

SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Sandbach Town Council held on 20 July 2017 at 7.00pm at Sandbach Town Hall.

PRESENT

Councillors: M Forster (Mayor)
R Hovey (Deputy Mayor)
K Southwell
M Muldoon
M Benson
B Moran
J Cartlidge
S Corcoran
G Merry
R Wait
B Davies
A Smith
S Kirkham
P Eaton (arrived 7.06)
G P Jones
S Ashcombe-Hurt
R Hoffmann (arrived 7.46)

Also present were Molly Burns, CEC Officer Paul Hurdas and 21 members of the public and press.

Cllr Merry read the prayer.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors K Haines
M Lea-O'Mahoney
C Lowe

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr G Merry – declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 18 as the Chairman of CEC Strategic Planning.

Cllr B Moran – declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in item 21 as a Cheshire East Councillor, in the interests of openness and transparency.

3. MAYOR'S COMMENTS

The Mayor circulated a schedule of Civic Engagements that he has attended since the last meeting. He went on to say how enjoyable these events are to attend and to recognise the work undertaken by the Town's many volunteers.

There are two forthcoming Mayoral Fund-Raising events:

5 September 2017 – Pamper Evening – tickets £5.00

17 September 2017 – Charity Walk with Afternoon Tea – tickets £5.00

Tickets can be obtained from the Council offices.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

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

Mr Brian Day – Arclid Household Waste and Recycling Centre (HWRC)

He referred to the CEC report which proposed the closure of the Arclid HWRC. He stated that out of the nine centres reviewed, only Arclid was proposed for closure with no counter-argument being presented.

The closure of Arclid will see people travelling further to dispose of waste in conflict with the Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan, this additional travel time, may also be the catalyst for increased fly tipping within the area.

He asked that Sandbach Town Council continues to fight the closure and looks at alternatives for the disposal of household waste.

Mr Trevor Boxer – Sandbach Footpaths

The Sandbach Footpath Group comprises of 800 members, with the aim to improve and extend the town's network of footpaths. The overall target is to identify and record every footpath within the parish, with a Masterplan Map being available on the website.

The Footpath Group is actively trying to engage developers of Sandbach, with a view to protecting, enhancing and developing footpath routes; most welcome such suggestions, however their focus when on site is development and not the connections to other areas.

The next step for the Master Plan is for it to be included on the Town Council's website if possible, and also to ensure that meetings are held with developers.

The support of Sandbach Town Council is sought, to use its influence in ensuring that footpaths are factored into all development plans.

The website address was shared for those who are interested.

Mrs Cathy Bruderer – Sandbach Market Hall Income

Mrs Bruderer queried the allocation of the Shop (Arches) income, as she understood it was to be included in the Market Hall income. The Chairman of Finance, Policy

and Governance confirmed that the presentation is correct, with the Shop and Market incomes being shown separately.

Ms Lindsey McDade – Town Events

Reference was made to a recent Lessons Learned Review Sub-Committee Meeting, where the an unauthorised/disputed invoice for the Events Working Group was discussed. Following the meeting Ms McDade had attempted to find out about the Events Working Group, but had been unable to locate agenda or minutes. She asked where the meetings of this group are advertised as she would like to attend.

The Mayor directed Ms McDade to the Council's website, he apologised that some are not presently on, but we are doing all we can to bring this up to date; he will let her know the date.

Following the questions the Town Mayor reconvened the meeting.

4. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Item 7 – Minutes of the Personnel Meeting held 5 July 2017

RESOLVED: that item 7 be considered in a closed session.

5. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 1 JUNE 2017.

RESOLVED: subject to an amendment under item 18, that the minutes are approved as an accurate record.

6. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 5 JUNE AND 26 JUNE 2017.

RESOLVED: that the minutes be noted.

7. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE HELD ON 5 JULY (DRAFT)

RESOLVED: that the minutes be noted.

8. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE FINANCE, POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – NO MEETINGS HELD.

9. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE – NO MEETINGS HELD.

10. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF ASSETS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE – NO MEETINGS HELD

11. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF LLR & GOVERNANCE SUB-COMMITTEE HELD 30 MAY AND 27 JUNE 2017(DRAFT).

RESOLVED: that the minutes be noted.

12. MATTERS ARISING

i. LLR and Governance Sub-Committee

i) Outlook 365

The Clerk presented proposals from the Council's IT support company Prism, in which they recommend the Council to transfer its internet and email services to Office 365 and Outlook. This will provide a more professional and auditable email service for all users and better equip the Council for storage and sharing of information.

The Chair of Finance explained that there is presently no budget allocation for this work, however Council can create a budget line for the purpose. Funding will come from 'general reserves', with the new budget line showing an overspend.

RESOLVED: that actions as outlined in the report to implement Office 365 and Outlook are approved and that a budget line be created and that £3,000 be made available from general reserves for implementation 2017/18.

ii) Standing Order Review

RESOLVED: That the review be deferred to the Finance, Policy and Governance Committee, immediately following which a meeting of Full Council will be convened to approve the document.

iii) Financial Regulations Review

RESOLVED: That the review be deferred to the Finance, Policy and Governance Committee, immediately following which a meeting of Full Council will be convened to approve the document.

13. UNDISCHARGED RESOLUTIONS

Lead: Town Clerk

RESOLVED: that the undischarged resolutions are noted.

14. SANDBACH MARKET

Lead: Town Mayor

The Chairman of Finance introduced the financials, by saying that the indoor market did not make a profit in 16/17, nor was a profit made in the first nine months of 15/16 as previously reported. The main change has been around the allocation of business rates, since 2014 it has been wrongly assumed that the rates applied to the indoor market, when they should have been allocated to the outdoor market. An appeal has been lodged against the rates paid, the outcome of which is not yet known. Clarification is required about the split of unrecovered VAT, which is also questioned as the sum exceeds 20% of the overall spend.

In summary the finances are improving, however the present surplus does benefit from low expenditure. It is felt that this improvement will continue as all units are now in use and have been let.

The Mayor and Lead Member of the Market Working Group introduced the report. He thanked all members of the group for their collaborative effort. He stated that the majority of the proposals contained within the report have been

highlighted through the detailed 'conditions survey', therefore a mostly required maintenance works.

RESOLVED;that

- i. the split of indoor and outdoor market expenditure as outlined within the report is agreed.
- ii. the percentage split of market expenditure be reviewed as part of the 2018/19 budget setting process
- iii. the Outline Proposals for the Market Hall be received.
- iv. the Proposals and the following individual recommendations are approved:
 - a. To accept and approve the outline proposals for investment in Sandbach Market Hall
 - b. To seek further specialist advice from Cheshire East Conservation Officer
 - c. To delegate to the Clerk, the appointment of an independent Project Manager to act on behalf of the council in line with costings outlined in section 7, spending up to £13,000 for this appointment.
 - d. To approve the seeking of tenders for the works to be carried out
 - e. To ask the Finance, Policy and Governance Committee for a review of possible funding arrangements and submission to full council

15. COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE – TOWN EVENTS

Lead: Cllr Mike Benson

Two events have been held during 2017:

Family Fun Day and Armed Forces Today, a very busy day providing fun and activities for the family.

Foden's Party in the Park a notable event with a high proportion of young families. Two bands played, with a fireworks finale.

Town Council provided financial support, with sponsorship totalling £2,700 from Bathgate, Flowcrete and Sibelco. Thanks also to Sandbach Partnership, the Old Hall and Friends of Sandbach Park, for their involvement.

These two events are both in their sixth year.

A full statement of accounts will be presented to the Community and Environment Committee in September which will enable planning of 2018 events to commence, which might include an additional event.

A schedule of invoices was attached to the report, which shows that all costs are within the budget approved by Council on 9 February 2017. It was pointed out that some of the listed invoices are yet to be presented and paid, however one of the listed invoices was due for payment on 24 June and is presently awaiting approval. It was emphasised that Working Groups do not make decisions and then questioned who made the decision to appoint the

three companies listed under iii below, it was suggested that a sub-committee may be a better forum for managing events as decisions can be made by a sub-committee.

RESOLVED: that

- i. a report on two recent events organised by the Events Working Group: The Fun Day held on 24 June and Party in the Park Concert held on 1 July be received.
- ii. the spend of third party funding be approved: the total sponsorship to be divided equally between the above two events; a donation against expenses of the Fun Day and a donation against the Party in the Park.
- iii. payments made and outstanding in respect of the 2017 Fun Day and Party in the Park be approved, within the total spend of £9118 approved by Sandbach Town Council on 9th February 2017.
 - a. Hipswing (retrospective): £4,518.00
 - b. Blitz (retrospective): £1,866.00
 - c. Abzorbed: 1,525.00

Following a report to C&E on 7 September, Finance, Policy and Governance, along with Community and Environment Chairmen to come up with an acceptable solution to avoid any similar situation.

- iv. ticket sales be applied if necessary to cover the balance of any outstanding invoices arising from the Party in the Park Concert, carry forward any surplus ticket sales to the events budget for 2018/2019, for consideration by the Community & Environment Committee in deciding whether to hold further events, and subsequent approval of full Council as required.

16. **SKATEPARK**

Lead: Cllr Merry

A Sandbach Parks and Play Areas Strategic Overview Group was set up in 2013, comprising representatives of Sandbach Town Council, Cheshire East Council and Sandbach Partnership to address the needs of all Parks and Play Areas except for Sandbach Park and Elworth Play Area. A full review of play areas was undertaken some years ago, which identified that maintenance and upgrade work, since that time some work has been undertaken.

For some time, the All Parks and Play Areas Group has been trying to identify a suitable site for a Skate/BMX/Scooter Park, there are presently two potential sites. A considerable amount of work is required to see the project through, which will include consultation, site allocation, design and funding.

Council is asked to form a Working Group to progress the project.

RESOLVED: that a Working Group (and Lead Member) is appointed to investigate the possibility of installing a skatepark in Sandbach, with findings to be reported back to Sandbach Town Council.

Cllr Corcoran volunteered to be Lead Members, with Cllrs Price Jones, Eaton, Forster and Youth Representative Mollie Burns also being on the Group.

17. **BUS SERVICES REVIEW**

Lead: Cllr Eaton

Thank you to the Bus Service Review Working Group for their work in preparing the response to CEC.

CEC has announced £1.6m proposed saving against the bus service and is presently consulting on those proposals. The outcome to Sandbach will be a number of restrictions to services, with only two bus services operating from 6pm, nos. 37 and 38, both operate along the main arteries of Sandbach, avoiding the estates. The impact would be economic, environmental and mental well-being of many passengers, and would certainly affect visitors and patients of Leighton Hospital.

Members of the public were urged to complete the public consultation on bus services on the CEC website.

RESOLVED: that draft response is approved for submission to CEC by the deadline date of 26 July 2017.

18. **VISSIM REPORT**

Lead: Cllr Corcoran

Thanks to members of the Working Group.

The action requested of CEC is:

Sandbach Town Council (STC) rejects the plans of Cheshire East Council (CEC) to take no strategic measures to the traffic infrastructure in and around Sandbach. We request that Sandbach CEC Councillors take up the issue with CEC to have the whole subject revisited with a new formal traffic modeling study based on realistic assumptions about traffic growth, including all new housing developments and Junction 17 of the M6.

Without strategic measures, Sandbach will suffer very serious traffic congestion within the next ten years or so, partly due to development and also to natural traffic growth.

Reference was made to an email from CEC Officer Paul Hurdus (Traffic Management Officer) dated 19 July sent in response to questions raised in February; this was made available to members at the meeting. It is felt that the email does not answer all of the questions raised by STC.

1. Validation of the Model

A document is required that has been properly validated, showing the traffic problems now, against the problems which the model shows.

2. Assumptions

The model assumes a growth of 6% over 10-20 years. A recent planning application or a revised M6 roundabout – this VISSIM model prepared for that, assumes traffic growth by 2020 of 23.5%. It is hoped that the model will

be revised to show more realistic assumptions on what traffic growth might be.

The response from Mr Hurdas refers to the CEC Local Plan – this model was presented to the inspector of the Local Plan, in the absence of full public representation due to time allowed.

Two corrections to the report were proposed and agreed:

All references to the Sandbach Local Plan, should be the Cheshire East Local Plan (Sandbach Section).

Paragraph 3.4 Implications (2 paragraph from the bottom). The widening of Platt Avenue on Middlewich Road, is nothing to do with the Capricorn site, it is about trying to help traffic flows on Middlewich Road.

The Mayor read the final paragraph of Mr Hurdas's email, it was then noted that CEC will be inviting the Town Council to a future members' briefing where an action plan for Sandbach will be discussed.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted and that the Clerk be delegated to the make the consequential amendments.

19. **ARCLID HOUSEHOLD WASTE AND RECYCLING CENTRE (HWRC)**

Lead: Cllr Benson (on behalf of Cllr Lowe)

The Mayor thanked Councillor Lowe, in her absence, for her hard work as Lead Councillor on this issue.

Since the CEC report was released, Sandbach Town Council has looked at a number of ways that CEC might make savings, thus removing the need to close Arclid HWRC. The Council has also been very active in making representations to CEC, however despite representations against closure, CEC has made the decision to close on 30 September. Members are asked to receive a note with regret this announcement.

Comment was made that CW&C, despite having to make savings across its HWRC's, it has chosen to review operational hours, rather than close any of its centres.

RESOLVED: that

- i) the report is received.
- ii) it is noted that Arclid HWRC will close on 30 September 2017.

20. **PAYMENT OF INVOICES**

Lead: Chairman of Finance, Policy and Governance

RESOLVED: that the following invoices be paid:

20.1 Property Tectonics: £2,100

20.2 Cheshire Police Constabulary: £11,918

21. **OFFICE AND MEETING ACCOMMODATION**

Lead: Cllr Hovey

Since the last meeting, the Working Group has had a formal meeting with the SLI Trustees. The Trustees are trying to progress a bid to extend the building, along with making it meet DDA accessibility requirements, such a project is likely to take 2 years. It is known that the SLI Trustees are keen to retain the Council as a Core Tenant. There will be a working group meeting on Wednesday 26 July at 6.00pm at the SLI, where matters will be discussed further.

RESOLVED: that the progress report be received.

22. MEMBERS ITEMS

22.1 Cllr S Corcoran

Cycling Strategy

CEC has a Cycling Strategy (CS) for the Borough, it is felt that a Town CS needs to be developed to determine routes and actions required. This will complement the CEC CS. CEC has produced a methodology guide for developing a Town CS.

RESOLVED: that Sandbach Town Council notes that Cheshire East Council approved a Cycling Strategy in Spring 2017 and has recently released a Methodology Guide for Creating a Town Cycling Plan, and resolves to form a working group to prepare a Sandbach Town Cycling Plan.

Cllr Corcoran will convene the first meeting at which a Lead Member will be appointed. Members of the group are Cllrs: Smith, Price Jones and Kirkham, with other members being convened by the Group.

22.2 Cllr P Eaton

Baby Change Facilities in Sandbach Park

Following a complaint by a local person about the accessibility and condition of the Baby Change facilities in Sandbach Park, an item was included on the agenda.

The issue is that the baby change area is in the disabled toilet and kept locked to avoid vandalism. A key is available from the library and park staff, it is hoped that this can be resolved through longer opening hours during the Summer.

RESOLVED: that the Cllr Eaton liaise with Cllrs Corcoran and Benson, and work with the Sandbach Partnership, to improve the accessibility of baby change facilities in Sandbach Town Park

22.3 Cllr P Eaton

Concessionary Bus Services

Linked to the impact of the bus cuts on the town, it is felt that a formal action is required to strongly convey the Council's discontent in what is being proposed.

An excerpt from a press release issued by Fiona Bruce MP was read out which urges local people to respond to the consultation.

RESOLVED: that Sandbach Town Council write to CEC to say:

Sandbach Town Council recommends that Cheshire East Council does not cut any of the concessionary bus services that give local and outlying residents access to the town's market and businesses. We feel that Sandbach is being affected more acutely due its appeal as a traditional shopping and banking centre, which brings in substantial numbers of people, who find it difficult to park on some days. Sandbach Town Council calls for a frequent and value for money bus service that supports the future growth and prosperity of Sandbach and reduces the volume of traffic and thereby improves air quality.

23. CORRESPONDENCE

There is none

24. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Town Council Meeting will take place on Thursday 21st September 2017 at 7.00pm at the Sandbach Literary Institution.

Please note that this date is in addition to the previously advertised calendar of meetings.

CLOSED SESSION

Due to the confidential nature of business, public and press will be excluded from the meetings under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

7. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE HELD ON 5 JULY (DRAFT)

Meeting closed: 9.07pm
Cllr M Forster, Town Mayor

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