

# MINUTES OF COUNCIL

15 DECEMBER 2021

## PRESENT:

The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Deepah Brojohomun-Roberts), Councillors Mrs Allanach, Mrs A'Barrow, Bearne, Mrs Brown, Cade, Ellis, Gillias, Mrs Hassell, Keeling, Miss Lawrence, Lewis, Lowe, Mahoney, McQueen, Mrs Maoudis, Mistry, Mrs New, Mrs O'Rourke, Picker, Poole, Rabin, Ms Robbins, Roberts, Roodhouse, Mrs Roodhouse, Sandison, Mrs Simpson-Vince, Srivastava, Ms Watson-Merret, Dr Williams and Willis.

## 68. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received from Councillors Brader, Mrs Crane, Daly, Douglas, Miss Dumbleton, Eccleson, Mrs Garcia, Mrs Parker, Shera and Mrs Timms.

## 69. MINUTES

The minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 17 November 2021 were approved.

## 70. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 7(c) of Part 1 – Appointments to Outside Bodies-Miscellaneous Appointments – Councillor Miss Lawrence (non-pecuniary interest as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors by virtue of being a Trustee of Hillmorton of Charities).

## 71. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Members had been informed that Lee Kirkbride, the Lead Officer in the Council's Communities and Projects Team, passed away unexpectedly on 26 November. Lee had been at the Council for almost 9 years, prior to which he had served with Her Majesty's Forces for 23 years.

Lee had brilliantly supported the decanting of our tenants from the high rise accommodation at Biart Place and Rounds Gardens with such kindness and had played a pivotal role in supporting the Foodbank right at the start of the pandemic. He was also the Council's Armed Forces officer champion.

The Council's thoughts were with Lee's partner, her daughter and family and friends at this difficult time. The Mayor, along with all Members and officers present at the meeting, stood in a moment's silence in memory of Lee.

(b) Case numbers of COVID continued to remain high within the borough. All adults could now register for their booster vaccine and the Mayor urged all Members to encourage residents who were eligible within their respective Wards to book as soon as possible.

## **72. QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 10**

### **A. Councillor Sandison asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lowe:**

“In light of the Council Leader’s delegated decision to support a South Warwickshire Council, when will Rugby Borough Councillors get to debate the potential impact of a new super district council on our boundaries since some of our services and officers are shared with other neighbouring authorities?”

#### **Councillor Lowe, Leader of the Council, replied as follows:**

“The much-anticipated Levelling up White Paper is forthcoming and it is key that we understand the opportunities and expectations this brings so that we can ensure this Council continues to do what is right for Rugby. I am sure that once we have had chance to digest its contents there will be a many a debate to follow.”

Councillor Sandison asked the Leader of the Council if, in light of his response, if he had ambitions elsewhere. Councillor Lowe responded that this was not the case and emphasised that the only shared service this Council had with the two district councils at Warwick and Stratford-upon-Avon was building control and that their decision to request to be merged had no impact on this local authority in any meaningful sense.

### **B. Councillor Mrs Allanach asked the Communities, Homes, Digital and Communications Portfolio Holder, Councillor Mrs Crane:**

“At the September meeting of the Council I asked you a question about the Council’s “one stop” service, Health and Safety legislation and the pandemic. In your absence I received a reply from the Leader of the Council. On 26 November the World Health Organisation designated a new mutation of the Covid-2 SARS virus as a “variant of concern”. Has the Council since conducted a fresh risk assessment of its One Stop service and if so, have the arrangements set out in the Leader of the Council’s reply changed?”

#### **Councillor Lowe, Leader of the Council (in the absence of Councillor Mrs Crane, Communities, Homes, Digital and Communications Portfolio Holder), replied as follows:**

“The Town Hall reception area has been under review during the pandemic and I am pleased to say there is a transformation to be completed by mid January to allow a more welcoming and accessible area within the Town Hall for our residents and businesses who choose to access our services in person. Clear, modern digital signage will inform users of the services, and a much larger, well ventilated area within the Town Hall will fulfil Covid-19 mitigations as much as possible. Further developments such as bookable video conferencing rooms to allow access to

selected services will also be introduced to give the flexibility our residents and businesses require.

We are extremely mindful of digital exclusion within the Borough and are dedicated to ensuring every resident and business can access services whilst at the same time doing what we can to bridge the digital gap that exists.”

Councillor Mrs Allanach welcomed the proposed changes and asked the Leader of the Council if there was a clearer timeline for these. Councillor Lowe undertook to provide Councillor Allanach with these details and emphasised that all risk assessments were continuously assessed to ensure service areas were COVID secure.

**C. Councillor Mrs Allanach asked the Growth and Investment Portfolio Holder, Councillor Mrs Simpson-Vince:**

“At the September meeting of the Council I asked you about Council staff being able to explain complex diagrams and plans. In your absence I received a reply from the Leader of the Council. Recently one of my constituents living in Hillside had difficulty understanding the plans submitted in support of planning application R21/0904 but was denied a face to face meeting with a member of the planning team. The Leader of the council has approved safe means for the customer services team to meet with members of the public. Why cannot similar arrangements be put in place to ensure planning applications are determined fairly when residents may not be able to comment on them most effectively as a result of difficult to interpret maps and diagrams?”

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

“Following discussions with the case officer, no members of the public have asked for and subsequently been denied a face to face meeting in connection with planning application R21/0904 to help understand the submitted plans. During the application process a couple of neighbours asked for help in either opening the plans online or for points of clarification in relation to the submitted plans. On both occasions responses were given and no further requests were made. However, although the Planning Service has gone fully digital, Cllr Lewis requested a paper copy of a particular plan from the case officer in relation to this application which was duly provided for him of which Cllr Allanach is aware.

Any resident or interested party can contact the relevant planning officer about a specific planning application on either a direct email address or direct telephone number to assist them in the interpretation of maps and diagrams pertinent to the submitted planning application. We will continue to review how the planning team responds to requests from the public in line with the Council’s most up to date Health and Safety Assessments and current Government guidance.”

Councillor Allanach then gave an example of a letter from the planning service which did not provide details of a direct contact number for the relevant case officer or a direct email address and suggested the Portfolio Holder may wish to review the standard letter currently being used. Councillor Mrs Simpson-Vince agreed to review the contents of the letter but emphasised that the public can contact officers to discuss planning applications.

**73. REPORT OF CABINET – 6 DECEMBER 2021**

**RESOLVED THAT** – the report of Cabinet be approved and adopted.

**74. REPORT OF OFFICERS**

**(a) Statutory Review of Gambling Policy – Statement of Principles**

Council considered the report of the Chief Officer – Regulation and Safety (Part 1 – agenda item 7(a)) concerning the statutory review of the Council's gambling policy and statement of principles.

**RESOLVED THAT** – delegated authority be given to the Licensing and Safety Committee to consider the consultation responses and adopt the Gambling Policy following the consultation period.

**(b) Modification of the Willoughby Neighbourhood Plan and Issue of Modification Document**

Council considered the report of the Chief Officer – Growth and Investment (Part 1 – 7(b)) concerning a technical modification to the Willoughby Neighbourhood Plan.

**RESOLVED THAT** –

- (1) the modifications to the Willoughby Neighbourhood Development Plan (modified plan included in Appendix 1) are accepted in accordance with Section 61M(4) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as applied by Section 38C of the Town and Country Planning Act 2004);
- (2) the Modification Document required under regulation 30 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 be approved (draft document included in Appendix 2); and
- (3) both the Willoughby Neighbourhood Development Plan and the Modification Document be published on the Council's website and any required notifications issued.

**(c) Appointments to Outside Bodies – Miscellaneous Appointments**

Council considered the report of the Chief Officer – Legal and Governance (Part 1 – 7(c)) concerning appointments to the Trustees of Hillmorton Charities.

**RESOLVED THAT** – the following appointments be made to the Trustees of Hillmorton Charities:

- (1) Mrs F Cameron be appointed to replace Mr R Price until 9 April 2022; and
- (2) Miss J Royle be re-appointed until 15 December 2025.

#### **(d) Member and officer working update**

Council considered the report of the Chief Officer – Legal and Governance (Part 1 – 7(d)) concerning an update with regard to Member and officer working.

**RESOLVED THAT** - Members note the contents of this report and refer this matter to the Scrutiny Committee for further consideration to put forward a future recommendation to Full Council.

#### **(e) Constitution update**

Council considered the report of the Chief Officer – Legal and Governance (Part 1 – 7(e)) concerning proposed changes to the Constitution's Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference following the restructure of Leadership Team.

#### **RESOLVED THAT -**

- (1) the Scheme of Delegations, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved;
- (2) the Terms of Reference, as set out in Appendix B to the report, be approved;  
and
- (3) delegated authority be given to the Monitoring Officer to implement the above recommendations and, in consultation with the Constitution Review Working Party, to make any non-material amendments.

### **75. NOTICES OF MOTION PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 11**

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

(a) Councillor Rabin moved and Councillor Poole seconded the motion as set out below.

*“Emergency services respond to around 60,000 suspected cardiac arrests every year. Unfortunately, resuscitation is considered in around 28,000. At present, fewer than 1 in 10 people survive. Prompt defibrillation can increase survival by up to 75%.*

*Public Access Defibrillators (PAD) are designed to be used by the public. When switched on they provide clear operator instructions. Although there are numerous Publicly Accessible Defibrillators throughout Rugby there is at present practically zero awareness of their presence and locations.*

*Over the last two years, Borough Councils across the country have been adding PAD sites for the benefit of their communities. Compared to most Councils, Rugby lags far behind. After some initial community engagement, I have already established a list of 47 defibrillator locations. There are more.*

*Sudden cardiac arrest can occur to anyone, at any time and at any age and it doesn't matter how fit you are. Improving awareness will save lives.*

*I, therefore, call upon the Council to approve and request action for:*

- *the creation of a web-based location map showing all Publicly Accessible Defibrillators in Rugby and a postcode look up feature on the Council's mobile app featuring the basic CPR procedure for public information; and*

*the future provision of additional defibrillators across areas of high public footfall and council-owned spaces including parking areas, public parks and leisure facilities – adding to the two 24/7 defibrillators at the Town Hall and Art Gallery.”*

Councillor Roodhouse then moved and Councillor Sandison seconded the following amendment (amendment highlighted in bold italics):

*“Emergency services respond to around 60,000 suspected cardiac arrests every year. Unfortunately, resuscitation is considered in around 28,000. At present, fewer than 1 in 10 people survive. Prompt defibrillation can increase survival by up to 75%.*

*Public Access Defibrillators (PAD) are designed to be used by the public. When switched on they provide clear operator instructions. Although there are numerous Publicly Accessible Defibrillators throughout Rugby there is at present practically zero awareness of their presence and locations.*

*Over the last two years, Borough Councils across the country have been adding PAD sites for the benefit of their communities. Compared to most Councils, Rugby lags far behind. After some initial community engagement, I have already established a list of 47 defibrillator locations. There are more.*

*Sudden cardiac arrest can occur to anyone, at any time and at any age and it doesn't matter how fit you are. Improving awareness will save lives.*

*I, therefore, call upon the Council to approve and request action for:*

- ***a high-profile public awareness campaign on the benefits of “Public Access Defibrillators” is launched with our health and community partners encouraging all defibrillator sites to register their machine on national networks (The Circuit and Heartsafe.org);***
- ***all Councillors support this campaign and are encouraged to raise awareness for the Publicly Accessible Defibrillators in their respective wards;***
- ***Rugby Borough Council's website features a clear guide to what to do in the event that someone suffers a cardiac arrest and provide links to the national networks showing locations of all registered Publicly Accessible Defibrillators; and***
- ***the future provision of additional defibrillators across areas of high public footfall and council-owned spaces including parking areas, public parks, and leisure facilities – adding to the two 24/7 defibrillators at our Town Hall and Art Gallery is considered.***

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

The Mayor then put the substantive motion to the vote and declared it carried.

**RESOLVED THAT** – the Council approves and requests action for:

- a high-profile public awareness campaign on the benefits of “Public Access Defibrillators” is launched with our health and community partners encouraging all defibrillator sites to register their machine on national networks (The Circuit and Heartsafe.org);
- all Councillors support this campaign and are encouraged to raise awareness for the Publicly Accessible Defibrillators in their respective wards;
- Rugby Borough Council’s website features a clear guide to what to do in the event that someone suffers a cardiac arrest and provide links to the national networks showing locations of all registered Publicly Accessible Defibrillators; and
- the future provision of additional defibrillators across areas of high public footfall and council-owned spaces including parking areas, public parks, and leisure facilities – adding to the two 24/7 defibrillators at our Town Hall and Art Gallery is considered.

#### **76. CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence.

#### **77. 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 reports adopted at this meeting.

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

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

**RESOLVED THAT** - under section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of information defined in paragraphs 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

## **79. PRIVATE REPORT OF OFFICERS**

### **(a) Regulation and Safety Restructure**

Council considered the private report of the Chief Officer – Regulation and Safety (Part 2 – agenda item 1(a)) concerning a proposed restructure to his service area.

#### **RESOLVED THAT –**

- (1) the proposed structure for the Regulation and Safety Team, as at Appendices 2 and 3 to the report, be approved; and
- (2) delegated authority be given to the Chief Officer – Regulation and Safety to implement the proposed structure.

### **(b) Operations and Traded Services – Recruitment and Retention**

Council considered the private report of the Chief Officer – Regulation and Safety (Part 2 – agenda item 1(b)) concerning recruitment and retention in the Operation and Traded services at the Council.

**RESOLVED THAT –** the recommendation, as detailed in the report, be approved.

**MAYOR**