



Rugeley Town Council

Minutes of Full Council Meeting held at the Rugeley Town Council Offices
7.30pm Wednesday 7th February 2024


PRESENT:

Councillors:-	C Barkas	A Cooney
	D Gaye	I Gibson
	C Green (Chair)	K Hart
	I Hodgson	R Hughes
	A Miller	


In attendance:-

S Buxton - Town Clerk
M Matthews – Finance Officer
S Bird – Development and Theatre Director
Sandie Morris – Internal Auditor
4 members of the public

Min No	Item	Action
180 180.1	Apologies Apologies were received from Cllrs Davey, Kirkham and Pyke. Cllr Pyke has asked to give his apologies for a month due to health issues <i>Proposed:- Cllr Green; Seconded: Cllr Hart</i> Agreed that the apologies be accepted and the council send their best wishes to Cllr Pyke	
181 181.1	Declaration of personal & prejudicial interest in any item on the agenda None	
182 182.1	To receive any requests for dispensation None	
183 183.1	Audit Sandie Morris discussed with the council the internal audit she had done to date and would complete at the end of the financial year, along with the VAT issues the council was currently working on. She informed the council that she has added a	

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	paragraph re: fraud and explained that an Internal Auditor cannot guarantee fraud has not occurred after completing their work. The role of the internal auditor is to look at the processes and procedures in place. She has not found any gaps at RTC and noted that if an invoice is signed by a councillor, she has to trust that is correctly signed	
	Cllr Lyons arrived	
	The audit will be completed on the AGAR which is done after the year end closedown. It will be on the agenda for the May council meeting and then Sandie will return in July to discuss any issues.	
	Sandie Morris left the meeting	
184 184.1	<p>Chair to close meeting for public session</p> <p><i>First member of the public:-</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Freedom of Information request had been made to the Town Clerk re: cllr numbers, elections, wards, residential status of cllrs, staff appointments and budgets. All questions raised again to ensure the Council were aware of his request. 2. Water issue on Bower Lane that has been reported on several occasions and is being dealt with by STWA/South Staffs. 3. Were any of the current councillors in the post at the time of the fraud – yes, approx. 50%. Had any of them been interviewed or charged. What were the reasons no one was interviewed. <p><i>Second member of the public:-</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pizza oven, seeking confirmation it was paid from the levelling up fund. A statement was read out by the chair explaining that it had been funded through the Shared Prosperity Fund administered by CCDC. He believes this is a pointless use of funds 2. Solar panels - he has a drone and has been looking at the roof of the council buildings and wonders why 12 solar panels are facing north, and why 12 on the south are in the shadow of a building. These panels will never pay for themselves 3. Loss – the council is running at £100k loss 	
185	<p>Chair to reopen meeting</p> <p>The chair re-opened the town council meeting</p>	
186	<p>To consider approving and signing the last minutes</p> <p><i>Proposed: Cllr Hart; Seconded: Cllr Gaye</i></p> <p>Agreed that the minutes of the full council meeting held on 10th January 2024 be signed as a true and correct record after the amended of two spelling mistakes</p>	

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187	Matters arising None	
188 188.1	Budget 2024-25 Budget The budget was discussed in great depth, including the inclusion of a business interruption reserve, the Charter Fair, Christmas lights, Mindfulness garden and boardwalk and rearrangement of council reserves. The budget gives a 4% rise in the precept for a band D property. Cllrs were reminded that when putting ideas forward for next years budget new projects need to be costed out. <i>Proposed: Cllr Cooney; Seconded: Cllr Hodgson</i> Agreed that the budget for 2024/25 be approved with one abstention	
188.2	Rose Theatre Pricing Structure The proposed increased prices for next were year considered <i>Proposed:- Cllr Cooney; Seconded: Cllr Barkas</i> Agreed that the prices be increased by 15% for all new bookings and for existing books from Jan 2025, except for charity use and block bookings which would be increased by 5% <i>Proposed: Cllr Gaye; Seconded: Cllr Gibson</i> Agreed that the pricing structure be taken back to the Rose Committee	
188.3	Community Infrastructure Levy This has been considered at CEC mtg and a current update was given <i>Proposed: Cllr Hodgson; Seconded: Cllr Cooney</i> Agreed that this be referred to F&M Committee and ask them to submit a formal grant application so that it can be considered at the same time as the other grant applications	
188.4	Air Conditioning Three quotes have been received and considered by F&M, who have recommended that Staffs Air Conditioning be appointed to service our air conditioning <i>Proposed: Cllr Cooney; Seconded: Cllr Gaye</i> Cllr Barkas abstained from the vote Agreed that Staffs Air Conditioning be appointed as the contractor to service the Town Council air conditioning.	
189 189.1 189.2 189.3 189.4	To note the minutes from the following committees:- Rose Committee – 13th December 2023 Community Engagement Com’ee – 13th December 2023 Planning Committee –No December meeting Finance and Management Com’ee – 20th December 2023 Agreed that the minutes of all of the above meetings be noted	

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<p>190 190.1</p>	<p>Planning Committee Neither the December or January meetings were quorate so no business was transacted. <i>Proposed: Cllr Gaye; Seconded: Cllr Cooney</i> Agreed that the planning committees continue to meet for the rest of the year until the Annual Meeting, when the process for planning can be discussed</p>	
<p>191</p>	<p>Pedestrianisation and vehicular access Cllr Lyons provided an update. The original pedestrianisation order was drawn up between SCC and CCDC, but it is only the police who can take enforcement action/ Cllr Lyons has met Chief Inspector Moss and raised this issue and he has agreed to take this up and that the police would do a full week of action of vehicular access to the pedestrian area</p>	
<p>192 192.1 192.2</p>	<p>Board Walk Cllr Lyons provided an update Cllr Cooney informed the council about the Kai's Memory Miles walk that will take place later in the year in memory of anyone who has committed suicide in Rugeley</p>	
<p>193 193.1 193.2</p>	<p>Training Councillor training – the SPCA have recommended as many councillors as possible attend the Better Councillor training. The clerk will forward details to all councillors. A number of free courses from SCRIBE will be available in due course Staff training – Melanie Matthews has completed her FilCA qualification</p>	
<p>194</p>	<p>Parish Meeting Agreed that the annual parish meeting will take place on the evening of 24th April 2024. Previously a Community Conference has been held on the same day</p>	
<p>195</p>	<p>Recording of Meetings Cllrs were in receipt of a draft policy on the recording of meetings <i>Proposed: Cllr Cooney; Seconded: Cllr Gibson</i> Agreed that the Recording of Meetings policy be adopted</p>	
<p>196</p>	<p>Items for future meetings:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Terms of reference for committees - March - Lucy Macdonald from CCDC re: Listed buildings - Email monitoring - Recording of meetings – what constitutes a breach and how can it be enforced - Report from Practitioners' Conference for Clerks 	<p>There was an illegal interruption of the meeting by a member of public during this item</p>

Signed: 
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197	Date of next meeting The next meeting of the town council will be on Wednesday 6th March 2024	
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The meeting closed at 9.12pm

Signed: *[Signature]*
Date: *06/03/24*