

SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Sandbach Town Council held on 5 December 2019 at 7.00pm at Sandbach Literary Institution.

PRESENT

Councillors: M Muldoon (Mayor)
 G Price Jones (Deputy Mayor)
 S Corcoran (arrived 7.09pm)
 R Hovey
 L Crane
 S Crane
 S Broad
 D Jack
 K Seymour
 A Smith
 S Kirkham
 S Ashcombe Hurt
 I Williams
 G Merry
 J Beddows
 K Flavell

Also present were twelve members of the public and press.

The prayer was read by Cllr G Merry.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs: M Lea
 R Hoffmann
 P Eaton

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To provide an opportunity for members and Officers to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in relation to any item on the agenda.

Cllr Corcoran – declared a non-prejudicial interest in item 20 and item 17 as the Leader of CEC. He requested permission to speak on item 17 but stated that he would not vote.

Cllr Flavell – declared a non-prejudicial interest in item 20 as a Cheshire East Councillor.

Cllr L Crane – declared a non-prejudicial interest in item 20 as a Cheshire East Councillor.

3. MAYORS COMMENTS

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced that item 21 has been withdrawn from the agenda.

He outlined the events that he has attended since the last meeting, all of which have been memorable; these include: Blood Brothers at the Lyceum, Remembrance Sunday, Hearing Dogs for the Deaf, Grassroots and ChALC AGM, Spooky Saturday and Sandbach Tree of Light.

It has been a busy time.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

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

Speaker No. 1

Concern was raised that there are many S106 agreements throughout the Town that are not being delivered, these include:

- Elworth Hall Farm – Crossing
- Abbey Road – Crossings
- Albion Lock – Bus Shelters
- Congleton Road – improvement to footways and public realm

Some of these items have been outstanding for up to 3½ years and the question was asked, why are these agreements not being delivered?

It was agreed that the Clerk will write to CEC stating that these agreements are taking too long, with an emphasis on the time limits that might be in place.

The Town Mayor reconvened the Town Council Meeting.

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

There are none.

5. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 10 OCTOBER.

RESOLVED: that the minutes are approved as an accurate record.

6. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE MARKET HALL STEERING GROUP SUB-COMMITTEE – NO MEETINGS HELD.

7. **TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING & CONSULTATION COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 14 OCTOBER, 4 NOVEMBER AND 25 NOVEMBER (DRAFT).**

RESOLVED: that the minutes be noted.

8. **TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – NONE HELD.**

9. **TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14 NOVEMBER 2019 (DRAFT).**

RESOLVED: that the minutes be noted.

10. **TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 9 OCTOBER AND 21 NOVEMBER 2019 (DRAFT).**

RESOLVED: that the minutes be noted.

11. **TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE EVENTS SUB-COMMITTEE – NO MEETINGS HELD**

12. **TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE ASSETS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD 5 NOVEMBER 2019 (DRAFT).**

RESOLVED: that the minutes be noted.

13. **TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE SMALL COMMON REFURBISHMENT SUB-COMMITTEE HELD ON 28 AUGUST AND 3 OCTOBER 2019**

RESOLVED: that the minutes be noted.

14. **MATTERS ARISING FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

There are none.

15. **DRAFT BUDGET 20-21**

Lead: The Chair of Finance, Policy and Governance

The Chair of Finance, Policy and Governance outlined the budget proposals and proposed that the budget be approved.

It was pointed out that CEC had yet to approve its tax base and as a result felt that STC could not approve its budget or precept requirements. Discussion followed on the appropriateness and potential impact of approving the budget ahead of CEC approving its tax base.

RESOLVED: that subject to the CEC tax base being approved on 19 December, the Clerk is delegated to inform CEC of the Town Council's budget and precept requirements:

2020/21 Budget:	£1,048,372
2020/21 Precept:	£ 687,192

Also approved are regular payments in excess of £1500 as listed on the attached schedule. Payments are delegated as identified within the document.

16. ACCOUNTANCY INVOICE

Lead: The Clerk

RESOLVED: that the invoice £1560 is paid to John Greenall & Co for accountancy services for 2018-19.

Payment is delegated to the Finance Officer and taken from budget line 101 4114 (Accountancy Services).

17. VISSIM

Lead: Cllr Hovey

A letter from the Leader of Cheshire East Council dated 27 November and VISSIM Legal Advice Document was presented.

The Lead Member referred to the CEC letter and supporting legal advice and reminded members that the VISSIM model had been the issue of contention due to the accuracy of figures used. CEC has sought legal advice on the matter and accepts that the VISSIM Modelling report, which was provided to the Local Plan Inspector, contained an error and recognised STC and public concern about the consequences of such an error.

The VISSIM model is no longer being used to support traffic management in Sandbach, however members would like reassurance that any proposed replacement model will first be subject to public scrutiny before being implemented.

Sandbach Town Council Planning Committee will consider the letter and attachment when it next meets and will decide if any further communication is necessary.

Thanks, were expressed to those members of the public who had studied that VISSIM data for their expertise and persistence, which had resulted in the VISSIM model no longer being used.

RESOLVED: that the letter be received by Council and further considered by the Planning and Consultation Committee on Monday 19 December 2019.

18. ICT HARDWARE

Lead: The Clerk

The Clerk outlined the IT hardware upgrade requirements, along with benefits and need. She explained that there is not sufficient budget available at present to cover the full cost and installation, and asked members to consider utilising the draft budget 20/21 provision to enable complete installation.

RESOLVED: that the purchase of new devices to the total of £9182.74 (ex VAT) and the monthly charges of £47.08 a month (ex VAT) are approved. Allocation to budget lines is as follows:

2019/20 Budget and Committed reserves	£4,440.00
2019/20 General Reserves Office Equipment	£1,500.00
2020/21 Draft Budget Office Equipment	£3,242.74

Delivery to be delegated to the Clerk.

19. **SANDBACH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW**

Lead: Cllr Price Jones

A review of the Sandbach Neighbourhood Development Plan has been undertaken following the adoption of CEC's Local Plan. This review was necessary to ensure that the policies contained within each document align. There have been no material changes at this stage, however a more rigorous review will take place later, when there will be a full refresh of policies. There are minimal costs associated with this stage of the review.

RESOLVED: that the refresh of the Sandbach Neighbourhood Plan be approved.

20. **SANDBACH IN BLOOM**

Lead: Cllr Jack

A plan for summer and winter hanging baskets planting was considered, which would see significant cost savings. The plan did not include on-going maintenance of the baskets and it is suggested that this might be delivered through STC staff. A first year costing was made available, as well as ongoing costings following initial equipment investment.

The proposed scheme also included the involvement of local businesses and the community, through a series of events and activities during Spring, Summer and Autumn.

It was proposed that the ideas outlined were further considered by a Working Group, with a reporting line to the Community and Environment Committee, although the reporting route was not felt appropriate by all members, with some suggesting that reports should be via the Assets and Services Committee.

It was stressed that these decisions are time sensitive due to the need to place orders for plants. Concern was expressed that the proposals need to be fully considered and therefore STC should remain with ANSA for the floral provision for just one year, whilst all options were investigated.

RESOLVED: that

- i. a review of the Town's floral provision is delegated to a Working Group with the reporting route to be through the Assets and Services Committee.
- ii. That the Council approves a spend from the 2020/21 budget which will be based upon the outcome of the Working Group Review as agreed by the Assets and Services Committee.

21. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Withdrawn

22. MEMBERS ITEMS

There are none.

23. CORRESPONDENCE

23.1 Holmes Chapel Parish Council

Letter dated 23 October regarding the New Homes Bonus.

Cllr Corcoran left the room whilst this item was considered.

RESOLVED: that the correspondence is received.

23.2 Cheshire East Council

Letter dated 20 November regarding CEC Communications.

Members discussed a new enquiry sifting system that has been brought in for CEC Councillors, there is an intention that the same system will be rolled out to T&PC in the future. In the meantime, all enquiries should be progressed through the CEC Ward Councillors, meaning that they should be dealt with in a timely manner

RESOLVED: that the correspondence is received.

24. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Town Council Meeting will be on Thursday 27 February 2019 at 7.00pm in The Chamber, Sandbach Literary Institute.

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 8.08pm

Cllr M Muldoon, Town Mayor

ALB