



**SANDBACH**  
Town Council

**FINANCE, POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

Minutes for the meeting held on **Tuesday, 03 December 2024**  
At 7.00pm in Sandbach Town Hall, Board room.

**Present** Councillors J Arnold (in the Chair)  
S Corcoran  
N Cook  
D Hegarty  
M Mitchel  
T Wheatcroft  
M Hough  
G Lindop  
A Nevitt (ex-Officio, Clerk)

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr K England, and L MacGregor.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of pecuniary & non-pecuniary interests in relation to any item on the agenda were made.

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The Chair adjourned the meeting to allow presentations and questions relating to items on this agenda from members of the public.

**Speaker 1.** P Jennings, commented on item 5 and 4 on the agenda.

He requested the committee's advice on when the allocated budget for the Skatepark Project was removed from the revised budget.

**Cllr Arnold, Corcoran & Nevitt.** Responded to the comment confirming that the Skatepark Project earmarked reserve were not removed. But thanked the speaker for raising the subject of the Skatepark Project which they support.

The speaker also noted that the minutes of the last meeting (item 4) do not identify a route for the expenditure of the CIL funding. He raised that the meeting of the Green Space working group mentioned in the minutes and their subsequent reporting to Council, is unlikely due to the narrow timeframe for the funds to be used.

**Cllr Arnold & Cook.** Discussed the accuracy of the minutes, Cllr Arnold proposed that the CIL funding could be discussed during the meeting of the Full Council on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 2024. Cllr Cook agreed to work with the Green Spaces group to try and identify some projects where CIL funds might be spent.

The Chair reconvened the meeting.

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**3. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

To consider, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), press representatives and public be excluded from the meeting for any of the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

Lead: Chair

**Resolved:** *No items were excluded from the press and public.*

**4. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE MEETING**

[Attached: Minutes of the meeting held 20 November 2024]

Lead: Chair

**Resolved:** *The minutes of the meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> November 2024 were approved as an accurate record with the following amendments:*

- i. **Item 6.** To minute the point raised by Cllr Cook during the discussion on the wording of the Standing Orders referring to the RFO's requirement to either prepare the budget or present the budget during the meeting.*
- ii. **Item 8.** To amend the wording of the resolution of the item to the following: 'To send out an agenda item to the Parks and Open Spaces WG via email to make a recommendation to either the Finance, Policy and Governance or Full Council on projects to use of the remaining CIL money before the end of the year.'*

**5. 2025-26 DRAFT BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS**

[Attached: Budget Report and Supporting Documents]

Lead: Chair

Cllr Arnold started the discussion by responding to the points of order raised during the previous meeting taking advice from the Deputy Chief

Officer (DCO) and Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC) on the matters raised.

He confirmed that in the absence of the RFO who is currently the Chief Officer (CO), the DCO is the acting RFO. In the case that the current RFO does not return to work, the Council will then nominate a new RFO.

Based on the advice of the DCO and ChALC, the committee may proceed, as the budget was prepared by the DCO, who is acting as the RFO. It was further confirmed that the RFO's presence is not required during the meeting.

There was further discussion on the compliance with the Council's Standing Orders. Cllr Corcoran queried where in the Standing Orders it states that the RFO is required to present the budget to the Finance, Policy & Governance Committee. Cllr Cook agreed to provide the reference following the meeting.

The committee then discussed the budget report, this discussion included: staffing cost which were identified as being too high, the Skatepark Project reserves and their presence in the report, Town Hall maintenance, the Youth Club, the Ranger, Environmental Projects and other.

**Resolved:**

*To recommend the following to Full Council:*

- i) To allocated £8,000 from general reserves to earmarked reserves for environmental projects.*
- ii) A 2025-26 net expenditure and precept level of £815,067 as presented.*
- iii) A Council Tax (Band D) rate per household of £90.87, representing increase of 4.65% as presented.*

**6. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

Lead: Chair

**Resolved:** No items were agreed for the next meeting.

**7. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting is Wednesday 5th February 2025 at 7pm in Sandbach Town Hall.

Meeting Closed at 7:52 pm  
Chair Cllr J Arnold (in the Chair)  
PG / AN