

# SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Meeting of Sandbach Town Council held on 4 September 2003 in the Council Chamber, Westfields.

### PRESENT

Councillor: J M Keeling, Chairman  
Mrs M E Smith, Vice-Chairman  
Councillors: Mrs D E Alcock  
Mrs P M Minshull  
Mrs G M Thomas  
P J Darnes  
E A Lea  
D Lloyd-Griffiths  
J J Moore  
B E Moran  
D Robinson  
W W Scragg  
M R Sherman  
R W Sutton

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The Opening Prayer was read by the Reverend Janet Bacon.

### 1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillors: Mrs P E M Price  
N T Price  
L Morris

### 2. **CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

The Annual Bowls Match against the Marriott House Veterans had taken place and although the Council had lost the match, it had performed far better than in previous years.

He had attended a meeting with representatives of Foden's Brass Band at Westfields. The reason would be discussed later under members' items.

He had attended the re-opening of the Salt Line Way which was much improved after a substantial investment.

He had attended the annual Sandbach Arts Festival and following the late unavailability of their President had opened the event. He commended the quality of the exhibits.

He had welcomed two new Methodist Ministers to the Town at a service held at Wesley Avenue Church.

In the morning he was due to set off early to attend the City of Carlisle Heritage Day.

### 3. **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 10 JULY 2003**

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.

**4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAYS 17 JULY 2003 AND 28 AUGUST 2003**

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.

**5. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 24 JULY 2003**

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.

**6. RAF CRANAGE**

Mrs Charlotte Peters Rock gave a presentation on RAF Cranage. During WWII it was the only effective night fighter station in the North West and contained a number of unique buildings. There was a Sandbach connection with an associated Q building located at Betchton. She believes the site to be of international importance and should be scheduled as a national monument. With the possibility of the Scottish Power Gas Plant the area is under threat. Mrs Peters Rock asked the Council if they would find a site for an exhibition in Sandbach. She and her supporters would provide and man the exhibition. Members thought that the exhibition should be held in the Town Hall.

**RESOLVED:** that the clerk organises a suitable weekend booking at the Town Hall. Any cost of hire would be met by the Town Council.

**7. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL DELEGATES / SUB-COMMITTEES**

**7.1 TOWN & PARISH COUNCIL'S "AT HOME" 30 JULY 2003**

The Chairman reported that following a presentation on the Government's proposals for Quality Town and Parish Councils it was decided to establish two working groups: -

1 To develop a Charter which all Councils could sign up to and to look at ways in which the Borough council could help local councils become Quality Councils.

2 To look at ways in which Town and Parish Councils could become involved in the scrutiny of a new unitary authority.

The Borough Council has asked Congleton Town and Parish Councils to forward the names of any volunteers for the above working groups so that they can get underway. The Chairman and Cllr Darnes have volunteered to represent the Council.

**RESOLVED:** that Councillors Keeling and Darnes' names are forwarded to CBC.

**7.2 QUALITY COUNCILS**

Cllr P J Darnes reported on the progress of the Quality Council sub-committee.

The main areas requiring attention are: -

- The Clerk must obtain the appropriate qualification.
- Time should be allocated at each meeting for public participation.
- Councillors should ensure their apologies and the reason for absence are tendered.
- The Annual Report should be circulated more widely.
- A short periodic report should be published periodically, possibly using CBCs "Link".

The sub-committee preferred informal contact with local residents to formal surgeries.

During discussion it was agreed that the sub-committee should reconsider the possibility of regular surgeries.

**RESOLVED:** that at the next Town Council meeting to be held on 16 October a period of not more than 15 minutes will be allocated to questions from members of the public.

### **7.3 OTHER REPORTS**

There were none.

## **8. THE BOUNDARY COMMITTEE**

At the last Town Council Meeting it was agreed that the Council would debate its position on single tier local government and transmit its view to the Boundary Committee before the deadline of 8 September.

**RESOLVED:** that the Boundary Committee are told that whatever arrangement of unitary authority is chosen that it is essential that the benefits to the local community including those of cost can be demonstrated. Secondly there must be a meaningful role for Town and Parish Councils within the new structure. The Town Council will convene a special meeting to define its position with regard to its preferred arrangement for a unitary authority in the light of information obtained from the Borough Council, the County Council and other sources.

## **9. CORRESPONDENCE**

### **9.1 Mr R W Lewis – Junction of Hind Heath Lane and Crewe Road**

He believes the junction to be hazardous and seeks the Council's support.

**RESOLVED:** that a letter is sent to Mr Lewis stating that the Sandbach Town Council will not take a view on the points made in his letter until they have seen the responses from Joint Highways and the other addressees.

### **9.2 Village Retail Services Association**

They seek to keep Village shops open. They have appointed a local representative.

**RESOLVED:** that the letter is received.

### **9.3 DEFRA – Rural Services Standard 2003**

Correspondence from DEFRA states that new Rural Service Standards for 2003 include:

All rural LEAs to have a full extended school service by 2006.

50% discount on local bus fares for over 60s.

A free piece of fruit every school day for every 4-6 year old.

A copy of the standard is available from the Clerk.

**RESOLVED:** that the standard is received.

### **9.4 CBC - CCTV**

Following Tony Potts' reply to STC's comments, Members believed that it should be possible to eliminate the noisy camera problem. They noted

with interest that the press are informed of the CCTV successes and requested that the Council is informed at the same time. Members would be able question Mr Potts at the next Council meeting when Mr Potts will report on the CCTV situation.

**RESOLVED:** that a letter is sent to Mr Potts confirming the above.

#### **9.5 Inspector Alan Holt – Cheshire Police**

His progress report was discussed with some dismay that a draft contract had not yet been prepared.

**RESOLVED:** that Inspector Holt is asked to attend a meeting of the Sandbach Police sub-committee before the next meeting of the Town Council on 16 October.

#### **9.6 Cheshire Association of Town and Parish Councils – Model Charter**

Comments are requested on the second draft of the Model Charter for Local Councils before 12 September.

**RESOLVED:** that the draft is received.

#### **9.7 Cheshire Association of Town and Parish Councils - AGM**

The Council is invited to nominate representatives to attend the AGM on Thursday 9 October at Nantwich Civic Hall. After the meeting is a workshop on Regional Government.

**RESOLVED:** that the notification is received and that any member who attends also notifies the Clerk.

#### **9.8 Network Rail – Footbridge off Foundry Lane**

The response to the Council's complaint stated that the matter had been referred to their Contractor, Jarvis. It was said that the situation had deteriorated and that there was now a dangerous gap in the fence. Members were uncertain about who was responsible for the footbridge and requested the Clerk to investigate.

**RESOLVED:** that the Clerk finds out who is responsible for the footbridge.

**RESOLVED:** that Network Rail are informed about the deteriorating condition.

#### **9.9 CCC – Review of Minor Highway Improvement List**

Two Sandbach schemes at Hassall Road and Station Road are unlikely to be implemented and Council's view is sought. The Clerk has searched the last eight years' minutes without finding any reference to the proposed schemes. One member stated that he believed that both schemes were still relevant. The Hassall Road scheme was associated with the end of the footpath and the Station Road scheme was associated with poor visibility for HGVs at the corner of Pring's yard.

**RESOLVED:** that a reply is sent stating that the Council believes that both the schemes remain relevant but that it would be grateful to receive any further details that may be available.

#### **9.10 CCC – Bus Information Strategy for Cheshire**

The document is available from the Clerk and *deals with the communication of the appropriate information at the right time and in the*

*right place to allow informed choices to be made by existing and potential users of bus services.*

**RESOLVED:** that the strategy document is received.

#### **9.11 CVS – Sandbach & District Volunteer Bureaux**

They would like to talk with members of the Town Council when touring the Borough in a minibus on Tuesday 7 October.

**RESOLVED:** that the notification is received and that any member who is available will attend.

#### **9.12 CCC – Rights of Way Improvement Plan**

The Parish Council is invited to comment on and suggest improvements to the local rights of way network. Members noted that the footpath at Sandbach Heath was a trail of litter.

**RESOLVED:** that the letter is received and a request made that the condition of the Sandbach Heath footpath is checked.

#### **9.13 CCC – Supply of Maps of Public Rights of Way**

There are strict conditions regarding their supply and CCC require the Council's formal agreement to accept them.

**RESOLVED:** that the Council accepts the conditions of supply.

#### **9.14 Local Government International Bureau**

The Clerk has a copy of two new publications entitled "New Neighbours" and "New Opportunities."

**RESOLVED:** that the publications are received.

#### **9.15 CCC – Hampton's Bridge**

A progress report has been received.

**RESOLVED:** that the report is received.

#### **9.16 CBC – Sandbach Cemetery**

Following vandalism and inappropriate behaviour at the cemetery the Borough requested the Town Council's views on what measures should be taken.

**RESOLVED:** that the cemetery must not be viewed on as a public right of way. All the gates at the far end of the cemetery should be permanently locked or removed and any gaps in the hedge or fence made good and sealed. The main entrance gate should be kept locked outside clearly defined opening hours which should be posted on the gate. No dogs should be allowed other than guide dogs.

### **10. MEMBERS' ITEMS – MATTERS AFFECTING THE TOWN OF SANDBACH**

#### **10.1 330 – Cllr Keeling - Fodens Richardson Band**

The Band, rated the best in the UK, is participating in the United States Open Brass Band Championships and seeks funding.

**RESOLVED:** that subject to confirmation at the next Finance Committee meeting a sum of £2,000 is awarded.

### **10.2 331 - Cllr Moran - work-in-progress/pending items and projects**

He gave notice of a review of the Council's work-in-progress/pending items and projects at the next Finance Committee meeting and that any on which there has been no progress in the last six months will be considered closed.

**RESOLVED:** that the proposed review is noted.

### **11. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED:** that the next meeting of the Sandbach Town Council will be held at 7.15pm on 16 October 2003 in the Council Chamber, Westfields.

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

J M Keeling  
Chairman

Ref: TCM040903