

SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Sandbach Town Council held on 26 April 2018 at 7.00pm at Sandbach Literary Institution.

PRESENT

Councillors: M Forster (Mayor)
R Hovey (Deputy Mayor)
R Hoffmann
J Cartlidge
P Eaton
G Merry
G Price Jones
A Smith
M Muldoon
K Southwell
S Corcoran

Officers: Town Clerk
Operations Manager

Also present were two members of the public and press.

Prior to the meeting a one-hour discussion session took place, where members were able to scrutinise and manipulate data based on a twenty-year projection of income and expenditure, to enable them to better understand the potential VAT position. This session was open for public observation.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors: M Benson
B Moran
S Kirkham
M Lea-O'Mahoney
C Lowe
K Haines
K Flavell

Absent without apologies:

Councillors: R Wait
S Ashcombe-Hurt

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

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

Council was asked, when considering whether to opt to tax, to consider public perception in addition to finance.

Following the questions, the Town Mayor reconvened the Town Council Meeting.

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular Charles Ray, the newly appointed Sandbach Reporter for the Chronicle.

He thanked all those involved with the Transport Festival for a wonderful event.

3. VALUE ADDED TAX

Attention was drawn to the earlier discussion session, which had been interesting and useful in demonstrating the impact of various financial scenarios. The Town Clerk and Operations Manager were thanked for putting together the information. Members were reminded that the decision to tax should not be solely about finance, but public perception should also be a consideration.

The impacts of opting to tax were discussed, with consideration being about: possible loss of revenue, timing and the 20 year commitment following decision.

RESOLVED: that STC does NOT opt to tax.

4. LINDEN BANK APPROVED PREMISES

Lead: Cllr Corcoran

Following a Panorama programme in 2006, the decision was taken that child sex offenders should not reside in approved premises adjacent to places used by children, this resulted in sex offenders being excluded from 14 approved premises, however Linden Bank was not one of those premises. It is felt that Linden Bank should have been included as, at that time, it was directly opposite a children's play area, not far from a primary school and next to a Church Hall regularly used by a Play Group.

STC has written to the Probation Service (renamed the National Offender Management Service (NOMS)), with correspondence either being ignored or mislaid; Sadiq Khan raised the issue in parliament, the responsible Minister denied seeing correspondence from STC, but later apologised when it was

located. NOMS claims the nursery was established after 2006, this not correct and they have been asked to explain this.

At a recent meeting of the Linden Bank Liaison Group, the NOMS representative said that we should be asking the Minister for the information behind the claim that the nursery was established after 2006.

Proposal: "that STC writes to the Minister responsible copied to Fiona Bruce asking, with reference to the letter from Jeremy Wright MP in 2013 why Jeremy Wright and the minister in 2006 believed that Linden Bank was not immediately adjacent to premises used by children; to confirm that we know that it IS immediately adjacent to premises used by children and has been for a number of years prior to 2006; and to copy the letter to NOMS asking why they stated in their letter of May 2017 "Linden Bank was not directly adjacent to any school, nursery etc in 2006" and to restate that we know this to be untrue."

Amendment to proposal: should the letter be agreed, it should contain a request that once resolved, all child sex offenders should be moved from the premises immediately.

It is noted that, nothing in what has been said should be taken as a criticism of the staff working at Linden Bank.

RESOLVED: that the proposal and amendment are approved and that a letter be sent to the Minister responsible for Linden Bank approved premises as detailed.

5. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Town Council Meeting will be the AGM on Thursday 17 May 2018 at 7.00pm at the Sandbach Literary Institution.

Meeting closed: 7.17pm

Cllr M Forster, Town Mayor

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