



**SANDBACH**  
Town Council

**SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA**

Minutes for the meeting held on **Wednesday, 04<sup>th</sup> December 2024** at **7.00pm** in **Sandbach Town Hall**. The meeting will be Clerked by the Chief Officer.

**Present Councillors**

Cllr A Nevitt (Mayor)  
Cllr J Arnold (Deputy Mayor)  
Cllr S Corcoran  
Cllr N Cook  
Cllr S Wright  
Cllr K England  
Cllr D Poole  
Cllr J Beddows  
Cllr G Price Jones  
Cllr L MacGregor  
Cllr L Crane  
Cllr D Hegarty  
Cllr M Hough  
Cllr M Mitchell

**Officers**

J Barber (Deputy Chief Officer)  
P Gorzka (meeting Clerk)

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

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllrs T Wheatcroft, M Muldoon, S Broad, R Gray, S Richards and G Lindop.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declaration of a pecuniary and prejudicial interest were made by Cllr Cook in respect of item 11.3 and 20. Cllr Cook withdrew from debate and voting for these items.

Declaration of a non-pecuniary and non-prejudicial interest were made by Cllr Nevitt in respect of item 20. There was no stated intention to withdraw from debate or voting for these items.

## 3. CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL SANDBACH MATTERS

*Resolved: The inclusion of the item on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 2024 Full Council meeting was notes.*

## 4. 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 item 25 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.*

## 5. MAYOR'S COMMENTS

The Mayor provided a summary of her community engagements since the last meeting, including the Light Switch-on Competition organised in collaboration with Sandbach Library, she briefly spoke about the competition winner who she described as an "absolute joy".

Appreciation was expressed to the office staff for their hard work and to the councillors who volunteered their assistance. Attendees were also reminded of the annual Tree of Light event scheduled for the following day.

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## PUBLIC QUESTIONS

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

**Speaker 1. Sarah Bradley.** The speaker addressed item 6 on the agenda, noting the absence of items 18-21 from the previous meeting, which had been deferred to this agenda due to time constraints. These items, including one concerning the Speed Indicator Device, were missing. The speaker expressed support for the Speed Indicator Device and requested that the Council include these items in the agenda for the next Full Council meeting.

**Speaker 2. Peter Jennings.** The speaker commented on item 27. He apologised for the comments he made about his interpretation of the budget figures at the previous Finance, Policy and Governance meeting which were not completely correct. However, the speaker acknowledged the positive outcome of mentioning the Skatepark Project at a public meeting and asked that referring to item 27 the Council "hit the ground running in 2025".

The speaker also asked the Council about the deferred items of the previous meeting.

**Cllr Nevitt.** Apologised for the omission of the deferred items and will make sure they are included on the next Full Council meeting which is planned to take place on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 2024.

**Cllr Corcoran.** Informed the meeting of the technical reasons behind the absence of school signage on the Hill in response to Speaker 1. He also expressed support for the reinstated Speed Watch Scheme and encouraged those interested in participating to contact him directly.

**Speaker 3. Martin Forster (Sandbach Transport Festival).** Thanked the Council for the funding of the 2024 Transport Festival providing the meeting with details of the funding. He detailed current new plans and changes for the 2025 festival, this includes an increase in available toilets, a new BMX stunt team performance, and a vintage double decker bus to drive around town providing free rides.

The Mayor reconvened the meeting.

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**6. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 11th SEPTEMBER 2024 [ATTACHED].**

**Resolved:** *The minutes of the meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024 were approved as an accurate record with an amendment to the presence of Cllr L MacGregor.*

**7. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE EGM TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 30th SEPTEMBER 2024 [ATTACHED].**

Cllr L Crane and L MacGregor raised necessary amendments to the record of their presence during this meeting.

**Resolved:** *The approval of the minutes was deferred to the next Full Council meeting to investigate the audio of the meeting in regard to an amendment to item 4 raised by Cllr Cook.*

**8. THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE PLANNING, CONSULTATION ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEES HELD ON 23<sup>rd</sup> SEPTEMBER 21<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER, AND 18<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2024 (DRAFT) WERE NOTED.**

**9. THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEES HELD ON 23<sup>rd</sup> OCTOBER 2024 (DRAFT) WERE NOTED.**

**10. THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF FINANCE POLICY & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 20<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2024 (DRAFT) WERE NOTED.**

## 11. ASSETS & SERVICES POSTPONED ITEMS

### 11.1 Masonry Survey – Capital Assets Strategy

[Commissioned Masonry Survey circulated to members separately]

**Lead:** Chair

Members discussed the extensive work outlined in the survey regarding the Town Hall and acknowledged its necessity.

**Resolved:** *The survey and its implications were considered and noted.*

### 11.2 Town Hall Equipment Replacement

**[Attached:** Report from the Chief Officer]

**Lead:** Chair

The Deputy Chief Officer informed the meeting on the current condition of the Town Hall chairs, this includes incidents of damages as a result of loose screws. Members then debated necessary equipment renewals for the Town Hall including PA equipment.

**Resolved:** *The purchase of 180 banquet chairs at a cost of £6,158.24 (excluding VAT), and dispose of fully depreciated old stock, funded by a transfer of revenue budget from Town Hall Repairs (CODE 180/6120,) which is currently underspent, to Town Hall Equipment Renewals (CODE 180 / 6230) was approved.*

### 11.3 Market Store Refurbishment / Repurposing

**[Attached:** Report from the Chief Officer]

**Lead:** Chair

**Resolved:** *The item was postponed to a later Full Council meeting in 2025 for the purpose of gathering more information including quotations.*

## 12. 2025-26 BUDGET & RESERVES

**[Attached:** Budget Report and Supporting Documents]

**Lead:** Chair / Finance, Policy & Governance Committee Chair

Cllr Arnold briefed the Council on the outcome of discussions regarding the budget report, including the addition of earmarked reserves for environmental projects.

Cllr England expressed his disapproval of the budget report, reiterating his view that it should not proceed. In response, Cllr Crane highlighted the consequences of failing to set the budget within the required deadline.

Cllrs Mitchel and Corcoran, responding to Cllr England, spoke in favour of the budget, noting positive changes made to the report as a result of feedback. Councillors acknowledged that there are always opportunities to improve a budget and expressed hope that Cllr England's input would contribute to future improvements.

Members discussed the data used to prepare the report and its impact on the accuracy of the budget. Cllrs Cook and England raised different reasons for potentially delaying the approval of the budget to a later meeting to allow for a more informed decision. This included a perceived conflict in the Council's Standing Orders raised by Cllr Cook. Cllr Arnold addressed this concern, clarifying that the matter had been investigated and discussed at the previous

Finance, Policy & Governance Committee meeting and was found not to constitute a conflict in the Standing Orders.

**Resolved by Named Vote [All members present in favour except Cllr D Poole (Against), Cllr K England (Against), Cllr N Cook (Against)]:** *Following the recommendation of Finance, Policy & Governance Committee at its meeting on 3 December 2023, Council approved the following:*

- 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.*

### **13. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS UPDATE**

**Lead:** Chair

Members spoke in approval of more regular meetings as a means of reducing the overall number of items on meeting agendas. Cllr Price Jones proposed an amendment to exclude August from the proposal.

**Resolved:** *that Council would move to a pattern of monthly meetings per year with no meeting in August.*

### **14. COMMITTEE UPDATE – PERSONNEL**

**Lead:** Chair

**Resolved:** *the nomination of Cllr Broad was as the new Chair of the Personnel Committee was approved.*

### **15. COMMITTEE COPTION**

**Lead:** Chair

**Action:** *It was agreed that Cllr S Wright would be co-opted as a member of the Planning, Environment and Consultations Committee, the Personnel Committee, and the Communities and Events committee.*

### **16. GRANT FEEDBACK – TRANSPORT FESTIVAL**

**[Attached: Grant Feedback Form & Supporting Documents]**

**Lead:** Chair

Members commented on the success of the Transport Festival and its importance to the community.

**Resolved:** *the feedback was noted.*

### **17. TRANSPORT FESTIVAL 2025 FREE USE OF SMALL COMMON CAR PARK REQUEST**

**Lead:** Chair

**Resolved:** *The request of the Transport Festival Committee for the free use of the Small Common Car Park for next year's festival dates with consideration of the weight limit was approved.*

### **18. MEMBER'S ITEM – BLEED CONTROL KITS**

**[Attached: Member's item form]**

**Lead:** Chair / Cllrs Cllr Gray

**Resolved:** *this item was deferred to the Full Council meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 2024.*

**19. RESIDENT CENTENARIAN GIFT**

**Lead:** Chair

Cllr Cook raised an amendment to the proposal to include any Sandbach resident that celebrates their 100<sup>th</sup> birthday as recipient of a floral tribute to be gifted on behalf of Sandbach Town Council.

Members then discussed further details of the amended proposal, this included the costings, and the formal process of verifying the resident age and other details.

**Resolved:** *For a process to be established for residents to apply for a floral tribute in celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of any Sandbach resident. Upon verification of the application, the Mayor will present the floral tribute on behalf of Sandbach Town Council.*

**20. SANTA'S SLEIGH RANGER VAN USE**

**Lead:** Chair

Members briefly discussed whether the approval for the use of the Ranger Van for Santa's Sleigh should require annual re-approval or if ongoing approval could be granted.

**Resolved:** *The Mayor's verbal approval for the use of the Ranger Van for this year's Santa's Sleigh was approved.*

**21. MARKET TRANSIT VAN REPLACEMENT UPDATE**

**[Attached: Market Transit Van Purchase & Update Report]**

**Lead:** Chair

The postponed purchase of a new Market Transit Van, actioned by the Chief Officer's Office using the income generated from the disposal of the old Market Transit Van and two trailers, was discussed by Members.

Cllr Crane raised a point of order, noting that the approval of the van for the net cost of £15,000 was already approved by the Council, and cannot be revisited.

Cllr Poole voiced opposition to the increase and proposed a continuation of the renting of the Market Transit Van. The Deputy Chief Officer informed the meeting on the reasoning behind the purchase as opposed to continual renting.

Cllr Crane, upon reviewing the original resolution, clarified that the Council had agreed to the purchase of the van at a maximum 'net cost' of £15,000. She further interpreted that the use of income generated from the disposal of the old van and two trailers was already approved at the previous meeting. Given differing understandings of the term 'net cost,' Cllr Crane proposed deferring the item to allow for an informed vote.

**Resolved:** *this item was deferred to the Full Council meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 2024.*

**22. FACILITIES PROJECTS UPDATE**

**[Attached: Facilities Projects Update Report]**

**Lead:** Chair

**Action:** *The report has been noted.*

**23. RANGER UPDATE**

**[Attached: Ranger Service Update Report]**

**Lead:** Chair

The Mayor and Members spoke in favour of the new Ranger and his work.

**Action:** *The report has been noted.*

**24. OPERATIONS ASSISTANT UPDATE**

**[Attached: Operations Assistant Update Report]**

**Lead:** Chair

**Action:** *The report has been noted.*

**26. CORRESPONDENCE**

No correspondence has been received for this agenda.

**27. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS & PUBLICITY**

**Lead:** Chair

**Action:**

- i. It was noted that the Community Cinema and Additional Cleaning Spend will be discussed at the next meeting.*
- ii. Propose items to be considered on the next Agenda were as follows: items 11.3, 18 and 21 from this agenda, the Minutes of the meeting from the 15<sup>th</sup> of October, items 18-21 from the previous Full Council agenda as mentioned by Speaker 1.*

**28. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Town Council Meeting is the taking place on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at 7pm in Sandbach Town Hall

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

**25. CONFIDENTIAL STAFFING UPDATE**

**Lead:** Chair

**Resolved:** *The verbal update was noted.*

Meeting Closed at 08.34 pm

Cllr A Nevitt (in the Chair)

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