minutes be approved.	

<p>97 97.1</p>	<p>Actions Arising There were no matters arising from the meeting.</p>	
<p>98 98.1 98.2 98.3 98.4</p>	<p>To note the minutes from the following committee meetings: Rose Committee 11th November 2020 Community Engagement Committee 11th November 2020 Planning Committee 18th November 2020 Finance and Management Committee 18th November 2020</p> <p>The minutes were noted.</p>	
<p>99 99.1 99.2</p>	<p>Car Parking Charges in Rugeley</p> <p>Following a request from full council, a letter had been sent to Cannock Chase District Council requesting that they consider offering free parking in Rugeley in return for a financial donation from the Town Council on the same basis as the contribution made by Hednesford. This matter had been taken to a Cabinet Briefing meeting for consideration. This briefing meeting were minded not to support the scheme as it would lead to a reduction in income to CCDC of circa £100k per annum.</p> <p>Councillors considered this response, and the following comments were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rugeley was looking to be treated the same as Hednesford • Were CCDC willing to sever the arrangement with Hednesford (giving a 12-month notice) so that they were not treated differently? • The Town Council never suggested that this was the sole way of fighting back against business decline, but it would help to increase footfall • Can the opposition at CCDC call in this decision so all councillors can debate it? • General disappointment with the response and not willing to discuss options • Noted that Cabinet had not made a decision – this was only taken to the cabinet briefing • Difficult decision for CCDC as it would be a large reduction in income • Noted that the reduced use of the car parks during Covid and lockdowns has meant that income dramatically reduced and offer by Town Council to part fund should be welcomed • If CCDC are looking to raise money – should be looking for Hednesford Town Council to pay more to cover parking. • Footfall in town is non-existent and businesses are suffering. Anything that can be done to encourage shopping when the Lockdown is over, should be done. • Could the town council subsidise parking whilst pandemic continues in order to support the town centre and offer support to CCDC. • Possible to look at alternative parking in town centre eg St Josephs? 	

Signed:

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99.3	<p>It was proposed that the Town Clerk, Cllr Stanley and Cllr Cooney, write back to CCDC expressing disappointment with response and requesting that additional points are taken on board when the matter goes to Cabinet next week.</p> <p><i>Proposed: Cllr Hodgson; Seconded: Cllr Ansell</i></p> <p>It was agreed that a letter be written to CCDC to express the thoughts of Councillors at this meeting.</p>	Cllrs Stanley, Cooney and the Town Clerk to send letter.
<p>100</p> <p>100.1</p> <p>100.2</p> <p>100.3</p> <p>100.4</p> <p>100.5</p> <p>100.6</p>	<p>Precept Discussion</p> <p>Cllr Stanley updated the meeting on the work undertaken in the past financial year to manage the budget in light of reduced income from the theatre and reduced ability to run events. Cllrs were also appraised of where funding had been secured in order to support the theatre and events. The difficulty ahead of the council was understanding when business would get back to normal.</p> <p>Finance and Management Committee had met in December and had considered the requests from the committees regarding the expenditure identified for 2021/2022. Committees had identified new projects and initiatives that they wanted to see developed.</p> <p>The meeting considered the Balances / Reserves held by the Town Council and the possible use of this funding to cover possible shortfall in income should the theatre not be able to open well into 2021/2022. Cllrs also considered funding required should CCDC agree to an arrangement re reduced parking fees for shoppers. Cllrs were also mindful of the fact that unemployment had risen locally and there was financial pressure on residents that could make it difficult for individuals to find additional money for increased Council Tax.</p> <p>Cllrs were asked to note a recent email from Staffordshire Parish Council Association which noted that although town councils were not subject to a precept cap, the average increase last year for Band D was 4% and this was more than the rate of inflation. Cllrs were also asked to note that residents were going through considerable hardship.</p> <p>Cllrs noted that it was important to keep positive and develop projects and ideas as these could bring in additional financial support and give focus for the community.</p> <p>It was proposed that should councillors be unable to agree to a budget at the 3rd February meeting, an extraordinary meeting would be arranged in order to further discussion and still be within the timescales to get the precept request in to CCDC.</p> <p><i>Proposed: Cllr Hodgson; Seconded: Cllr Stanley</i></p> <p>It was agreed that should councillors be unable to reach a decision on the budget on 3.2.21, an extraordinary meeting would be called asap.</p>	

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101	Chairs and Clerks Report	
101.1	Cllr Ansell reminded councillors of the Remembrance wreath laying, the Christmas Lights and her filming with Father David re action of the town council to the Coronavirus issue.	
101.2	The Town Clerk advised councillors that building work to the rear toilets in the theatre had started and would continue for approx. 2 weeks. Staff were continuing to come into the theatre in a socially distanced way and work on upkeep of the building. Town Council staff were working from home but would be coming into the office occasionally to print off papers for meetings etc.	
102	Date of Next Meeting	
102.1	The next meeting of Full Council would be Wednesday 3 rd February 2021 at 7.30pm. This would be held via Zoom.	

The meeting finished at 8:50pm.

Signed:

Date: 3rd February 2021