

Congleton Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Thursday,
10th December 2009 in the Town Hall, Congleton.

PRESENT: Councillors E Clarke (Town Mayor)
G Baxendale
N J Bayley
Mrs L Daniels
D Martin
P Mason
D Murphy
C Nield
D Parker
Miss R Williams
Mrs J Whitehurst
M Carey

The Mayor's Chaplain led prayers.

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: C R Anstice, Mrs L Bossons, R Boston, D T Brown, G R Edwards, Mrs S A Holland, P Smith and A R Thwaite.

2 MINUTES

CTC/80/0910 RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 3rd November 2009 be approved.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were reminded to declare both “personal” and “personal and prejudicial” interests as early in the meeting as they become aware of it.

Councillors Mason and Baxendale declared personal interests as members of Cheshire East Council in relation to Agenda Items 8 & 23

Councillor Parker declared a personal interest in item 18.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor drew attention to the various engagements that he and the Mayoress had fulfilled since the last Council Meeting. A list of all engagements undertaken by the Town Mayor and the Deputy Town Mayor was circulated.

The Town Mayor thanked Councillor D Martin for playing Pudsey. He also congratulated Linda Minshull for her achievement in gaining the CiLCA award and Peter Cooper for achieving the Power of Well Being in addition to his CiLCA accreditation.

5. ADEPT INTEGRATED QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Town Mayor commented that the Council has been successful in the reaccreditation of the Adept Plus which has been awarded for a further two years and congratulated the staff responsible for this achievement.

6. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

None

7. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The following question was put to the Town Mayor by Mr K Norman on behalf of Sandy Lane Action Group:-

Resulting from a question put to Council at the meeting on 24th September, the Mayor assured me that a copy of a report produced by SECE in 2008, and referred to by Cllr Whitehurst, would be provided. Ten working weeks have now elapsed and the report has not been provided.

In the absence of the report we asked the Town Council on 5th November, to advise us when Cllr Whitehurst first became aware of this report and how and when the information she has relied on, was communicated to her. No response has been received.

My question is:

When will the Town Council provide this document and provide the information relating to Cllr Whitehurst's knowledge of the report.

The Town Mayor responded as follows:-

Thank you for your question.

As you will have noted from the minutes, I didn't in fact make any commitment to provide the document you requested at the Council meeting held on the 24th September 2009

As I explained during my response to you, Councillor Mrs. Whitehurst didn't refer directly to any survey carried out by the Town Council or its consultants, as her comments were based on anecdotal evidence gained from attending a presentation given by young people in Sandbach to Congleton Borough Council. In point of fact she neither possesses a copy of the report nor indeed has she seen the report. My understanding was that this response had addressed your question and there was no further need to supply documents which hadn't in fact been used by Councillor Whitehurst in the first place.

For the sake of clarity, the Town Council does not possess a copy of the report you referred to either.

However, if you still wish to see the report produced by SECE we will request them to send you a copy of the report, assuming of course that they are prepared to release the document. But it may be more productive for you to approach the organisation yourself; if you wish to do this we will of course provide all the contact details.

In accordance with Standing Orders, Mr Norman asked a supplementary question as follows:-

"Now that it is clear that the Town Council has never held a copy of the SECE report and Cllr Whitehurst has never studied the report, I consider it is unsound for this report and other hearsay evidence, to support the Council's case for Sandy Lane employment site. The probity of the Council's Case is clearly compromised."

My supplementary question is:

"Will the Council confirm that it will now set aside Cllr Whitehurst evidence and cease all further activity on Sandy Lane Employment site and allow Cheshire East to develop the required Core Strategy, LDF, and Employment Land review.

The Town Mayor responded as follows:-

The Town Council has already confirmed its policy in respect of this issue concerning Sandy Lane as an Employment Site.

8. CHESHIRE EAST COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Councillor P H Mason commented that the results of the warding arrangements have more or less left Congleton's two wards the same, with only minor changes to boundaries proposed.

Councillor Whitehurst enquired whether the proposed car parking charges are still planned to go ahead in January 2010. Councillor P H Mason stated that he believed they would be.

Councillor Whitehurst then asked whether or not Cheshire East were keen to get involved with the Youth Council. Councillor P H Mason responded by stating that he is sure Cheshire East would get involved.

9. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Council considered a request from Steve Shaw, National Coordinator, Local Works; requesting Town Councillors to contact MP's to support the adoption of the Sustainable Communities Act Amendment Bill.

CTC/81/0910 RESOLVED- That the report be received.

10. COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

CTC/82/0910 RESOLVED-That the minutes of the meeting held on 19th November 2009 be received and the recommendations therein be adopted.

11. AMENITIES AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

CTC/83/0910 RESOLVED-That the minutes of the meeting held on 19th November 2009 be received and the recommendations therein be adopted.

12. FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

CTC/84/0910 RESOLVED- That the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd December 2009 be received and the recommendations therein be adopted.

13. PLANNING COMMITTEE

CTC/85/0910 RESOLVED- That the minutes of the meeting held on 12th November and 3rd December 2009 be received.

.14. ACCOUNTS

CTC/86/0910 RESOLVED-

1. That the Council approve the payment of the accounts listed in Appendix A.
2. That the Council approve payment of any expenditure agreed at the meeting.

15. URGENT MATTERS – Members Items

Councillor D A Parker advised the council of a Planning Committee meeting he chaired last week, and pointed out that some of the plans the committee were considering and had only just received had already been passed by Cheshire East.

The Town Clerk agreed to raise this with the Planning Department at Cheshire East.

16. YOUTH COMMITTEE/JUNIOR COUNCIL

CTC/87/0910 RESOLVED- (a) That the minutes of the meeting of the Youth Committee held on 10th November 2009 be received.

CTC/88/0910 RESOLVED- (b) That the minutes of the meeting of the Junior Council Meeting held on 11th November 2009 be received.

CTC/89/0910 RESOLVED- c) That the increase in the number of members of the Youth Committee from 10 to 12 be approved.

(d) Councillor J Whitehurst pointed out that the proposed trip to the European Parliament would be reduced to one overnight stay, so that the cost of the trip could be as far as is possible contained within the subsidy provided by the European Union.

(e) Questions from members of the Youth Committee present at the meeting were dealt with by the Town Mayor; however in response to a question about the state of the car park at Congleton Station, Councillor G Baxendale commented that he would encourage Cheshire East to get the potholes filled.

17. CONGLETON CHORAL SOCIETY

The Council considered a request from Congleton Choral Society requesting a grant for the forthcoming Christmas Concert.

CTC/90/0910 RESOLVED- That the Clerk contacts the Choral Society and request more information relating to the amount of income the society collects versus its expenditure.

18. TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH

The Council considered a request from the Trinity Methodist Church to support the provision of a meal for anyone who is alone at Christmas.

CTC/91/0910 RESOLVED- That a grant of £100.00 be approved for the Trinity Methodist Church Christmas Meal.

19. VISIT TO EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Councillor Mrs J Whitehurst requested the Council's approval to arrange a visit for a group of young people accompanied by adults to the European Parliament.

CTC/92/0910 RESOLVED- (1) That the Council approve the visit to the European Parliament.

(2) That any additional expenditure incurred on the visit not covered by the EC subsidy can be recovered from the Youth Committee Fund.

20. INFORMATION AND DATA PROTECTION POLICY

The Change Management Consultant outlined the changes to the Information Data Protection Policy which included modifications to the Publication Scheme and Information Guide and handling of Disclosure Information.

CTC/93/0910 RESOLVED- That the revised policy submitted by the Change Management Consultant be approved and adopted.

21. MMU STUDENT PLACEMENT

A report on the placement of a Student from Manchester Metropolitan University to undertake a 13 week placement from mid January to April 2010 to undertake work on marketing projects for Congleton.

CTC/94/0910 RESOLVED- That the Council approve the placement of a student from MMU for 13 weeks.

22. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

CTC/95/0910 RESOLVED- That the Council resolve to exclude the press and public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, for the matters set out below on the grounds that they could involve the likely disclosure of private and confidential information or staff matters.

23. DE LACEY'S CAFE

A report on the current status of De Lacey's Café was presented by the Change Management Consultant and it was noted that the completion of the Tapas Café could be delayed by about 3 months.

CTC/96/0910 RESOLVED- That the recommendation contained within the report be approved.

ERNEST CLARKE
MAYOR