

SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL

ASSETS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes for the meeting held on Tuesday 30 July 2019 at 7.00pm in the Sandbach Literary Institution.

PRESENT

Councillors: Laura Crane (Chair)
John Beddows
Kieran Seymour
Richard Hovey
Mike Muldoon (Town Mayor)
Laura Crane
Richard Hoffmann

In attendance were eight members of public and press.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillors: Geraint Price Jones
Paula Eaton

2. **RESIGNATION OF VICE-CHAIR**

RESOLVED: that the Vice Chair's resignation from his position is accepted.

3. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

RESOLVED: that Cllr Price Jones is appointed Vice Chair of the Committee.

4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Beddows declared an interest in agenda items 10, 16 and 17.

Cllr Merry declared an interest in agenda item 20 as she is named in the report as knowing the gentleman involved; this is a non-pecuniary interest.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

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

Speaker 1

She referred to the new website and confirmed that it works on her mobile phone, despite Facebook comments to the contrary.

She expressed her concern that the Council does not post its events on Community Facebook pages, she felt that by not doing this the Council is not being inclusive.

The Clerk explained that the Council did used to do this, however following a report made by a member of the public, Facebook had withdrawn this privilege and the Council was no longer able to share to other Groups.

Councillor responded stating that followers of the Council Facebook page would automatically see updates and that the ability to share among other groups is complicated and needs the support of the administrators

The Clerk offered to look into this to see if there is a manageable solution, it was further agreed that the matter would be referred to the Events Sub-Committee.

Speaker 2

Members were asked whether there had been any Working Group meetings since the formation of the new Council and if so, how had they been publicised.

The Clerk advised that all members have been reminded of requirements regarding the operation of Working Groups, as these meetings are not facilitated by staff, the onus to publicise rests with the Lead Member.

The Committee Chair referenced two Working Groups that had met and apologised if the public had not been made aware; she committed to providing an answer.

Additionally, the Committee was asked to consider all aspects of improvement to the Small Common Carpark under one project; it was confirmed that this has already been considered and will be factored into future considerations.

Following the questions, the meeting was re-convened.

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

RESOLVED: that Item 20 be considered in the absence of the public and press under the Public Bodies Admissions to Meetings Act 1960. This is due to commercial sensitivity and the need to divulge personal details.

6. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 4 JUNE 2019.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Assets & Services meeting held 4 June 2019 are approved as an accurate record.

7. CO-OPTION

RESOLVED: that Cllrs Jack and Merry are co-opted to the Committee.

8. MARKETS & TOWN HALL OPERATIONAL UPDATE

The Clerk presented operational reports from the Facilities & Services Supervisor, Business Promotion Officer and Financial Report. She drew out key points for discussion. The following comments were made for further investigation at the appropriate times:

1. Whether CCTV can be installed near to the public toilets with a view to deterring vandalism and anti-social behaviour.
2. Whether the Moonlight Market should be re-branded for future years.
3. Follow up why casual market traders are leaving.
4. Remove the Market Refurbishment costs from the overall Market Expenditure line, thus giving an accurate baseline for future comparison.
5. Whether it would be appropriate to cease providing gazebos on a Saturday.

RESOLVED: that the report be received and that the comments made are considered at the appropriate time.

9. OPERATIONAL FUNDING

The Clerk presented a report which detailed six pieces of work, which all require Committee or Council approval to enable funding to be accessed.

Town Hall CCTV

RESOLVED: That the 2019/20 budget provision of £5,700 is made available for the installation and upgrade of CCTV and that as part of the upgrade CCTV coverage of the outside of the public toilets is investigated and considered.

*following the meeting, the Finance Officer clarified that the wrong budget heading had been used, £5,700 sits in the Town Centre CCTV allocation, the Town Hall CCTV upgrade is actually £2420, therefore Council will have to be asked to approve an over-spend, with the actual requirement being £4001.09.

Town Hall Ballroom Refurbishment

RESOLVED: that Council be recommended to make available the 2019/20 budget provision of £4,400, with an additional over-spend of £400, plus 10% of the overall cost. Total over-spend = £880.

Pigeon Cleansing and Proofing between the Town hall and Market Buildings (High Level)

RESOLVED: that Council be recommended to make available the 2019/20 budget provision of £4,500, with an additional over-spend of £409.20, plus 10% of the overall cost. Total over-spend = £900.12.

Town Hall High-Level Clean – Ballroom

RESOLVED: that Council be recommended to make available the 2019/20 budget provision of £1,970.00, with an additional over-spend of £178.00, plus 10% of the overall cost. Total over-spend = £392.80.

Van (Primary Use Ranger)

RESOLVED: that the Council be recommended to make available the 2019/20 budget provision of £7,900 and the amount in committed 'van' reserves of £3,286, total £11,186.00 for the purpose of acquisition of a medium sized van for use by the Ranger, and agrees to vire the surplus to the equipment budget line, which will enable tools to be bought for use by the Ranger.

Town Hall Office Furniture

RESOLVED: that the Council be recommended to make available committed 'office furniture/maintenance' reserves of £1,862 to enable the refurbished Town Hall Officer to be furnished.

10. CHRISTMAS MARKET

A written report from the Operational Support Officer was presented, which shows that good progress is being made. There are a few stalls remaining, it is expected that these will soon be filled. The next step is to allocate and confirm stalls with traders.

To assist staff in organising the Market, Committee is asked to formally delegate delivery of the Market to staff; previously it was via an operational group comprising of staff and councillors.

Members asked that consideration be given to extending the Christmas Market onto Welles Street in future years.

RESOLVED: That the Assets and Services Committee notes the report and delegates the delivery of the Christmas Market to Officers, within the allocated budget. Any expenditure outside the budget will require Council approval.

11. LATE NIGHT CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

The Committee Chairman outlined the outcome of consultation with the Town's businesses regarding offering late night shopping through December. The majority of traders support the idea but feel that promotion needs to be thorough in order for it to be a success.

Members considered which nights would be the best to offer late night shopping and agreed a method of promotion, which will include a Christmas Programme, on the reverse of the Christmas Market Leaflet (to all households), coverage in local newspapers, the Town Talk and Banners.

A letter is to be sent to all shops and traders of the town, to establish exactly what level of interest there is within the trading community.

RESOLVED: subject to their being sufficient interest, Sandbach Town Council agreed to promote late night shopping during December.

12. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

The potential to expand the Christmas lights has been researched with three possible options being available, however in light of the emerging suggestions for the upgrade of the Small Common Carpark, the Officer involved is unable to make a recommendation at the time and feels that expansion of the lights should be considered along with wider plans to improve the small common.

Members sought clarity on the Christmas Light provision and what might happen should the current volunteers decide to retire.

Members agreed that the matter should be considered along with other improvement works but felt that the survey of the Congleton Road posts should be done independently.

RESOLVED: that five lamp posts on Congleton Road (Welles St to Bus Stop) are surveyed by CEC to establish whether they could take Christmas Lights, at a cost of £25 per column. Further enhancement will be considered as part of the Small Common upgrade.

13. STORAGE UNIT

RESOLVED: that the annual rental invoice of £2,400 is approved for payment.

14. **CONDITION SURVEY**

A copy of the latest revised version of the Condition Survey was made available for members. The Clerk explained the colour coding as an indication of the works that have been completed, require contractors and which remain outstanding.

The report was presented for information only.

RESOLVED: that the report be received.

15. **WEBSITE**

The Clerk confirmed that the new Council website is now live. All members have been asked to review the website and to feedback their observations to the Clerk, which will be acted upon at the earliest opportunity. The Clerk also asked that members of the public make contact with their comments and observations, they would be welcome.

RESOLVED: that it is noted that the new website is live and the Councillors and member of the public feed back to the Clerk as necessary.

16. **SMALL COMMON CARPARK**

A report was presented which outlined possible improvements to the Small Common Carpark, which could include a covered area which would help overcome events being affected by adverse weather. Subject to budget, consultation and planning, such improvements could be delivered by Summer 2020.

Considerations will include the full redevelopment of the Small Common Carpark: surface, materials, lining, power, lighting, cover etc.

Ensuing discussion covered:

- The need to ensure that the Town's overall carparking provision is not affected by any improvement works.
- That the Car-park is within the Sandbach Conservation Area, therefore needs to be planned sympathetically, with input from the CEC Conservation Officer.
- That the project should be factored into the 20/21 budget.
- The potential to attract ASB and vandalism, and the need for the area to be covered by CCTV. Advice from police to be sought.

RESOLVED: That the Committee approves the formation of the "Small Common Redevelopment Sub-Committee", the remit of which would be to investigate, cost and consult on options for providing a covered area, before reporting back to the Committee, with a view to presenting any emerging recommendations to Sandbach Town Council. In the meantime, a sum to be included in the emerging 'draft' 2020/21 budget.

Initial Volunteers for the Sub-Committee are: Cllrs Merry, Jack, Beddows, L Crane and Muldoon.

17. **TOWN HALL AND MARKET MARKETING PLANS**

As requested at the last A&S meeting, the Clerk prepared a template discussion document Marketing Plan for the Town Hall Complex. She suggested that

members read and feed in to the document, with the final version becoming the responsibility of the new Snr Business Promotion Officer.

RESOLVED: that the document be noted and that the new Senior Business Promotion Officer is asked to complete and deliver.

18. TOWN HALL OFFICE

The Clerk reported progress on the office development, she advised that planning applications had been lodged with CEC and the target completion date is still October 2019.

RESOLVED: that the report be received.

19. STREET FURNITURE ADJ. MARKET TAVERN

Correspondence from the Licensee of the Market Tavern was considered, which requested that the Council considered relocation three pieces of street furniture as their current position enabled unauthorised access to the Tavern Beer Garden.

The Local PCSO has been consulted, who in turn has spoken to the Licensee to better understand the position. The PCSO has arranged a meeting with the Ward Councillor for CEC and a Police ASB Officer, to consider options. He agrees that there is an issue which needs to be managed.

RESOLVED: that the issue is noted and the outcome of the PCSO meeting is awaited. In the meantime the Clerk will cost relocation of the three items, with an alternative location being the gable end wall of The Crown public house, with a report being presented to Council for decision and funding.

20. COMPLAINT RE TRADER

To be considered in a closed session due to commercial sensitivity and personal names/details being included.

A detailed report was presented which outlined a commercial disagreement between a member of the public and a Sandbach Indoor Market Trader.

RESOLVED: that Cllrs Jack and Muldoon will meet with the two parties individually to try to resolve the situation.

21. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

There are none.

22. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting of the Assets and Services Committee is Tuesday 5 November at 7.00pm.

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

Meeting closed 9.11pm
Cllr L Crane, Chair

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