



MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING **HELD ON 10th June 2021.**

PRESENT: Councillors: Stuart Bostock (Mayor), Penny Butterill, Peter Groves (Deputy Mayor), Pam Kirkham, Andrew Martin, David Marren, Arthur Moran, Phil Staley, John Statham and Carole Thomas with David Thomas the Facilities Manager, Sheryl Birtles the Deputy Clerk and Samantha Roberts the Town Clerk.

Also Present: There were no members of the public or press present.

21. PUBLIC FORUM

21.1 Representatives from the Police.

There were no representatives from the Police present.

21.2 There were no representations from the public present.

21.3 There were no representations from the public on planning applications.

21.4 There were no questions submitted in advance in writing.

22. APOLOGIES: There were apologise of absence from Councillors David Greaves and Stephanie Wedgwood.

ABSENT: none

23. DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillors Arthur Moran expressed an interest in agenda item 6, planning application 21/2075N relating to Nantwich Swimming Baths as Councillor Moran is a Cheshire East Councillor.

Councillor Moran and Councillor Thomas expressed a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 7, St Mary's Church as they are both members of the Church.

24. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

24.1 **Resolved:** That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 27th April 2021 be confirmed as a correct record, approved, and signed by the Mayor.

24.2 **Resolved:** That the minutes of the Annual Town Council meeting held on 5th May 2021 be confirmed as a correct record, approved, and signed by the Mayor.

24.3 **Resolved:** That the minutes of the Annual Town meeting held on 15 April 2021 be confirmed as a correct record, approved, and signed by the Mayor.

25. MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor informed members of his engagements since the last meeting of the Council, advising that he had several additional engagements which were slowly increasing as social distancing measures are easing.

26. PLANNING CONTROL

Members considered the planning applications and supported the recommendations of the Clerk.

Resolved: It was resolved that the recommendations of the Town Clerk be reported to Cheshire East.

27. ST. MARY'S CHURCH NANTWICH – PROPOSED VISITOR CENTRE

The Mayor welcomed Andrew Spiers from St. Mary's Church and invited him to share the proposals with members. Mr Spiers informed members that the Church had over a number of years considered ideas to make the church more welcoming and to enhance the asset which is in a prime location and a building of historic significance. He shared the idea that the church is considering developing the back of the church into a focal point with a visitors' centre for tourists, adding that there could be a retail offer including the selling of teas/coffees with historical guides and an exhibition space. Mr Spiers added that the space could also be a community space where people could come together to talk.

Mr Spiers advised that the Church were currently consulting with the Parish to firm up the ideas, so it is still very early days, and it will be another year or so before firm proposals are developed. As part of the consultation the Church are also talking to other stakeholders including the Council, as the Church wants any ideas to compliment other services provided in the town.

Councillor Thomas suggested that there could be an issue with the increased noise levels from the visitor centre which would impact on parishioners wishing to visit the church for quiet reflection. Mr Spiers agreed that this was a concern and the working group are currently considering how the potential noise issues could be addressed, potentially through additional structural work.

Councillor Statham asked if the Church already had funding in place to deliver the project. Mr Spiers confirmed that there was some core funding in place to develop the ideas, but nothing in relation to the build. He advised that there were grants available to there would be a requirement first to develop a business case to ensure the project is sustainable.

The Mayor thanked Mr Spiers for his presentation.

Resolved: It was resolved to note the ideas of the Church for the development of a Visitor Centre

28. ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Members considered the previously circulated report containing recommendations of the internal auditor. The Clerk advised members that responses on how each of the recommendations would be addressed were detailed within the table. The Clerk reminded

members that they had already received and considered the three interim internal audit reports which had been provided again for information. The informed members that she had also included all the recommendations from the previous financial years audit to show confirmation that all recommendations from that year had been implemented.

Resolved: It was resolved to note the interim internal audit report and approve the actions by the Clerk to address the recommendations.

29. ACCOUNTS 2020/21 – GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Members considered the Annual Governance Statement prepared by the Clerk and approved the responses to points 1-9 of the statement for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Resolved: It was resolved It was resolved to approve the responses to points 1-9 of the Annual Governance Statement

30. ACCOUNTS 2020/21 – ACCOUNTING STATEMENT

Members considered the Accounting Statement for 2019/20 prepared by the Clerk and approved the figures contained within boxes 1-11.

Members also considered the previously circulated income and expenditure report for the year ending 31 March 2021. The Clerk provided details of areas of overspend giving detailed explanations. She also highlighted areas where income levels had significantly reduced because of the pandemic.

Members considered the report on significant variances where the annual accounting statement figures differed by at least 15% compared to the previous year. Councillor Statham asked if the staff costs detailed included the income received through the furlough payments. The Clerk advised that the furlough grants received could not be shown or off-set against the staff costs for accounting purposes, so the figure shown was the gross figure.

Members noted the amendments to the Asset Register for 2020/21 which had previously been circulated.

Resolved: It was resolved to:

- a) approve the Accounting Statement for 2020/21;
- b) Note the details within the Income and Expenditure report for year ending 31 March 2021;
- c) Note the report on significant variances (2019/2020 to 2020/2021)
- d) Note the Asset Register for 2020/21.

31. ACCOUNTS 2020/21 – ANNUAL RETURN

Resolved: It was resolved to approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21 Part 3, and for the Chair to sign the approved document.

32. ANNUAL REPORT

Members considered the previously circulated Annual Report detailing the activities of the Town Council for 2020/21. The Clerk advised members that once the report is approved it will be published on the website.

Resolved: It was resolved to approve the Annual Report for 2020/21

33. DONATIONS

The Clerk advised members that under normal circumstances once the budget is approved by Council then all confirmed donations are issued to the various organisations. However, due to the on-going concerns linked to the pandemic the Clerk sought confirmation for Council to approve the donations details within the report.

Following a question from Councillor Statham relating to organisations reporting to Council on how grant funding is used the Clerk confirmed that this could be addressed during the budgeting process with regular receivers of grants and donations re-affirm their requirements for the funding.

Resolved: It was resolved the approved the issuing of donations as detailed withing the report amounting to £19,700 and £7,000

34. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY AND PETITIONS POLICY

Members considered the previously circulated draft policies. The Clerk reminded members that both polices had been considered by the Policy Committee and amendments had been made based on recommendations from the Policy Committee.

Resolved: It was resolved to approve the Community Engagement Policy and Petitions Policy

35 CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

The Clerk provided details to members on the idea of making an application to Cheshire East to become a Connected Communities Centre. She advised that if the application were successful whilst it would attract funding of £2000, there would be a requirement of the Town Council to offer 200 hours of room hire during a 12-month period. The Clerk suggested that the Peggy Killick room could be used to offer the free hours. The Clerk added that becoming a Connected Communities Centre would be a positive way to work with the community and voluntary organisations, so there would be a social benefit as well as a financial benefit.

Councillor John Statham sought clarification relating to the costs associated with promotional materials, and how it would be funded. He also asked if it would have an impact on the commercial use of the Civic Hall. The Clerk confirmed that Cheshire East would provide promotional materials and that the main hall at the Civic would not be offered for room hire use, which is where the majority of the commercial hire takes place. The Peggy Killick room is under used and so this would potentially increased income from the funding offered.

36. BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORTS

Councillor Arthur Moran informed members that the new Committee System was now up and running at Cheshire East.

37. REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES

Councillor Arthur Moran advised members that the Luncheon Club had been successful with a grant application from Engie which would be used to purchasing items required when moving to the Civic Hall. He also advised that The Gables is now sold, but he was unaware who had purchased it.

The meeting ended at 7.40pm

Signature of Chair :.....

Date :.....