

Main points arising: Questions to the Mayor/ Parking charges at Poynton Station.

MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT 8.05PM ON MONDAY 29TH JUNE 2015 AT THE CIVIC HALL, POYNTON.

PRESENT

Town Mayor/Chairman: Cllr Mrs R Horsman-Johnson

Cllrs. M Beanland, L Berry, L A Clarke, Mrs S-J Gilmore, Mrs S Horsman, G King, Mrs T Lorde, H Murray, Mrs J Saunders, Mrs J Sewart, M C G Sewart and G Smith

14. Questions to the Mayor

The Clerk drew Councillors attention to the e-mail he had received from local resident Mrs Jane Crossley regarding the closure of the Poynton Leisure Centre swimming pool for maintenance during the summer months. The Clerk explained that he had invited Mrs Crossley to attend this meeting but she had declined on health grounds, and asked the Clerk to raise the issue on her behalf.

It was explained that the Poynton Leisure Centre is no longer strictly part of Cheshire East, but a charitable trust known as 'Everybody'.

Members agreed that it was difficult to reach other swimming pools in the area such as Macclesfield and Wilmslow by public transport. Cllr Clarke proposed that the Town Council write to Mike Harding at Everybody, and express sympathy with the points raised by Mrs Crossley.

Members agreed that there was never an ideal time for the pool to be closed, but understood why the work should be carried out during the school holidays, given that it is a shared facility and well utilised by the school in term time.

RESOLVED: That the correspondence from Mrs Crossley is received, and that the Clerk write to Everybody, seeking clarification, and expressing sympathy with the points Mrs Crossley had raised in her e-mail (NC)

15. Apologies for absence

Cllrs. C Gorst, T Holbrook, I Hollingworth, Mrs I Thornton-Maddocks and Mrs N Wylie

16. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Other Interests

None.

17. Minutes of the Annual Town Council meeting held on 18th May 2015

Page 4 – amend Cllr I Hollingworth’s position on the M&E Committee from ‘Chairman’ to ‘Vice Chairman’.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Annual Town Council meeting held on 18th May 2015, subject to the minor amendment above, are approved as an accurate record and signed by the Mayor (NC)

18. Parking charges at Poynton Station

Matthew Worman, Client and Stakeholder Manager, Northern Rail Ltd had been invited to attend the meeting to explain the reasons for the introduction of parking charges at Poynton station from 18th May 2015. He admitted this is a contentious issue, particularly because parking there had been free for many years.

Mr Worman explained that as a result of the franchise extension the company has been asked to look at a number of commercial revenue-making initiatives. A number of other revenue increasing initiatives had been introduced over the past year such as changing peak time restriction tickets.

Car parking charges have also been introduced at other stations in the area, such as Holmes Chapel and Prestbury. The Dept. of Transport had been fully briefed.

From the 18th May the daily parking charge is £2 for the whole day. The commercial team had also introduced discounted rates of £8 for a weekly ticket, £23 for a month, and £240 for an annual parking ticket. Mr Worman reiterated that this is a revenue-making scheme for the benefit of its shareholders, and admitted that it would not be viewed as customer-friendly.

He also said that the car parks do not always get the attention they need so some of this revenue will help towards the upkeep and maintenance of the car park, and to make it more fit for purpose. Mr Worman undertook to find out if there were plans to make the car park larger and make use of the wasted space. In answer to a question he said the car park was about 50% utilised at the moment. Mr Worman acknowledged that some rail passengers would have migrated to Hazel Grove. They had in any case tended to do this even before parking charges were imposed at Poynton. He went on to stress that they will not consider removing the charge. Consultation had taken place through the appropriate channels, though not with Passenger Focus. The move had been authorised by the Dept of Transport.

Mr Worman admitted that, given the choice, they would probably introduce charges at Hazel Grove rather than Poynton, because it is a much larger station, but it sits within Transport for Greater Manchester, and as such is not part of this round of parking charges. In terms of enforcement Mr Worman said there are people at the station who will check, as would Northern Rail's Facilities team. He thought clamping would be extreme, but said he would find out if this was intended.

Mr Worman said he would look into the situation at Bramhall Station, where a Member said that parking charges had been introduced a while ago, and had then been rescinded. He said there are probably lessons to be learnt such as approaching, informing and briefing the Town Council earlier. A robust discussion followed, when issues such as displaced parking in the area, particularly at peak times, and the effect on increasing traffic in the vicinity of Lower Park Primary School, were raised.

Mr Worman sympathised with the points raised in the debate, but said that the introduction of the car parking charges would not be rescinded. He will clarify the points raised and inform the Clerk. The Town Council thanked Mr Worman for his attendance.

RESOLVED: That the report from Mr Worman is received (NC)

19. Mayor's Engagements/Announcements

The Mayor took Members through the highlights of her recent engagements. The full report is available from the Clerk on request.

RESOLVED: That the Mayor's report is received (NC)

20. Standing Committees

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Facilities, Infrastructure and Economic Development Committee meeting held on 13th April 2015, and the resolutions adopted therein, be received and noted by the Town Council (NC)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 27th April 2015, and the resolutions adopted therein, be received and noted by the Town Council (NC)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Planning and Environment Committee meeting held on 27th April 2015, and the resolutions adopted therein, be received and noted by the Town Council (NC)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Community, Order and Public Safety Committee meeting held on 27th April 2015 (subject to a minor

amendment to Page 243), and the resolutions adopted therein, be received and noted by the Town Council (NC)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Planning and Environment Committee meeting held on 26th May 2015, and the resolutions adopted therein, be received and noted by the Town Council (NC)

The meeting concluded at 8.40pm