

SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL

Finance, Policy and Governance Committee

Minutes for the meeting held on Wednesday, 8th December 2021 at 7pm,
in the Sandbach Town Hall Ballroom.

In Attendance Cllrs: A Smith
G Merry
S Corcoran
R Hovey
D Hegarty
L Crane
S Crane
S Kirkham
A Nevitt
N Adams
G. Price Jones (arrived 7.20pm)

Also present were the Finance Officer, Assistant Town Clerk, P Cooper (ChALC) and one member of the public.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr M Muldoon
Cllr Price Jones (later joined the meeting)

2. CO-OPTION TO THE FINANCE, POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Resolved: that Cllrs Ann Nevitt and Nick Adams are co-opted to the Finance, Policy and Governance Committee.

Cllrs Nevitt and Adams immediately joined the Committee meeting.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr S Corcoran

Advised that he is Leader of Cheshire East Council which is not prejudicial to any items on this agenda.

L Crane

Declared an interest in agenda 8.4 and will not participate in discussion or voting.

S Crane

Declared an interest in agenda 8.4 and will not participate in discussion or voting.

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

Speaker 1.

In relation to agenda item 8.2, provided background information on the project and details of the benefits to the community and visitors to the Town.

There being no further requests to speak, the Chair reconvened the meeting.

4. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Resolved: Due to commercial sensitivity and personnel reference, that items 10, 11 and 12 are considered in the absence of public and press, under the Public Bodies Admissions to Meetings Act 1960.

5. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE MEETING ON 23rd AUGUST 2021

Resolved: That the minutes be approved as a true record of the meeting.

6. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS: INTERIM SECOND QUARTER 2021-22 STATEMENTS [FINANCE]

[Attached: Simplified Accounts Summary, Detailed Income and Expenditure Cost Centre Report, Bank Reconciliation.

Lead: Chair of Finance

Resolved: That the second quarter statements are approved.

7. PAYMENTS MADE

Attached: [Schedule of Payments]

Lead: Chair of Finance

Resolved: That the payments made 1st July to 30th September 2021 are approved.

8. GRANT APPLICATIONS

Attached: [Four Applications, Extra supporting information emailed to Councillors]

Lead: Chair of Finance

To approve grant applications from budget line Community Grants- 110-4530, payments to be delegated to the Finance Officer. Fund balance currently £27,900

8.1 SANDBACH TRANSPORT FESTIVAL (Deferred from the last Meeting of the Committee)

Members discussed the application and accompanying email, in which Festival organisers query various levels of support during the Transport Festival from Council and it's staff. Further reference was made to previous grant funds allocated, in addition to the £12,000 requested to help deliver the 2022 Transport Festival.

Resolved: Town Council Market and Events team review the application document requests to report to next Finance meeting on how, and if, Sandbach Town Council can contribute

8.2 SOUTH CHESHIRE CYCLING ACTION GROUP

Members supported the scheme which encourages residents and visitors into the countryside with a comprehensive and useful map.

Resolved: That the £500, requested to update and re-print maps, is approved for payment from budget line Community Grants, 110-4530, payment to be delegated to the Finance Officer.

8.3 THE SANDBACH TUNNEL NETWORK SOCIETY

Members expressed concerns regarding the application for £10,000, including lack of business plan, conflicting details of supporting information and Member research and viability of the proposition.

Resolved: This application is not taken any further.

8.4 RUBY'S FUND

Cllrs L Crane and S Crane did not participate in discussion or voting.

It was agreed that this community play group will benefit many local families.

Resolved: that the grant of £2535, to help create a new community play group term time project – Ruby's Fund Butterfly Group, is approved for payment from budget line Community Grants, 110-4530, payment to be delegated to the Finance Officer.

9. SUPPLIER INVOICES [FINANCE]

Attached: [2 Invoices]

9.1 Barnes Walker

Invoice 6565 for £2720 +VAT for Landscape Design Services – Small Common Car Park, Sandbach.

Resolved: that payment of invoice 6565 totalling £3264 be approved for payment by the Finance Officer.

9.2 JDH Business Services LTD

Invoice 4118 for £1309 +VAT for Data Protection Compliance Services 2021/22

Resolved: that payment of invoice 4118 totalling £1570.80 be approved for payment by the Finance Officer.

10. PAYMENT IN ERROR

Considered in the absence of public and press.

Resolved: the next steps are agreed to include delegation for the Assistant Town Clerk/Finance Officer to pursue fund recovery and obtain appropriate outside action, as necessary.

11. FINANCE SUPPORT

Considered in the absence of public and press.

A verbal update confirmed that Finance Support had been obtained for two days during December and a steer was sought regarding further support.

Members agreed no further action was required.

Resolved: Finance Officer and Asst Town Clerk to undertake further budget document preparation.

12. BUDGET UPDATE

Considered in the absence of public and press.

An initial review and discussion relating to circulated draft documents provided strong steer from the Committee towards 0% increase in precept, which will be passed to the public meeting 10th January 2022.

Members did not support the proposals for introduction of a rolling capital fund.

Resolved: The verbal update is noted and budget papers to be circulated to all members for consideration at the Finance Meeting 10th January 2022.

13. VEXATIOUS PERSON POLICY

The Chair provided a verbal update on status and confirmed at the last meeting, 23 August, a working group was to be set up.

Resolved: That an invitation be sent to all Members and the volunteer member of the public to serve on the working group.

14. WATER INVOICE

Members had received a report, via email, from the Market Manager regarding current status and previous problems encountered, which confirmed progress would be reported in due course.

Resolved: That the update is noted.

15. NOTIFICATION BY CEC COUNCILLORS TO STC OF DECISIONS THAT AFFECT SANDBACH (Deferred from Council 23rd November)

Members discussed the item proposals and suggestion that the four CEC Councillors are asked to report regularly to STC (Full) Council meetings on matters which affect Sandbach. There was some concern expressed regarding the expectation of updating on all matters and it being unfeasible for all CEC Councillors to know and understand all Sandbach matters.

Resolved: For a trial period, to end of this Council term, on an alphabetical rota basis, one Cheshire East Councillor is invited to attend full Town Council meetings and speak on Sandbach matters for five minutes.

16. UNDISCHARGED RESOLUTIONS

The circulated table of undischarged resolutions was reviewed by the Committee, with reporting and updates confirmed. Members queried actions agreed to progress the Pension Discretions policy in February 2021 and were advised that these outcomes had not been specified within approved minutes and, as such, the Pension Discretions Policy was currently being reviewed in line with documents obtained from Cheshire Pension.

Resolved: that :-

- i. An initial Cash flow forecast is prepared for the January meeting, with support of the Chair and Vice Chair of Finance.
- ii. Business Deposit account information is obtained from CCLA and Lloyds for 10 January meeting
- iii. Equality policy is adopted and can be removed from the list.
- iv. Pension policy update to be provided for next Finance Meeting.

17. LETTERS OF THANKS

There were none.

18. CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

19. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

20. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS

The date of the next meeting of the Finance, Policy and Governance Committee is Monday 10th January 2022 in Sandbach Town Hall.

Meeting closed 9.20pm

Cllr A Smith, Chair.

DRAFT