



## **MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING** **HELD ON 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

**Present:** Councillors: Peter Groves (Mayor), Penny Butterill, David Greaves, David Marren, Arthur Moran, John Statham, Carole Thomas and Stephanie Wedgwood with Samantha Roberts the Town Clerk, and Sheryl Birtles the Deputy Town Clerk.

Also present: 5 members of the public, 2 Cheshire East Council officers joined virtually, one member of press.

### **115. PUBLIC FORUM**

115.1 There were no representations from the Police.

115.2 A resident thanked the Town Council, in particular David Thomas for organising the Remembrance Service which he thought was a wonderful event.

A resident commented that the new A51 bypass works were still underway, which should have been completed in February 2022. They asked if the Town Council had any updates or could we obtain any further information from Cheshire East about its progress?

The Clerk responded to advise that she couldn't give an update at that point, however she would contact Cheshire East and obtain a response to be brought forward at the next meeting.

115.3 There were no representations from the public on planning applications

115.4 There were no questions submitted in writing in advance.

### **116. APOLOGIES**

There were apologies of absence from Councillors Stuart Bostock, Pam Kirkham, and Andrew Martin.

**ABSENT:** none

### **117. DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

Councillor David Greaves and Penny Butterill declared an interest in Planning Application 22/5028N. Councillors David Marren and Penny Butterill declared they were members of the Southern Planning Committee.

### **118. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

118 **Resolved:** That the Minutes of the Council Meetings held on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022 be confirmed as a correct record, approved, and signed by the Mayor.

### **119. MAYOR'S REPORT**

Councillor Groves reported that he had enjoyed attending the Carol Service at St Marys, Nantwich Band Christmas Concert and was pleased to see such a good number of people there having dinner together

at the Methodist Church on Christmas day. He also reported that he'd joined the Police at a surprise retirement celebration for a colleague who had work at the station in Nantwich for many years.

## **120. NANTWICH TOWN CENTRE VITALITY PLAN**

This item was brought forward on the agenda to accommodate speakers from Cheshire East Council.

Members welcomed Jo Wise and Craig Wallace from Cheshire East Council. Jo gave members some background information about the Vitality Plan. She informed members that following the draft going out to consultation 136 residents from Nantwich had commented on it, and their views along with feedback from the Town Council had been included in the final version.

She advised that the Vitality Plan was due to be approved by Cheshire East on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023 and was encouraging Nantwich Town Council to endorse the document, believing that by having the strategy it would help towards gaining funding in the future for the town and also provides all stakeholders with a clear focus and priorities.

Councillor Moran commented that he had been involved from the start and thought it was a good document, but raised concerns that residents may believe that there is money in place to deliver all the actions. He commented that the Town was in a good place having secured some Section 106 money which would help towards some of the actions. Councillor Statham agreed with Councillor Moran's comments, also saying that the consultation had been handled well and he was pleased that it was clear that resident's responses had been acted on in the plan.

**Resolved:** It was resolved that Nantwich Town Council endorse the Cheshire East Vitality Plan for Nantwich.

## **121. SECTION 106 FUNDING**

Jo Wise and Craig Wallace moved on to give members a short presentation on Section 106 funding. They advised members that under the conditions of the planning consent for the Kingsley Village Development, the Developers were subject to paying £750,000 Section 106 money to Cheshire East, to be used for 'improvements to public realm and town centre facilities in Nantwich and no other purpose'.

Jo advised members that they would like to work with the Town Council to use the funds in the best way for the town but highlighted that whilst it seems a lot of money, hard surface projects can be very expensive.

Jo informed members that the Vitality Plan and Nantwich Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Character Strategy 2012 documents would help form a priority list but welcomed other suggestions from the Council. Councillor Statham suggested The Local Transport Plan and The Clerk suggested the Town Council's Corporate Plan.

Jo suggested a walk around and consultation may help the Town Council to bring together a list of priorities.

Councillor Moran thanked Jo for ensuring the Town Council were involved with the funding and commented that Nantwich Partnership had already had a walk about and some priorities including many low cost quick fixes had been identified. He asked if the money could be used to lever money from other sources to which Jo confirmed it could if they were available.

The Clerk asked if there was potential for the money to be used for a Business Improvement District (BID), but Jo felt this wouldn't be allowed, but advise the Council that she would be happy to discuss a BID in the future as she had already assisted other town's with one.

**Resolved:** It was resolved:

- a) That the Clerk would organise a walk-about with Jo Wise, members and invite the Chair of the Civic Society and Nantwich Partnership.
- b) A list of priorities be brought to the next Town Council Meeting for approval.

Jo Wise and Craig Wallace left the meeting.

## **122. PLANNING CONTROL**

Members considered the planning applications. In relation to planning application 22/5028N Councillor Moran commented that the property currently houses a new boxing club and he has concerns about where they would go, but that he also welcomes new accommodation in the town. Councillor Statham agreed and commented that the boxing club were in understanding that the accommodation was a temporary solution. Councillor Statham also commented that an original application for this property had included the demolition of the building to allow for a wider access to the new development behind. He expressed concerns of the width of the access with this new application, to which Councillor Thomas agreed.

**Resolved:** It was resolved that the Deputy Clerk would respond to planning application 21/3817N supporting the Town Council's original comments and to application 22/5028N stating their concerns about the width of the access adjacent to the property.

## **123. COMMUNITY SOLAR PANEL PV SCHEME**

To complement the information previously circulated to members on the community solar panel scheme, the Clerk ran through a presentation from Nantwich Mill Community Energy Company.

Councillor Marren commented that within the presentation it implied that you were only eligible for the scheme if you could not afford it and was concerned that the Town Council would get criticised for this. Jeremy Herbert, a member of the company, replied to say the scheme is intended for those who don't have the funds to purchase solar panels outright, but that it would be a better return if you could do that. He went on to say in terms of the Council he sees it as a way of the Council investing in the community via a different source.

In response to Councillor Marren questioning responsibility of any damage to the building during installation, Jeremy confirmed this would come under the contractors remit, stating that only experienced companies would be used.

Councillor Statham commented that he thought it was a well thought out scheme, which we were lucky to have in the town. He questioned what the tariff and pricing was set against to which Jeremy responded that the pricing was linked to the market and that the Town Council would expect to see costs of 20% less. Jeremy in response to Councillor Statham asking about shareholders, explained that the company will be open to residents buying shares, but highlighted that it was a community company and therefore there would be annual returns but only low, at 4-5%.

Councillor Marren commented that he thought it was a good idea, low risk, good value for money from a business that has grown up in the community.

**Resolved:** It was resolved to move forward with installing solar panels at Nantwich Civic Hall in partnership with Nantwich Mill Community Energy Company.

#### **124. HIGH STREET COLLISION – HOPE HOUSE**

Councillor Groves informed members that the Council had been copied into correspondence from the property management company for 14 High Street to Cheshire about their concerns about highway safety around Swine Market following a number of collisions. He commented that there had also been many comments on social media about it and concerns about people crossing the road in the area had already been spoken about.

Councillor Moran responded to say that dropped kerbs hadn't been installed as highways wanted people to cross at the proper crossings, where it was safe to do so. He also said that the issue causing the collisions was parking in that area making it difficult for vehicles, especially buses and lorries to get through.

The Clerk advised that Cheshire East had responded and said that they would attend the site for a meeting. Members felt it important with the Town Council's knowledge to be present at the meeting.

**Resolved:** It was resolved that the Clerk respond to Highways suggesting that Councillors Moran and Groves meet with Highways at High Street.

#### **125. BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORTS**

Councillor Moran advised members that Cheshire East Council's budget was out for consultation and that it would be an agenda item at the next Town Council Finance Committee.

#### **126. REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES**

Councillor Statham informed members that he had attended the first Food Festival meeting of the year and plans are already well under way and are very exciting for the 2023 event.

The meeting ended at 8pm

Signature of Chair :.....

Date :.....