

ALSAGER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN THE ALSAGER INSTITUTE
ON TUESDAY, 10th JUNE 2008

Present: Councillor Mrs T E S Jones (Chairman)

Councillor C V Burgess
Councillor Mrs D Burgess
Councillor Mrs J Burgess
Councillor Mrs M Camm
Councillor W Howell
Councillor S Morris
Councillor S Roberson
Councillor A Snape
Councillor W H Stevenson
Councillor Mrs J Williams

Mr. T. Fitton (Town Clerk)
Mrs C A Jennings (Assistant)

10 members of the general public
1 press

Councillor Mrs D Burgess opened the meeting with prayers.

08/653 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs G Burgess, D I Hough and R Tyson.

08/654 Declarations of Interest

Councillor A Snape declared an interest in all Planning Applications, Councillor S Roberson declared an interest in Planning Application 08/0793/FUL.

08/655 Minutes – Town Council

Resolved: That, the Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 20th May 2008, Pages 1 – 11, and Appendices A and B, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

08/656

Matters Arising

Merelake Way Bridge, Alsager (08/635)

The Town Clerk was requested to ask for a response from the Borough Council regarding the future of this bridge.

Crewe Road, Alsager (08/635)

The Town Clerk be instructed to contact the Area Highways Manager about urgent repairs to Crewe Road and to include the information supplied by Mr Cain.

08/657

Chairman's Announcements

27 th May	Grants Panel
1 st June	Congleton Borough Civic Parade and Service
3 rd June	Civic Pride meeting with Judges
4 th June	Meeting of Congleton Compact Group
10 th June	Meeting with Inspector Gammage concerning policing in Alsager
4 th June	Vice-Chairman attended Friends of Alsager Station meeting
8 th June	Vice-Chairman started Alsager Cyclethon
8 th June	Chairman's Consort attended Sandbach Town Council Civic Parade and Service

08/658

Public Participation

Julie Grint on behalf of Alsager First Responders asked for the Town Councils support against North West Ambulance Service proposals for changes to the Community First Responders Scheme. The NWAS were seeking to reduce their activities and the treatment they were allowed to give as well as proposing to stop them wearing their distinctive green uniform and stripping the responders vehicle of its markings which have been provided in part by public donation. The NWAS also wants to stop them attending traffic accidents and administering drugs.

The Town Clerk referred to the letter from Councillor Snape which had been circulated setting out the details of the proposal to de-skill First Responders in the Cheshire and Merseyside region and indicated that Nantwich Town Council had offered to make joint representations on behalf of themselves, Alsager and Congleton Town Councils to the County Councils Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Select Committee in July on this issue.

It was agreed that the Town Council support the Alsager First Responders Group in objecting to the proposals of NWAS and forward there letter to Nantwich Town Council for inclusion in the joint submission and also seek support from Lady Winterton MP.

Mrs Dyke referred to recent newspaper reports indicating that our local MP was trying to retain the MMU site for a new university and expressed concern that if this occurred then

the 300 houses proposed for that site could go ahead on green field sites in and around Alsager and asked if the Town Council had any further information.

In answer to Mrs Dyke the Chairman stated that at the moment there was no further information about HM Governments proposals for 'new' university sites and that a development plan for the existing MMU site was awaited.

In answer to a question from Mr Waterman about speeding on Crewe Road through Alsager County Councillor Fletcher and Councillor Howell indicated that they would bring this matter to the urgent attention of the Highways Committee.

08/659

Alsager Town Centre Plan

The Chairman suspended Standing Orders in order to allow public questions on this issue.

Councillor C V Burgess indicated that as a member of the Borough Councils Planning Committee he would undertake only a watching brief on this matter.

Further to Min. 08/635 dated 20th May 2008, the Chairman reported that the Town Councils views were requested on a proposal the Borough Council had received on potentially selling land at Fairview Car Park to Kimberley Developments and the Co-op ahead of completion of the Supplementary Planning Document for the Town Centre Plan currently being prepared by the Borough Councils Planning Department as agreed jointly by the Town Council and the Partnership.

The Chairman welcomed and introduced Peter Hall Corporate Property Services Manager and Joanne Dutton Principal Planning Officer Congleton Borough Council, who gave further information on the proposal and circulated a Planning Policy report in relation to Supplementary Planning Documents.

The Town Clerk reported that the Alsager Partnership had considered their response to the proposal at a meeting held on the 9th June 2008 which was that:

Congleton Borough Council be asked to progress negotiations with Kimberley Developments without commitment and once a detailed proposal is completed it be presented to the Town Council, Borough Council and the Partnership for further discussion.

Any proceeds ultimately resulting in the sale of land at Fairview Car Park should be spent in Alsager.

The Town Clerk indicated that the Town Councils current position was to support the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document for the town centre in conjunction with a Planning Brief for Fairview Car Park.

Also present were Philip Pearce and Richard Graham-Wood of Kimberley Developments and an agent on behalf of the Co-op who were available to provide additional information about their plans for a supermarket on Fairview Car Park.

There then followed a question and answer session after which it was:

Resolved: The Town Council is still committed to the Town Centre planning process and therefore the Borough Council is urged to continue work on the preparation of the Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document and the Development Plan for Fairview Car Park.

In the mean time it is considered to be appropriate for Congleton Borough Council to continue discussions with Kimberley and the Co-op on their proposal but it is stressed that the Town Council would like to be consulted further before any final decision is taken on the disposal of part of the Car Park to Kimberley Developments and the Co-op.

Any proceeds ultimately resulting in the sale of land at Fairview Car Park should be allocated for development in Alsager.

08/660 Commons Registration Act 1965 – Village Green Application

Further to Min. 08/640 dated 20th May 2008 the Town Clerk reported that he had updated the County Solicitor with the present position regarding the Village Green Application.

Resolved: That, the matter be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

08/661 Sub Station Sainbury's – Crewe Road, Alsager

Further to Min. 08/649 dated 20th May 2008 the Town Clerk reported the following decision from the last meeting regarding the planning application submitted by Rellum Estates LLP for screening proposals for the sub station at Sainsbury's Store, 23 & 23A Crewe Road.

The Town Council recommended that this application be refused on the following grounds:-

The proposed screening will obstruct the vision of drivers entering and leaving the car park onto Crewe Road which could be a traffic hazard given the high volume of traffic using this main road in and out of the town. The proposed screening would be inappropriate given the close proximity to the conservation area.

The Town Council would also like to draw the attention of the planning authority to the sub station its self which the Town Council on behalf of local residents would like to see resited from its current location to a site at the rear of the store. The sub station detracts from the visual amenities of the area and also does not create a good impression for visitors using the B5077 Crewe Road when entering the town.

Finally attention is drawn to the fact that the sub station itself is being used for advertising purposes for which the Town Council understands that planning permission has not been obtained.

The Town Council then considered what further action could be taken regarding the relocation of the sub station to a site not fronting Crewe Road.

Resolved: That, the Town Clerk be instructed to register the Town Councils concerns with Scottish Power.

08/662 Community Grants Panel

The Town Council considered the report of the meeting of the Community Grants Panel held on 27th May 2008 together with criteria for grant applications and an application form.

Resolved: That, the report of the meeting be received and noted and the criteria and application form be approved.

08/663 Alsager Partnership

Resolved: a) That, the minutes of the meeting of the Alsager Partnership held on the 13th May 2008 be received and noted.

b) That, the minutes of the meeting of the Christmas Market Project Group held on 2nd June 2008 be received and noted.

08/664 Highway Matters – Cross Street and Longview Avenue

Further to Min. 08/638 dated 20th May 2008 which was raised during public participation members considered the under mentioned reply from the Area Traffic Manager regarding the suggested reversal of the Cross Street traffic directional flow and the traffic speed and volume on Longview Avenue.

Cross Street, Alsager, One Way System - It is not clear why there has been a request to consider a reversal of the system but I do recall that I was asked to respond to a similar request previously. There are a number of problems and disadvantages associated with reversing this one way system on Cross Street including the following,

- Available visibility for vehicles, if they were required to exit onto Station Road, is inadequate in contrast to that available currently when exiting onto Crewe Road.
- Reversing the one way system on Cross Street would increase the volume of traffic requiring exit at both ends of Station road where existing arrangements are complex with a corresponding increased potential for conflict and collision. There could also be an unpredictable effect on traffic flow on Station Road and Cross Street itself with any increase at any point on the local road networks likely to generate complaints.
- If we did reverse the one way order, then human nature being what it is, rather than people travelling all the way to the Station Road car park it is likely that they would park in the first available kerbside space on Cross St itself. For this reason I would expect a significant level of objections from the residents.
- If there were any reason to reverse the one way system on Cross Street, that was considered of sufficient importance to outweigh the disadvantages described, a specific legal process is required to rescind the existing Traffic Regulation Order and introduce a replacement. This process would require the application of resources that are currently directed to such matters using a prioritisation process. Details of this process and the current prioritised list of requests for new or revised traffic regulation orders was last

reported to the Highway and Transportation Local Joint Committee at their meeting held on 10 March 2008.

Longview Avenue, Alsager, Traffic Speed and Volume - It is not uncommon for local traffic to identify and migrate to alternative routes when their initial choice is subject to traffic calming. The degree to which this migration occurs will vary from site to site and is very difficult to predict in advance. It is a common objective of a traffic calming scheme to achieve a reduction in traffic volume where the road provides the opportunity as a through route. However, this can have a negative effect if traffic displacement is concentrated on another unsuitable road.

In relation to Longview Avenue I was aware, from advice obtained following a police forum, that concern had been raised in relation to issues of traffic displacement and had noted the need to gather traffic data to quantify the problem.

In order to determine the effectiveness of any traffic calming scheme traffic speed, classification and flow data is compared from surveys carried out before and after the scheme is installed. It was intended to carry out such surveys on Moorhouse Avenue within the next six weeks and I have asked for Longview Avenue to be surveyed at the same time. Data from these survey will be analysed and results reported to the subsequent meeting of the Transportation Local Joint Committee programmed for 8 September 2008.

Councillor Mrs M Camm submitted observations in support of the proposed reversal of the one way system so that traffic could turn into Cross Street from Crewe Road.

Resolved: That, the Town Council support the comments made by Councillor Mrs Camm regarding the direction of traffic on Cross Street and these be forwarded to the Area Highways Engineer.

08/665 Cheshire East, Cheshire County Council and Congleton Borough Council Issues

County Councillor Fletcher reported that the Area Highways Manager would be presenting his report to the next meeting and asked if the Town Council could consider matched funding for some of the highway repairs to enable them to be undertaken in Alsager.

08/666 Accounts for Authorisation

Resolved: That, the report be received and the payments authorised. (Appendix A)

08/667 Application for Grant – One World Week Event

The Town Council considered an application from One World Alsager for a grant towards their Annual Festival to be held on Saturday 11th October 2008 which will celebrate Rites of Passage (significant occasions and events) in all our various countries and traditions.

Resolved: That, a grant of £100 be approved as contained in the grants list in the budget for 2008/09.

08/668

Listed Buildings and Structures

The Town Council considered a letter from the Principle Conservation Officer asking for assistance in drawing up a local list of buildings and structures that the community regard as important to the local Alsager environment and which will be taken into account when determining planning applications.

This local list could include any such structure that was considered to be an important part of the history of Alsager and the criteria to be used to decide which buildings would be included on the local list was contained in a leaflet available for inspection at the meeting.

The deadline for nominating a building for consideration on the local list was the 11th July 2008 and nomination forms were available on the Borough Councils website.

Resolved: That, the following be nominated for inclusion in the local list:-

Alsager One Stop Shop
St Marys Church
Wesley Place Chapel
Weslyan Chapel, Hassall Road
Merelake Way Bridge
Alsager Station

08/669

Planning Applications

The Town Council considered Planning Applications registered with Congleton Borough Council as follows:

Week ending 23/05/08
Week ending 30/05/08
Week ending 06/06/08

Resolved: That, the Town Council's formal comments on all applications registered with Congleton Borough Council up to week ending 6th June 2008, be forwarded to the Head of Planning and Estates, Congleton Borough Council. (Appendix B)

NOTE: Councillor A Snape declared an interest in all Planning Applications and he took no part in the discussion, and did not vote on the decision.
Councillor S Roberson declared an interest in Planning Application 08/0793/FUL and he took no part in the discussion, and did not vote on the decision.

08/670 Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved: That in accordance with the Public Bodies Admissions to Meetings Act 1960 the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it could involve the likely disclosure of private and confidential information.

08/671 Internal Auditors Report – Town Council Accounts 2007/08

The Town Council considered the report of the Internal Auditor following the completion of the Audit of Accounts for the financial accounts 2007/08.

- Resolved:
- a) That, the Internal Auditors Report be received and noted.
 - b) That, a meeting be arranged between the Internal Auditor and Councillor W H Stevenson to discuss suggested revisions to the Internal Audit Programme.
 - c) That, the actions taken by the Town Clerk on the recommendations of the Internal Auditor regarding revisions to various types of insurance be received and noted.
 - d) That, the Town Clerk be instructed to discuss with the Councils bank suggested revisions to the banking policy.

08/672 Internal Auditors Report – Alsager Institute Accounts 2007/08

The Town Council considered the report of the Internal Auditor on the Alsager Institute Accounts for the financial year 2007/08.

Resolved: That, the Internal Auditors Report be referred to the Institute Committee for detailed consideration.

08/673 Alsager Town Council – Staffing and Office Equipment

The Town Council considered the Private and Confidential report of the Town Clerk on the following matters:-

Secretarial Assistance
Additional Office Accommodation, 3 Lawton Road
Copying Facilities
Car Allowance Town Clerks Assistant

The Town Clerk submitted revised details for the tender for the copying machine from Infotec in the sum of £469.00 per quarter.

The Town Clerk declared that a family member was employed by Weaver Business Machines.

- Resolved:
- a) That, authority be given for the appointment of a secretarial assistant, part-time, 10 to 12 hours per week at £7.00 per hour, the job description to be approved in consultation with the Chairman and Councillor Mrs G Burgess.
 - b) That, the rent of the additional office G7 at 3 Lawton Road be approved.
 - c) That, the tender submitted by Weaver Business Machines for the supply of a Sharp Colour Copier as detailed in the report on a 3 year rental be approved.
 - d) That, the post of Town Clerks Assistant be subject to mileage allowance at 58.7p per mile with effect from 2nd June 2008.
 - e) That, the decisions in a - d above be financed from general balances and recovered in the Precept for 2009/10 in order to restore the level of balance.

Councillor Mrs T E S Jones
Chairman