

# SANDBACH ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 2018

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Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Thursday 22 March 2018 at 7.00pm at Sandbach Town Hall.

Present: 65 Members of the public.

*Displays were positioned around the hall, at which representatives from 14 local community groups provided a showcase of their events and group information for visitors.*

## 1. **Welcome by Town Mayor**

Councillor Martin Forster welcomed everyone to the Town Meeting and gave thanks to the voluntary groups in attendance for providing displays of their projects and activities. Having visited many organisations throughout his Mayoral year and realising the significant amount of work undertaken to enrich the Town by residents and group members, who selflessly donate their time, huge thanks are owed to these special and generous people.

## 2. **Minutes of the 2017 Annual Meeting.**

Minutes approved as a true record of the meeting.

## 3. **Community Group Presentations:**

### i. **Cheshire Arts for Health**

The founder of this Sandbach voluntary organisation provided an informative update on the formation of the group and their regular, and ever-increasing, weekly activity list. These activities currently attract up to 80 attendees per week, with limited funds available, and make a significant difference to the wellbeing of the group members. Though planned activities take place, visitors are encouraged to drop in any time and their volunteers regularly travel to assist with projects at local schools, community events and raise awareness of numerous charities. New volunteers are always welcome; Friends of the Art Club can register for regular donations to support the work. The group hope to obtain charity status in the coming year, which opens opportunities to apply for invaluable grant funding.

### ii. **Sandbach Footpath Group**

The group was formed to protect, improve and extend footpaths, providing increased accessibility on some of the Sandbach paths. With an informative website detailing the many paths and walks in and around Sandbach and an ever-increasing following on their popular Facebook group, the group of volunteers continue to promote regular activities, consultations and guided walks and are currently working on a project to locate and report lost paths. This requires details of lost and forgotten paths be submitted to a 'definitive map' which is an official record of the public's rights of way in an area; any missing from the definitive map following the 2026 cut-off date will be lost forever.

New members to the group are very welcome. Visit the website or 'like' on Facebook. There is no fee to join and only a small donation of 50p for the guided walks.

iii. **Sandbach Cricket Club**

This agenda item was withdrawn due to representative being unavailable this evening.

iv. **Sandbach Woodland and Wildlife Group**

Working alongside several Sandbach Community groups, SWWG continues to make improvements to Local Authority owned woodland areas within the Town, with a view to regenerating and creating public access. With funds raised from various sources the groups and volunteer supporters have restored areas including Dingle Wood, St Mary's Dell and Brook Wood; over 24 acres of woodland transformed! Plans are already underway for the next project at Filter Bed Wood, adjoining Offley Wood. The group's Chairman expressed his thanks to the 100+ volunteers, U3A Environmental Action Group and Phil Mason and Care4CE team who have donated hours of their time to the projects and their continued maintenance of the open spaces.

**4. Dementia Friendly Town**

Sandbach Partnership provided details of Sandbach becoming a Dementia friendly Town, raising awareness in the Town so that people with dementia can continue to live in the way they want to, and within the community they choose. Regular training days are taking place and the Partnership will support and form a steering group to work with individuals willing to help or wishing to learn more. The Partnership recently visited and presented details to Sandbach High School and have further plans to co-ordinate activities including walks, arts, memory groups. Much more can be achieved when people come together and make Sandbach a dementia friendly town, encouraging shared responsibility for ensuring and people with dementia feel understood, valued and able to contribute to the community.

**5. Sandbach Town Strategy**

Following the initial Vision for Sandbach and subsequent Town Plan, a strategy for Sandbach is to be produced which will involve public consultation asking 'what Sandbach wants?'. There is currently no timetable in place for the strategy document but it will help the Town Council and Sandbach Community in forming a vision of our Town's direction and steps needed to achieve targets.

**6. Presentation Questions**

There were none.

**7. Have Your Say!**

With many speculative planning applications appearing for large housing areas in and around Sandbach, question was asked as to the weight of the Neighbourhood Plan. In response, the resident was advised that the plan was made before CEC's local plan and has been successful in stopping development in areas of separation. The NDP is considered along with the Local plan with each application, and all considered on their own merits.

Meeting ended 8.37pm  
M Forster, Town Mayor.