

ALSAGER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN THE ALSAGER INSTITUTE  
ON TUESDAY 6<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2009

Present: Councillor Mrs T E S Jones (Chairman)  
Councillor Mrs M Camm  
Councillor W Howell  
Councillor S Roberson  
Councillor A Snape  
Councillor W H Stevenson  
Councillor R Tyson  
Councillor Mrs J Williams

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

5 members of the general public  
1 member of the press

Councillor R Tyson opened the meeting with prayers.

09/794 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C V Burgess, Mrs D Burgess, Mrs J Burgess, D Hough and S Morris.

09/795 Declarations of Interest

Councillor A Snape declared a personal interest in all Planning Applications as a local contractor.

Councillor S Roberson declared a personal interest in the I.T. provision in the Budget as the Town Council's I.T. provider.

09/796 Minutes – Town Council

Resolved: That, the Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2008, Pages 1 – 6, and Appendices A and B be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

09/797 Matters Arising from the Town Council Meeting – 9<sup>th</sup> December 2008

Fairview Car Park – Provision of Disabled Car Park Spaces (08/785)

The Chairman reported that authority had been given for the Borough Council to erect a directional sign for the new disabled car parking spaces. The cost of the sign of £100 to be met by the Town Council with the Borough Council erecting the sign free of charge. The Chairman's action was confirmed.

09/798

Chairman's Announcements

11<sup>th</sup> December      Attended Carol Service at Christ Church, organised by WI, with Consort  
16<sup>th</sup> December      Attended Carol Service at Dennis Round Court with Consort.  
17<sup>th</sup> December      Attended Pips Day Nursery's 1<sup>st</sup> Christmas party with Consort.  
18<sup>th</sup> December      Attended WRVS Luncheon Club's Christmas dinner in the Civic Centre with Consort.

09/799

Public Participation

Peter Smith reported that due to cuts in the County Transport Budget the number of bus stops in which timetables would be displayed would be reduced in Alsager.

09/800

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Resolved:      That, the new Alsager Town Council Publication Scheme as set out in the report of the Assistant Town Clerk be approved and adopted.

09/801

Cheshire East Council - Proposed Local Area Partnerships (LAPs)

Members considered their initial response to Cheshire East's proposals for Local Working, which included Alsager with Middlewich, Sandbach and Holmes Chapel and the neighbouring local rural parishes as one of the LAPs.

Members had been forwarded a plan showing the proposed eight Local Area Partnerships together with background information on the proposals.

The Chairman reported that a workshop was being arranged on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2009 at Congleton Town Hall to get further details on the proposals.

It was noted that Cheshire East would devolve some decision making, service provision and at some time in the future finance to the individual LAP's.

The Town Council considered the following response:

Alsager is proposed to be included in an LAP with Sandbach, Middlewich, Holmes Chapel, Church Lawton, Odd Rode, Haslington, Hassall, Brereton, Betchton, Bradwall, Winterley, Barthomley and Shavington.

Although this is a large area and cannot be construed geographically as local, nevertheless Alsager Town Council has a positive response to this proposed LAP for the following reasons:

- Alsager, Middlewich, Sandbach and Holmes Chapel share common goals and initiatives. All are pursuing market town projects and engage in local partnership working, are similar sized communities and have more or less the same level of precepts.

- They have local clusters of parish councils which use the town centre facilities of these main towns and these parishes are in the main included in the proposed LAP.
- The Town Clerks of Alsager, Holmes Chapel, Middlewich and Sandbach already have close working relationships and have regular meetings to discuss matters of common interest.

However, Alsager Town Council feels that the people of Shavington may have a local affinity to Crewe and might wish to be considered to be included in the Crewe LAP. Likewise the communities of Cranage, Goostrey and Brereton may feel they have a local affinity to Holmes Chapel and Sandbach respectively and may wish to be included in this LAP.

Alsager Town Council have some concerns that the LAP's, which we understand will have some measure of decision making powers, service provision and ultimately finance devolved to them by Cheshire East could become another tier of local administration within Cheshire East. As Cheshire East was set up as a Unitary Authority this could complicate the new local government structure for local residents.

Alsager Town Council has already indicated to Cheshire East Council its willingness to consider taking over responsibility for the provision of some services locally and/or alternatively to provide additional finance to enhance and maintain higher standards of service over and above those provided by Cheshire East. Details of these services are attached. Will devolution of services still be offered to town/parish councils?

Cheshire East is asked to clarify what the LAP's are established to do and how they are to be organised. Alsager Town Council would prefer them to be called "Local Authority Boards" so as not to be confused with existing local partnerships.

At the recent seminar on LAP's it was stated that H.M. Government clustering proposals for parishes would be pursued. Alsager Town Council's view is that clustering of parishes would be beneficial.

In conclusion, Alsager Town Council supports the proposed LAP in which the town is included.

Resolved: That, the aforementioned response be approved for submission to Cheshire East.

09/802

Cheshire East Consultation

The Chairman reported on invitations to attend to the following consultation exercises:

Budget Consultation 2009/10	Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> January 2009	Crewe Hall	7pm – 9pm
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Budget Consultation 2009/10	Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> January 2009	Wychwood Park, Crewe	10am – 3pm
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New Planning Development Management Service	Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> January 2009	Chimney House Hotel, Sandbach	11.30am – 5pm
Local Area Partnerships	Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2009	Congleton Town Hall	6.30pm – 9.30pm
Local Strategic Partnership	Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> January 2009 (Provisional)	Tatton Park, Knutsford	9.30am – 1.30pm

Resolved: That, the Chairman, Councillor W Stevenson and the Town Clerk be appointed to represent the Town Council at the meeting on LAP's to be held at Congleton Town Hall on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2009.

09/803 Alsager Partnership – 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008

Resolved: That, the minutes of the meeting of Alsager Partnership held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008 be received and noted.

09/804 Cranberry Primary School, Alsager

Members considered a consultation document from Cheshire County Council on the proposal to reduce the size of Cranberry Primary School from September 2010.

Councillor Tyson addressed the committee and stated that Cranberry Infant and Junior Schools had recently been amalgamated and that it was the Governing Body's preferred option to use to the Nursery/Infant School building and expand where and when necessary. The Governing Body were now pursuing a meeting with the County Council's Transforming Learning Communities department, architects etc to pursue this option.

After a debate it was:

Resolved: That, The Town Council support the reduction in capacity from 267 to 210 to create a one form entry school and also support the Governing Body in their efforts to ensure that the new school building is fit for purpose to achieve an appropriate place of learning.

09/805 Accounts for Authorisation

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

09/806 Quarterly Internal Audit Statement

Resolved: That, the report of the Internal Auditor on the Books, Statements and Vouchers to 19<sup>th</sup> December 2008 including the special examination of Payroll, VAT and Section 137 Grants be received and noted.

09/807 Precept 2009/10

Further to Minute 08/793 dated 9<sup>th</sup> December 2008. Members considered the report of the Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer containing recommendations for the formal ratification of the Town Councils Budget for 2009/10 and confirmation of Precept requirements for 2009/10, which were required by the Borough Council by 16<sup>th</sup> January 2009.

Consideration was also given to a Draft Press Release for the Budget Proposals.

- Resolved:
- a) That, the Budget for 2009/10 in the sum of £192,000 as detailed in Appendix B be confirmed.
  - b) That, the Precept for 2009/10 in the sum of £192,000 be confirmed and Congleton Borough Council be informed accordingly.
  - c) That, the Press Release be confirmed without amendment for issue to the local media and publication on the Town Council's website.

09/808 Alterations to Radio Base Station – Alsager Hall Farm

Members considered a Planning Application Notification Letter from Lambert, Smith & Hampton acting on behalf of Telefonica O2 UK Limited informing the Town Council of a proposal to erect an additional three antennas on the existing column located at Alsager Hall Farm, which will enable the site to provide 3G coverage from their existing 2G only installation and reduce the need for an additional installation to be erected in the community.

- Resolved: That, the Town Council make the following observations:
- a) There should be no negative visual impact from the proposed alteration on buildings or the local skyline
  - b) The Town Council has concerns about health and safety issues relating to Telecommunications Masts
  - c) The proposed alterations conform to the Borough Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Telecommunications Development

09/809 MMU Alsager Campus Interim TPO

- Resolved: That, the MMU Alsager Campus Interim TPO 2008 including all trees within the existing Campus be accepted.

09/810 Planning Applications

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

Week ending 12/12/08  
Week ending 19/12/08(None for Alsager)

Week ending 26/12/08(None for Alsager)  
Week ending 02/01/09(None for Alsager)

Resolved: That, the Town Council's formal comments on all applications registered with Congleton Borough Council up to week ending 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2009, be forwarded to the Head of Planning and Estates, Congleton Borough Council. (Appendix C)

NOTE:

Councillors C V Burgess and D I Hough were not present whilst Planning Applications were discussed and so did not take part in any of the decision-making.

Councillor A Snape declared a personal interest in all Planning Applications as a local contractor and took no part in the discussion and did not vote on each application.

09/811 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.

09/812 Town Handyperson

Resolved: a) That, the Job Description and Person Specification for the Handyperson post be approved.

b) That, a meeting of the Working Group be held on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2009 at the Town Council Offices commencing at 10am.

Councillor Mrs T E S Jones  
Chairman