

SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2008/09

Prepared by:
Ann Banks, Town Clerk
March 2009



QUALITY
TOWN
COUNCIL



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Annual Report 2008/09.

This report is intended to show you how the Council spends its time and money and details some of the many events that have taken place since the last Annual Town Meeting held in 2008.

A complete list of Town Councillors is included at the end of the report, where you will also find details of how to contact them.

1. THE COUNCIL

The Town Council consists of 18 voluntary Councillors. They are appointed through election or co-option and can serve for a period of up to four years before having to be re-elected; the last election took place in 2007.

The Council employs two staff:

Miss A L Banks, Town Clerk and RFO (37 hours)
Mrs K R Pepper, Administrative Officer (16 hours)

The Council meets eight times per year and holds its Annual Meeting during May. In addition there are regular meetings of the three Committees: Planning, Quality and Projects and Finance and Personnel.

All meetings are advertised on the website www.sandbach.gov.uk and on the noticeboard situated to the front of the Literary Institution.

Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of the Council and its Committees and to ask questions during the 15 minute public forum.

Once a month (normally the second Saturday) Councillors hold a surgery at the Literary Institution, this is an ideal opportunity to meet Councillors and express views regarding the Town. Dates of surgeries are posted on the noticeboard.

The Town Council's offices are located at the :

**Sandbach Literary Institution
Hightown
Sandbach
Cheshire
CW11 1AE**

(01270 759959
* clerk@sandbach.gov.uk



2. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Council has continued to operate on a consultative basis with Cheshire County Council and Congleton Borough Council and has continued to work in partnership with many local groups and organisations for the benefit of the Town.

The Town Council operates with eighteen members and there have been no changes to membership during the past year.

There has been one staff change since the last meeting with the appointment of a Part-time Administrative Officer in April 2008. The Administrative Officer has supported the Clerk in undertaking routine business, has taken on the responsibility of producing the quarterly newsletter and facilitating specific Committee and Working Group meetings.



The Council occupies two rooms at the Sandbach Literary Institution for the purpose of carrying out Council business. A lease has been drafted to incorporate the ex-Learn Direct Room; this will be signed following the installation of disabled access to the Council Chamber.

It has been an eventful year. The Council has achieved Quality Town Council Status and the Town is now formally recognised as a Fairtrade Town. Following consultation, 2008 saw the beginning of a facelift for the Cobbled Market Square - due to be completed at the end of March. Another two day Transport Festival is planned for 2009, despite objections from some of the Town's traders, the Festival Committee promises the 'best festival yet'. The Old Hall has been the subject of much debate, we are informed that Congleton Borough Council and its successor, Cheshire East, will be using the most appropriate course of action to ensure that the building is maintained and preserved.

As we move into 2009, there is an increased need for us to be more flexible. The impending change in local government will see the end of Cheshire County Council and Congleton Borough Council and the creation of the new Cheshire East Unitary Authority which may result in services being devolved to Town Councils. We look forward to some interesting and challenging times.

3. EVENTS

This year's Chairman, Cllr Mrs Pauline Minshull's major Civic events were the Civic Parade and Service on 8 June 2008 and the Chairman's Ball on 30 January 2009. A hugely successful musical evening, 'Mince Pies and Music' was held on 29 November and 'Sincerely Abba' concert is planned for 28 March, tickets are now on sale. All monies raised through the Chairman's fund raising activities will be donated to her chosen charities: St Mary's Church Roof Appeal and Cancer Research (Local Committee).

The annual bowls match with the Marriott House Veterans was held on 8 August.

2008 saw a special two day Transport Festival; this was to celebrate the Cheshire Year of the Garden. Despite poor weather many people turned out to enjoy the spectacular. The Town Crier's competition was hosted during the Festival week-end with Town Criers from all over England competing.

The Town Council sponsored and took part in many of the town's Christmas events which included the Christmas Lights switch on and procession, St Mary's Christmas Tree Festival and celebrations organised by the Sandbach Partnership.



4. COMMUNICATION

The Council is committed to being accessible by all and to sharing information about what we do. We do this in the following ways:

Newsletter

The quarterly newsletter is well established and has continued to improve. We currently produce a four page newsletter and try to publish all submitted articles, however due to popular demand some contributors have recently been disappointed due to lack of space; it is hoped that this will be addressed during the coming year.

Surgeries

Councillor surgeries are held on second Saturday of each calendar month, however despite a friendly face and warm drink being available they have been quite poorly attended. The surgeries are an excellent opportunity to meet your local councillors and discuss town issues. A timetable is displayed on the Council noticeboard and available from the Clerk on request.

Website

Sandbach Town Council has had its own website for some years. A facelift of the site commenced last year and should be completed during 2009. It is hoped that the site will continue to provide useful information and be accessed by all.

5. PROJECTS

Community Buildings

The Town Council has appointed representatives to the Literary Institution Management Committee and contributes to the ongoing improvements of the building. Plans have recently been submitted for the installation of a lift to the rear of the building, this will enable the much needed refurbishment of the first floor.

As well as funding the Literary Institution, substantial grants have been promised to St Peter's Elworth Church Hall and the Wheelock Community Association (Wheelock School building) and have been awarded to the Church on Ettiley Heath.

Environment

The Community Pride Team (consisting of Sandbach in Bloom, Sandbach Clean Team, Friends of Sandbach Station, the Hope Street Project, Sandbach Partnership and Congleton Borough Council Streetscape) continued to be supported by the Town Council. An entry in the Cheshire Civic Pride Award will be made in 2009.

Youth Council

Sandbach Youth Council was formed early 2008. Since that time they have engaged with other local youth councils and have petitioned for a Cheshire East Youth Council. They plan to hold an event during the Summer for the young people of Sandbach.

Quality Town Council

On 1 September 2008 the Council achieved Quality Status. This status demonstrates that the Council it is representative of, and actively engages with, all parts of its community and that it is properly managed. It also enables the Council to apply for grants and funding which would otherwise be unobtainable.

Fairtrade

On 17 July 2008 the town was officially awarded 'Fairtrade' status. The town seeks to encourage the use of Fairtrade products where possible to ensure that deprived communities receive fair pay for their produce.

M6, J17

Sandbach Town Council continues to engage with the Highway Agency over the parlous nature of access to the Town at M6 Junction 17. IN tripartite meeting, with Cheshire County Council, the HA has stated that any work at Junction 17 is not objectively justifiable, when prioritising on a cost versus safety basis.

Recently the Council wrote yet again to the HA, requesting details of the revised plan to use the hard shoulder of the M6 at peak periods.

We have requested that, in planning any necessary works at Junction 17, the HA carefully consider opportunities that might serve to improve the current unsatisfactory situation."

Town Design Statement

Through the Council's Vision the need for a Town Design Statement was identified. Such a document would encourage the involvement of the community in developing a statement which would define the built environment of Sandbach and encourage sympathetic future development. Ultimately it is hoped that the principal planning authority (currently Congleton Borough Council) would adopt the document as a supplementary planning document to influence all future development within the town. Early work has started, it is anticipated that the document will take eighteen months to complete.



6. JOINT WORKING

The Council has contributed £10,000 during 2008/09 towards the position of Sandbach Partnership Project Coordinator.

The Council is a stakeholder in two major projects within the Town:

Market Square

The Town Council has committed £36,000 towards the refurbishment of the Cobbled Market Square. After many months of consultation, the first cobble was lifted on 13 October 2008 and the completion date is on target for mid March. An opening ceremony is planned for late Spring 2009.

Sandbach Park

A large-scale redevelopment scheme is currently being planned which will take five years to complete. It will involve full public consultation, following which a complete refurbishment of the park areas will be undertaken.

Sandbach Town Council recently contributed towards the installation of a new toddler play area.



7. REPRESENTATION

The Council appoints members as representatives on various outside bodies. This ensures good working relationships with local groups and organisations. The Council has representatives on the following bodies:

- Sandbach Partnership
- Sandbach Christmas Lights Committee
- Sandbach in Bloom
- Sandbach Almshouse Trust
- Sandbach Literary Institution Trustees
- Sandbach Literary Institution Management Committee
- Sandbach School Governing Body
- Neighbourhood Liaison Policing Group
- Streets Ahead Youth Project
- Central Cheshire PCT
- Linden Bank Liaison Committee
- Central Cheshire PCT
- Cheshire Association of Local Councils
 - Congleton Area Meeting
 - Annual Meeting
- Cheshire Planning Forum
- Cheshire Rights of Way
- Wheelock Village Hall Trustees
- Sandbach Old Hall Action Group (SOHAG)
- Middlewich Railways Steering Group

8. FINANCE

DONATIONS, GRANTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS 2008/09

Many local groups, societies, churches and youth organisations have been supported via financial donations to enable services to the public.

To date the following donations, grants or contributions have been made during the financial year 2008/9.

Sandbach Voices	500.00
Sandbach in Bloom (storage space)	999.00
Sandbach in Bloom	4,000.00
Congleton Borough Council Contribution to Toddler Area in Park	1,094.50
St Mary's Church, Maintenance of Churchyard	400.00
St John's Church, Maintenance of Churchyard	200.00
St Peter's Church, Maintenance of Churchyard	200.00
Christ Church, Maintenance of Churchyard	200.00
Ettiley Heath Methodist Chapel, Maintenance of Churchyard	200.00
Marriott House Bowling Club, Regular Donation	100.00
Congleton Borough Council, Street Entertainers	833.00
SECE (Sandbach Partnership), Ice Rink	1,500.00
St Mary's, Christmas Tree Festival	45.00
Christ Church, Illumination of war memorial	50.00
Leonard Cheshire Disability	2,760.00
Sandbach Christmas Lights	4,000.00
Alliance Technical Services, replacement lanyard St Mary's	293.75
SLI, Underpinning Work	8,000.00
Dial-a-Ride	584.62
Church on Ettiley Heath	5,000.00
Samaritans, Crewe	500.00
Vitalise	92.00
Transport Festival	7,000.00
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	38,551.87

2008/09 ACCOUNTS

Sandbach Town Council Profit & Loss Account for the year ended 31 March 2009 as at 31 March 2009

	2008/09		2007/08
	YTD	Budget	Actual
	£	£	£
Precept	222,780	222,780	88,086
Interest income	2,320	2,000	3,363
Other	106		0
	<u>225,206</u>	<u>224,780</u>	<u>91,449</u>
Sandbach in Bloom	4,000	5,000	4,800
Christmas Lights	4,000	5,000	4,000
Transport Festival	7,000	7,000	10,000
Other Regular Donations	125	100	700
Churchyard Maintenance	1,200	1,250	1,200
Other Grants	21,339	13,120	14,100
Total Annual Donations	<u>37,664</u>	<u>31,470</u>	<u>34,800</u>
Chairman's Allowance	1,650	1,600	1,600
Civic & Ceremonial	1,753	1,800	1,271
Complimentary Meals Chairmans Ball 2006/07	0		312
Subscriptions	3,547	2,150	240
Newsletter	3,195	3,200	2,790
Audit Fees	735	850	580
Insurance	2,918	2,750	3,441
Rent	7,389	7,000	3,363
Other Premises Costs	1,409	3,110	651
Telephone	569	500	544
Postage, Printing & Stationery	3,044	1,900	1,058
Travel	313	600	138
Training	503	500	140
By-election	0	7,500	
Equipment	4,309	4,000	
Salaries and NIC	40,418	40,000	28,825
Pensions	8,301	7,800	2,705
Other	2,133	2,550	646
Total Administration	<u>82,185</u>	<u>87,810</u>	<u>48,302</u>
Committed Partnership Projects (Ear-Marked)			
Sandbach Community Police	22,000	22,000	22,000
Market Square	36,000	18,000	

Total committed projects	<u>58,000</u>	<u>40,000</u>	<u>22,000</u>
New Partnership Projects			
Market town manager support	10,000	10,000	
Vision feasibility studies	0	10,000	
Town planning supplementary documents	0	20,000	
Sandbach Park	8,095	25,000	
Fairtrade implementation	117	500	
Total new projects	<u>18,211</u>	<u>65,500</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Expenses	196,060	224,780	105,102
Grants from Earmarked reserves less pensions reserve	0		2,095
	<u>196,060</u>		<u>107,196</u>
Net Surplus	<u>29,146</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>-15,747</u>

**Sandbach Town Council
Balance Sheet
as at 31 March 2009**

	31.03.09 2009 £	31.3.08 2008 £
Fixed Assets	0	0
<i>Current Assets</i>		
Debtors	0	0
VAT Repayable	5,397	2,014
Prepayments	0	1,485
<i>Cash & Bank Accounts</i>		
Cash	40	30
Current Account	1,000	8,640
Business Reserve	29,444	26,661
Capital Reserve/Bonus Saver	80,087	47,992
	<u>110,571</u>	<u>83,323</u>
<i>Creditors</i>		
Creditors	0	0
Provisions	883	883
	<u>115,085</u>	<u>85,940</u>
Net Assets		
Reserves		
Balance b/f	85,939	101,687
Surplus for the year	29,146	-15,747
	<u>115,085</u>	<u>85,940</u>
Reserves are made up of		
Market Square Cobbles	18,000	18,000
Wheelock Community Association	5,000	5,000
St Peters Community Hall	15,000	15,000
Gratuity Reserve	319	1,414
Other Projects	0	0
Amount required for this year's budgeted expenditure	29,146	7,305
Amount available for use	47,620	39,221
	<u>115,085</u>	<u>85,940</u>

BUDGET FOR 2009/10

There will be no increase in the precept requirement for 2009/10. The Council has decided to offset its reserve carry forward against the increase in running costs.

c/f from previous year	136,139
Precept Requirement	222,780
Interest income	2,000
Other/VAT	2,000
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	362,919
Sandbach in Bloom	4,500
Christmas Lights	4,500
Transport Festival	9,500
Storage Unit	2,500
Other Regular Donations	100
Churchyard Maintenance	1,250
Town Crier Honorarium	650
Other Grants	30,000
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	Donations 53,000
Sandbach Partnership Project Coordinator Contribution	20,000
Vision Feasibility Studies/Partnership Projects	10,000
Foden's Brass Band Sponsorship	7,500
Town Design Statement	20,000
Sandbach Park	25,000
Market Square	0
Sandbach Police Officers	25,000
Fair Trade Implementation	500
Street Furniture	1,200
Clean Team Business Coordinator	1,500
SLI	20,000
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	Projects 130,700
Chairman's Allowance	1,725
Civic and Ceremonial	3,500
Newsletter	4,000
Subscriptions	1,500
Audit Fees	1,200
Insurance	2,980
Rent	7,120
Heating, Lighting and Water	1,820
Building Maintenance	12,000
Telephone	650
Printing and Stationery	1,400
Office Equipment	2,374
Postage	550

Travel	400
Training	1,000
Salaries	46,500
Pensions	10,500
Other	0
Election Contingency	0
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Admin	99,219
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Total Budget Requirement	282,919
Recommended balance c/f	80,000
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Net requirement	362,919
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9. CONTACT DETAILS

SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP 2008/09			
EAST WARD			
Cllr Mrs D E Alcock	31 Newall Avenue, Sandbach CW11 4BJ	766238	alcockd@talktalk.net
Cllr S A M Corcoran	7 Radbroke Close, Sandbach CW11 1YT	753038	sam@ achillesaccountancy.co.uk
Cllr Mrs P M Minshull	Buttersfield, 66 Manor Road Sandbach. CW11 2NB	764100	N/A
Cllr L Morris	1 Hawthorne Drive, Sandbach CW11 4JH	765885	N/A
Cllr D Robinson	59 Heath Road, Sandbach CW11 2JU	764799	N/A
Cllr D L Darnes	16 Park House Drive, Sandbach CW11 1YW	764681	patrick.darnes@talktalk.net
NORTH WARD			
Cllr G J Richardson	38 Duke's Crescent, Sandbach CW11 1BL	766422	gemmajaner@gmail.com
Cllr G W Bell	128 Heath Road, Sandbach CW11 2LE	529055	bellsonteheath@aol.com
Cllr B E Moran	143 Middlewich Road, Sandbach. CW11 1JD	768816	moranbarrye@aol.com
Cllr S B Holland	Threeways, 122 Congleton Road, Sandbach CW11 1DN	762380	hollandSB@tiscali.co.uk
Cllr Mrs G M Merry	217 Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 3EL	764580	gillmerry@talktalk.net
Cllr R W Sutton	10 Pickmere Close, Sandbach CW11 1TR	764673	roysutton@uwclub.net
WEST WARD			
Cllr P J Darnes	16 Park House Drive, Sandbach CW11 1YW	764681	patrick.darnes@ talktalk.net
Cllr W R Goodall	FlexTel House, 13-15 The Commons, Sandbach CW11 1EG	600193	council.will.goodall@ Flextel.com
Cllr K E Haines	25 Tatton Drive, Sandbach CW11 1DZ	761541	keith@ haineskeith.wanadoo.co.uk
Cllr W W Scragg	3 Mill Lane, Moston, Sandbach CW11 3PT	765746	bill.scragg@ cheshire.probation.gsi.gov.uk
Cllr M R Sherman	57 Congleton Road, Sandbach CW11 1HP	767090	martin.sherman@ mail.adsl4less.com
Cllr A J Wood	60 Marriott Road, Wheelock, Sandbach CW11 3LS	760725	a-j-wood@amserve.com
TOWN CLERK			
Ann Banks	Sandbach Literary Institution, Hightown CW11 1AE	759959	clerk@sandbach.gov.uk