

ALSAGER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN THE ALSAGER INSTITUTE
ON TUESDAY 9th DECEMBER 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 D I Hough
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)

7 members of the general public

Councillor Mrs D Burgess opened the meeting with prayers.

08/782 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs G Burgess and R Tyson.

08/783 Declarations of Interest

Councillor A Snape declared a personal interest in all Planning Applications as a local contractor and the proposed grant to the Alsager First Responders as a member of that organisation.

Councillor S Roberson declared a personal interest in the I.T. provision in the Budget as the Town Council's I.T. provider and in Planning Application 08/1765/FUL.

The Town Clerk declared an interest in the proposed grant to Alsager Voluntary Care and the Staff Salary report.

The Assistant Clerk declared an interest in the Staff Salary report.

The Town Clerk had circulated a Fact Sheet from The Standards Board for England which provided key information and answered frequently asked questions about the declaration of personal and prejudicial interests.

It was agreed that the Town Clerk would arrange for the Borough Council's Monitoring Officer to address the Town Council on this issue.

08/784 Minutes – Town Council

Resolved: That, the Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 18th November 2008, Pages 1 – 6, and Appendices A and B be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

08/785 Matters Arising from the Town Council Meeting – 18th November 2008

White Moss Quarry (08/765)

The Chairman reported that the Secretary of State had not called in the recent application at White Moss Quarry and that the decision from Cheshire County Council to approve the application would now stand.

The Secretary of State's decision not to call in the application was because it did not conflict significantly with national policies and only related to local issues.

An email had been received from Mrs. Mainwaring thanking the Town Council for their support.

Street Sign - St. Andrews Court (08/769)

The Chairman reported that the Borough Council would arrange for the street name plate to be fixed.

Fairview Car Park – Provision of Disabled Car Park Spaces (08/773)

The Chairman reported that Congleton Borough Council had provided three disabled car parking bays and that thanks had been received from parents with children at Highfields for the Town Councils prompt action.

08/786 Chairman's Announcements

19 th November	Attended White Moss Quarry Liaison Group meeting Attended Cheshire Community Action AGM (Middlewich) with Consort
24 th November	Visited Sandbach Talking Newspaper with Consort to record a Christmas message
28 th November	The Big Switch On. Turned on the Christmas lights with Mayor of Congleton Borough and Mayor Josef from the Czech Republic
3 rd December	Attended the opening of Milton Gardens play area with Consort
3 rd December	SECE meeting regarding MMU Development Brief
8 th December	Christmas Concert at Alsager Highfields with Consort
11 th December	MMU Liaison Meeting

The Chairman informed Members that she had sent a letter of appreciation to Mrs. K Selbourne for allowing her husbands plate, which she had kindly donated to the Town Council, to be used as the Town's gift to the visitors from the Czech Republic who attended the switching on of the Alsager Christmas Lights on Friday 28th November.

08/787 Public Participation

Mrs S Dyke indicated that there was a need for an authority to take responsibility for future monitoring at White Moss Quarry and it was agreed that the Town Council should have some involvement in whatever monitoring system is introduced.

08/788 Alsager Partnership - Town Council Representation

Members reconsidered the appointment to fill the vacancy on the Alsager Partnership deferred from the last meeting. (Min 08/774 refers)

Resolved: That, Councillor W Howell be appointed to replace Councillor Mrs M Camm as the Town Councils representative on the Alsager Partnership.

At this point in the proceedings the Chairman left the meeting and Councillor S Roberson Vice-Chairman took over the Chair for the remainder of the business of the meeting.

08/789 Accounts for Authorisation

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

08/790 Publication – Walks in Alsager

Resolved: That, the aforementioned publication which contains a map and guide to footpaths in and around Alsager be reduced from £1 to 40p per copy.

08/791 Planning Applications

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

Week ending 21/11/08

Week ending 28/11/08

Week ending 05/12/08 (None for Alsager)

Resolved: That, the Town Council's formal comments on all applications registered with Congleton Borough Council up to week ending 5th December 2008, be forwarded to the Head of Planning and Estates, Congleton Borough Council. (Appendix B)

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.

Councillor S Roberson declared a personal interest in Planning Application 08/1765/FUL and took no part in the discussion and did not vote the application.

Councillor Mrs J Williams took the Chair for the consideration of Plan no. 08/1765/FUL.

A letter from the residents of 176 Sandbach Road North, Alsager relating to Planning Application 08/1734/OUT was circulated to all Members.

08/792 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.

08/793 Draft Budget 2009/10

The Town Clerk presented the Draft Budget for 2009/10 as contained in the cream booklet.

The document included:

- Estimated balances on all accounts up to 31 March 2009
- General Risk Assessment and Budget Assumptions
- Statement of Budget Pressures
- Assessment of the current economic climate and its effects on the Precept for 2009/10
- Budget Heads 2009/10 and supplementary notes
- Schedule of Growth Items for consideration for inclusion in the Precept for 2009/10
- Schedule of Grants and new policy 2009/10
- Staffing Report 2009/10
- Draft Budget Summary
- Comparative Parish/Town Council Precepts
- Institute Budget 2009/10 and Annual Report 2008/9 which was adopted by the Institute Committee on 4th November 2008 (Min 08/119 refers)

Detailed consideration was given to the Budget and it was

Resolved: a) That, the Draft Budget for 2009/10 as amended, to include a sum of £1000 for activities for young people in the Town, in respect of existing Town Council services and growth items be agreed and presented to the Town Council for formal ratification on Tuesday 6th January 2009 for the purposes of determining the Precept level for 2009/10.

b) That, the Institute Budget for 2009/10 as recommended by the Institute Committee be approved and adopted.

c) That, the Handyman Services Working Group be authorised to advertise the post of Town Handyman and conduct interviews in order to have the post in place by 1st April 2009.

d) That, the under mentioned Members be appointed on a Working Group to progress the information gathering process and prepare the Town Council's vision for the future of the Civic Hall for adoption by the Town Council prior to consultation with residents of Alsager and possible future stakeholders.

Councillor Mrs T E S Jones (Chairman)
Councillor S Roberson (Vice Chairman)
Councillor Mrs D Burgess
Councillor D I Hough
Councillor A Snape
Councillor W Stevenson

e) That, the suggested form and media outlets relating to publicising the Budget as contained in the report be agreed.

f) That, the amended Grants Policy and Guidelines in respect of the determination of Grant Applications be approved and adopted.

g) That, the under-mentioned recommendations contained in the Staff Salary Report be approved and adopted for implementation from 1st April 2009.

- That the Town Clerk be advanced to point 35 - £468 in accordance with grade LC2 34-38.
- That Mrs. C Jennings be redesignated Assistant Town Clerk, 25 hours per week and her salary increased to £10,000 per annum and her duties amended accordingly.
- That the job description, designation and salary of Mrs. S Colclough be reviewed in August 2009.
- That consideration be given to the implementation of an Annual Staff Review Scheme in 2009/10.

NOTE:

Councillor A Snape declared a personal interest in the proposed grant to the Alsager First Responders as a member of that organisation.

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

The Town Clerk declared an interest in the proposed grant to Alsager Voluntary Care and the Staff Salary report.

The Assistant Clerk declared an interest in the Staff Salary report.

(Both the Town Clerk and the Assistant Clerk offered to leave the meeting during the consideration of the staff report which was declined)

Councillor Mrs T E S Jones
Chairman