

BOROUGH OF RUSHMOOR

MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL held on Thursday, 25th February, 2021 at 7.00 pm via Microsoft Teams and streamed live.

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

Cllr Gaynor Austin
Cllr T.D. Bridgeman
Cllr Sue Carter
Cllr A.K. Chowdhury
Cllr R.M. Cooper
Cllr P.I.C. Crerar
Cllr K. Dibble
Cllr C.P. Grattan
Cllr A.J. Halstead
Cllr Prabesh KC
Cllr J.H. Marsh
Cllr S.J. Masterson
Cllr Marina Munro
Cllr A.R. Newell
Cllr M.L. Sheehan
Cllr Calum Stewart
Cllr M.J. Tennant
Cllr Jacqui Vosper

Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford
Cllr J.B. Canty
Cllr Sophia Choudhary
Cllr D.E. Clifford
Cllr A.H. Crawford
Cllr P.J. Cullum
Cllr Veronica Graham-Green
Cllr Christine Guinness
Cllr L. Jeffers
Cllr Mara Makunura
Cllr Nadia Martin
Cllr T.W. Mitchell
Cllr K.H. Muschamp
Cllr M.J. Roberts
Cllr M.D. Smith
Cllr P.G. Taylor
Cllr B.A. Thomas

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Sophie Porter.

Before the meeting was opened, the Mayor led the Council in a period of silence in memory of those who had lost their lives during the period of the pandemic, including Captain Sir Tom Moore.

43. MINUTES

It was MOVED by Cllr D.E. Clifford; SECONDED by Cllr K.H. Muschamp and

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 3rd December, 2020 (copy having been circulated previously) be taken as read, approved and signed as a correct record.

44. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Mayor reported that, on 22nd February 2021, it had been the 49th anniversary of the IRA bombing of the officers' mess at 16 Parachute Brigade Headquarters, which had killed seven people and injured a further nineteen.
- (2) The Mayor stated that, earlier that evening, the Council had respected a period of silence for those who had lost their lives to the coronavirus. The Mayor

expressed his wish, when the time was right, for the Council to be able to join together as a community to remember and pay their respects.

He considered that a glimmer of hope had appeared through the creation of a vaccine against Covid-19 and its roll-out to all adults in the UK. Although it was early days, the Mayor hoped that the vaccination of people around the world would mean that the process of slowly returning to normal life could be commenced.

The Mayor reported that he would be visiting Rushmoor's vaccination centres and the Covid-19 testing centre to thank all the volunteers and staff running the centres.

45. STANDING ORDER 8 - QUESTIONS

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

46. NOTICES OF MOTION

The Council was asked to consider two Motions which had been submitted in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 9 (1).

(1) Commonwealth and Gurkha Veterans

Cllr Nadia Martin introduced her Motion and said that, since submitting her Motion she had been honoured to have inspired the Leader of the Council to take action and write that day to relevant Members of Parliament on the issues raised within her Motion. Cllr Martin stated that she felt that this was a great step in the right direction not only for Commonwealth and Gurkha soldiers and veterans in Rushmoor, but also for all those who had served across the country. Cllr Martin then proposed an Amendment to her Motion.

It was MOVED by Cllr Martin and SECONDED by Cllr T.W. Mitchell – That the Motion be amended as follows:

“Rushmoor Borough Council are aware of the difficulties experienced by Commonwealth and Gurkha veterans, many of whom live in Aldershot, Home of the British Army, and wish to ensure that those who are currently experiencing problems, whether financial or immigration, are not disadvantaged whilst their applications for visas are ongoing.

To that end, Council records its thanks to the Leader of the Council for writing to the Prime Minister, the Minister of State for Immigration, and the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Minister for Defence People and Veterans) outlining the Council's cross-party support for all Commonwealth and Gurkha veterans who have served a minimum of 4 years being granted the automatic, free-of-charge right to remain in the UK and for any veteran who completes 12 years of service being automatically given British Citizenship.

We further hope that the above press the Government for a change in the legislation on visas and citizenship that affects Commonwealth and Gurkha veterans who have served Her Majesty The Queen and this country diligently and honourably.”

With the consent of the Council, the Amendment then became the Substantive Motion. During discussion, Members referred to the current high costs faced by Commonwealth and Gurkha veterans in the processing of visas and citizenship applications. It was also mentioned that cross-party support for the Motion should give a clear message that Rushmoor was united in its message to Government that those men and women from the Commonwealth and Nepal who had served in Britain’s armed forces and put themselves in harm’s way should have the opportunity to apply for British Citizenship and visas without cost.

Members were in support of the letter sent by the Leader of the Council to the Government urging the Government to make changes to the process for applying for British citizenship, permanent residency and associated rights for Commonwealth and Gurkha veteran soldiers who had served in the British Armed Forces and for their families too. It was noted that the letter to the Government celebrated the significant contribution that Commonwealth and Gurkha soldiers had made to the British Armed Forces and to the local community in Rushmoor. The letter recognised the existing barriers to British Citizenship faced by Commonwealth and Gurkha veterans, which included significant cost and a challenging process to follow. The letter acknowledged that the Ministry of Defence had recently announced its intention to hold a public consultation exercise on the issue of settlement fees with the aim of providing greater simplicity and flexibility. The letter concluded by stating Rushmoor’s intention to engage in the public consultation exercise and called on the Government to take steps to reduce the barriers to applying for permanent residency, citizenship and associated rights for Commonwealth and Gurkha soldiers and their families. Members were urged to support the Motion.

The Amendment was put to the meeting. There voted FOR: 35; AGAINST: 0; and the Motion was **DECLARED CARRIED**.

(2) **Devereux House**

It was MOVED by Cllr C.J. Stewart and SECONDED by Cllr Veronica Graham-Green - That

“This Council notes the sad closure of Devereux House (formerly the Farnborough and Cove War Memorial Hospital) and pays tribute to the extraordinary work of its staff and volunteers in the service of our Borough over the past 100 years.

In addition, this Council notes its longstanding support for the Trust, as well as the generosity of volunteers, local charitable organisations and the wider community over many years.

This Council affirms its commitment to endeavouring to further the legacy of the Trust, alongside its partners, and continue honouring the fallen of the First World War.”

In introducing his Motion, Cllr Stewart said that it was very sad for him, fellow Trustees and many others that Devereux House had closed. It had been his privilege to serve as a Trustee, representing the Council since his election onto the Council in 2019. Cllr Stewart advised that, in the aftermath of World War 1, public meetings had been held all over the country to discuss how to remember the fallen. The residents of Farnborough, Cove and South Hawley had decided unanimously that they would welcome a living memorial and something practical for the community as a war memorial. A private house in Albert Road, Farnborough had been purchased and a cottage hospital had been created and had been first run by volunteers. By 1948 it had been taken over by the newly formed NHS. In 1974, with the opening of Frimley Park Hospital, the cottage hospital had closed its doors to patients and for a short period housed a number of Council departments. Not long afterwards, the Farnborough and Cove War Memorial Hospital Trust had been formed and Devereux House came into being. It had been named after Councillor Lieutenant Colonel Robert Devereux who had worked tirelessly for its creation. Lieutenant Colonel Devereux was also the first Honorary Alderman of the Borough of Rushmoor.

Cllr Stewart stated that, for the last 42 years, Devereux House had been a much loved and well respected residential care home and a crucial lifeline for many residents in their later years. As well as being a care home, Devereux House had also offered day care for 60-70 people in the form of personal care, hot meals and respite for carers. Since established, Devereux House had always been operated as a registered charity, run by volunteers and heavily reliant on the generosity of local people. Such organisations as the League of Friends and local Rotary Clubs had helped to keep Devereux House going for nearly 50 years. As well as support from the Council, Devereux House had also received assistance from central Government and Hampshire County Council. However, the financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic had been too great for such a small charity and sadly Devereux House had had to cease operating.

Cllr Stewart paid particular tribute to Maureen Kayll and Honorary Alderman John Debenham MBE who were founders of the Farnborough and Cove Hospital War Memorial Trust and had helped to establish the care facilities at Devereux House. Cllr Stewart also wanted to pay tribute to Terri Wilcox who had led the Trust during its last, difficult year. Cllr Stewart was grateful to the countless staff and volunteers who had donated so much of their life to Devereux House. He advised Members that the physical war memorial at Devereux House would be given to Knellwood Residential and Care Home to house with its own.

Cllr Stewart hoped that Members would support the Motion, paying tribute to Devereux House, staff and volunteers who had given so much of their life in the service of the Borough over the last 100 years.

During discussion, Members spoke of their experiences of and associations with Devereux House. A question was raised regarding the future of the building and the Leader of the Council advised that the Council was currently talking to a number of organisations about the future use of the building and that this matter would be brought back to the Council in the near future.

The Motion was put to the Meeting. There voted FOR: 33; AGAINST: 0 and the Motion was **DECLARED CARRIED**.

47. MAYOR-ELECT AND DEPUTY MAYOR-ELECT 2021/22

The Chairman of the Licensing, Audit and General Purposes Committee (Cllr S.J. Masterson) reported that the Committee had considered the nominations for the Mayor-Elect and the Deputy Mayor-Elect for 2021/22 at its meeting on 25th January, 2021. Having regard to the criteria adopted by the Council, the Committee had agreed to recommend that:

- (i) Cllr B.A. Thomas be selected as Mayor-Elect for the Municipal Year 2021/22; and
- (ii) Cllr C.P. Grattan be selected as Deputy Mayor-Elect for the Municipal Year 2021/22.

It was MOVED by Cllr S.J. Masterson; SECONDED by Cllr Mara Makunura – That the Recommendations of the Licensing, Audit and General Purposes Committee be approved in respect of the Mayor-Elect and Deputy Mayor-Elect.

There voted FOR: 34; AGAINST: 0 and the Motion was **DECLARED CARRIED**.

48. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CABINET AND COMMITTEES

(1) Annual Capital Strategy 2021/22

Cllr P.G. Taylor introduced the Report of the Cabinet meeting held on 16th February 2021, which recommended the approval of the Capital Strategy 2021/22, including the Prudential Indicators for Capital Finance. It was MOVED by Cllr P.G. Taylor; SECONDED by Cllr D.E. Clifford – That approval be given to the Capital Strategy 2020/21 and Prudential Indicators.

There voted FOR: 34; AGAINST: 0; ABSTAINED: 1 and the Recommendations were **DECLARED CARRIED**.

(2) Annual Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Non-Treasury Investment Strategy 2021/22

Cllr P.G. Taylor introduced the Report of the Cabinet meeting held on 16th February 2021 which recommended the approval of: the Treasury Management Strategy and Non-Treasury Investment Strategy 2021/22, including the borrowing and investment strategies and treasury management indicators for capital finance for 2021/22 and the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement. It was MOVED by Cllr P.G. Taylor; SECONDED by Cllr D.E. Clifford – That approval be given to the Treasury Management Strategy and Non-Treasury Investment Strategy 2021.

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

(3) Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Council Tax Level 2021/22

Cllr D.E. Clifford introduced the Report of the Cabinet meeting held on 16th February 2021 which recommended the approval of the Revenue Budget, Capital Programme, Council Tax Level and Council Tax Support Scheme for 2021/22.

- (i) It was MOVED by Cllr D.E. Clifford; SECONDED by Cllr P.G. Taylor – That, approval be given to the following recommendations set out in the Budget Booklet:
 - (a) The Executive Head of Finance's report under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, as set out in Appendix A;
 - (b) the General Fund Revenue Budget Summary, set out in Appendix B;
 - (c) the additional items for inclusion in the budget, set out in Appendix 2(CAB);
 - (d) the Council Tax Requirement of £6,927,715 for this Council;
 - (e) the Council Tax level for Rushmoor Borough Council's purposes of £214.42 for a Band D property in 2021/22 (an increase of £5);
 - (f) the Capital Programme, set out in Appendix 3(CAB);
 - (g) the Strategy for the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts, set out in Appendix 4(CAB); and
 - (h) the proposed transfers to and from earmarked reserves in 2021/22 and the holding of reserves, as set out in the Cabinet Report (Appendix B); and
- (ii) Approval be given to the following, as detailed in Report No. FIN2030:
 - (a) following the review of Council Tax Support by the Task and Finish Group, the current scheme for working age customers continue for 2021/22 with the usual alignment to Housing Benefit Rates (this did not require consultation); and
 - (b) in light of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, a fundamental review of the Council Tax Support Scheme be deferred until 2021/22.

Following debate, the Recommendations were put to the meeting. On a Recorded Vote, there voted FOR: Cllrs Mrs. D.B. Bedford, J.B. Canty, Sue Carter, Sophia Choudhary, A.K. Chowdhury, D.E. Clifford, R.M. Cooper, P.I.C. Crerar, P.J. Cullum, Veronica Graham-Green, L. Jeffers, Prabesh KC, Mara Makunura, S.J. Masterson, Marina Munro, K.H. Muschamp, A.R. Newell, M.L. Sheehan, M.D. Smith, C.J. Stewart, P.G. Taylor, M.J. Tennant, Jacqui Vosper and the Deputy Mayor (Cllr B.A. Thomas) (24); AGAINST: Cllrs Gaynor Austin, T.D. Bridgeman, A.H. Crawford, K. Dibble, C.P. Grattan, Christine Guinness, Nadia Martin and M.J. Roberts (8); and

ABSTAINED: Cllr T.W. Mitchell and the Mayor (Cllr M.S. Choudhary) (2) and the Recommendations were **DECLARED CARRIED**;

(4) Review of Rushmoor's Polling Districts and Polling Places

Cllr S.J. Masterson introduced the Report of the Licensing, Audit and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 25th January 2021, which recommended the approval of proposed permanent changes to polling districts and polling places. It was MOVED by Cllr S.J. Masterson; SECONDED by Cllr Mara Makunura – That approval be given to proposed permanent changes to polling districts and polling places, as set out in the Report.

There voted FOR: 34; AGAINST: 0 and the Recommendations were **DECLARED CARRIED**.

49. THE COUNCIL TAX 2021/22

It was MOVED by Cllr D.E. Clifford; SECONDED by Cllr P.G. Taylor – That

- (i) it be noted that the Council calculated the amount of 32,309.09 as its Council Tax Base for the year 2021/22 in accordance with Section 31B(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Localism Act 2011 (the 'Act').
- (ii) the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2021/22 in accordance with Sections 31 and Sections 34 to 36 of the Act:
 - (a) £85,708,962 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act
 - (b) £78,781,247 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
 - (c) £6,927,715 being the amount by which the aggregate at 2(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 2(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year
 - (d) £214.42 being the amount at (ii)(c) above, all divided by the amount at 1 above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.

(e)

Valuation Band

Rushmoor Borough
Council

A

£142.95

B

£166.77

C

£190.60

D	£214.42
E	£262.07
F	£309.72
G	£357.37
H	£428.84

being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at (ii)(d) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands;

- (iii) it be noted that for the year 2021/22 Hampshire County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire, and Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below:

Precepting Authority	Precept Amount
Hampshire County Council (HCC)	£43,631,811
Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire (PCCH)	£7,316,716
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority (HIWFRA)	£2,275,529

Valuation Band	HCC	PCCH	HIWFRA
A	£900.30	£150.97	£46.95
B	£1,050.35	£176.14	£54.78
C	£1,200.40	£201.30	£62.60
D	£1,350.45	£226.46	£70.43
E	£1,650.55	£276.78	£86.08
F	£1,950.65	£327.11	£101.73
G	£2,250.75	£377.43	£117.38
H	£2,700.90	£452.92	£140.86

- (iv) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (ii)(e) and (iii) above, the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2021/22 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation Band	TOTAL
A	£1,241.17
B	£1,448.04
C	£1,654.90

D	£1,861.76
E	£2,275.48
F	£2,689.21
G	£3,102.93
H	£3,723.52

- (v) That the Council determines that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2021/22 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Following debate, the Motion was put to the meeting. On a Recorded Vote, there voted FOR: Cllrs Mrs. D.B. Bedford, J.B. Canty, Sue Carter, Sophia Choudhary, A.K. Chowdhury, D.E. Clifford, R.M. Cooper, P.I.C. Crerar, P.J. Cullum, Veronica Graham-Green, L. Jeffers, Prabesh KC, Mara Makunura, S.J. Masterson, Marina Munro, K.H. Muschamp, A.R. Newell, M.L. Sheehan, M.D. Smith, C.J. Stewart, P.G. Taylor, M.J. Tennant, Jacqui Vosper and the Deputy Mayor (Cllr B.A. Thomas) (24); AGAINST: Cllrs Gaynor Austin, T.D. Bridgeman, A.H. Crawford, K. Dibble, C.P. Grattan, Christine Guinness, Nadia Martin and M.J. Roberts (8); and ABSTAINED: Cllr T.W. Mitchell and the Mayor (Cllr M.S. Choudhary) (2) and the Recommendations were **DECLARED CARRIED**.

50. QUESTIONS FOR THE CABINET

The Mayor reported that two questions had been submitted for response by Members of the Cabinet.

- (1) The first question had been submitted by Cllr P.J. Cullum for response by the Leader of the Council (Cllr D.E. Clifford) and related to the role of the private sector in the response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

In response, the Leader of the Council (Cllr D.E. Clifford) paid tribute to the many organisations in the private sector which has supported the response. In particular he referred to local pubs, supermarkets and couriers who had supported the call for help in donating and delivering food and essential items, including medicines, to the Borough's residents.

- (2) The second question had been submitted by Cllr Sue Carter for response by the Democracy, Strategy and Partnerships Portfolio Holder (Cllr A.R. Newell) and related to how long the Borough's Covid-19 test centre would be running, what the capacity was for testing per day and whether people who come to work in the Borough were also eligible to use the test centre.

In response, Cllr Newell stated that the local community testing centre at Farnborough Leisure Centre had opened earlier that week and was due to run initially for a period of six weeks. The Director of Public Health at Hampshire County Council was leading the programme and any decision to extend it beyond six weeks would be with Hampshire. Cllr Newell confirmed that anyone who lived or worked in Hampshire was eligible to use the Rushmoor test centre. In terms of capacity planning, it was estimated that up to 9,600 people per week could use the test centre. However, there was the ability to adjust the capacity to accommodate local

demand and there was an ongoing communications campaign to encourage anyone eligible to come forward for testing.

51. **REPORTS OF CABINET AND COMMITTEES**

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

Cabinet	8th December 2020
Cabinet	19th January 2021
Licensing, Audit and General Purposes	23rd November 2020
Development Management	20th January 2021
Licensing, Audit and General Purposes	25th January 2021

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

RESOLVED: That the Reports of the meetings of the Policy and Project Advisory Board held on 25th November 2020 and 27th January 2021 and the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 4th February 2021 be received.

The meeting closed at 10.11 pm.
