

BOROUGH OF RUSHMOOR

MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL held via Microsoft Teams and streamed live on Thursday, 8th October, 2020 at 7.00 pm.

The Worshipful The Mayor (Cllr M.S. Choudhary (Chairman))
The Deputy Mayor (Cllr B.A. Thomas (Vice-Chairman))

Cllr Gaynor Austin	Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford
Cllr T.D. Bridgeman	Cllr J.B. Canty
Cllr Sue Carter	Cllr Sophia Choudhary
Cllr A.K. Chowdhury	Cllr R.M. Cooper
Cllr A.H. Crawford	Cllr P.I.C. Crerar
Cllr P.J. Cullum	Cllr K. Dibble
Cllr Veronica Graham-Green	Cllr C.P. Grattan
Cllr Christine Guinness	Cllr A.J. Halstead
Cllr L. Jeffers	Cllr Prabesh KC
Cllr Mara Makunura	Cllr J.H. Marsh
Cllr Nadia Martin	Cllr S.J. Masterson
Cllr T.W. Mitchell	Cllr Marina Munro
Cllr K.H. Muschamp	Cllr A.R. Newell
Cllr Sophie Porter	Cllr M.L. Sheehan
Cllr Calum Stewart	Cllr P.G. Taylor
Cllr M.J. Tennant	Cllr Jacqui Vosper

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr D.E. Clifford, Cllr M.J. Roberts and Cllr M.D. Smith.

Before the meeting was opened, the Mayor's Chaplain, Reverend George Newton, led the meeting in prayers.

28. **MINUTES**

It was MOVED by Cllr K.H. Muschamp; SECONDED by Cllr M.J. Tennant and

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 30th July, 2020 (copy having been circulated previously) be taken as read, approved and signed as a correct record.

29. **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- (1) The Mayor reported that he had attended a service to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VJ Day at the Cenotaph in Municipal Gardens, Aldershot on 15th August 2020. This had been an invitation only event, in accordance with the Covid-19 restrictions, and had been attended by the Deputy Lieutenant of Hampshire (The Honourable Hugo Cubitt DL), the High Sheriff of Hampshire (Reverend Sue Colman), the Aldershot Garrison Commander (Lt. Col. Paddy

Baines MBE), High Sheriff of Surrey and Chairman of Aldershot Town Football Club (Mr Shahid Azeem), representatives of the Aldershot and Farnborough Branches of the Royal British Legion, as well as standard bearers representing the Royal British Legion, Royal Air Force Association, Parachute Regimental Association and the Royal Naval Association.

- (2) The Mayor reported that, on 3rd September 2020, he had attended a short and poignant flag raising ceremony at the Council Offices to mark Merchant Navy Day.

30. STANDING ORDER 8 - QUESTIONS

The Mayor reported that no questions had been submitted under Standing Order 8.

31. NOTICE OF MOTION - COVID-19 TESTING

The Council was asked to consider a Motion which had been submitted by Cllr Sophie Porter in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 9 (1):

“In the light of evidence about:

- the recent difficulties faced by Rushmoor residents in accessing Covid-19 testing; and
- the increasing number of Covid-19 cases in Rushmoor, particularly Aldershot Town and Hawley Lane and Fox Lane areas;

this Council resolves as a matter of urgency to establish a Covid-19 testing site in the Borough in co-operation with NHS Test and Trace but, if necessary, independently, so that all Rushmoor residents who have Covid-19 symptoms can access the testing they need when they need it.”

In moving the Motion, Cllr Porter made an amendment to the wording, as follows:

“In the light of evidence about:

- the recent difficulties faced by Rushmoor residents in accessing Covid-19 testing; and
- the increasing number of Covid-19 cases in Rushmoor;

this Council applauds the work done to date to establish a Covid-19 testing station in the Borough in co-operation with Test and Trace as rapidly as possible, in order that all Rushmoor residents who have Covid-19 symptoms can access the testing they need when they need it.

Should it prove to be necessary, this Council resolves to seek all other means by which to establish such a testing station.”

The amended Motion received the support of the seconder, Cllr Sue Carter and, with the leave of the Council, the amended Motion therefore became the substantive Motion for debate.

Speaking on her Motion, Cllr Porter stated that, in view of the imminent announcement regarding a mobile testing site, she wanted to thank publicly the emergency planning and engineering teams for their hard work on establishing a mobile testing site in the Borough.

Cllr Porter advised Members that the previous month some residents had reported that they had been unable to get a Covid-19 antigen test. A survey of the local area had showed residents being offered tests in Scotland, the Isle of Wight and Northern Ireland; the latter two would have involved a ferry ride, putting others at increased risk of contracting the virus.

Members were advised that Covid-19 tests were carried out through a number of different routes:

- Pillar 1 - Swab tests in Public Health England labs and NHS hospitals
- Pillar 2 - Swab testing for the wider population
- Pillar 3 - Serology testing for antibodies
- Pillar 4 - Surveillance testing

Information about these pillars was outlined in the Department of Health and Social Care paper titled "Coronavirus: scaling up our testing programmes", which also stated that "anyone who needs a test should have one". Cllr Porter questioned this statement as Rushmoor residents had been unable to access tests. Cllr Porter stated that the Council would like to establish a permanent Pillar 2 testing site for those who had symptoms as per the Government guidelines.

Cllr Porter said that the track, trace and isolate system had been developed to reduce the risk of transmission of Covid-19 and was of the opinion that, if one element of this did not function, the whole system would break down and the virus would be at risk of getting out of control. Cllr Porter advised Members that an article in the British Medical Journal on Covid-19 mass testing had summed up local testing sites well - "The system must ensure that testing is accessible, trusted, and tailored to all sections of society (especially ethnic minority groups and those at disadvantage) - otherwise those who most need testing will not be reached". Cllr Porter queried why Rushmoor's residents were expected to travel long distances to be tested and felt that localised testing was important. This was because it allowed for a local positive rate to be confirmed which was a crucial metric as it measured how adequately regions were dealing with the virus relative to their population size.

Cllr Porter said that her passion to improve the offerings on testing capacity and improve the test, trace and isolate system locally stemmed from her personal battles with Covid-19, which she detailed for Members. Cllr Porter also referred to the sad death of the former Deputy Mayor, Cllr Frank Rust, who lost his life to the virus. As a NHS employee, Cllr Porter stressed how important testing was within the system of test, track and trace and urged Members to support the Amended Motion to ensure

that, if the Council was unable to secure a permanent testing site in the Borough, the Council would use any means at its disposal to establish a testing site in Rushmoor.

During debate, it was announced to Members that, thanks to the efforts of officers who had worked so hard on this issue, the Borough had been successful in securing a mobile testing unit on two days per week. In summing up, Cllr Porter stressed the need therefore for the Council to get a permanent testing station for the Borough. This would be the best outcome for the Borough's residents.

The Motion was put to the Meeting. There voted FOR: 34; AGAINST: 0 and the Motion was **DECLARED CARRIED** unanimously.

32. **RECOMMENDATION OF THE CABINET**

The Operational Services Portfolio Holder (Cllr M.L. Sheehan) introduced the Report of the Cabinet Meeting held on 11th August, 2020 which recommended proposals for the future delivery of the Council's CCTV service and associated budget provision following a recent review. It was MOVED by Cllr M.L. Sheehan and SECONDED by Cllr K.H. Muschamp – That approval be given to:

- (i) an additional revenue budget of £10,000 to meet the costs of these works in financial year 2020/21;
- (ii) a separate capital budget programme of works of £400,000 to upgrade the Council's CCTV camera stock and network to a partially wireless system in preparation for the change; and
- (iii) a revenue budget of £75,000 in 2021/22 for the decommissioning of the current CCTV control room.

There voted FOR: 33; AGAINST:0; ABSTAINED: 1 and the Recommendations were **DECLARED CARRIED**.

33. **QUESTIONS FOR THE CABINET**

The Mayor reported that one question had been submitted by Cllr M.J. Roberts for response by the Planning and Economy Portfolio Holder (Cllr Marina Munro) about housing associations' rent and service charges.

In response, Cllr Munro stated that, unfortunately, the Council did not collect the information requested by Cllr Roberts. However, the Government had restricted the amount Registered Providers could increase rent charges to CPI plus 1% each year. Service charges were handled differently and are set on a block by block basis and therefore based on individual costs. Average information across Registered Providers was not held.

34. **REPORTS OF CABINET AND COMMITTEES**

RESOLVED: That the Reports of the following meetings be received:

Cabinet	11th August 2020
Cabinet	15th September 2020
Development Management Committee	22nd July 2020
Licensing, Audit and General Purposes Committee	28th July 2020
Development Management Committee	19th August 2020
Development Management Committee	16th September 2020

35. **REPORTS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND POLICY AND PROJECT ADVISORY BOARD**

RESOLVED: That the Reports of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23rd July 2020, Policy and the Project Advisory Board held on 25th August and 3rd September 2020 be received.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm.
