

SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Sandbach Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 18th January 2022 at 7.00pm, in Sandbach Town Hall.

PRESENT

Councillors: G Price Jones (Mayor)
K Flavell (Deputy Mayor)
G Merry
L Crane
S Corcoran
S Broad
R Hovey
A Nevitt
N Adams
A Smith
R Hoffmann
M Muldoon
D Hegarty
S Kirkham

Also present were the Assistant Town Clerk, Operational Support Officer, ChALC Officer, CEC Cllr M Benson and twelve members of the public and press

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs: J Beddows
S Crane
D Jack
K Seymour

Absent without apologies: Cllr P Eaton

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Smith

Confirmed that, following advice received, he will leave the room during discussion of item 15 due to being one of the complainants. Further stating that he would like to make it clear that the sole motivation of complaint was to uphold principles of the Code of Conduct, which all Councillors signed up to.

Cllr Corcoran

Declared interest as per Councillor Smith, as one of the complainants to which agenda item 15 refers, and that he is the Leader of Cheshire East Council and

considered this prejudicial in relation to item 16.4 and, as such, would not participate in discussion.

3. MAYORS COMMENTS

The Mayor referenced the popular festive activities in and around the town and praised the hard work of all businesses to enhance their shop windows. The Christmas Market was again well-attended and all involved with the Christmas Lights, particularly Blitz, were congratulated on their efforts in providing the attractive 2021 display.

A minute silence was held in memory of Craig Bayley, Chair of Grassroots Sandbach, who recently passed and will be greatly missed in the community.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Mayor adjourned the meeting to allow questions from members of the public. There being no questions, the meeting was immediately reconvened.

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

Resolved: Items 8, 16.5 and 21 be considered with the exclusion of public and press, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, due to personnel nature.

5. CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL SANDBACH MATTERS – CLLR MIKE BENSON

Cllr Benson provided an update on his membership of various CEC Committees. In joining the recently formed Cemetery Strategy Review advisory panel he looks forward to working with his colleagues on a topic which has cross-party support across Cheshire East and stated that the key issues for Sandbach Cemetery is demand and capacity.

Current and previous consultation dates were referenced for Highways and Transport, Speed Management Strategy and pending public right of way applications were confirmed. As a Southern Planning Committee Member, Cllr Benson provided brief explanation of the planning decision process and 'calling-in' applications. He advised that individual CEC Councillors do not receive all STC observations on local Planning applications as a matter of course and so, should a response be required by STC, he suggested all CEC Sandbach Ward Cllrs are emailed directly.

6. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 23 NOVEMBER [ATTACHED].

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

7. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING & CONSULTATION COMMITTEE HELD ON 13 DECEMBER.

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting are noted.

8. **TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2021 (DRAFT).**
Considered in the confidential section.
Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting are noted.
9. **TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8 DECEMBER 2021 (DRAFT).**
Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting are noted.
10. **TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 6 DECEMBER 2021 (DRAFT).**
Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting are noted.
11. **TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EVENTS SUB-COMMITTEE – NONE HELD**
12. **TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ASSETS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE – NONE HELD.**
13. **TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SMALL COMMON REDEVELOPMENT SUB COMMITTEE - NONE HELD**

The ChALC support Officer in attendance provided clarity regarding agenda item 14.1 and the separation between Personnel Committee recommendation, as referenced, and agenda item 15. As such, agenda item 15 was considered ahead of item 14.1.

15. CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL HEARING OUTCOME

[Attached: Decision Notice]

The Mayor advised Members that the role of the meeting was not to discuss the content of the Decision Notice but to deal with the recommendations of the Hearing Sub-Committee, as specified within the circulated report.

ChALC officer stated that the Council was only – in regard to this report - to decide whether or not to accept and implement the recommendations.

Resolved: The recommendations of the decision notice are accepted and will be put in motion.

14. MATTERS ARISING FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS

14.1 Personnel Committee

Lead: Chair of Personnel

During discussion and queries raised it was confirmed that Council can choose who sits on its committees at any time and a timeframe for sanction was debated to facilitate review of training benefit and modified behaviours, in line with the Code of Conduct, before any return to Committee or reinstatement of Council email access.

Resolved: That:-

- i. the recommendation of the Personnel Committee be accepted, to sever email connections with regard to the .gov.uk email address.
- ii. three months following completion of training a review of behaviour is undertaken.

14.2 Finance Committee

2022-2023 Budget

Lead: Chair of Finance

The Chair of Finance confirmed the budget document circulated and presented on the screen followed discussion and update at the last Finance Meeting, which all Council Members were invited to attend, and thanked all of those who joined the meeting and were involved in the production of the draft document.

Resolved: That:-

- i. The budget and precept of £695,310 for 2022-2023 is approved.
- ii. Submission of the precept request to CEC is delegated to the Assistant Town Clerk, to meet the submission deadline.

14.3 Finance Committee

Grant application

Sandbach Partnership, on behalf of Sandbach Park Bowls Club and Sandbach Park Steering Committee

[Attached: Grant application]

Lead: Chair of Finance

The Chair of Finance outlined the grant application requirements and questions previously raised by the Finance Committee, to which response had been received and circulated to all; including ownership and maintenance.

Additional queries were raised:

- Why are there no accounts of the organisation to clarify whether the Bowling group has money and, if they are wanting the facility, will they be making a contribution to demonstrate that they do want it?
- Who is being paid for the unit? As the Partnership cannot reclaim vat the sum would be lost, however, CEC or STC purchasing would enable £2,000 to be recovered.
- Would STC provide the grant to CEC for reclaim of vat?

Resolved: That Council delegates the finality of the proposal to the Finance, Policy and Governance Committee to agree to purchase the unit, providing questions are answered to the satisfaction of the Committee.

14.4 Finance Committee

Movement of Reserves to CCLA

Lead: Chair of Finance

Resolved: Movement of £500,000 of reserves is approved to CCLA, as recommended by the Finance Committee, and completion of the fund move delegated to the Town Clerk's Office

15. CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL HEARING OUTCOME

Considered ahead of 14.1 (above).

16. FINANCE MATTERS

Lead: Chair of F,P&G Committee

16.1 Blitz Invoice – Christmas Market

[Attached: Invoice]

Resolved: The payment of invoice amount £9540 for 2021 Christmas Market Provision is approved.

16.2 Blitz Invoice – Christmas Lights

[Attached: Invoice]

Resolved: The payment of invoice for the amount of £33,114 for year 1 of the Sandbach Christmas Lighting scheme is approved.

16.3 DCK Accounting Solutions

[Attached: Invoice]

Resolved: *Payment of invoice amount £3235.20 for services provided by DCK Accounting Solutions on 2nd and 3rd December 2021 is approved and budget line 101-4114 (accountancy support) overspend.*

16.4 Cheshire East Council

[Attached: Invoice]

Resolved: Payment of invoice amount £1641.84 for the Road Closure at the Remembrance Sunday Parade – 14th November 2021 is approved.

16.5 EQ Harmony

[Attached: Invoice]

Considered during confidential section of the meeting.

Resolved: Payment of invoice amount £2000 for advice and representation is approved for payment by the Finance Officer.

16.6 ANSA – Hanging Baskets

[Attached: Invoice]

Resolved: Payment of invoice amount £9930.02 for Summer 2021 Hanging Baskets is approved.

16.7 Silk FM – Christmas Lights Switch On

[Attached: Invoice]

Resolved: Payment of invoice amount £1684.80 for the Roadshow at the Christmas Lights Switch On 2021 is approved.

17. ANNUAL CORPORATE RISK REVIEW

[Attached: STC Corporate Risk Assessments]

Lead: Assistant Town Clerk

Resolved: The Sandbach Town Council Corporate Risk Assessments, as presented, are approved.

18. TERMS OF REFERENCE

[Attached: ChALC Report and Draft ToR]

Lead: ChALC Support Officer

Having discussed the circulated amended Terms of Reference there was some concern regarding time available to review and digest the changes.

Resolved: The revised Terms of Reference and associated delegation will be presented to the respective Committee's for review, with the newly proposed Appeals Committee ToR reviewed by the Personnel Committee, and all subsequently returned to Council for ratification.

19. CONSTITUTION

[Attached: ChALC report and draft document]

Lead: Mayor

Resolved: The revised Town Council Constitution, including and both the Introduction and Summary & Explanation Sections are approved.

20. DIGNITY AT WORK AND STRESS POLICY

[Attached: ChALC reports and draft documents]

Lead: ChALC Support Officer

Query was raised regarding process for Staff complaints and Council's duty of care to Employees, under relevant employment Acts, and that a referral to the MO could delay review by a lengthy period. As such, staff should be protected by Council. It was requested this be investigated further and reported to the Finance Meeting.

Resolved: That the revised policies are delegated to the Finance Policy and Governance Committee.

21. SUBJECT ACCESS REQUEST

Considered within Confidential Section

Lead: Assistant Town Clerk

Verbal status update was received.

Resolved: A formal course of action was agreed.

22. PHONE BOXES

[Attached: Supporting Documentation and Contract]

Lead: Mayor

Members discussed the two phone boxes and, with regard to Crewe Road, Wheelock, were advised there is a community interest in its upkeep and so there should be minimal draw on Council resource to maintain.

The

Resolved:

That:-

- i) Phone box: Jnc Mill Lane PC01 Crewe Road, Wheelock Sandbach – Number: 01270 759082 will be adopted by the Town Council and signing and return of the contract by Council's Officers is approved.
- ii) Above newly adopted Crewe Road, Wheelock, phone box be referred to Assets & Services Committee for a proposal of future Community use be developed.
- iii) BT are asked to commence a 90 day consultation for, K6 kiosk – 01270759095 O/s Market Hall , High Street Sandbach CW11 1AX.

23. DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATION

[Attached: Table of Delegated Decisions]

Lead: Mayor

Resolved: The attached list of decisions taken under SO 27 are noted.

24. MEMBERS ITEMS

There were none.

25. CORRESPONDENCE

25.1 Email received on 15th November from Cheshire Constabulary concerning a Sandbach ASB Working Group.

Resolved: The Assistant Town Clerk invites all Councillors to confirm their interest in joining the group, with each ward to agree one representative.

26. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Town Council Meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 9th February 2022 at 7pm in Sandbach Town Hall.

Meeting Closed 9.05pm

Cllr G Price Jones, Mayor

KP