

Full Town Council Meeting – 6th September 2023

Car parking Charges

Minutes of Rugeley Town Council Full Council held online at
7.30pm Wednesday 7th October 2020.

51	Cllr Alan Dudson
51.1	<p>Cannock Chase District Councillor Alan Dudson had been invited to speak on the role of CCDC in supporting the reopening of town centres.</p> <p>During the discussion, the following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CCDC were facing a deficit of between £1.5m and £2m in the coming financial year• With fewer people coming into town to shop, encouraging shoppers with free parking could make a large difference to traders.• Possibility that the free parking spaces, if offered, would have been taken up by the traders rather than shoppers• Hednesford offers free parking as town council make a contribution to the CCTV in the town. Could Rugeley Town Council make a similar 'donation' to allow for free parking in the town?• Cllr Dudson suggested that Rugeley Town Council raise the precept to enable free parking in the town.• The estimated loss of between £35k and £40k each year on Rugeley Parking was based on income pre Covid. In reality, the loss is much lower.• Rugeley is not unique in having struggling town centre – all local towns are in the same position. Rugeley Town Council should step up and support local businesses by subsidising parking fees by increasing Precept.• Lichfield introduced £1 all day parking during Covid which boosted local economy – Could CCDC not offer that for a fixed time period?• ERDF money delivered through CCDC has been applied for to support the reopening of Rugeley Town Centre. Disappointment that one element is not being supported – Cllr Martin to look in to this.• Refused element of the proposal does fit the focus on supporting and engaging with SME's.
51.2	<p>Cllr Dudson was thanked for his contribution and it was agreed that Cllr Martin would feed back on the one element of ERDF funding which was refused by CCDC. It was further agreed that Finance and Management Committee in October would look at the possibility of the Town Council subsidising parking fees in Rugeley.</p>

Minutes of Rugeley Town Council Full Council held online at
7.30pm Wednesday 4th November 2020.

67 67.1	Car Parking Charges in Rugeley Following a detailed discussion, it was proposed that the Town Clerk contact Cannock Chase District Council with a request that Rugeley Town Council pay on the same basis as Hednesford Town Council in order that all town centre car parking spaces are offered free of charge to users. <i>Proposed: Cllr N Stanley; Seconded: Cllr A Cooney</i> It was agreed that the Town Clerk contact Cannock Chase District Council with a request that Rugeley Town Council pay on the same basis as Hednesford Town Council in order that all town centre car parking spaces are offered free of charge to users.
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Minutes of Rugeley Town Council Full Council held online at
7.30pm Wednesday 2nd December 2020.

89 89.1	Car Park Charges in Rugeley The Town Clerk had written to Mike Edmonds (Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles) at CCDC concerning the opportunity for the Town Council to subsidise Rugeley town centre parking on the same lines as Hednesford.
89.2	We have been advised that CCDC has invested in new contactless payment ticket machines for the District and is currently in the process of installing these in all their pay and display car parks. These will provide safe assurances to visitors using the town centre car parks as we recover from the virus. The Town's Council proposals and the significant financial implications will ultimately need to be considered formally by CCDC Cabinet which is likely to be in January.
89.3	Cllr Stanley raised concerns over the installation of the parking machines as the Town Council had been specifically invited to make the fee proposal to CCDC by CCDC Cllr Dudson approx. 3 months ago. Rugeley was seeking fairness in car parking fees across the district and there is a possibility that CCDC will be favouring Hednesford shoppers over those to Cannock and Rugeley.
89.4	Cllrs were aware that for the next 3 Saturdays leading up to Christmas, parking fees in District Council car parks will be suspended. Cllrs were disappointed that these were not being suspended during the weekdays leading up to Christmas in order to ensure a spread in shoppers entering the town and maintaining safe distances and encouraging local shopping.

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

99	Car Parking Charges in Rugeley
99.1	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.
99.2	Councillors considered this response, and the following comments were made: <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?
99.3	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. <i>Proposed: Cllr Hodgson; Seconded: Cllr Ansell</i> It was agreed that a letter be written to CCDC to express the thoughts of Councillors at this meeting.

Minutes of Rugeley Town Council Full Council held online at
7.30pm Wednesday 3rd February 2021.

109 109.1	<p>Actions Arising</p> <p>Re Item 99 Car Parking. A letter had been written to CCDC offering payment for free parking in Rugeley. The request had gone to January Cabinet meeting and was declined. A feasibility study was proposed as part of the CCDC corporate plan 2021/2024 to review car parking strategy and investigate possibly refund of car park charges by shops when visited. The portfolio leader for Environment and Climate Change – Cllr Josh Newbury – had offered to attend a future meeting of the Town Council. It was agreed that he be invited to the March Full Council meeting.</p>
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Minutes of Rugeley Town Council Full Council held online at
7.30pm Wednesday 3rd March 2021.

120 120.1	<p>CCDC Cllr Josh Newbury to speak on the issue of free/reduced rate parking to shoppers in Rugeley.</p> <p>Cllr Newbury reminded Cllrs about the Cabinet report which considered the Town Council offer to pay up to £30,000 towards free parking in Rugeley town centre car parks.</p>
120.2	<p>Points made by Cllr Newbury included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2019/2020 year, CCDC received £129,772 from Rugeley. • Up to Jan 2020 the income for 2020/2021 was £50,080 with an anticipated end of year income of £67,000. • £49,000 has been claimed from central government to cover the loss. • CCDC has spent £98,000 on installation of new ticket machines in car parks across the district. • CCDC felt it is the wrong time to look at supporting Rugeley in isolation – need to consider other ways of increasing footfall to the towns across the district. • CCDC have a projected deficit of £300,000 for the next financial year owing to increased costs associated with additional works around the pandemic. • Review of car parking across the district as part of new corporate plan – this would be part of recovery strategy. Will consider all issues including parking fees, number of spaces etc. • Offer from Rugeley would reduce CCDC income from parking and loss would have to be made up from elsewhere which may be diversion of funding from other projects. • Hednesford Town Council have requested funding from CCDC to support further regeneration of their town centre • Budget review will go to Cabinet on 1st April 2021 • CCDC still responding to the effects of the pandemic and therefore premature to consider reducing income. • CCDC have considered a loyalty scheme for Rugeley <p>Cllrs considered the views and made the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are car park fees charged comparable to other areas / district council car parks / Lichfield?

120.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The car parking income received of c£129k is around £30k less than 4 years earlier – why is that? Less Parking? Increased Charges? • Clarification on the costs – is the income quoted gross or is it net of salaries for staff to collect money from machines and monitor parking breaches etc • You mentioned that CCDC would be looking to do works to Elmore Park toilets and the Boardwalk – what is the budget for those projects as CCDC budget last week did not show this work • At the meeting on 1st April which will hear a car parking review – can the timeframe be specified then? • Climate Change – has CCDC got plans to invest in alternatives e.g. bike storage and electric vehicle charging points? • CCDC advocates equality and fairness between the towns – this is not evident from car parking charges in Hednesford and Rugeley – there is an inconsistency in policies • Is the income from Rugeley car parks ring fenced to be spent in upkeep and maintenance and staffing of the car parks in Rugeley? • The car parking issue in Hednesford was to be revisited some years ago when the regeneration of the town had taken place – why has it not been revisited?
120.4	<p>CCDC Cllr Newbury agreed to report back to the Town Council on the questions raised at another time. It was noted that the decision of CCDC on the free parking was to be reported to CCDC Scrutiny Committee on Monday 8th March 2021. Town Councillors would be attending that committee.</p>

Minutes of Rugeley Town Council Full Council held online at
7.30pm Wednesday 8th April 2021.

<p>8 8.1</p>	<p>Actions Arising</p> <p>Item 120 – <u>Rugeley Free Car Parking issue</u> – the issue had been called in by Scrutiny Committee on 8th March 2021 and the offer of subsidised parking was again rejected. Cllrs expressed concern that Hednesford was not being treated the same as Rugeley Town Council by the District Council. CCDC were looking at car parking charges throughout the district. Town Clerk was asked to contact Cllr Newbury at CCDC to get formal written response to the questions raised at the February town council meeting. Town Clerk was asked to write a press release to raise this issue with the public.</p>
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Minutes of Rugeley Town Council Full Council held at the Rugeley Rose Theatre
7.30pm Wednesday 7th July 2021.

49	Free Parking Scheme
49.1	Cllr Phil Hewitt spoke about the Free Parking Scheme operating in Rugeley until 21 st September 2021. Shoppers parking in CCDC run car parks can get their parking fees refunded by collaborating local retailers when they spend more than £10 in store. The retailers will be given £500 to cover the cost of these parking fees. The funding for this has come from the Welcome Back to the High Street Fund. This fund has already paid for banners, bunting etc for the Welcome Back to the High Street Artisan Market held on 1 st June 2021.
49.2	For more details of those shops contributing to the Free Parking scheme please go to NEW Car Parking Discount Initiative Cannock Chase District Council (cannockchasedc.gov.uk) Businesses that are interested in taking up this initiative should contact Cannock Chase Council direct.