



MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING **HELD ON 6th October 2022**

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

Also present: Inspector Andy Smith, Michael-John Parkin, one member of press and one member of the public.

76. PUBLIC FORUM

76.1 Inspector Andrew Smith reported that the Food Festival had been a great success with little crime and disorder, but that he recommended that the organisation should consider closing Pillory Street during the event, from a safety point of view, as the pavements are too narrow for pedestrians and they were walking into the road.

He said that there was nothing significant to report, but that the Police were now preparing to move into a busy time of Halloween and Christmas.

Andy said that PC Adam Bradley had replaced PC Stonier, and whilst there were still gaps in staffing he was confident that they would be filled in the near future.

Councillor Marren asked when the Police desk in Nantwich was open, with Andy advising that all help desks had been closed apart from the major ones. Councillor Marren asked if Andy could look into the cost of reinstating a help desk in Nantwich.

Councillor Bostock highlighted a problem with drug dealing close to the Police Station, which Andy asked for details to be sent over to him so that he could investigate further. He did advise that there was always going to be drug related crime about, but that Nantwich was a relatively safe town to live.

76.2 There were no representations from members of the public

76.3 There were no representations from the public on planning applications

76.4 There were no questions submitted in writing in advance.

77. APOLOGIES

There were apologies of absence from Councillors, David Greaves and Carole Thomas.

ABSENT: none

78. DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillors David Marren and Penny Butterill declared they were members of the Southern Planning Committee and Councillor Groves declared he was a member of Cheshire East Strategic Planning Board. Councillor Wedgwood declared that she was a member of the of the Brookfield Community Garden and both Councillors Moran and Butterill commented that they knew well the applicant on Planning Application 22/3522N.

79. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

79.1 **Resolved:** That the Minutes of the Council Meetings held on 8th September 2022 be confirmed as a correct record, approved, and signed by the Mayor.

79.2 **Resolved:** To receive and note the minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 29th September 2022, and to accept and approve the recommendations contained within the minutes.

80. NANTWICH SHOW

The Mayor welcomed Michael-John Parkin from the Nantwich Show. Michael-John commented to Councillors that he had wanted to thank the Town Council personally for their support with the show. He reported that it had been a great success at the new venue and that the show had made a profit. In accordance with the terms of the grant given by the Town Council, he confirmed he would like to return a proportion of the grant.

Councillor Marren commented that he had attended the show and that it was a great event and he was delighted that they had made a profit, suggesting that the returned grant be held separately to support the show should it need it in the future.

Members agreed with Councillor Marren's comments and the Clerk advised that the returned grant could be held in earmarked reserves.

Resolved: It was resolved that the returned grant to be held in earmarked reserves for the Nantwich Show.

Councillor Marren left the room.

80. MAYOR'S REPORT

Councillor Peter Groves reported that he had enjoyed attending Nantwich Players' production of Big Big Sky and likewise the Royal British Legions concert. He also reported that he had attended the launch of the Gables Luncheon Club at the Civic Hall. Councillor Moran commented that it had taken a long time to get it up and running again, and now they were concentrating on getting numbers up.

Councillor Marren re-entered the room.

81. PLANNING CONTROL

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

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

82. NANTWICH EXTERNAL MARKETS

Members considered the previously circulated report. The Facilities Manager commented that it had been increasingly difficult to staff the weekly markets on the square, often with cases where there is only one member of staff to assemble/take down the markets, working 15 hour plus days. He highlighted this was a health and safety issue as the Town Councils advisers recommend a minimum of two staff for the Markets.

The Facilities Manager advised that historically the town had always had a popular entertainment programme combined with markets and that he was proposing to reintroduce this, by keeping the Town Councils Farmers Markets.

Councillor Groves asked if the entertainment would be free. The Facilities Manager confirmed that there would be no charge for the entertainment, and also advised that these events would be self-contained therefore require much less staffing than when operating the markets.

Councillor Statham raised concerns about removing the markets and the effect it would have on footfall in the town.

Resolved: Members agreed to withdraw the staff support for the external markets on the Square and replace with self-contained entertainment.

83. FOAMSTREAM

Members considered the previously circulate report to purchase a Foamstream to address extensive issues of horsetail at allotment sites.

The Clerk reported that all the allotment sites have ongoing issues with horsetail which is preventing the Town Council from letting a number of sites. Currently the only other option, other than using herbicides, which it had been agreed not to use, was covering areas for around 2 years.

The Facilities Manager added that the Foamstream would not only tackle horsetail but also weeds and remove chewing gum.

Councillor Statham asked if could be rented or hire a contractor to use one, with Clerk advising that they were a relatively new product and that this option isn't available. Councillor Statham also commented that the weeding was the responsibility of Cheshire East and questioned if the Town Council should be lobbying them.

Councillor Marren responded that whilst is it the responsibility of Cheshire East, but as a town we should want to do better, and by having a clean, tidy town would be good for the town.

The Clerk advised that the costs would be covered from earmarked reserves for tree felling at the allotments that hadn't been used combined with the funds from the climate budget.

Resolved: It was resolved:

- a) That the Town Council authorise the Town Clerk to purchase the Foamstream equipment if it proves effective during the demonstration.
- b) That the Town Council approve the suspension of Financial Regulations to obtain three quotes as there is only one supplier of the equipment.

84. BROOKFIELD COMMUNITY GARDEN – NATIONAL LOTTERY GRANT

Members considered the previously circulated report relating to a national lottery grant application for the community garden project.

The Clerk advised members that after successfully completing the first stage of the application for a grant for an officer for the community garden project officer, she had met with the Lottery Funding Officer. The Clerk highlighted that whilst members had previously supported the application, they resolved that the position should be self-employed or managed by another organisation. The Funding Officer had advised that the National Lottery would not support outsourcing and therefore the Clerk had brought the item back to Council for reconsideration.

Councillor Statham commented that it was a great project but had reservations that we may not be able to meet expectations following the initial two-year contract, he also raised how the role would impact on the Town Council's pension contributions. The Clerk responded by advising members that once funding for a project such as this has been received there is often opportunity to apply for more funding. She also advised members that whilst an initial amount for a grant had been submitted, the amount could change following the submission of a detailed accurate financial application which would include pension contributions.

Resolved: It was resolved that the Clerk proceed with the application with the Town Council being the employer.

85. NOTICE OF MOTION

Councillor Marren reported that previously Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council had been twinned with Bischofsheim and that they still believed they are twinned with Nantwich. He continued that there are many benefits to twinning for the town and therefore would recommend the Town entering into a friendship agreement as they had done with Dzierzoniow.

Councillor Statham supported the idea and commented that the agreements should be more than dignitaries visiting the town's and should extend to involving the community especially schools.

Councillor Bostock commented that a member of the Climate Change Working Group was already establishing contact with Dzierzoniow for young people to share ideas on Climate Change.

Resolved: It was resolved that the Town Council create a friendship agreement with Bischofsheim.

86. BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORTS

Councillor Moran reported on the current financial position of Cheshire East Council.

Councillor Marren reported that Cheshire East were publishing a new Councillor Code of Conduct Policy which he felt that the Town Council should review and tweak to make it more relevant before they adopt it. The Clerk responded to advise that members that the new Code of Conduct would be brought to a future meeting.

87. REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES

Councillor Statham reported that he had attended meetings for both the Civic Society and Museum and was saddened to hear about the passing of Herbert Rowsell.

Councillor Bostock reported that Nantwich In Bloom were due to attend the North West In Bloom awards and hoping for a positive result. He also commented that he had received great feedback relating to Nantwich Food Festival.

88. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved: It was resolved to exclude press and public pursuant to the Public Bodies Admission to meetings Act 1960 as personal or financial contract details are likely to be discussed.

The meeting ended at 8.25pm

Signature of Chair :.....

Date :.....