

# SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes of the special meeting of Sandbach Town Council held on 15 April 2003 in the Sandbach Literary Institution.

### PRESENT

Councillors: Mrs D E Alcock, Chairman  
M J Wood, Vice-Chairman  
Councillors: Mrs D Flint  
D Lloyd Griffiths  
J J Moore  
D Robinson

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### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors: Mrs P M Minshull  
Mrs R D Frost  
J Iddon  
E A Lea

### 2. REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Cllr Lloyd Griffiths opened the debate by examining the impact of Regional Assemblies in Scotland and Wales. Those regions had received resources that local government here could not match. He was in favour of the proposed North West Regional Assembly. It was not true that local decision making would be removed. The opposite was the case. We should maximise local decision making with a more efficient and openly accountable administration in the North West that understood the region better than the present unknown decision makers in Westminster, Government Offices and Quangos. The existing Local Government structure in the counties created inefficiency between County and Borough Councils. Reform into unitary authorities was logical following the setting up of a regional assembly.

Cllr Flint felt that the Labour Party would dominate the assembly and that funds would be directed to the major cities to Cheshire's disadvantage. Cllr Lloyd Griffiths disagreed saying that that is what happens now. Within the new arrangements, money, for example, from the North West Development Agency, could be better prioritised and could be channelled more effectively to local projects.

Cllr Moore thought that it was inevitable that the Assembly would be created and that we should get what we can out of the reorganisation. It was a shame that the proposed assembly would not have the Scottish powers and have the ability to raise taxes. We know what needs doing here and therefore it is important that Town Councils are given more powers to get things done.

The following motion was passed unanimously.

**RESOLVED:** that Sandbach Town Council supports both the principle and proposed establishment of a Regional Assembly for the North West Region of England. The Council accepts that a reform of the local government provided by district and county councils leading to unitary authorities will take place. The

Town Council has not adopted a position on the form of, or area for, a successor unitary authority. However, the Council believes there is a need for a meaningful and enhanced role for Town Councils and this should be defined within the new arrangements.

It was agreed that the contents of the above resolution would be transmitted to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm.

Following meeting Cllr Flint announced that this was her last meeting as a councillor. The Chairman thanked her for all she had contributed to the Town Council during her years as member.

The Trustees of Sandbach Literary Institution showed members around the building and explained their plans for the future.

D E Alcock  
Chairman

Ref: TCMS0403