



SANDBACH
Town Council

SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

Minutes of the meeting held on **Monday, 30th September 2024** at **7.00pm** in **Sandbach Town Hall, Ballroom.**

Present:

Cllr A Nevitt (Mayor)

Cllr J Arnold (Deputy Mayor)

Cllr S Corcoran

Cllr N Cook

Cllr T Wheatcroft

Cllr M Muldoon

Cllr S Broad

Cllr R Gray

Cllr S Richards

Cllr S Wright

Cllr K England

Cllr D Poole

Cllr G Lindop

Cllr J Beddows

Cllr G Price Jones

Cllr M Hough

Cllr M Mitchell

Mrs. N. Clarke – Clerk to meeting

8 members of the public

1 member of the press

PART 1 : ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs D Hegarty and S Richards.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Resolved: Under the Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and accredited representatives of newspaper be excluded from the meeting for items 8 and 9 of business on this agenda on grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Town Mayor adjourned the meeting to allow contributions and questions from members of the public relating to items on the agenda.

Speaker 1: The resident expressed their anger relating to the political sniping on social media in Elworth based on the Speedwatch team. Sandbach Town Council should not be political and needs changing.

Speaker 2: The speaker queried how the Town Council had made the error with the recent by-election and that the winning candidate has already served briefly as a councillor. The speaker urged the Town Council to co-opt rather than go through another election to save £12,000.

Speaker 3: The speaker, being the winning candidate of the by-election, spoke of their anger and how they are lost for words for the way they have been treated. The speaker is especially disappointed with the misleading comments posted on social media about the error made by Sandbach Town Council.

4. ELECTION UPDATE

Lead: Mayor

The Mayor read out a statement on behalf of Sandbach Town Council sincerely apologising to the winning candidate of the by-election and that they are unable to take up the position of Town Councillor. The Mayor explained that the Declaration of Acceptance of Office was not completed within the time frame of the by-election and therefore the winning candidate was never a Councillor. The vacancy has now been posted with the electorate having 14 days to submit 10 names if another election is to be called. If not, a co-option can take place to the vacant post.

It was confirmed that failure to complete the Declaration of Acceptance of Officer was an Sandbach Town Council officer error, not the winning candidate.

Members spoke of their disappointment of the error and that the winning candidate had made an impact as a Town Councillor from the beginning, working with Elworth residents in various campaigns. Concerns were raised that the Speedwatch campaign would stop now. The general consensus is

that a co-option of the winning candidate would be the preferred option as the winning candidate had won the support of the electorate, however, it is acknowledged that the democratic process allows 10 members of public to request a by-election.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

6. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Town Council Meeting is taking place on Wednesday 4th December 2024 at 7pm in Sandbach Town Hall.

PART 2 : ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

7. WORKNEST PAYMENT

Lead: Mayor

The Mayor gave an explanation on why a payment is needed for the use of Worknest in confidential HR matters. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor answered members' questions.

Resolved:

- i) *To approve a payment to a maximum of £3,000 for HR support from the HR and H&S budget, provided there is sufficient budget.*
- ii) *To approve a virement from the General Reserves budget if there is insufficient budget in the HR and H&S budget.*
- iii) *To bring further information to a future Town Council meeting to clarify the cover provided in the Worknest contract and how the contract was negotiated.*

8. CONFIDENTIAL STAFFING UPDATE

Lead: Cllr John Arnold

Cllr Arnold informed members of a staffing issue and read an email received from a member of staff to councillors. A lengthy discussion took place on the matter and next steps.

Cllr Arnold confirmed the use of Worknest in the process to ensure correct procedure is followed and that they are following their guidance.

Resolved: To delegate that the Mayor work with Worknest in the matter and that if a resignation is submitted the Mayor has delegated powers as to whether or not to accept the resignation.

Meeting Closed 8.20 p.m.

Mayor Cllr A Nevitt / Meeting Clerk NC