

SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Sandbach Town Council held on 28 November 2002 in the Council Chamber, Westfields.

PRESENT

Councillors: Mrs D E Alcock, Chairman
M J Wood, Vice-Chairman

Councillors: J M Goode
D Lloyd Griffiths
Mrs P M Minshull
J J Moore
L Morris
N T Price
D Robinson
Mrs E Rubidge
R W Sutton

The Opening Prayer was read by Councillor R W Sutton.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors: Mrs D Flint
Mrs R D Frost
B Brindley
J Iddon
E A Lea
A J Walker

2. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

The Chairman's engagements since the last meeting included: -
Marriott House Bowling Club to make the presentations at their Presentation Lunch.

Sandbach Art Club Exhibition at the Masonic Hall.

Sandbach Voices concert at Alsager.

Remembrance Day Parade to St Marys, Sandbach

Remembrance Day Laying of Standards ceremony at St Peter's, Elworth

Service at the Sandbach War Memorial on Monday 11 November.

3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 17 OCTOBER 2002

RESOLVED: that the Minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.

4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 31 OCTOBER 2002

RESOLVED: that the Minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.

5. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2002

RESOLVED: that the Minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.

6. CONTROL OF MAJOR ACCIDENT HAZARD REGULATIONS 1999 (COMAH)

Mr Powell, Lead Officer, Civil Protection, Cheshire County Council was ill and hence the item was postponed.

7. MATTERS REFERRED FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7 NOVEMBER 2002

7.1 Sandbach Youth Project

They seek £1350 for a new PC system and £878 for the installation of an intruder alarm system for the Caretaker's House at Sandbach High School. The total requested is £2,228.

RESOLVED: that the donation of £2,228 is confirmed.

7.2 Budget for 2003/4

The Finance Committee had recommended no increase in precept for the year 2003/4. This had not been with the 2003 elections in mind. After the recommendation had been made a possible need for an increase had arisen.

RESOLVED: that for the year 2003/4 the Town Council ask Congleton Borough Council for a precept 3% higher than that for 2002/3 (i.e. £79,825).

8. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL DELEGATES / SUB-COMMITTEES

8.1 Linden Bank Bail Hostel

The Chairman was pleased to tell members that at the last meeting she had attended there had been no incidents to report.

RESOLVED: that the report is received.

8.2 Association of Parish Councils

The Vice-Chairman reported that the next meeting would be on 29 January 2003.

RESOLVED: that the report is received.

8.3 Meeting between representatives of the Town Council, the Chamber of Trade and the Police

Minutes of the meeting were attached to the supplementary agenda.

RESOLVED: that the minute document is received.

The Vice-Chairman wished to comment further on the meeting which was most encouraging, which gave pointers on which way to go forward and gave many, positive suggestions. The most interesting item that came out of this meeting was the statement that we could have our own full time policeman for Sandbach, **if** we were prepared to pay for one. The cost was said to be £30,000 + 10% (i.e. £33,000). The police officer would work to our remit and would be in Sandbach full-time except in times of dire need. Indeed we would be creating employment in the area.

The initial contract would be for a 3 year period so we would be looking to a fair sized outgoing of funds. However we may be able to attract in sponsorship from local businesses or grants from outside bodies to ease the financial burden, e.g. Sandbach Partnership.

He proposed that: -

1. Inspector Alan Holt is asked to send details of this scheme, and
2. that a sub-committee is appointed to pursue the matter.

Cllr Wood said the Council has the money to do this and he knew that the people of Sandbach would welcome having their own policeman for the town.

There was extensive debate during which it was established that members would wish to ask the Police questions about the scheme. If necessary this could be outside a formal Council meeting.

RESOLVED: that a police officer is invited to address Council Members about the scheme.

8.4 Sandbach Partnership

Cllr Mrs Rubidge said that the Project Manager post had been re-advertised and selection should take place in January. She confirmed that the Partnership were interested in the proposals of item 8.3.

RESOLVED: that the report is received.

8.5 Standards Board

Cllr Moore reported that he and the Chairman had attended a Standards Board presentation and had been told that contrary to local guidelines it was permissible for a dual councillor to speak and vote planning meetings at both Town and Borough level.

RESOLVED: that the report is received.

8.6 Youth Project

Cllr Price reported that the Youth Project would consider the need for best value when purchasing their proposed computer.

RESOLVED: that the report is received.

8.7 Byley Gas Plant Meeting

Cllr Moore had attended a meeting at Byley Village Hall on 4 November at which the available options were considered following the decision by the County Council not to present evidence at the inquiry. He said that those at the meeting felt betrayed by the County Council.

RESOLVED: that the report is received.

9. TOWN COUNCIL VACANCY

Andrew Barber ceased to qualify as a member and the notice of the vacancy was posted on the Town Council notice board for 14 working days starting 14 October 2002. The Returning Officer did not receive any nomination.

Councillor Price believed that the notification of the vacancy to the Returning Officer had not been handled correctly. Other members believed that if an error had been made it was not done intentionally.

Members paid tribute to Andrew Barber's contribution to the work of the Council and sympathised with the circumstances that led to his cessation of membership.

RESOLVED: that a letter of thanks is sent expressing the Council's appreciation of his work.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

10.1 Forum of M6 Councils

Minutes of AGM held 27 June 2002.

RESOLVED: that the minutes are received.

10.2 Joint Highways - Junction of Old Mill Road and Newcastle Road

A letter had been received from Mr Richard Chiverton. Following the resolution made at the Council meeting held on 21 November 2002 the Clerk had written to Mr Chiverton highlighting the opportunity presented by the current road works to put the problem right.

RESOLVED: that a copy of Town Council's letter be given to Cllr Price for him to progress.

10.3 Cheshire Association of Town & Parish Councils

They have drafted a model Local Council's Charter for the County and invite Local Council's to comment by 3 January 2003.

RESOLVED: that the report is received.

10.4 Cheshire Constabulary - Superintendent Tim Jackson

Letter of thanks in response to Council's welcome.

RESOLVED: that the letter is received.

10.5 Cheshire County Council – Manager of Public Library Operations

Allan Bell confirms that they wish to move the Council's notice board to the left of the main entrance.

He outlines the proposed building work that will take place in the new financial year at the earliest.

Members would like to see a formal written scheme for the proposed work.

RESOLVED: that a letter of reply is sent stating that the Council sees the improvements to the Library as a partnership between the Town Council and the County Council and would therefore look for dialogue and consultation with officers.

10.6 CBC Chapel Street Car Park

Response to the Town Council request for more detailed information.

RESOLVED: that the letter is received but that the Town Council must be kept informed.

10.7 Sandbach Partnership

In addition to thanking the Council for the £1,000 donation they ask permission to use the Council logo on future correspondence.

RESOLVED: that the necessary permission is given.

10.8 CBC – Joint Meetings with Cheshire County Council

Minutes of meeting held on 9 October.

RESOLVED: that the minutes are received.

10.9 CBC Environment and Public Protection

Members' comments were sought on a new street cleaning initiative.

It was too early to comment. The possibility of asking the responsible director to attend the meeting was raised. It was noted that there had been no reply to the letters sent enclosing the disappointing Civic Pride judging results.

RESOLVED: that the letter is received and that street cleaning is made an agenda item for the next meeting when comments will be collected.

RESOLVED: that a letter is sent asking for a response to the Civic Pride judges comments.

10.10 CCC Cheshire Local Government Association The Cheshire Household Waste Management Strategy

RESOLVED: that the report is received.

10.11 CCC Cheshire's Community Waste Action Programme

RESOLVED: that the letter is received.

10.12 Information Commissioner – Freedom of Information Act

Letter of acceptance that Sandbach Town Council has adopted the Parish Council Model Scheme.

RESOLVED: that the letter is received.

10.13 Cranage Parish Council

Information received summarising the current position. A meeting has been arranged for 4 December at Allostock Village Hall.

RESOLVED: that the information is received and that the Council representative is informed of the meeting.

10.14 CCC Engineering Service – High Street Sandbach

Description of the proposals for the provision of a contraflow cycle lane and traffic calming measures.

RESOLVED: that the proposals are received.

10.15 CBC – Future Management of Borough Markets

The CBC proposals are described and Sandbach Town Council are requested to nominate a representative to sit on a selection panel.

Cllr Moore declared an interest as a market trader. He was against privatisation because inevitably rents would rise. About £100,000 could be saved in his opinion by getting traders to provide their own stalls and by controlling the generation of rubbish more rigorously.

It was said that a panel of 13 was large for a selection panel.

Sandbach Partnership was a result of the need for market town regeneration and therefore the future of the market was very relevant to them.

Sandbach is the most important Market in the Borough. Executive must clarify the market policy before the selection process begins. Advertising is needed. It is essential to go out to tender to check best value. The last May Day market showed that cost savings could be made. The Council representative must argue strongly for Sandbach's interests.

RESOLVED: that the Council representative is the Council Chairman with Cllr D Robinson as reserve.

11. MEMBERS' ITEMS

11.1 318 - R W Sutton - Elworth Pedestrian Crossing

That the pedestrian crossing at London Road, Elworth, is upgraded to a Pelican Crossing due to yet another accident. An elderly gentleman had received a broken arm in an accident. The present zebra crossing can often have lamp failure that may take several days to be put right and therefore the crossing should be modernised. A modern crossing would also have a traffic calming contribution.

RESOLVED: that a letter is sent to Joint Highways requesting that the proposal is added to their committee agenda.

11.2 319 - Cllr Mrs D E Alcock – Transportation Project

That Sandbach Town Council would like to receive detailed information on the Sandbach Transportation project. Cllr Morris spoke passionately about his opposition to the project.

It was pointed out that information on the proposals for the cobbles in the Market Square and coach parking was still awaited.

RESOLVED: that a letter is sent to Joint Highways requesting detailed information on the above.

11.3 320 - R W Sutton – Hind Heath Road

He understood that work had commenced and therefore withdrew the item.

12. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED: that the next meeting of the Sandbach Town Council be held on Thursday 9 January 2003 in the Council Chamber at Westfields.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

D E Alcock
Chairman

Ref: TCM1102