



RAYLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL
The Pavilion, King George V Playing Field, Bull Lane,
Rayleigh, Essex, SS6 8JD
Tel: 01268 741880
Email: clerk@rayleightowncouncil.gov.uk
www.rayleightowncouncil.gov.uk
VAT number: 830 7558 23

Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council
Held on **Monday 13th February 2023 at 7.30pm**
at The Pavilion, King George V Playing Field, Bull Lane, Rayleigh,

19/23 Those present and apologies for absence.

Chair D Mercer.

Councillors D Belton, S Belton, E Brewer, C Callis, E Callis, R Dowell, R Dray, J Jacobs, J Lumley, , R Milne, J Newport, C Pavelin, C Roe, B Smart, D Sperring, C Stanley, I Ward.

Not present Cllr Lambourne.

Also present Assistant Clerk. County Councillors Lee Scott and Cllr Lauren Shaw for item 22/23. Seven members of the public.

Resolved. The council accepts apologies for absence from J Burton, S Page, J Sawford, J Waight. Proposed Cllr Mercer and carried unanimously.

20/23 Declaration of members' interests.

Cllrs Lumley and Newport declared interest as County and District Councillors.

Cllrs D Belton, R Milne, C Roe, D Sperring, C Stanley, I Ward declared interests as District Councillors.

Cllr I Ward declared interest as a committee member of 1476 Squadron ATC.

Cllrs Lumley and Sperring declared interest as Governors at Edward Frances Schools.

21/23 Public forum

There were eight members of the public present. Two of whom spoke on behalf of a recently felled tree in Ashingdon Parish expressing their frustration with the County Council's disregard for public opinion that wished to save it. Concern was also expressed about the dangerous nature of the road junction that is being built on the site. A particular plea was made on behalf of the fallen tree, objecting to the lack of engagement from the County Council when residents wished to challenge the decision. The speaker asked if Cllrs Scott and Shaw were going to resign.

22/23 To receive an update on highways matters from Cllr Lee Scott

In response to the comments from the public, Cllr Scott pointed out that decisions were collective and not made by individual councillors. Community Safety was the responsibility of his colleague Cllr Waglam. As for the specific concerns about local wishes to save the tree, the County Council can only operate within the law and there

was nothing they could do about a high court judgment and the developer's right to prosecute their business.

It was agreed that cuttings and acorns from the tree be propagated and added to the ECC tree planting programme.

All County Councillors are aware that they are being judged on the poor state of the roads and have allocated an addition £9 million for highways repairs; £4 million will be allocated to footway maintenance and £3 million to pothole repairs. These repairs may not be done as quickly as residents would like, and some will be makesafe repairs in advance of a proper job. It was acknowledged that the extra money will not solve all the problems, but it will help.

Cllr Scott confirmed that the streetlights will not be switched-off earlier, nor are they being dimmed.

To help the police manage speeding, they are being trained on the use of TruCam laser devices. These are improved hand-held speed cameras which will be rolled-out over the county and give the police additional power to address concerns about speeding.

In response to these comments, the Town Councillors raised concerns about potholes, considering some of them to be very dangerous and noting that it was deplorable that the roads have been allowed to deteriorate. This represents very bad value for money.

Moving to specific complaints. Grove Road is a particularly bad example of a bus route that needs extensive maintenance. The footways are in a poor state which make it difficult for the less mobile to access the buses.

It was reported that repairs to the footways in the high street occasionally used inappropriate material when paving slabs have been repaired by using tarmac. This is not just an aesthetic problem as the dark patches can be seen as holes by those with perception issues. The slabs themselves can cause problems as they become trip hazards.

Reminding the Town Council about the £4 million additional funding for footway repairs, it is expected that identifying necessary repairs will be Member-led as the local Councillor will have the best local knowledge. Reporting the problems will be through an online system which will be made as easy as possible. Cllr Newport confirmed that the system works but noted that not all County Councillors have taken advantage of the scheme.

An outstanding problem with the streetlights over the taxi rank will be addressed when Cllr Shaw meets representatives of UK Power Networks next week. The problems caused by the stumps of decommissioned lighting poles will also be raised.

Moving to a more general question and answer session Cllr Scott was asked if his department could come-up with a system where adjacent potholes are repaired at the same time. He acknowledged that this could frustrate residents but pointed-out that the repair teams could only work to their job sheets, and there have been many occasions where residents have refused to move their vehicles restricting access to the area needing repair. Cllr Scott will be meeting with officers to consider how this can be managed.

In response to a question about the availability of high-speed pothole repair tools, Cllr Scott confirmed that they are not necessarily as good as claimed but they are being evaluated.

A request was made to have pedestrian crossing road markings repainted and the beacons refitted with halo lighting.

The speed table in Grove Road needs repair. Warwick Road, Clarence Road Chase Road and Grove Road are missing signage.

A request was made to have pedestrian refuges maintained, with their reflectors cleaned and lights repaired.

Keeping footways clear is another priority. Residents with visual impairment or physical mobility problems can experience problems with blocked or reduced pathways. Sometimes the problem is vegetation from private property but it can often be cars parked on the footway. Currently this is not an offence, so County Councils are requesting the same powers to manage pavement parking as are given to the London Boroughs. Dangerous driveways and pavements will be investigated within ten working days.

It is not widely understood that County Council cannot prevent private contractors from doing works on the highway, and they have little control over the quality of their work when making good. Highways are investigating options for putting conditions on the work and establishing a bond that can be held against satisfactory completion.

In conclusion, there are known problems with potholes, streetlights, and pedestrian properties but they are being addressed by the increase in revenue spending mentioned previously. This £9 Million will be a big help in managing the repair programme but will not address the need for capital investment. Some County Councillors recognise this and are keen to increase the investment in long term work.

23/23 County and District Councillors' updates District Council.

The District Council held their business awards event on 26th January. It was good to see lots of Rayleigh businesses involved at a well-received and successful event.

District Council is considering a proposal to separate the collection of green waste and food waste.

Budget will be set on 21st February.

County Council.

With reference to the discussion with Cllr Scott, most of the County Council's £2 billion budget is spent on social care, the elderly and support for education. An additional £2 million is being made available for care of the elderly, £2 million more for social care and an additional £1.5 million for schools

24/23 Correspondence.

None this month.

25/23 Consultations.

None this month.

26/23 Minutes of Town Council meetings.

Resolved. The Council approves the minutes of the Town Council meeting that was held on 9th January 2023 as a true record with the following amendment. Proposed Cllr Mercer and carried unanimously.

11/23 Cllr smart was left off the list of members of dementia working group.

Resolved. The Council notes the Personnel minutes for 20th January 2023 with the following amendment. Proposed Cllr Mercer and carried unanimously.

PER1/23 Cllr Dray gave his apologies.

Resolved. The Council notes the Policy and Finance Minutes for 30th January 2023. Proposed Cllr Mercer carried unanimously.

Resolved. The Council notes the Planning Minutes of 3rd and 9th January and 6th February 2023. Proposed Cllr Mercer and carried unanimously.

27/23 Finance.

- a. To receive a list of all payments up to the end of January 2023.
- b. To receive a list of budgetary information on all accounts.

Resolved. The Council notes the budgetary information and confirms that the account balances are: -

Unity Trust Bank – Current Account £165,940.41

Unity Bank – Instant Account £4,557.81

Nationwide Account £163,730.52

HSBC (KGV Trust) - £106,698.37

NatWest Accounts (as of 31st December 2022) £231,661.30

(as of 31st January 2023) £31,817.31

Proposed Cllr Mercer and carried unanimously.

The Council noted that the HSBC account was closed on 13th February with a final balance of £106,698 being the £106,439 originally transferred, the £226 remaining in the RTC account and the £33 interest made in the meanwhile.

28/23 To Consider 20's Plenty Speed limit Scheme

To consider introduction 20's plenty and safer streets programme.

The Councillors noted that Rayleigh Town Council might be too big and diverse for this programme to work over the entire parish, but it does not have to be a blanket enforcement. A suggestion that it could be put forward for estate roads, particularly those around schools was countered by the reminder that most of the schools are on main roads, so this would not help. Schools do not have parking areas and are not equipped to enforce the three parking rules of care, consideration, and caution of the 3PR scheme.

An alternative approach would be to selectively survey the parish and identify areas of concern and promote roads that would be suitable for 20mph limit. Some roads, like Grove Road are seen as rat runs that could be calmed. Residents, public transport, and utility companies would have to be consulted before any changes made. It may not be enforceable but could be made a moral obligation. It may not be respected, but will bring advantages in improved air quality, reduced damage to roads and better safety.

Noting Cllr Scott's comments about improved enforcement of speeding violations it may be more practicable to make more of enforcing the existing 30 m.p.h. limit. As there is no Highways money available, the Town Council could fund replacement or new signs if appropriate.

In conclusion, speed enforcement lies with the County Council safer streets programme and is not a matter for the town council. The Council supports 20s plenty in principle but prefer to lobby directly.

29/23 Chairman's Engagements

- 18th January 2023 - The Jack Petchy Awards at the Towngate Theatre, Basildon
- 27th January 2023 - Holocaust Memorial Day at the Mill Hall (RDC event)
- 10th February 2023 - Unveiling of the 1,000-year-old Rayleigh Castle timbers at the Rayleigh Town Museum.
- 12th February Celestial Church of Jesus Rehoboth grand reopening.

30/23 Matters for Information

a. Neighbourhood plan – dates for neighbourhood plan

Adrianna Jones will be attending on March 1st at 7.30 for a training course on Neighbourhood Planning. Eleven councillors are currently confirmed as attending.

b. CCTV

Site visit to Chelmsford monitoring office arranged. Site visit to Brentwood monitoring office pending their refurbishment.

c. Audio Visual

A Quotation for four ceiling-mounted microphones, one camera with 110° field of view, audio-visual mixer with capability to merge the projector output with the recording stream. Cost £7,000 with two days onsite to install.

d. Standing Orders Training

Training to be offered to all Councillors 7pm February 2023.

e. First aid training course.

To note that first aid training was undertaken by two members of staff on 2nd February.

31/23 Items for later agendas

Waheed Khan visit

Meeting closed 8.55