

Congleton Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Thursday 24th
September 2009 in the Town Hall, Congleton.

PRESENT: Councillors E Clarke (Town Mayor)
D Brown (Deputy Town Mayor)
C R Anstice
N J Bayley
R Boston
Mrs L Bossons
Mrs S J Daniels
D Murphy
C Nield

The Mayor's Chaplain led prayers.

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: G Baxendale, G R Edwards, Mrs S A Holland, D Martin, P H Mason, D A Parker, P C Smith, A R Thwaite, Mrs J Whitehurst and Miss R K Williams.

2 MINUTES

CTC/47/0910 RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 20th August 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.
No declarations were made.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor drew attention to various engagements he and the Mayoress had fulfilled since the last Council Meeting.

5. PRESENTATIONS

The Town Mayor presented Town Council Badges to Members of the Youth Committee present at the meeting and also a Certificate to Jenna Pierce who was leaving for University.

6. APPOINTMENT OF TOWN CLERK

Members were informed that Mr B Hogan had accepted the formal offer of this appointment and would be taking up his duties on the 1st December 2009.

7. FUTURE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Council received a presentation from the Change Management Consultant on this matter which was based on a similar presentation made recently to the Leader of Cheshire East Council and other Cheshire East Councillors representing the Congleton East and West Wards. Members also considered an issues paper prepared following these discussions.

CTC/48/0910 RESOLVED- That approval be given for a further meeting with the Leader of Cheshire East Council to raise and pursue the various issues set out in the report now submitted.

8. CASUAL VACANCY-SOUTH WARD

The Town Clerk reported that no requisition for a Election had been received by the Returning Officer and, accordingly, it fell to the Town Council to fill the vacancy by co-option. In accordance with the agreed procedure, a second Notice had been published inviting expressions of interest and responses would be considered by the Members Panel in due course. A further report would be submitted to the next Council Meeting.

9. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

There were no items to report.

10. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

“It has been reported in the Congleton Chronicle on 10th September that at the meeting of the Community and Environment Committee held on the 3rd September, Councillor Jeanne Whitehurst claimed that “A lot of university graduates in this town have moved out of town or have to get on a bus to Stoke or Macclesfield to go to work”

My question is: Will the Town Council provide copies of the survey which it, or its consultants, have carried out to support this statement.

The Town Mayor responded as follows:-

“Thank you for your question. Councillor Mrs Whitehurst is not present tonight so I will respond on behalf of the Town Council. The comments made by Councillor Mrs Whitehurst at the last meeting of the Community and Environment Committee were based on anecdotal evidence and not on any survey carried out by the Town Council or its Consultants.

Mrs Whitehurst has extensive experience of working very closely with young people in Congleton over many years and the comments she made at the meeting were derived from concerns expressed to her personally by university graduates and students seeking employment. Councillor Mrs Whitehurst is also aware of the 2008 survey carried out by South East Cheshire Enterprise. “

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

“Will the Council please tell us, of the “ lots of graduates who travel by bus to Macclesfield and Stoke” how many have graduated in the past 3 years which make them potentially suitable candidates for employment in the high technology/science based companies you wish to attract to the 15 hectare employment site”

In response, the Town Mayor informed Mr Norman that the Town Council had not conducted a survey and was not in possession of the information requested..

11. CHESHIRE EAST COUNCILLORS REPORTS

Standing Orders were suspended to allow Councillors from the principal authority to report on relevant issues. Councillor D Brown referred to the relationship issue discussed earlier and also reported on the first meeting of the Congleton Local Area Partnership held earlier in the day.

12. COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

CTC/49/0910 RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Community & Environment Committee held on 3rd September 2009 be received and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

Arising from Minute CAE/14/0910, the Town Mayor signed the Nottingham Declaration.

13. AMENITIES AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

CTC/50/09 10 RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Amenities & Services Committee held on 3rd September 2009 be received and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

14. FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

CTC/51/0910 RESOLVED- That the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee held on the 10th September 2009 be approved and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

15. TOWN HALL COMMITTEE

CTC/52/0910 RESOLVED- That the minutes of the meeting of the Town Hall Committee held on 15th September 2009 be received and the recommendations contained therein be adopted, subject to the addition of the following minute which had been omitted from the printed copy in error:-

“THC/12/0910/Recommended: that authority be given for negotiations to be entered into, to determine the extent of works and costs in the undertaking of essential repairs to the east gable of the Town Hall in conjunction with roof and chimney repair works being undertaken to No 5 High St. Works to the Town Hall wall repair to be then undertaken by the contractor employed by the owners of No 5 High St. Works to the Town Hall gable wall to be supervised by the Town Councils Architectural Consultant”

16. PLANNING COMMITTEE

CTC/53/0910 RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 20th August and 10th September 2009 be received.

17. ACCOUNTS

CTC/54/0910 RESOLVED –

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

18. URGENT MATTERS-Members Items

Councillor Mrs Bossons requested the Town Clerk to include an item on the agenda for the next meeting of the Amenities and Services Committee to discuss recent acts of vandalism at the Hilary Avenue Allotment site.

19. YOUTH COMMITTEE/JUNIOR COUNCIL

CTC/55/0910 RESOLVED- a) That the minutes of the meeting of the Youth Committee held on 8th September 2009 be received.

b) That the revised constitution for the Youth Committee now submitted be approved and adopted.

20. CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL ISSUES

CTC/56/0910 RESOLVED: a) That the decision of the Cabinet on car parking charges be noted. Arising from a question, the Town Clerk was asked to reiterate the representations contained in the Town Council's submission about the Leisure Centre car park.

b) That the Town Mayor and the Leader of the Council be appointed to represent the Council at the Town and Parish Councils' Conference to be held at Congleton Town Hall on 13th October 2009.

c) That the Town Clerk be authorised to seek a volunteer member to attend the Assembly of the Local Strategic Partnership to be held at Tatton Park on 23rd October 2009.

21. COMPLETION OF ANNUAL AUDIT

CTC/57/0910 RESOLVED- That the Audit Commission's certificate and opinion on the Accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2009 be received and noted.

22. CONGLETON TOWN TRUST

CTC/58/0910 RESOLVED- a) That Councillors D Murphy and D Parker together with Hon Burgess Mrs M M Williamson be reappointed as Trustees for a further 4 year term from 1st November 2009.

b) That nomination of the fourth Trustee be deferred to the next meeting.

23. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

CTC/59/0910 RESOLVED- That approval be given to supporting the campaign for the Bill to become law and to seek the support for it from the Member of Parliament.

24. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

CTC/60/0910 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.

PART TWO –ITEMS CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

25. STAFFING MATTERS

Arising from consideration of a confidential report submitted by the Town Clerk and the Change Management Consultant it was-

CTC/61/0910 RESOLVED- a) That the recommendations contained in the report be approved and adopted.

b) That the Mayor be asked to write to The Town Clerk and Support Manager congratulating them on their qualification successes.

26. WEDDING PROMOTION-CONGLETON TOWN HALL

Arising from minute THC/12/09/10 dated 15th September 2009, there was a discussion on the interpretation of the promotional discount in respect of recently booked weddings and it was agreed that this would be applied, subject to hire contracts being signed at the Open Day on 20th October 2009.

ERNEST CLARKE
MAYOR

