

SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Sandbach Town Council held on 21 September 2017 at 7.00pm at Sandbach Literary Institution.

PRESENT

Councillors: M Forster (Mayor)
R Hovey (Deputy Mayor)
K Southwell
M Benson
B Moran
S Corcoran
G Merry
A Smith
S Kirkham
C Lowe
S Ashcombe-Hurt
R Wait
M Lea-O'Mahoney
K Haines
G Price Jones
J Cartidge
P Eaton (arrived 7.19pm)

Also present was Rev T Shepherd and fourteen members of the public/press.

Please note that the audio recording failed for the first part of the meeting, it was switched on during item 13.i) b. The audio recording is available in two parts as it was switched off during the adjournment at 8.23pm.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor B Davies
M Muldoon
R Hoffmann

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Moran – in the interest of openness and transparency a non-pecuniary interest was declared in item 14 due to his involvement with environmental funds. He stated that he would not .

Cllr Lowe – declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 14 as a member of the Sandbach Woodland and Wildlife Group (SWWG)

Cllr Haines – declared a non-prejudicial interest in item 14 as a member of both the Sandbach Woodland and Wildlife Group (SWWG) and the Environmental Action Group.

3. MAYOR'S REMARKS

A list details all civic events and engagements was circulated.

The Mayor referred to his recent engagement with the Talking Newspaper, which is an audio newspaper recorded and delivered on a weekly basis to about one hundred people. Should anyone want to use this service, please contact the Mayor directly who will pass on information.

Members were thanked for persevering with the new email system. It was acknowledged that there are a few teething problems. The Clerk will circulate the Prism Helpdesk number, members were asked to use the number for support.

Mr Dennis Robinson, Town Crier was sent good wishes for a speedy recovery from his recent illness.

Thanks were given to all who had supported the Mayor's recent charity events:

Pamper Evening	£600
Walk and Tea	£168

This bring this bring the total to date to just under £1,000.

All were asked to reserve Friday 16 March in their diary as the date of the Mayor's Ball; further details to follow.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

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

Mrs P Minshull

Mrs Minshull asked if members would speak up when addressing the Mayor.

Mrs C Bruderer

Mrs Bruderer remains perturbed that Council has failed to implement the two-year Chairmanship rule. The Mayor stated that this matter was likely to be discussed during the meeting.

Ms L McDade

Ms McDade referred to the work of the LLR Working Group and latterly Sub-Committee and expressed concern that the draft Standing Orders are being challenged. The Mayor stated that this matter was likely to be discussed during the meeting.

Mr D Williams

Mr Williams asked that the proposed amendments to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are made clear to the public before being resolved.

Mr Alan Smith (Trader)

The Operations Manager and his Team were congratulated on the success of the first Moonlight Market and John Beddows continues to deliver successful fairs.

Concern was expressed that STC did not appear to be learning lessons, despite all nineteen recommendations of the Lessons Learned Review being accepted. The proposed changes to Standing Orders are a result of the LLR and to change them may affect the delivery of some of the approved recommendations.

Member of the Public (name not known)

Reassurance was sought that STC will implement all of the LLR recommendations, it was stated that presently the Council appeared to want to 'pick and choose'. It is felt that as a democratic body, there should be no objection to implementing any of the approved recommendations.

Following the questions, the Mayor reconvened the meeting.

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

RESOLVED: that no items will be considered with the exclusion of public and press.

5. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 20 JULY AND 3 AUGUST 2017.

Both sets of minutes require amendment, with the location of the meeting being corrected to read Sandbach Literary Institution.

RESOLVED: subject to the amendment stated, the minutes are approved as an accurate record.

6. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 17 JULY, 7 AUGUST AND 29 AUGUST (DRAFT).

RESOLVED: that the minutes be noted.

7. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – NO MEETINGS HELD.

8. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3 AUGUST 2017 (DRAFT).

RESOLVED: that the minutes be noted.

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

10. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE ASSETS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 10 AUGUST (DRAFT).

RESOLVED: that the minutes be noted, but amended as Cllr Wait is not a member of the Committee, therefore his name should be removed.

11. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE LLR & GOVERNANCE SUB-COMMITTEE HELD ON 27 JUNE (DRAFT) AND 22 AUGUST 2017 (DRAFT).

RESOLVED: that the minutes be noted.

12. UNDISCHARGED RESOLUTIONS

The Clerk gave a progress report on the two undischarged resolutions listed.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

13. MATTERS ARISING

i) FINANCE, POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE AND SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL 3 AUGUST 2017

a. Suspension of Standing Orders

RESOLVED: that Standing Orders are suspended to allow 13i) to be considered, as decisions pertaining to the appointment of Chairs were approved within the last six months.

b. Standing Order Review

Lead: Chairman of Finance, Policy and Governance

In a statement before the item re: Finance, Policy and Governance Committee's recommendation for changes to the Standing Orders, the Mayor expressed disappointment and anger as they ran counter to changes agreed at the April Full Council meeting and the acceptance of the LLR recommendations agreed last year. He added that it is important that we send a clear message to the people of Sandbach that we have genuinely listened and we have learnt lessons, and that we are willing to act upon these lessons learnt in a determined effort to rebuild trust between us and the community we serve.

Lengthy discussion took place on amendments proposed by the Finance, Policy and Governance Committee with the following being determined on a named vote basis:

All references will be to Chair or Vice-Chair.

FOR: Cllrs Forster, Hovey, Eaton, Cartlidge, Corcoran, Smith, Jones, Haines, Leo-O'Mahoney, Wait and Southwell.

AGAINST: Cllrs Benson, Moran, Lowe, Merry and Ashcombe-Hurt.

Absentions: Cllr Kirkham

Agreed that all references will be to Chair or Vice-Chair.

Standing Order 3, proposed insertion of new paragraph:

“Nothing in this paragraph shall prevent arrangements being made for members to receive an informal briefing in public. A minimum of two such briefings should be held so as to include:

- i. Discussion of the budget prior to the formal Council meeting fixed for this purpose;
- ii. Discussion of member’s appointments prior to the Council Annual Meeting.

An amendment was proposed which removed reference to specific meetings.

FOR: Cllrs Forster, Hovey, Eaton, Cartlidge, Corcoran, Smith, Jones, Haines, Merry, Southwell and Wait.

AGAINST: Cllrs Benson, Moran, Lowe, Kirkham and Lea-O’Mahoney.

Abstentions: Cllr Ashcombe-Hurt

Agreed that the paragraph be inserted with no reference to specific briefings.

Standing Order 3.f. Standing order 3.d. will not apply to Working Groups. Following discussion, the vote was that all regulations about meetings are applied to the business of Council, Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Groups.

n.b Standing order 3.d. will enable a Working Group to exclude public and press when required.

FOR: Cllrs Forster, Hovey, Eaton, Cartlidge, Corcoran, Smith, Jones, Haines, Merry and Wait.

AGAINST: Cllrs Benson, Moran, Lowe Ashcombe-Hurt and Southwell.

Abstentions: Cllr Lea-O’Mahoney.

Agreed that Standing Order 3.f. will read: Standing Orders 3(a-d) will be applied to the business of Working Groups.

A new Standing Order under 3 was proposed which states: The Town Clerk may attend any meetings of the Council, it’s Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Groups and may advise and participate as appropriate.

Unanimously Agreed

After Standing Order 4.d. proposed insertion of new paragraph:

Chairs and Vice-Chairs shall remain in post until the first meeting in the new civic year of their Committee or Sub-Committee, which will take place within one month of the Annual Council Meeting. The first item of that meeting shall be the election of the Chair with the Retiring Chair in the chair. Chairs shall not serve for more than two consecutive years and are not eligible to stand for a third year, except when no one else wishes to stand for the position. The second item of that meeting shall be the election of the Vice-Chair with the new Chair in place.

8.23pm – 8.29pm: the meeting was adjourned to allow the Mayor to clarify points with the Clerk.

Unanimously agreed that the following paragraph is inserted:

Standing Order 4.f.vii – it needs to be made clear that Council is permitting members of Committees and Sub-Committees to appoint their own Chairs and Vice-Chairs.

It was also clarified, that any Committee or Sub-Committee Chair, that has served for 2 years up to 2017 is not eligible to stand again this year.

Standing Order 4.e.ix – correction of a type, the quorum should be four.

Standing Order 27a – insertion of 'Town' before Clerk.

RESOLVED: that subject to the amendments as outlined, the revised Standing Orders be adopted with immediate effect.

c. Financial Regulations Review

Lead: Chairman of Finance, Policy and Governance

RESOLVED: that the revised Financial Regulations be adopted with immediate effect.

ii) ASSETS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE 10 AUGUST 2017

Charter Room Air Conditioning Unit

Item withdrawn pending further information from the Operations Manager.

iii) COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE 9 SEPTEMBER 2017

a. Conservation Committed Reserve Spend

Lead: Chairman of Community and Environment

Expenditure against the installation of brown tourism signs has been discussed and agreed by the C&E Committee. The item

has been referred to Council as the funds are presently held in Committed Reserves and require Council resolution to access. Cllr Benson and the Working Group were thanked for their work on this project.

RESOLVED: that the spend of up to £2,500 from the Conservation Committed Reserve is approved, for the provision of Sandbach Crosses Tourist signage (brown signs), as recommended by the Community & Environment Committee 18 May 2017.

b. Events Group

Lead: Chairman of Community and Environment

There was an overview, including projected costs, of the events being planned for 2018:

Fun Day/Armed Forces Day – 30 June

Party in the Park – 7 July

New event in May – 19 May

Tour of Britain - tbc

It is anticipated that there will be a carry forward of £6,591, approval was sought to ring-fence this, to be used against 2018 events.

The Committee is recommending a budgetary increase to £10,000, which will be considered for inclusion in the 2018/19 budget through the budget setting process.

Combined with other income generated through ticket sales and sponsorship, and due to the level of expenditure being incurred, the matter is being presented to Council for approval.

One Councillor felt unable to support the proposals, as s101 of the Local Government Act does not allow delegation to a Working Group to deliver an event. He suggested that the replacement of the Working Group with a Sub-Committee would overcome this problem. He requested a named vote.

The following was resolved:

RESOLVED:

That the balance brought forward from the 2017 events, be made available to support events in 2018.

- ii. That funding within the budget for 2018/2019 be increased from £5000 to £10,000, to cover all items of expenditure set out in paragraphs 1 to 3 of this Report, and that the Community and Environment Committee be delegated to deal with the appointment and payment of suppliers, in accordance with the agreed budget.
- iii. That the Community and Environment Committee be delegated to incur expenditure to a maximum of £1,000 to support the Tour of Britain Cycle Race, should it stage in Sandbach.

- iv. That sponsorship received is applied to the 2018 events as specified by the sponsors, and that the balance of income over expenditure, including tickets sales, is ring-fenced to support events planned and approved for 2019.

FOR: Cllrs Forster, Hovey, Cartlidge, Smith, Jones, Haines, Benson, Moran, Lowe, Merry, Ashcombe-Hurt, Kirkham, Southwell, Wait and Lea-O'Mahoney.

AGAINST: Cllrs Corcoran and Eaton.

14. **CEC ENVIRONMENTAL FUNDS**

Lead: Cllr Haines

In July 2017 CEC agreed that money previously allocated against a Community Orchard, could be allocated against a tree and hedgerow planting scheme.

The Sandbach Woodland and Wildlife Group (SWWG) has developed a planting scheme for Dingle Wood, which will improve and provide hedgerows adjacent to the road, thus providing both visual and acoustic screening.

Planting will be undertaken by volunteers and should there be a surplus fruit trees will be planted within the parish – it was suggested that Mortimer Drive Play Area might be a good location.

RESOLVED: That approval is given for £500 of CEC Environmental Funds is released with immediate effect, to enable the installation of hedgerow screening at Dingle Wood.

15. **ADVERTISING BUDGET**

The Clerk report that budget code 101 6290 (advertising) is likely to be up to £350 overspent by the year end, she asked members to approve this overspend.

RESOLVED: that an overspend of up to £350 is approved.

16. **PREFERRED SUPPLIERS**

The Clerk stated that the Market Working Group was presently going through the process of inviting tenders from companies wishing to delivery architectural and project managements services to the market refurbishment. Financial Regulations state that a preferred list may be used, therefore a list of preferred companies was presented and members asked to approve this list as the preferred list for the Market Hall Project. It was noted that as the project develops a new list of preferred builders will be required, this will be developed with the support of the successful architect prior to being approved by Council.

RESOLVED: That Sandbach Town Council approves the five named companies as its 'approved list' for the purpose of seeking tenders for the refurbishment of the Market Hall.

17. SKATEBOARD/BMX/SCOOTER PARK PROVISION

Lead: Cllr Corcoran

The draft Terms of Reference (ToR) were presented for approval, along with a project progress report and a request to make available £500 for any required consultation (to be administered by the Clerk).

Amendments to the ToR we proposed:

- Lead Councillor to be named.
- Reporting line via C&E Committee.

Any funds to be made available from the Parks and Play Area Committed Reserves.

Vote for the amendments as detailed:

FOR: 11

AGAINST: 5

Abstentions 1

RESOLVED: that

- The progress report is received.
- The Terms of Reference be approved, subject to the above amendments.
- £500 be made available for promotion and consultation (To be administered by the Clerk).

18. WORKING GROUP ON SANDBACH VISSIM TRAFFIC MODELLING

Lead: Cllr Haines

A detailed report was shared.

CEC is to undertake a review of the Local Transport Plan (LTP), which will include a car parking review. A member briefing session has taken place, to which all members were invited. A Working Group is being formed to undertake the review, all members are invited to be part of the group.

Concern was expressed regarding the quality of the data used to inform the LTP. It was felt that any subsequent review would have little credibility unless a review of the VISSIM report was first conducted.

It was proposed that STC should write to CEC to convey these concerns and request that before any work is done on the LTP that a new VISSIM study for Sandbach is undertaken, with all inputs and assumptions being independently verified.

RESOLVED: that the report be received and that STC write to CEC as outlined.

19. MARKET HALL WORKING GROUP

Lead: Cllr Forster

Since approval was given to appoint a Project Manager, a change of approach has been identified. This change now means that architects from the preferred list of suppliers will be invited to tender to fulfil the roles of Architect, Designer and Project Manager (single role). The successful firm will work with the Market Working Group to agree a design plan, undertake consultation with stakeholders, conservation and planning, with a view to putting the agreed plan to tender. It is planned that the final tender report, along with preferred contractors and costings will be put to Council at an additional meeting which will take place on 30 November. Members sought assurance that the Council's adopted Project Management will be applied to ensure good governance throughout the project.

A high-level Action Plan and Design Brief were shared, which shows completion of the project being Spring 2018.

RESOLVED: that that Action Plan and Design Brief are agreed.

20. AIR QUALITY WORKING GROUP

Lead: Cllr Forster

The minutes of a meeting of the Air Quality Working Group held on 17 August were shared. Several questions have been posed to CEC, with a response still awaited.

The Air Quality Working Group was thanked for its efforts.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the WG be received.

21. ARCLID WASTE AND RECYCLING CENTRE (AWRC)

Lead: Cllr Lowe

A Working Group comprising of representatives from local councils has been liaising with CEC to keep the AWRC open while further work is done to establish if the centre could be run locally by parish councils. Unfortunately, this has not been possible and the Centre will close on 30 September.

There is concern that the closure will increase the level of fly tipping across the area and all local councils have agreed to monitor this.

The work of the Working Group was commended.

RESOLVED: that

- i. Members of the Working Group collate information and monitor the situation with regard to fly-tipping.
- ii. A letter of concern is sent to CEC about the closure of the Centre.

22. MEMBERS ITEMS

22.1 CAR PARKING AT SANDBACH STATION

Lead: Cllr Lea O'Mahoney

Northern Rail has introduced car parking charges at Sandbach Station, which could mean an additional cost of up to £600pa for Sandbach commuters. A draft letter opposing the introduction of charges was shared, with a request that it be sent.

RESOLVED: that the report be received and the letter sent to Northern Rail.

23. CORRESPONDENCE

23.1 Sandbach Partnership

A letter dated 15 April 2017 stating that the Partnership does not want the Council to consider a three year funding plan.

RESOLVED: that the correspondence be received.

23.2 Fiona Bruce, MP

A letter dated 14 August 2017 regarding email from Mr T Barnett. The Clerk reported that she had written to Fiona Bruce MP explaining the Town Council's position and that she was not aware of any further action.

RESOLVED: that the letter be received.

23.3 Mr Hibbert

Letter dated 22 August 2017 regarding Ettiley Heath improvements.

RESOLVED: that the letter be forwarded to CEC Highways, with a copy to the Ward Councillor Gail Wait.

23.4 Mrs L Purcell

Email dated 11 September 2017 regarding Sandbach Day of Dance.

RESOLVED: that the email is received with thanks.

24. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Town Council Meeting will take place on Thursday 12 October 2017 at 7.00pm at the Sandbach Literary Institution.

Meeting closed: 9.37pm
Cllr M Forster, Town Mayor