

MINUTES OF COUNCIL

15 DECEMBER 2020

PRESENT:

The Mayor (Councillor Lewis), Councillors Mrs A'Barrow, Allanach, Bearne, Brader, Mrs Bragg, Mrs Brown, Brown, Butlin, Cade, Mrs Crane, Cranham, Douglas, Miss Dumbleton, Eccleson, Ellis, Mrs Garcia, Gillias, Keeling, Miss Lawrence, Lowe, McQueen, Mahoney, Mistry, Mrs New, Mrs O'Rourke, Pacey-Day, Mrs Parker, Picker, Poole, Ms Robbins, Mrs Roberts, Roberts, Roodhouse, Mrs Roodhouse, Sandison, Shera, Mrs Simpson-Vince, Srivastava and Mrs Timms.

50. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received from Councillors Leigh Hunt and Stokes.

51. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2020 were approved.

52. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

53. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor asked all Members and residents to continue to observe social distancing and good hand hygiene in order to help prevent the spread of Covid-19 and reiterated the message, "Hands, face, space" which everyone must keep to all of the time.

As residents looked forward to new freedoms to meet friends and family, whilst complying with the Christmas bubble restrictions, it was important to remember that the vast majority of exposures occurred in the home amongst friends and family. To keep each other safe everyone must continue to remember Hands; Face; Space – even within our own homes and, when hosting guests, residents were reminded to keep homes well ventilated too.

In the New Year a lateral flow testing site would be set up with colleagues in Public Health. This would help to identify otherwise undetected infections, helping reduce the spread of the virus. The Council would continue to work with health colleagues to roll out the various vaccines as they are approved.

There was promise that 2021 would be better than 2020. The Mayor urged everyone to do everything to protect one another until this pandemic has passed.

The Council was shortlisted as a finalist for the 'Council of the Year' Award at the UK Housing Awards 2020, which the Mayor was grateful to be able to attend virtually on behalf of the borough with others earlier this month.

The awards celebrated excellence in the housing sector. The council was shortlisted for its work on the regeneration projects at Biart Place and Rounds Gardens. The judging panel recognised that, from the start of the project, the safety and welfare of the Council's tenants had guided its decision-making and the way that it supported tenants. Overall, it had been a great team effort both across the Council and externally with its partners.

To make it to the finals was a great achievement and also a fantastic opportunity to highlight the Council's fast growing expertise in regeneration. The Mayor thanked all officers and Members who had been involved in the projects.

Last year some of the civic Christmas cards were posted as printed cards and for the first time a few were sent out as an electronic version. This year almost all the cards had been sent electronically with very few being printed, which had distinct advantages during the present restrictions and some environmental advantages too.

This year the Mayor included his three charities in the design of the card, which had been sent to all Members. The Mayor was very grateful to all the members of Rugby Dementia Support, Rugby Autism Network and New Directions Rugby for their contributions to the card. There had also been considerable input from members of the Council's Communications and Business Support teams as well as the Mayoral and Civic Officer. The Mayor and Mayoress thanked them all for their assistance.

54. QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 10

Councillor Douglas asked the following question of the Growth and Investment Portfolio Holder, Councillor Mrs Simpson-Vince:

Following the announced plans for a major regeneration of the town centre with the development of an ambitious new strategic masterplan, can the Portfolio Holder outline what initial plans Rugby Borough Council has to promote and maximise tourism to support the local economy?

Councillor Mrs Simpson-Vince, Growth and Investment Portfolio Holder, replied as follows:

In answer to Cllr Douglas's question, there are two current initiatives in progress that are relevant to maximising tourism in support of the local economy as described below.

Firstly, Rugby Borough Council has recently entered into a partnership with destination management organisation, Shakespeare's England (SE). SE works to promote Warwickshire as a destination for tourists in the UK and overseas and work as part of the UK VisitBritain tourism network. Whilst having a Warwickshire-wide remit, SE has in the past mainly received engagement from South Warwickshire districts. Our new partnership with them will correct this imbalance and enable the Council to participate in website promotion of Rugby's tourism assets as well as joint campaigns to attract tourists to the county, enticing them to stay in Rugby accommodation and visit heritage attractions and businesses here.

Shakespeare's England has an international reach with key members including Birmingham Airport, Royal Shakespeare Company, Warwick Castle and the British Motor Museum. The partnership with SE will ensure a collaborative and strategic approach to the Council's tourism marketing, PR, and social media activities.

As a result of this partnership, Rugby Borough Council will have a dedicated website space for the promotion of Rugby Art Gallery and Museum, World Rugby Hall of Fame, The Benn Hall and Caldecott Park. The aim is to progress and reach privately-owned hospitality and tourism venues to invite them to feature their venues on Rugby's dedicated webpage within the SE website.

The Place Marketing Officer for Rugby Borough Council is already working as part of Shakespeare's England tourism team providing the information to collaborate on tourism schemes, initiatives, and campaigns. In addition to this, the Council will be engaged with Shakespeare's England tourism forums and intelligence gathering. This will be vital for sharing best practice and to monitor the success of the schemes.

It is hoped that as we enter a recovery phase of COVID-19, then this will offer additional support to our businesses and encourage visitors and international tourism to the town. This complements our project to regenerate Rugby town centre and support the local economy as it will encourage new visitors and overnight stays.

Secondly, we are working with Warwickshire County Council, Warwickshire districts and WCC-commissioned consultants Creative Giants (CG) on a project to use art and culture to increase the vitality of vibrance of our town centres. CG will co-ordinate the delivery of artist interventions in key locations across Warwickshire and we plan to have one in Rugby through the creation of what is known as a Social Hub or Parklet. The intention is that these Parklets will activate spaces in playful ways and enable people to come together.

Artists are invited to design a Parklet-style Social Hub that includes opportunities for seating, planting and recreational activities. The briefing process will focus on the design and CG plan to pair artists with an appropriate designer to make the design feasible and suitable for outdoor spaces. As well as being inviting dwell spaces, these could also include platforms for busking and local live performance.

We plan to engage CG with our commissioned regeneration consultants to ensure that this opportunity is full explored as part of the refreshed town centre vision and masterplan.

Councillor Douglas asked if the Portfolio Holder could confirm if the World Rugby Hall of Fame would continue to be a prominent feature within the town centre. Councillor Mrs Simpson-Vince responded that discussions with World Rugby were ongoing as the contract for the Hall of Fame was due to expire in the near future. There were no current plans, however, to remove the visitor attraction.

55. REPORT OF CABINET – 7 DECEMBER 2020

RESOLVED THAT – the report be confirmed and adopted.

56. AUDIT AND ETHICS COMMITTEE – 10 NOVEMBER 2020

RESOLVED THAT – the report be confirmed and adopted.

57. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

(a) Information Governance and Agile Working Policies

Council considered the report of the Head of Communities and Homes (Part 1 – agenda item 7(a)) concerning the proposed information governance and agile working policies for the Council.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) the Agile Working policy, as set out at Appendix 1, be approved;
- (2) the Information Governance Framework, as set out at Appendix 2, be approved;
- (3) the updated Clean Desk policy, as set out at Appendix 3, be approved;
- (4) the updated Data Protection policy, as set out at Appendix 4, be approved;
- (5) the Sharing Information Safely policy, as set out at Appendix 5, be approved; and
- (6) the Information Security policy, as set out at Appendix 6, be approved.

(b) Licensing Act 2003 – Statement of Licensing Policy 2021-2026

Council considered the report of the Deputy Executive Director (Part 1 – agenda item 7(b)) concerning the Council's proposed statement of licensing policy for 2021 to 2026.

RESOLVED THAT - the Statement of Licensing Policy 2021-2026, as at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

(c) Urgent Decisions under Emergency Powers - October and December 2020

Council considered the additional agenda item of the Executive Director concerning two urgent decisions taken under emergency powers during October and December 2020.

RESOLVED THAT – the report be noted.

58. NOTICES OF MOTION PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 11

Council considered the following Motion, notice of which had been given pursuant to Standing Order 11.

The Mayor considered it advisable and convenient to deal with the Motion on the agenda at the meeting.

Councillor Sandison moved and Councillor McQueen seconded the following motion set out at item 8(a) of the agenda.

(a) "This Council congratulates St. Andrew's Church on its forthcoming 800th anniversary as a parish and civic church. The earliest record of a priest serving in Rugby is from 1221 and the church's west tower was built during the reign of Henry III (1216–1272) to serve a defensive as well as religious role and is Rugby's oldest building.

The church was altered and enlarged in the late 19th century to include a new east tower with a high spire. St. Andrew's Church is the only parish church in the world with two sets of bells, numbering 13 in total, one set being in each of the two towers. The church houses other artefacts of medieval Rugby including the 13th century parish chest and a medieval font.

St. Andrew's Church is one of only five churches in the country to have been awarded an Eco-gold award. The church has expressed its thanks to Rugby Borough Council and Warwickshire County Council for their help in working to achieve that award.

St. Andrew's Church is recognised as one of the major churches of England and its contribution to the civic, the cultural and the economic life of the parish and borough demonstrates that. The church is now looking forward to the next chapter in its development. It has aspirations to be given the honorific title of 'Minster'.

We urge this Council to:

*(a) support St Andrew's Church in its bid to become a Minster; and
(b) write to the Bishop of Coventry to support the application."*

Further to debate, the Mayor put the motion to the vote and declared it carried.

59. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

60. COMMON SEAL

It was moved by the Mayor, seconded by the Deputy Mayor and

RESOLVED THAT - the Common Seal be affixed to the various orders, deeds and documents to be made or entered into for carrying into effect the several decisions, matters and things approved by the Council and more particularly set out in the Cabinet and Committee reports adopted at this meeting.

61. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC UNDER SECTION 100(A)(4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED THAT - under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

62. PRIVATE REPORT OF CABINET – 7 DECEMBER 2020

RESOLVED THAT - the report be confirmed and adopted.

CHAIRMAN