

SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Sandbach Town Council held on 7 April 2005 in the Council Chamber, Westfields.

PRESENT:

Councillor:	Mrs M E Smith, Chairman of the Council
Councillors:	Mrs D E Alcock
	Mrs P M Minshull
	Mrs P E M Price
	Mrs G M Thomas
	D Lloyd-Griffiths
	L Morris
	N T Price
	D Robinson
	W W Scragg
	M R Sherman
	R W Sutton
	J J Moore, Vice-Chairman
	P J Darnes
	J Iddon

The Reverend Nick Blundell read the Opening Prayer.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors E A Lea
B E Moran

2. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

The Chairman had attended the Civic Balls at Middlewich and Congleton and the Meanee Ball at Sandbach. She had attended the Guiding AGM on 8 March and the Rotary Swimathon on 12 March. This was special because her son was taking part. She went on the Mayor's Charity Walk and suffered as a result. She had attended the 1651 Committee's presentation evening when donations were made to ten local organisations. Finally she had travelled at 120 mph around Mallory Park in aid of one of her chosen charities, Prostate Cancer Research.

3. A PRESENTATION FROM THE HEAD TEACHER OF SANDBACH HIGH SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Mr John Leigh presented his view of sixth form education in Sandbach.

He began by thanking the Council for its donation towards the Annual Christmas meal and concert put on by the girls for the elderly.

The High School wished to admit boys to its sixth form and have collaborative links with a range of schools, locally, nationally and internationally. The school would remain single sex and comprehensive pre 16 years old.

Sandbach was fortunate to have two good schools, each of which was unique and different in a number of areas. Differences included funding arrangements,

traditions, staff employment systems, policy on uniforms, school registration, management style and amount of taught time in the sixth form. Collaboration requires these differences to be addressed. Mr Leigh was concerned that changes at sixth form level might have a harmful effect on the rest of the school. Mr Leigh had been trying for fifteen years and was still trying to make progress on collaboration. Some collaboration took place in the late 90's with Colin Brown but this had been lost for some reason.

Mr Leigh had no concern about the budget or declining rolls and these were not the reasons for his proposal to have 50 to 60 boys in a sixth form of 240. Numbers at the school could be maintained by simply accepting those who are turned away at the moment.

Some pupils from both Sandbach schools will wish to move elsewhere for their sixth form education for a variety of reasons. It would be better if they stayed in Sandbach. Pupils should be registered at the school where they are studying. Shared management of a sixth form organisation would not work. A joint staff appointment would not work.

Mr Leigh said that he will make sixth form collaboration happen as soon as is feasible.

RESOLVED: the meeting thank Mr Leigh and receive his report.

4. SOUTH EAST CHESHIRE ENTERPRISE / SANDBACH PARTNERSHIP

Mr David McGifford gave a presentation on the status of the Sandbach Futures bid.

Brief Background

The partnership was formed to access a funding opportunity made available by the Northwest Development Agency (NWDA) to only 3 market towns in Cheshire. (Frodsham and Neston are the others) A health check was carried out in 2002 resulting in an action plan being developed by 2003. This action plan was very community based which was not what the NWDA wanted, they were looking for "economic outputs" which are jobs created, safeguarded and learning opportunities.

During 2004 SECE was approached to become involved with the partnership to help develop projects that would meet the NWDA's requirements. A scheme bid proposal deadline of March 2005 was imposed on the Partnership by the NWDA; failure to meet this would result in the offer of funds being withdrawn. The Sandbach Futures scheme bid was presented to the NWDA during early March and by the 18th of March we had received feedback that the bid had been recommended for approval.

The Sandbach Futures bid

The bid is valued at £1,327,000 of which the NWDA are funding £681,500 and is centred on the following projects.

- Delegated fund (community chest)
- Business Centre — Business start ups / mentoring / training / development
- Retail Development Grants
- Virtual Sandbach
- Business Landscapes

- Project management and admin

Each of the above will need to be developed with a robust business plan before the NWDA will approve any of the individual projects and it is quite feasible that during this stage the individual projects will deviate from its origins.

The development of these projects will probably be done through the relevant existing partnership working groups, i.e.

- Economy
- Environment and Transport
- Social and Community

Opportunity

Assuming that the NWDA give final approval the projects will need to be developed / adapted and the best way that the Town Council can influence these projects is by involving itself in the project working groups once they become established. It is also possible within these groups to look at other associated project ideas and funding opportunities as they arise.

Timescales

The development of these projects will be starting in weeks rather than months. As the funding will not be available after March 2008, we are anticipating having planned projects ready for approval by the autumn of this year.

Contact

Helen Beech is leaving her position as Project Manager at the end of the month to move to pastures new; in the short term it has been proposed that I cover Helens position until her replacement is appointed.

My contact details are; Tel 01260 285274, e-mail david.mcgifford@sece.co.uk

RESOLVED: the meeting thank Mr McGifford and receive his report.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting to allow questions from members of the public. However there were none and therefore the Chairman reconvened the Town Council Meeting.

5. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2005.

RESOLVED: that the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.

6. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAYS 17 FEBRUARY, 3 AND 24 MARCH 2005.

RESOLVED: that the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.

7. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 10 MARCH 2005.

RESOLVED: that the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.

8. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE QUALITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 31 MARCH 2005.

RESOLVED: that the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.

9. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE FINANCE MEETING HELD ON 10 MARCH 2005.

9.1 Sandbach Wesley Centre

RESOLVED: that the grant of £15,000 is confirmed.

10. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL DELEGATES / SUB-COMMITTEES

10.1 Sandbach Literary Institution Working Group

Cllr D Lloyd-Griffiths reported that the scope of maintenance work had been agreed and therefore the grant money had been released. The chosen contractor, Chester Masonry Group of Hawarden, planned to start work on 11 April. The lease for the Town Council to occupy two rooms in the building was still being negotiated.

10.2 Sandbach Festival of Transport Committee / Town Crier Competition

Cllr D Robinson reported that following the decision to cancel the Transport Festival it had been attempted to organise the competition together with a market on May Day. The market management were not prepared to arrange one this year but might do in the future. There were two other places holding Town Crier Competitions on May Day and Cllr Robinson had not been able to persuade enough criers to come to Sandbach to make it worthwhile. Reluctantly, the event would not take place in 2005.

10.3 Annual Meeting of Cheshire County Council and Town and Parish Councils

Cllr P Darnes had attended the meeting on behalf of the Council on Thursday 3 February. He found the meeting useful. The County Council were intending to develop their proposals for democracy at a local level. Other subjects discussed included the Transport Plan, waste disposal and the restructuring of education and social services.

10.4 Cheshire Association of Local Councils Congleton Area

Cllr Darnes had also attended the local meeting of CALC under the chairmanship of Mr Frank Walton. The main topic had been the Freedom of Information Act and the need for Councils to be aware of its implications.

11. VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE TOWN COUNCIL 2005/6

Cllr Barry Moran was proposed, seconded and elected unanimously as Vice-Chairman for 2005/6.

12. CORRESPONDENCE

12.1 CCC – Sandbach Heath Bus Service

Cllr Robinson had received further information from the County stating that were considering a return journey for service 51 some two hours later.

RESOLVED: that the correspondence is received.

12.2 Ashfields – Parking

A member of the Borough Council stated that any development of the Chapel Street car park would provide at least as many car park places as were used.

RESOLVED: that a reply is sent supporting the development of a parking management plan and request that its contents are shared with the Town Council.

12.3 CBC – Wardens and Drinking By-laws

RESOLVED: that the correspondence is received.

12.4 DEFRA – Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill

RESOLVED: that this item is passed to the Quality Council Committee for consideration.

12.5 ODPM – Neighbourhoods and Leadership

RESOLVED: that this item is passed to the Quality Council Committee for consideration.

12.6 Royal Mail and Mr Marc Coleman - Elworth Post Box

RESOLVED: that a letter is sent to Royal Mail with a copy to Mr Coleman stating that the Council agrees with the Royal Mail decision..

12.7 CCPCT – Sandbach Town Planning Meeting

RESOLVED: that Cllr John Moore is nominated as the Council's representative.

12.8 CBC – Statement of Community Involvement

RESOLVED: that this item is passed to the Quality Council Committee for consideration.

12.9 CCC – Set the Pace Campaign

RESOLVED: that the Quality Council Committee is delegated to decide on whether to join.

12.10 CBC – Food and Drink Events

Such an event is organised by the Sandbach Chamber of Trade.

RESOLVED: that CBC are invited to write to the Chamber of Trade for the information.

12.11 Cheshire Police Authority – Budget Consultation

The time scale for a response was not adequate.

RESOLVED: that a letter is written complaining about the inadequate time given for consultation.

12.12 Standards Board - Consultation

Comments were invited from the Council on the changes it would like to see introduced.

RESOLVED: that this item is passed to the Quality Council Committee for consideration.

RESOLVED: that CBC are urged to stage the Standards training that had been planned for 23 March.

12.13 Primary Care Trust – Dates of Meetings

Cllr D Lloyd-Griffiths declared an interest. Cllrs Moore and Alcock had attended one of the meetings and felt that the extravagant standard of catering was not justified.

RESOLVED: that this comment is passed to the PCT.

12.14 Scottish & Newcastle – Georges Walk

Multi-ownership made the problem more difficult. The state of footpath between the George and Iceland was most unsatisfactory. The problem had been present since the Walk was built and was due to failure to adopt it.

RESOLVED: that a letter is sent to the Chairman of the County Highway Authority, Cllr Andrew Needham, with copies to the County Engineer and the Director of the Environment requesting that they initiate the procedure for adoption.

12.15 CCC – Transport Plan Consultation

RESOLVED: that this item is passed to the Planning Committee for consideration.

12.16 Joint Highways – Non-injury Accident Reports

RESOLVED: that the request for reports is received.

12.17 DEFRA and DTI - Broadband

RESOLVED: that the information is received.

12.18 Dr K Hawkhead – STC and Sandbach Literary Institution

She does not approve of the proposed move by the Council.

RESOLVED: that the SLI working group reply to her letter.

12.19 CVS - “Compact”

RESOLVED: that the Town Council sign the “Compact”.

12.20 Mr Mile Devlin – 1651 and Sandbach Transport Committees

He invites Sandbach Town Council to participate on both committees. Members of the Transport Festival Committee emphasised that the Committee was still in existence and they would ask him to attend one of their meetings.

RESOLVED: that the Transport Festival Committee deal with the points raised.

12.21 CALC – Members’ Allowances

They seek the Council's view.

RESOLVED: that the information is received.

12.22 CALC – The Northern Way

Information is attached.

RESOLVED: that this item is passed to the Planning Committee for consideration.

12.23 CALC – Regional Spatial Strategies

Information on the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act is attached.

RESOLVED: that this item is passed to the Planning Committee for consideration.

13. MEMBERS' ITEMS - MATTERS AFFECTING THE TOWN OF SANDBACH

13.1 361 – Cllr D Lloyd-Griffiths – Traffic, Transport and Parking Policies

That the Council agrees a policy.

RESOLVED: that this item was made a full agenda item for the next business meeting of the Town Council.

13.2 363 – Cllr D E Alcock - Newall Avenue Play Area

Cllr Alcock reported that equipment had been ordered and tenders received from installation contractors. The work would last for about six weeks and would start in May with completion planned in time for the summer holiday. It was possible that the area would be widened by removal of the Council Depot concrete wall and the possibility of improving the adjacent wild area to make it a useful leisure area was being investigated.

RESOLVED: that a letter is written to CBC to ask about the future of the depot and to request that they remove the unsightly concrete wall.

13.3 364 – Cllr P J Darnes - Bus Shelters in Elworth

It was stated that the bus shelter in the centre of Elworth should be upgraded to include provision for seating and that a shelter should be erected at the bus stop opposite to St Peter's church. County Councillor Price informed the meeting that the County Council already had these projects in hand and that the required bus shelters should be installed during the coming May.

14. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED: that the next meeting of Sandbach Town Council will be the Annual Town Council Meeting and will be held at 7.15 pm on Tuesday 10 May 2005 at 7.15 pm in the Council Chamber, Westfields.

The meeting closed at 10.00 pm.

M E Smith
Chairman

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