

# SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL

## LLR and Governance Sub-Committee

Minutes for the meeting held on Tuesday 30 May 2017 at 7.00pm at the Sandbach Literary Institution, Hightown.

In Attendance: Cllr K Haines  
Cllr M Forster (Chairman)  
Cllr P Eaton  
Cllr R Hovey  
Cllr B Davies  
Cllr S Corcoran (arrived 7.15pm)

There was one member of the public in attendance.

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The Clerk opened the meeting and asked for nominations for Sub-Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

**RESOLVED:** that Cllr Forster be appointed Chairman and that Cllr Davies is appointed Vice-Chairman.

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr G Merry

Absent without apologies: Cllr S Corcoran

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

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The Chairman adjourned the meeting to allow questions from members of the public.

Ms Lyndsey McDade

Concern was expressed that only three Councillors attended the meeting held on 29 April and it was asked whether, under the new quorum regulations, that was acceptable. The Chairman responded, saying that the sub-committee was aware that it did not have a quorum, therefore no decisions were made at the meeting.

The Sub-Committee was then asked if it planned to review its membership to improve attendance. It was confirmed that the Sub-Committee membership

was reviewed at the AGM and that there were no plans to review. It was noted that all members are volunteers and do their best to attend meetings, but occasionally 'life' gets in the way and members were reminded of the Councillor Engagement document that members had decided not to implement.

Following the questions, the Chairman reconvened the Meeting.

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**4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 25 APRIL 2017**

**RESOLVED:** subject to the date being amended, the minutes were approved as an accurate record.

**5. GOV EMAIL [LLR ITEM 19]**

Lead: Martin Forster/Town Clerk

The Clerk asked for the purpose of implementing .gov to be clarified, asking whether it is about image or auditability. She explained that if the focus is image, then it is much easier to implement, than an auditable system, for which she would rely heavily on professional IT advice and guidance.

There was discussion around archiving of email, management of accounts, implementation and the use of remote 'cloud' storage. It was also suggested that the Member Code of Conduct could be amended to enforce the use of .gov among members. The Clerk advised that a Prism representative would be willing to address the sub-committee from a technical point of view, to assist in making a decision.

**RESOLVED:** that:

- i. By 1 July, create and implement a .gov email address for all Councillors, using the current google mail system.
- ii. Invite Prism representative to the next Sub-Committee meeting to talk about technical detail in respect of audit, accountability and management.

**6. CRITERIA FOR CLOSURE OF MEETINGS TO PUBLIC AND PRESS [LLR ITEM 26]**

Lead: Martin Forster

A document was shared which outlined several reasons for the legitimate closure of meetings. Some slight amendments were made, with members happy for the document to be referred to Council for adoption.

**RESOLVED:** that the document entitled 'Closure of Meetings' is recommended to Council for adoption.

**7. STANDING ORDER AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS REVIEW [LLR ITEM 3]**

Lead: Town Clerk

The Clerk presented revised and tracked versions of the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

Two comments were discussed:

Appointment of Committee Chairmen, which should be undertaken as soon after the AGM as is practicable.

Setting out a 'code' for members of the public who join Sub-Committees or Working Groups – it was agreed that this is a task for a later date.

Members were invited to make comment in writing to the Clerk before 9 June.

**RESOLVED:** that the revised Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are referred to the Lessons Learned Review Sub-Committee at its next meeting.

## **8. PUBLISHED AGENDA AND MINUTES [LLR ITEM 7]**

Lead: Martin Forster

There is a need to formalise all meetings, in doing so it is felt that agenda and minutes meetings, including working groups, should be made available via the Town Council's website. It was also suggested that the members card should be updated, to promote the council's working groups, showing the working group title and lead member.

**RESOLVED:** that:

- i) Agenda and minutes of all working groups are made available via the Council's website, with immediate effect.
- ii) That working groups and lead members are listed on the members' card.

## **9. DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY [LLR ITEM 18]**

Lead: Town Clerk

In accordance with the most recent Internal Audit Report, a draft Document Retention Policy was presented for consideration. Some suggestions for amendment were made.

**RESOLVED:** that the document be further amended and referred back to the next meeting of the Lessons Learned Review Sub-Committee.

## **10. SCHEDULE OF WORK**

Lead: Ann Banks

**RESOLVED:** that the revised schedule is noted.

## **11. NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 27 June 2017 at 7pm at the Sandbach Literary Institution.

Cllr Corcoran tendered his apologies for the next meeting.

Meeting Closed at 8.20pm

Cllr M Forster

Chairman

ALB

## LESSONS LEARNED REVIEW

RECOMMENDATIONS AS AGREED BY STC 15.11.16

### Review of Recommendations by Sub-Committee 30.5.17

	RECOMMENDATION / ACTION	To be actioned by:	Progress Review 1: 31.1.17	Progress Review 2. 28.2.17	Progress Review 3. 28.3.17	Progress Review 4. 25.4.17	Progress Review 5. 30.5.17
3	That Councillors be reminded of the importance of working within the Standing Orders and that the Council implements a review of the standing orders and schemes of delegation to ensure that weaknesses highlighted in this review are properly addressed. This should include a review of the financial regulations and these should be reviewed regularly as per the standing orders.	GWG	No Progress	No Progress	No Progress	SO/FR reviewed – discuss 30.5.17. ToR and SoD to be reviewed next.	Further draft to next meeting. Members of Lessons Learned Review invited to comment.
7	The practice of all Councillors meeting behind closed doors without published agendas or minutes should be for the purpose <u>only</u> to report recommendation to Full Council or appropriate Committee to enable full discussion in public.	GWG	Not reviewed	Not reviewed.		WG Rules adopted. Item 26 below. Review of SO to be reported to next meeting	Action: Agenda and Minutes of Wkg Groups to be available on website.
8	Where an item needs, for valid reasons, to be considered by the Council confidentially the letter of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meeting Act) 1960 should be followed; the council should	GWG	Not reviewed	Not reviewed.		To consider 30.5.17 MF lead	Document 'Closed Meetings' to be

	resolve in public to defer the agenda item to part II, giving reasons for doing so. Clear records of the justification for items being considered in part II must be kept to assist future auditing of those decisions.						recommen ded to Council.
11	That any spend of public money should be authorised by a clear decision from an officer or body authorised to spend it. Where, by reason of value, the spend requires the approval of a Committee or the Council, that authorisation must take the form of a minute of that body.	GWG	Not reviewed	Not reviewed.		FR Review	FR Review
12	That no statement by a third party be used in Council communication without that person's written approval.	GWG	Comms Protocol	No. 16 below to be reviewed	Doc back to LLR	No progress	No progress
13	That financial figures issued in the name of the Council be appropriately scrutinized; where possible, they should be approved by the Finance Committee, or by the Council itself. If approval by the Finance Committee, or by the Council is not possible, the Chair of the Finance Committee or RFO should be consulted and proper records of that consultation be made.	GWG	Not reviewed	Not reviewed.	Not reviewed	No progress  Monitor via FR/SO	No further progress
14	That urgency powers should not be used for contentious decisions, and where they are used, strong and robust reasoning must be recorded, along with a record of alternative courses of action considered.	GWG	Not reviewed	Not reviewed	Not reviewed	SO Review	SO Review
16	Good communication is key to healthy public perception of the work of the Council. All Council staff and Councillors should be mindful at all times to communicate in a respectful and professional manner towards members of the public and	GWG	Not reviewed	Guideline for Successful Engagement Doc to	Doc back to LLR	No progress  Cllr/Staff doc	Cllr/Staff document approved 1.6.17. No

	stakeholders. Communication training may be appropriate.			FPG 9.3.17		developed to Sandbach Town Council 8.6.17	external public engagement document approved.
18	That the Council review its document storage and management policies with a view to introducing a numerical record keeping system with proper version control mechanisms to allow more rapid recovery of information.	AB	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing Doc Retention Policy to Lessons Learned Review 30.5.17	Filing systems are being implemented. Document Retention policy to LLR 27.6.17.
19	All email communication regarding council business is conducted using council provided email addresses to ensure a complete and visible audit trail.	BD	No progress	No progress. To be considered with 23 below.	No progress. To be considered with 23 below.	To be considered 30.5.17	Action: gov email addresses to be set up via gmail.
20	It is recommended Finance committee look into how accounts can be easily presented and managed. A simple income and expenditure spreadsheet with breakdowns of costings would be clearer and easier to understand.	FPG	Fin WG to re-form	No progress	No progress	WG meeting.	No Progress

**ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE SUB-COMMITTEE (ARISING THROUGH NORMAL BUSINESS)**

**Town Councillors are asked to review this list and to submit any comments to the LLR Sub-Committee via the Clerk or Chairman.**

23	Use/issue of tablet devices, to reduce paperwork and improve member access to information.	KH	Further work required.	No progress to be considered with 19 above.	No progress	No progress	No Progress
26	Criteria for the Legitimate closure of meetings to the public/press.	MF/BD	No progress	No progress	No progress	To be reported 30.5.17	Item to Sandbach Town Council 20.7.17

CAN 26 AND 8 BE MERGED??