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UTTOXETER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 12 AUGUST 2025 IN THE BALLROOM, UTTOXETER TOWN HALL COMMENCING AT 7.00PM AND THERE WERE PRESENT:

Chair and Mayor – Councillor B Houlihan

Councillors: T Ashby, D Boot, J Glandfield, R Hawkins, D Holland, A Johnstone, P Krupski, Z Krupski, C Lancaster, A Mansfield (Deputy Mayor), C Sylvester, C Wain

Officer in attendance – T Jeffery, Town Clerk/RFO

It was noted that 1 member of the public was in attendance in the meeting.

1. CHAIR'S WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Members and the Members of the Public to the meeting and he provided a brief on the provisions of the Filming of Meetings as in accordance with "The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014", he reminded Members of the Civility and Respect Pledge and he briefed Councillors and members of the public on the use of emergency exits from the Alan Dean Suite to the fire point located outside the former Wilko Store located in the High Street in the event of a fire.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(a) The Clerk reported receipt of apologies from Town Councillors A Noyes, S Page and L Syvester.

RESOLVED that the same be accepted and approved.

(b) The Clerk reported that all other Town Councillors were in attendance.

RESOLVED that the same be noted.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In accordance with Standing Order 3(e-h), the meeting be adjourned for up to 15 minutes to allow for public participation where members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they were entitled to attend in respect of the business on the Agenda.

It was noted that the member of the public did not wish to address Council on an Agenda Item on this occasion.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declaration of any disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter to be discussed at the meeting, and which was not included in the register of interests. Members were reminded that they were required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they had a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest was entered in the register of members' interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

None received.

5. DISPENSATION PROCEDURE

To consider and approve dispensation requests as in accordance with Standing Order 13(d), that all Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Clerk as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the Dispensation was required. Council would decide whether to grant the dispensation at the relevant meeting. Unless Council grant the relevant delegated power to Committee, it was Council that decided whether to grant the dispensation.

None received.

6. MINUTES

- (a) Council gave consideration to the Recommendations of the Policy and Planning Committee Meeting held on 22 July 2025.

RESOLVED that the Recommendations of the Policy and Planning Committee Meeting held on 22 July 2025, be approved and ordered to form part of the minutes attached hereto as Appendix A.

- (b) Council gave consideration to the Recommendations of the Footpaths Committee Meeting held on 24 July 2025.

RESOLVED that the Recommendations of the Footpaths Committee Meeting held on 24 July 2025, be approved and ordered to form part of the minutes attached hereto as Appendix B.

7. ACCOUNTS

- (a) Council gave consideration was given to the list of accounts submitted for payment in the sum of £47,412.74 which included BACS/cheque payments made since the date of the last meeting.

Council was advised that RBS Mandate Team had confirmed that the updated Bank Mandate was now in place.

RESOLVED that the list of accounts as above be accepted and approved, and the Mayor and Deputy Mayor be authorised to sign it.

- (b) Council gave consideration to the monthly summaries of the Council's income for July 2025.

RESOLVED that the same be noted.

8. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN INFORMAL CONSULTATION ON MAP CHANGES

As Recommended by the Policy and Planning Committee at its meeting held on 22 July 2025, Council was advised that letters had been issued by the Clerk to the two businesses located adjacent to Trinity Square and Council's NHPlan Consultant, UVE CIC had met with the owner of one of the local businesses who was in support of extending the red boundary line for the proposed Trinity Square site as identified in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan to include their premises.

RESOLVED that the extension to the red boundary line for the proposed Trinity Square site as identified in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan be accepted and approved.

9. SPCA AGM – UTTOXETER TOWN HALL

Council was asked to support hosting free of charge the associated charges (including tea/coffee) for SPCA's AGM on Monday, 24 November 2025 within the Ballroom (AGM and Guest Speakers) and the Alan Dean Suite for Exhibitors. It was anticipated that up to 150 people could be attending the event. Council's instruction was sought.

RESOLVED that the Clerk liaise with SPCA to advise that the Town Council will support hosting SPCA's AGM on Monday, 24 November 2025 with no charge for the use of the Town Hall and tea/coffee will be provided free of charge.

10. ESBC - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Council gave consideration to providing its comments for the undermentioned Planning Application received from ESBC:

- (a) P/2025/00744 - Demolition of existing conservatory to facilitate the erection of single storey rear / side extension, installation of replacement bay window to South elevation and alterations to existing fenestrations on East elevation at 131 Byrds Lane, ST14 7LW.

RESOLVED that with respect to Planning Application No. P/2025/00744, Council had no comment to make at this stage.

The Mayor expressed his thanks to the member of the public for their attendance at the meeting.

11.

COUNCIL IN PRIVATE – PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the above Act it was requested that the public and press were not present due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted and were asked to withdraw.

RESOLVED that the same be accepted and approved.

The Mayor reminded Members that any matter considered in the Private part of Meetings should not be discussed outside the Chamber. It was noted that the Council had received some unjustified negative comments recently on social media due to misinformation being issued anonymously regarding the Remembrance Parade as the Council was having to consider additional public safety requirements for events under Martyn's Law.

12. **TO CONSIDER THE NOTES FROM THE TOWN HALL ENTERTAINMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 JULY 2025.**

The Chair of the Town Hall Entertainments Committee addressed Council on the Notes from the recent Committee Meeting in readiness for comment/approval and due consideration of the quotations under Item No. 13.

The Chair reminded Council that as included within the Recommendations by the Town Hall Entertainments Committee on 21 July 2025 that ' Hostile Vehicle Prevention Barriers should not at this stage be deployed as the threat level to Uttoxeter was low and the cost was prohibitive in relation to the posed risk. However, should circumstances change dramatically, additional security measures should be considered.'

The Mayor reminded Council of the importance of following due protocol for the submission and advertising of its Agendas for its Committee Meetings. Following due debate, it was

RESOLVED that the Recommendations included within the Notes of the Town Hall Entertainments Committee Meeting held on 21 July 2025, be accepted and approved and ordered to form part of the minutes attached hereto as Appendix C.

13. **TOWN CENTRE EVENTS – SECURITY/MARSHALLING PROVISIONS (MARTYN'S LAW)**

Council was asked to give consideration to the following quotations including SIA Trained Security/Marshall Provisions as reviewed by the Town Hall Entertainments Committee on 21 July 2025 for the Remembrance Parade and Christmas Lights Switch On as follows:

(a) Christmas Lights Switch On:

Radio Hire	£ 189.00 plus vat
Hi-Vis Vests for Staff/Marshalls	£ 65.00
Quote 1 - Road Closure SIA trained Marshalls (xTBC)	£1,584.00
Quote 2 – Road Closure SIA trained Marshalls (x22)	£2,230.00
External First Aid Provisions	£ 200.00

Council's instruction was sought. Following due debate, it was

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The Clerk liaise with the Events Team to ascertain the number of Marshalls included within Quote 1 for the Switch On event.
- (ii) Upon receipt of (i) as above, the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chair of F&G, Chair of Town Hall Entertainments Committee and the Clerk be tasked with further reviewing the Quotations and be authorised to accept the most relevant Quote for the Christmas Lights Switch as part of the Council's ongoing commitment to support the events within the town despite the considerable additional costs involved, with the overspend to be shown under the Events budget allocation.
- (iii) The Clerk provide all Members with an update following (ii) as above.
- (iv) The Clerk include additional Event Provisions for the Christmas Lights Switch On within the Precept Meeting scheduled to take place on 25 November 2025.

(b) Remembrance Parade:

Radio Hire	£ 189.00 plus vat
Note: Hi-Vis vests to be re-used for all events	£ -
Quote 1 - Road Closure/Parade SIA trained Marshalls (xTBC)	£3,168.00
Quote 2 – Road Closure SIA trained Marshalls (x11)	£3,660.00
External First Aid Provisions	£ FOC

Council's instruction was sought. Following due debate, it was

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The Clerk liaise with the Events Team to ascertain the number of Marshalls included within Quote 1 for the Remembrance Parade.
- (ii) Upon receipt of (i) as above, the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chair of F&G, Chair of Town Hall Entertainments Committee and the Clerk be tasked with further reviewing the Quotations and be authorised to accept the most relevant Quote for the Remembrance Parade as part of the Council's ongoing commitment to support events within the town despite the considerable additional costs involved, with the overspend to be shown under the Events budget allocation.
- (iii) The Clerk provide all Members with an update following (ii) as above.
- (iv) The Clerk include additional Event Provisions for the Remembrance Parade within the Precept Meeting scheduled to take place on 25 November 2025.

14. **ESBC – BRADLEY STREET TOILETS – TAKING ON DEVOLVED SERVICES FROM PRINCIPAL AUTHORITIES**

The Clerk reported receipt of a letter dated 16 July 2025 from ESBC's Head of Regeneration and Development regarding the above mentioned. Council's instruction was sought. Following due debate, it was

RESOLVED that the Clerk write to ESBC's Head of Regeneration and Development to advise that Council:

- (i) Declines the offer as received from ESBC on 16 July 2025.
- (ii) Wishes to remind ESBC of its commitment to refurbish the toilets in Bradley Street as previously reported to the Town Council and to the electorate.
- (iii) Request that ESBC provide a firm timescale for the refurbishment works to be completed.
- (iv) Following the refurbishment, the Town Council would support conversations with ESBC about the future management of the Bradley Street toilets.

15. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION**

- (a) *As Resolved by Council on 8 July 2025 that 'the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chair of Finance and General Purposes and the Clerk be tasked with progressing a meeting with your good self as Leader of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council to discuss how Staffordshire Moorlands foresee Uttoxeter fitting in with a North Unitary Authority and what strengthening opportunities would be envisaged for the Town.'*

The Mayor, Chair of F&GP and the Clerk provided Council with an update following the meeting with Staffordshire Moorlands District Council on 11 August 2025. Following due debate, it was

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The Clerk provide Members with the link received from Staffordshire Moorlands CEO.
- (ii) The Clerk liaise with the Clerk's at Stone, Leek, Biddulph and Cheadle to seek their Councils common interest at this time.
- (iii) Local Government Reorganisation - Way Forward be included for further consideration by Council, in private, at its meeting scheduled to take place on 9 September 2025.
- (iv) The Clerk provide an update to the Leader and CEO of Staffordshire Moorlands with (iii) as above.

- (b) The Clerk reported receipt of the following emails dated:
- (i) 21 July 2025 on behalf of ESBC's CEO and Leader of the Council advising Council that, a Parish Council Forum – Local Government Reorganisation meeting will be held online via Microsoft Teams on Thursday, 7 August 2025, 18:00 – 19.30. As part of the forum, ESBC's CEO and Leader of the Council will present an update on LGR matters. A representation from each parish council be limited to chairpersons or deputies. Council was advised that Councillor Houlihan attended the Parish Council Forum and he provided Council with an update which included the following:
- Forum led by ESBC's CEO and Leader of the Council with 11 representatives in attendance.
 - A Presentation was provided by ESBC's CEO which summarised the current position of the government on LGR and current Staffordshire proposals. He emphasised that recent government advice was that the threshold of 500,000 was a 'guide'.
 - He mentioned that a southern unitary authority (UA) was the preferred option for ESBC but there was some discussion of having two southern unitaries (unlikely to be viable).
 - He also mentioned SMDC's proposal for a northern UA which would include Uttoxeter and Stone – but made no further comment.
 - ESBC have undertaken a financial viability analysis of a southern UA. I asked if this was available but was told that it was too provisional at this stage.
 - ESBC's CEO stressed that borough and district councils were not permitted to transfer any assets before reorganisation although the SCPA representative stated that lower value assets could be transferred though the threshold was unclear.
 - In answer to my question, ESBC's CEO and Leader provided reassurance that ESBC remained committed to completing all current projects in Uttoxeter.
 - They also confirmed that information on specific assets would be made available after November (not available sooner due to pressure of work)
 - In response to a question from another representative ESBC's CEO reported that Neighbourhood and Local Plans would continue as scheduled. He noted that the replacement/modification of current Neighbourhood and Local planning processes would take some time to complete (% years +).
 - ESBC's CEO also noted that the establishment of Town and Parish Councils where they currently do not exist would not be supported by government. The government did not want new authorities with precepting powers. The alternative was Neighbourhood Area Committees. See extract below from the government for more information.
 - It was agreed that a second forum would be held later in the year once there was more feedback on proposals from government.
 - Councillor Houlihan shared the Extract from 'LGR: Summary of government feedback on interim plans' dated 3 June 2025 - *Strong community voice: We welcome the steps areas are taking to consider how to maintain strong community voice. Local Government Reorganisation should facilitate better and sustained community engagement and needs a clear and accountable system of local area-working and governance. Neighbourhood Area Committees, led by frontline ward councillors, offer a model of place-based engagement and leadership which maximises the structural efficiencies brought about by Local Government Reorganisation and strengthens localism and community participation across all areas. Neighbourhood Area Committees help councils fulfil their commitments to working in partnership with communities at the neighbourhood level. They can also include other service providers, such as town or parish councillors, when applicable, along with co-opted members from local community organisations. Areas considering new town or parish councils should think carefully about how they might be funded, to avoid putting further pressure on local authority finances and/or new burdens on the taxpayer. We recognise the value that town and parish councils offer to their local communities, but they are independent institutions and are not a substitute for meaningful community engagement and neighbourhood working by a local authority. We want to see every local authority hardwiring local community engagement into their own structures, preferably through neighbourhood Area Committees.*

Council's instruction was sought. Following due debate, it was

RESOLVED that in readiness for the Town Council meeting on 9 September 2025, Borough Councillor Mansfield liaise with ESBC to seek the financial viability analysis of a southern UA as carried out by ESBC.

- (ii) 25 July 2025 from on behalf of ESBC's CEO and Leader of the Council advising Council that *'East Staffordshire Borough Council, alongside 5 other southern Staffordshire authorities have jointly proposed the creation of a Southern and Mid Staffordshire Unitary Authority under the plans for Local Government Reorganisation. As part of this, we're launching a survey to gather views on the proposal, as part of a wider public engagement running until 1st September 2025. This is an important opportunity for everyone to share their thoughts, concerns, and ideas as we explore how council services could be delivered in the future. The survey is now live and will remain open until 1st September 2025 via <https://online1.snapsurveys.com/shapingstaffordshire>'* as forwarded to Members. Council's instruction was sought.

RESOLVED that the same be noted.

- (iii) 25 July 2025 from SPCA Re: Local Government Reorganisation Consultation - East Staffordshire Borough Council, as forwarded to Members on 4 August 2025. Council's instruction was sought.

RESOLVED that the same be noted.

- (iv) 26 July 2025 from SPCA Re: Local Government Reorganisation Consultation – Stafford Borough Council, as forwarded to Members on 4 August 2025. Council's instruction was sought.

RESOLVED that the same be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm.