

# SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of Sandbach Town Council held on 12 October 2017 at 7.00pm at Sandbach Literary Institution.**

**PRESENT**

Councillors: M Forster (Mayor)  
R Hovey (Deputy Mayor)  
K Southwell  
B Moran  
S Corcoran  
M Muldoon  
G Merry  
A Smith  
C Lowe  
S Ashcombe-Hurt  
R Wait  
K Haines  
G Price Jones  
J Cartidge

Also present were four members of the public/press.

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## **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllrs: M Benson  
S Kirkham  
R Hoffmann  
B Davies

Absent without apologies

M Lea-O'Mahoney  
P Eaton

## **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Southwell expressed a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in a letter from the Cheshire Police Constabulary, should it be discussed (tabled at the meeting).

### 3. MAYORS REMARKS

A list of events attended by the Mayor was circulated with the agenda. The Mayor stated that it continues to be a privilege to meet the many people who give their time freely to support initiatives in the town.

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#### **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

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

##### Mr Richard Hamilton

Concern was expressed that the 2016 VISSIM report, undertaken by CEC, is flawed. He stated that the main flaws are in relation to understated traffic projections between 2017 and 2030 and questioned why there is such a degree of mistakes contained within, all 'understating' the problem; his conclusion is that there is a deliberate manipulation of data and growth factors. The report was used as a material evidence through the Local Plan Enquiry; it is felt that the Local Plan Inspector has been misled by inaccurate information. Mr Green has written to the Lead of CEC, Cllr Bailey, plus Cllrs Brown and Stockton concerning the matter, however has not received a response.

He went on to speak about the current piece of work to 'refresh' the Local Transport Plan for Sandbach and stated that, based on the current data held, a refresh is not adequate and a full review should be undertaken.

He feels that action is required to rectify the issue, however does not know how to progress, he asked for Sandbach Town Council guidance.

Following the last STC meeting, a letter regarding the flawed VISSIM report was sent to CEC, the Clerk reported that to date she has not received a response. This will be pursued.

A number of members empathised with Mr Hamilton and agreed that pressure should continue, until such time CEC provides a satisfactory explanation. The local press is asked to publicise the matter.

Cllr Moran offered to pursue Mr Hamilton's letter via CEC and requested that copies be made available to him.

Mr Richard Hamilton and Mr David Whitworth were thanked for their professional support to the Council.

Following the questions the meeting was reconvened.

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

**RESOLVED:** that items 7 and 13.1 are considered with the exclusion of the public and press, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

**5. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2017.**

Cllr Moran corrected the wording to his expression of interest.

Cllr Forster asked for there to be a reference to his introduction to item 13i, he offered to provide a summary of what was said.

**RESOLVED:** that subject to two amendments (above), the minutes are approved as an accurate record.

**6. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 18 SEPTEMBER (DRAFT).**

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes be noted.

**7. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE HELD ON 27 SEPTEMBER 2017(DRAFT).**

*Considered with the exclusion of public and press.*

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes be noted.

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

**9. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 7 SEPTEMBER 2017 (DRAFT).**

Members were urged to carefully consider the wording of the minutes, which purport to give power to the Events Working Group to organise and deliver events. Members were informed that doing this contravenes S101 of the Local Government Act, which states that the Council can only delegate decision making responsibilities to Committees and Sub-Committees, and not Working Groups.

A named vote was requested.

For noting the minutes: Cllrs Forster, Hovey, Haines, Moran, Lowe, Merry, Southwell, Wait and Ashcombe-Hurt.

Against noting the minutes: Cllrs Corcoran, Price-Jones and Cartlidge.

Abstentions: Cllr Smith.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes are noted.

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

**11. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE LLR & GOVERNANCE SUB-COMMITTEE – NO MEETINGS HELD**

**12. UNDISCHARGED RESOLUTIONS**

The Town Clerk referred to the schedule of undischarged resolutions. She informed members that a letter had been received from Cheshire Police, which outlined proposals for future PCSO provision. She asked that members consider the contents of the letter when discussing budgetary requirements for 2108/19.

Due to the level of required expenditure for proposed changes, STC would like an extension to the response time, with the matter being further considered by Council at its December meeting.

**RESOLVED:** that the schedule be noted, with the Cheshire Police letter being considered at the next meeting of STC.

### 13. MATTERS ARISING

#### 13.1 Personnel Committee

*Considered with the exclusion of public and press.*

The Chairman of the Personnel Committee and Town Clerk both spoke to the Staffing Review report, which recommended a number of changes to job descriptions.

**RESOLVED:** that the report be noted, with all recommendations approved with immediate effect.

#### 13.2 Personnel Committee

A revised H&S Handbook was shared, with a request that it be adopted.

**RESOLVED:** that the revised handbook is deferred and referred back to the Personnel Committee for tracking before being re-presented to Council.

#### 13.3 Cycling Working Group

The draft Terms of Reference were discussed, with amendments being agreed:

- Lead Councillor: Cllr S Corcoran.
- The Planning Committee is noted as the parent Committee and is delegated to approve the plan.

**RESOLVED:** that subject to the amendments as noted, the Terms of Reference are approved.

### 14. SANDBACH MARKET HALL

The Lead Councillor for the project presented the item. He explained that a robust interview and tender procedure had been undertaken and an architect/project manager being identified. The tender figure had come in within the Council's approved £13,000, but unfortunately it has since been established that any VAT will not be reclaimable, therefore an increased total figure of £15,000 was requested.

Additionally, an amount of £5,000 is requested to enable professional fees and permissions, such as planning and building regulations, to be paid.

An amended timetable was presented, which sees the final design being presented to Council on 20 November, public consultation on 22 and 23 November and contractor tender closing date being 19 December at 12 noon. Final approval to undertake the work will be sought from Council on 18 January 2018. If all goes to plan, work should commence on 5 February and be completed week commencing 13 April 2018.

The Steering Group Terms of Reference were made available for comment and it was agreed that the Group will be formed under the direction of Council and not the Project Team; the group will report directly to Sandbach Town Council.

Members expressed concern about the level of irrecoverable VAT and asked whether the decision to tax should be re-visited.

**RESOLVED:** that

- i. Council approves the appointment of David Trowler Associates (Warrington), in accordance with their tender of £12,500 + VAT.  
[n.b. appointment delegated to the Clerk]
- ii. £5,000 be made available for planning/build related fees and professional advice as required.  
[n.b. appointment and payments agreed by the Clerk in accordance with adopted Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation]
- iii. The revised timetable is noted and agreed.
- iv. The Market Hall Working Group will be known at the Market Hall Project Team.
- v. The Town Council be responsible for creating a Steering Group comprising a cross section of the community as outlined. Cllr Hovey volunteered.
- vi. The Terms of Reference for the Steering Group were agreed with the amendment that Ann Banks and David Trowler be in attendance, rather than full members of the Group.

## **15. SANDBACH CHRISTMAS LIGHTS**

A letter from the Sandbach Christmas Lights Committee (undated) with supporting accounts was presented, through which the release of £5,000 grant was requested.

**RESOLVED:** that a payment of £5,000 be made to the Christmas Lights Committee, with the thanks of Council being conveyed.

## **16. CORRESPONDENCE**

16.1 Sandbach Partnership

An email dated 2 October was presented, in which it was requested that the current and future Town Mayor's champion dementia awareness.

**RESOLVED:** that the Mayor and Mayor Elect both welcome the opportunity, with the role being reviewed before the 2019 AGM.

16.2 Mr P Critton

An email dated 25 September regarding options to deal with dog fouling in Sandbach had been sent to a number of individual Councillors, with a response being made available from Mr Broughton, the CEC Open Spaces Manager.

It was reported that a meeting had taken place comprising of 'responsible dog owners', with the general opinion of all in attendance being that they want to work to improve the position. STC could be involved by assisting in the improvement of signage; it was reported that CEC has already erected a sign on Green Street.

STC posters have been made available for use, which request the people clear up after their dogs, also available are semi-permanent chalk stencils, to use on footpaths and pavements.

A direct request was made to the Sandbach Chronicle reporter who was in attendance, that awareness is raised via the media.

**17. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Town Council Meeting will take place on Thursday 7 December 2017 at 7.00pm at the Sandbach Town Hall.

***Please note that this meeting will be recorded and the audio recording made available to the public within 5 working days of the meeting.***

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**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

Meeting closed: 8.49pm  
Cllr M Forster, Town Mayor