

SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

Agenda for the extraordinary meeting to be held on Monday, 14th March 2022 at 7.00pm in Sandbach Town Hall. The meeting will be clerked by the Locum Town Clerk.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To provide an opportunity for members and Officers to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in relation to any item on the agenda.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Town Mayor will adjourn the meeting to allow questions from members of the public. After the questions the Town Mayor will reconvene the Town Council Meeting.

3. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

(Item 6 due to references to individuals)

Action: *To determine whether any items should be considered with the exclusion of the public and press, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.*

4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 9 FEBRUARY [ATTACHED].

5. DRAFT CORPORATE STRATEGY

[Attached: Draft Corporate Strategy]

Lead: The Mayor

Action: To

i) Approve the draft consultation strategy

ii) Make recommendations regarding the approach and timescales for effective consultation of the draft strategy

6. TO APPROVE PAYMENT TO CHALC

[Report to Follow]

Lead: The Mayor

Action: To

- i) Approve payment of the ChALC invoice for £11,102
- ii) Approve the remaining Chalc invoice up to £8,000
- iii) Approve that cost of these services is funded through virement from the 2021-22 underspent salaries budget

7. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Town Council Meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 6th April 2022 at 7pm in Sandbach Town Hall.

Please note that this meeting will be recorded and the audio recording made available to the public within 5 working days of the meeting.

SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Sandbach Town Council Meeting held on Wednesday 9th February 2022 at 7.00pm, in Sandbach Town Hall.

PRESENT

Councillors: G Price Jones (Mayor)
 K Flavell (Deputy Mayor)
 G Merry
 L Crane
 S Broad
 N Cook
 K Seymour
 R Hovey
 A Nevitt
 N Adams
 R Hoffmann
 M Muldoon
 D Hegarty
 S Kirkham
 J Beddows
 P Eaton

Also present were the Locum Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk and eight members of the public and press

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs: S Corcoran
 S Crane
 A Smith

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Price Jones

Declared an interest in agenda item 20.1 and will not participate in discussion or voting.

3. MAYORS COMMENTS

The Mayor had not formally attended any events in the short period between Council meetings but had supported some local activities.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Mayor adjourned the meeting to allow questions from members of the public.

Speaker 1.

Informed the meeting of their Sandbach-based voluntary organisation and ways in which the group offers support through many on site classes and sessions and offers a safe, confidential environment to individuals of various ages. It was confirmed that the organisation plans to submit a formal grant request to Council to seek funding for future youth support projects. A current survey of requirements is underway via social media to ascertain needs for future group work.

Speaker 2

Since 2019 there had been two by-elections called at cost to Sandbach Town Council of approximately £17,000 and a further by-election recently at a further £8,200, as there is less than 12 months until the next main election and therefore 6 Council meetings, would like to ask that councillors do not support or push a by-election which would make financial sense within the timescale.

Speaker 3

Prayers at beginning of meeting are antiquated, is it time to change practice?

In response it was confirmed that STC has already formally agreed to use alternative readings. There was no prayer or reading today. Councillors were encouraged to submit appropriate suggestion to the Assistant Town Clerk so that a bank of readings is available for all meetings.

Speaker 4

A representative of Sandbach Cricket club provided information in relation to current club status and requirement for replacement cricket nets, for which they have submitted a grant for Member's consideration during the agenda. It was stated that the venue employs many local people, hosts sporting activities open to the community and supports local group bookings within their hall, such as disability disco.

Speaker 4

Having received the enquiry by email, the meeting Clerk read question from a resident in relation to the by-election and associated costs.

In response, it was verified that by-elections are called by a process outside the control of Sandbach Town Council and that there are associated by-election costs to the public purse, paid by the Town Council budget, though the Council has no responsibility or involvement in an election being called. This will be confirmed within reply to the resident.

The meeting was reconvened.

4. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Resolved: That items 18 and 21 are considered with the exclusion of public and press due to Commercial Sensitivity under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

14. CEC SANDBACH MATTERS – CLLR LAURA CRANE

Cllr Crane provided details of Sandbach-specific matters underway at Cheshire East, including imminent presentation of final budget proposals to CEC's Corporate Policy Committee and heavy investment in Highways over coming years. Though short of total needed, this funding is a great improvement. Unfortunately, some highways disruption is scheduled for Sandbach due to repair work and installation of faster broadband, though this will all be advertised through usual routes and any necessary diversions in place. In news for Ettiley Heath and Wheelock, the Planning Inspectorate recently dismissed appeal for additional homes on Hind Heath road which reflects strength of strategies and locally formed and adopted documents, specifically the Sandbach Neighbourhood Plan which was referenced through the decision notice. In closing, Cllr Crane drew attention to current online surveys, including Country Parks and Ranger questionnaires.

Cllr Crane was thanked for her report and its value noted to assist people in understanding activities at Cheshire East Council.

6. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 18 JANUARY [ATTACHED].

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting are approved as a true record.

7. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING & CONSULTATION COMMITTEE HELD ON 24 JANUARY 2022 (DRAFT).

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting are noted.

8. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2022 (DRAFT).

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting are noted.

9. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10 JANUARY 2022.

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting are noted.

10. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING – NONE HELD.

11. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EVENTS SUB-COMMITTEE – NONE HELD

12. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ASSETS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE – NONE HELD.

13. TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SMALL COMMON REDEVELOPMENT SUB COMMITTEE HELD ON 26 JANUARY 2022 (DRAFT).

Resolved: The minutes are noted.

14. MATTERS ARISING FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS

14.1 Small Common Sub-Committee

Update on the Project

[Attached: Report]

Lead: Chair of The Small Common Redevelopment Sub-Committee

Referring to the circulated report, the Chair of the Sub-Committee explained current position and requirements in moving forward the project to suggested timeline.

Several concerns were expressed during discussion in relation to prioritisation and necessity for consultation ahead of any planning application submission, in order to ascertain key stakeholder opinion on characteristics of the design. Further comment was made regarding practicality of Sub-Committee's suggestion to secure any fixed pricing from a contractor, due to ongoing trade and material cost uncertainties. It was queried whether progression at this stage, in order to obtain necessary professional support of planning advisors and quantity surveyors, should be delegated to officers to expediate process in between sub-committee meetings. This would also facilitate immediate and necessary consultation of Council's Market Staff.

During discussion it was suggested that the design be made available for public consultation as soon as possible and ahead of planning submission, however, members of the sub-committee emphasised that this will not actually be a formal public consultation to change the design itself, but is a public engagement to assist in refining.

A proposal was made to reprioritise the sequence of suggested next steps to prioritise 6 week public engagement ahead of other activities associated with this project. The proposal was seconded and carried.

Resolved: that:-

- i. The sequence of proposed actions is altered so that undertaking the 6 week public/stakeholder engagement is prioritised ahead of other activities associated with this project.
- ii. Council agrees the staged approach, subject to amendment (i) to completing the project and the timeline, subject to amendment (i), set out within the report and delegates to Interim Clerk delivery of any operational matters, in association with the Chair of the Sub-Committee
- ii. £5,000 from the allocated project budget (Small Common Redevelopment) be approved for spend in due course and as detailed within the report, for Planning and Quantity Surveyor.

14.2 Personnel Committee**Pension Discretions Policy**

[Attached: Draft Policy]

Lead: Chair of The Personnel Committee

Resolved: The revised document is adopted.**14.3 Personnel Committee****Employee Handbook and Officer Code of Conduct**

[Attached: Updated Handbook and Draft Document]

Lead: Chair of The Personnel Committee

Contradiction and duplication between the two draft documents were highlighted and concern expressed regarding some language used, which may not be reflective of the Council as an employer.

It was suggested that this is not necessarily the end of process but that comments can be fed back to the Chair of Personnel for continued revision of the documents.

Resolved: That the revised handbook and draft officer code of conduct documents are adopted.**14.4 Finance Committee****Revised Terms of Reference**

[Attached: Updated ToR]

Lead: Chair of Finance Committee

Resolved: The revised Terms of Reference for the Finance, Policy and Governance Committee are adopted.**15. COUNCIL TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Lead: Mayor

15.1 Council ToR

[Attached: Terms of Reference]

Resolved: The revised Terms of Reference are approved for adoption.**16. INTERIM AUDIT**

[Attached: Interim Audit Report]

Lead: RFO

The RFO confirmed the report details and impact of staff shortages and various other issues which are now already completed or are part of an action plan for resolution and improvement.

Resolved: The interim report is noted.**17. PAYMENTS OVER £1500**

[Attached: Payments over £1500 Approval request]

Lead: RFO

Resolved: The circulated list of payments [attached] in excess of £1500 is approved, with payment delegated to Officers.

18. OFFICE ACCOMODATION**Considered during confidential section of the meeting**

Resolved: The study and payment of associated invoice, at the cost of £4188, from budget line 400-4614 (Office Accommodation) are approved.

19. ANNUAL CORPORATE RISK REVIEW - PROCUREMENT

[Attached: Procurement Corporate Risk Assessment]

Lead: Meeting Clerk

Resolved: The Procurement Corporate Risk Assessment is approved.

20. GRANT APPLICATIONS

[Attached: 2 Applications]

20.1 SANDBACH CRICKET CLUB

Cllr Price Jones did not take part in discussion or voting. The agenda item was chaired by the Deputy Mayor.

Resolved: a grant of £3000 for replacement nets is approved from budget line Community Grants (110-4530)

20.2 SANDBACH TRANSPORT FESTIVAL

Members discussed the application for an additional £12,000 of funding. It was confirmed that the festival and parade will go ahead and that this further grant is requested to replace events within the park, following conclusion of previous three year support and attendance of SpareParts.

Since the funding request was originally considered, supplementary requests have been received via email from the Festival organisers for permission to use Small Common during the event weekend and for sponsorship or free provision of Town Council Market Equipment and labour for the Festival duration.

Councillors were disappointed that, despite request of Council following earlier application, the Festival Committee had not attended any of Council's meetings to clarify breakdown of activities associated with the further £12,000 of funding requested, and expressed concern at the lack of festival organiser engagement with the Council's nominated representative.

It was stated that the festival is supported however, one day event seems to be preferred by many within the community.

Resolved: That:-

- i. the grant is refused on the grounds of insufficient information being received to support the application.
- ii. Permission to use Small Common is granted, excluding space allocated for Saturday Market and subject to receipt of necessary insurance documentation.
- iii. Equipment is not available for the festival use.

21. UPDATE ON TOWN CLERK

Considered during confidential section of the meeting.

The Locum Clerk provided update and summary of the document received.

Resolved: The document and associated actions are accepted in full and delegated to the Locum Clerk for completion as stated.

22. APPOINTMENT OF LOCUM CLERK

The Locum Clerk was thanked for all her work to date and welcomed.

Resolved: The appointment of the Locum Town Clerk as Proper Officer and RFO, under Standing Order 27, is noted.

23. COUNCILLOR RESIGNATION

A brief update regarding the resignation was received to confirm the advert is in place and that the Borough Council will contact STC in due course regarding any call for by-election.

24. MEMBERS ITEMS

There are none.

25. CORRESPONDENCE

There is none.

26. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Town Council Meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 6th April 2022 at 7pm in Sandbach Town Hall.

Meeting Closed 9.39pm

Cllr G Price Jones, Mayor

KP

[Approved payment list as item 17 follows]

Sandbach Town Council. Payments over £1500 2022/23
Approval to delegate the below non-operational payments over £1,500 to the Officers.

Nominal Code	Item	Further Information	Total Budget	REASON
4000/6022/6023	Salaries		£418,400	To prevent delays
4001/6021	Employer NI			
4002/6022	Pension Contributions			
4003	Staff Restructure (contingency)	As per approved budget		
4100	Mayors Allowance	Paid with monthly salary run	£2,000	To prevent delays
4120	Insurance	Annual insurance	£10,000	To prevent delays
4152	HR and H&S	Annual invoice	£5,000	Three-year commitment approved at TCM22.10.2020
7000	Loan	Paid by direct debit (Budget will update dependant on Loan Repayment decision)	£29,606	To prevent delays
Cost Centre 110	Grants and Discretionary Payments	Town Crier Honorarium £750 Churchyard Maintenance £1580 Allotments £1000 RBL £250	£3,580	Annual repeat payments
4515	Concert Series	Three Year grant award FCM05.08.2021 Item 12.6 First Payment	£3,500	Committee approved three-year award
4573	Sandbach Woodland and Wildlife Group	Three Year grant award FCM05.08.2021 Item 12.2 First Payment	£2,000	Committee approved three-year award
6010	Bar Purchases	Total budget used to cover numerous orders.	£20,000	Covered by income, orders are placed on a need-by-need basis according to the vent requirements. To prevent delays.
6100	Utilities	Any invoices over £1,500	£19,000	Paid by variable direct debit, to prevent delays

SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL:
CORPORATE STRATEGY 2022-2025

“The Hub of the Community” Consultation Draft



Map showing Parish of Sandbach, with its 5 distinct settlements and bordering parishes.

To be added to Consultation draft

FOREWORD

To be added to final Strategy after consultation

The Mayor

Our Vision for Sandbach: A vibrant, modern market town and service centre, which has capitalised on its heritage and location to develop a robust economy, a sustainable environment and an inclusive and engaged community with a strong sense of social justice, who enjoy the safe, healthy and family friendly culture.

We believe this can be achieved, by the Town Council engaging with and supporting its communities, and working with key stake holders and partners to stimulate economic growth, improve the public realm and protect amenities and the environment.

Our Mission: (purpose) is to use our mandate to represent the best interests of our parish, and its people. To respect its heritage; listen to, lead and empower its communities; and to sustainably improve the quality of life for all those who enjoy the Town by delivering efficient and effective services; enabling others and being an active partner and forceful advocate.

We achieve this by councillors and officers working together and jointly with others, to champion the needs and wishes of the community by direct provision, partnership, engaging others and lobbying. We will manage resources effectively, operate sustainably and be a campaigning voice for the Town.

OUR CORE VALUES: The principles by which we will operate the Council are:

*Democracy and transparency

* Integrity and Value for money

* Equality & respect

* Professionalism & Delivering on our promises

* Communication and listening

Strategic Goals:



A PROSPEROUS TOWN

Make Sandbach even better by enhancing economic prosperity for all with a spread of high quality and sustainable employment and a vibrant town centre. Sandbach will embrace the opportunities presented by digitalisation, delivering improved services to meet the additional demand as it grows.

A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

Improving the quality of the public realm, responding to climate change issues and protecting the local environment and the Town's heritage.

AN ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Developing a sense of civic pride across all age groups, improving the level of public engagement and providing a place where people feel positive, in a historic market Town which promotes equality, diversity and Inclusiveness.

AN AGENDA FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Working with partners and other statutory services to increase community safety

Investing in, enabling and campaigning for services which allow our residents to feel healthy and safe on both an emotional and physical level

Encouraging our community to treat each other with kindness and respect.

Working with othes to encourage better and additional leisure assets and promotion of arts and culture.

A COUNCIL TO DELIVER

Developing the capacity and skills within the Council, to equip it to deliver the community facing priorities efficiently and effectively.

FUTURE DIRECTION

The Council has adopted five **Strategic Priorities**, four of which are aimed directly at improving Sandbach for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors. The Council wish to see it develop as a great town in which to live, work or do business, as well as to visit or spend leisure time, with an engaged community which is proud of the town.

Within these Strategic Priorities are a number of supporting corporate objectives. For each of these we have listed the key broad actions we intend to take. These will be given more specific targets in our Delivery Plan, which will also identify dates by which they will be delivered, as well as outcomes and action champions.

Our final Strategic Priority concentrates on developing the potential of the Council-our efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and firm intension to deliver for our community.

A PROSPEROUS TOWN

Make Sandbach even better by enhancing economic prosperity for all with a spread of high quality and sustainable employment and a vibrant town centre. Sandbach will embrace the opportunities presented by digitalisation, delivering improved services to meet the additional demand as it grows.

CONTEXT

Sandbach Parish consists of 5 distinct settlements with green buffers between. It includes a characterful historic town centre, identified in the Cheshire East Local Plan as a key service centre, which supports the surrounding agricultural area and rural population.

Sandbach was one of the Cheshire East's mid-performing centres in terms of visitors in August 2019. Comparatively, it has been less effected by the pandemic than surrounding centres, suggesting many working from home were choosing to shop locally.

Sandbach has witnessed significant housing growth over the last decade, with further growth proposed in the Local Plan, raising concerns about the ability of the Town's infrastructure and public services to accommodate the increased demands.

The largest employer is Cheshire East Council at Westfields located on the perimeter of the town centre. The main industrial employment area is situated at the Springvale Industrial Estate in Ettiley village, with smaller employment areas in Wheelock village and business units in Elworth. Significant mixed-use development is proposed at the 29 acre Capricorn Business Park adjacent to J17 of the M6 motorway, however this has not yet been able to be brought to fruition.

Sandbach has lost much of its previous industry. This and the excellent transport available including proximity to the M6 motorway and mainline rail services at Crewe, has meant that the town has become a commuter town.

Sandbach benefits from a well-represented convenience retail offer including a Waitrose and Aldi supermarket, and weekly Thursday Market; together with a strong representation of independent retailers, food and beverage operators; and a low shop vacancy rate. The town also plays host to a range of regular events such as niche markets, festivals, open-air concerts and fairs. Sandbach also has an important civic role with Cheshire East Council offices and a historic Town Hall. Other visitor attractions include Sandbach Park, Wheelock Rail Trail and the Trent and Mersey Canal. Beyond the villages that make up Sandbach is open countryside and much used public rights of way.

The Town benefits from a train station which lies a 25 min walk away from centre and free town centre parking. The historic town centre is very compact and walkable. Sandbach suffers from a lack of integrated transport links, particularly to the station and traffic and congestion, significantly that passing through the town centre.

Whilst the scale of office use within the town centre is limited, the importance of retail, leisure and tourism as an employer and economic driver in Sandbach is well recognised. The pandemic has demonstrated to many organisations that "remote" or "hybrid" working offer tremendous benefits and Sandbach plans to take advantage of this new reality by making sure the digital infrastructure is there to support both co-creation office space and start up office provision. There are however considered to be too many fast-food outlets on the High Street.

There are estimated to be over 10,000 Sandbach residents in employment, with more than 50% commuting out of the Town (twice as many as commute in). A majority of people coming in to work in Sandbach come from surrounding locations such as Middlewich or Crewe. Un-employment is under 2%, well below the national average.

We propose to:

- Work with Cheshire East, the Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and other partners to maximise the benefits for Sandbach from the Town Centre Vitality Plan.
- Work with the community to achieve the objectives set out in the Sandbach Neighbourhood Plan (as revised) and to use these as principles when responding to planning applications and planning policy consultations.
- Develop a new “brand” for Sandbach and work with partners to promote the town as **the** place to live, work, shop and visit in South Cheshire.
- Work with others, particularly Cheshire East Council, to develop a more coordinated public transport service linking the railway station and the Town's population centres as well as with centres outside the Town.
- Continue to press for improved facilities and inclusive access to the railway station.
- Enhance and develop the Town's markets in order to maximise its contribution to the revitalisation of Sandbach, including the visitor offer.
- Work with local businesses – physical and virtual – and representative bodies such as the Cheshire East Chamber of Commerce, to encourage networking, investment, and job creation for a speedy and sustained recovery following the impact of the pandemic.
- Continue to organise, support, and promote a range of events which promote the Town and attract visitors.
- Use our planning influence to ensure there is no net loss of allocated employment sites and to retain and enhance smaller employment sites particularly where they enable “start-up” activity or the expansion of existing businesses.
- Lobby for and help Cheshire East Council and the LEP facilitate the development of the Capricorn Employment site adjacent to Junction 17.
- Help facilitate start-up activity or the expansion of existing businesses and by recognising the move to hybrid working support business from home and online.
- Be aware of the development of HS2 at Crewe and seek out spin off opportunities for cluster or support businesses within Sandbach.
- Promote the visitor and night-time economies by working with stakeholders to raise the standard and range of the offering in Sandbach, with supporting promotion to local audiences.

- Lobby to retain free public parking in the Town and to increase the amount of parking available, including edge of town and associated transport.
- Continue to work with Cheshire East Council, the community and other partners to ensure the development of Sandbach is planned and delivered in a strategic and holistic manner.
- Ensure that Sandbach gets “full fibre” and 5G across the town so that local residents, businesses (current and new) and visitors alike can all access ever improving digital services and prevent digital exclusion.
- Develop the visitor offer of Sandbach, including access to Sandbach Park, the canal, the multitude of paths and bridleways and link with the hospitality offer to make Sandbach a “must go” destination.
- Work to ensure a quality retail offering whilst maintaining the heritage of the town by helping to influence the continuation of adequate physical retail outlets and an extension to the current space, where opportunities allow, including by conversion.
- Use the Town Hall to best advantage to support businesses and create jobs. We are aware that hosting weddings has a spin off for surrounding businesses. We will also look at developing its use, including the offer of conference facilities, “offsite” meeting facilities for away day opportunities and possibly start-up work space.
- Whenever possible we will use local suppliers and businesses and seek to influence our partners to do likewise. We will create a roster of companies that match our ethical standards, environmental aims and value criteria.
- Work with Cheshire East Council in seeking funding to support businesses and job creation in Sandbach.
- Develop and maintain a Business Directory.
- Promoting a culture that recognises the value of the contribution of young people to the wellbeing of the Town whilst ensuring education is linked to local business needs.

A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

Improving the quality of the public realm, responding to climate change issues and protecting the local environment and the Town's heritage.

Sustainability means "meeting the needs of today but preserving the environment for the next generation". This cannot be achieved by only considering environmental issues. Social and economic sustainability is equally important.

The Town Council will act as an organisation whose business activities impact on the environment, leading by example to minimise any adverse impact we create but we will also lead our community and other partners to help make the town environment more sustainable.

CONTEXT

Sandbach as we have seen, has five distinct settlements and the green gaps between them are cherished locally, as is the rural countryside consisting of prime dairy and arable farmland, which surrounds the parish. These are always under pressure by the demand for further housing sites, yet the substantial growth over the last decade makes them ever more important if the character of the Town is to be maintained along with that of surrounding parishes.

Situated on the Cheshire Plain, the landscape character is typical flat, rolling farmland and woodland, with traditional style buildings. Historic salt brine pumping has led to the creation of the "Flashes", now a site of special interest for birdwatchers and other species.

Brine extraction without replacement and the existence of a number of underlying brine runs, means that significant areas of the parish are potentially subject to ongoing ground movements.

Sandbach Town is mentioned twice in the 1086 Domesday Book. The town's most famous landmark is the 9th Century "Sandbach Crosses". The licence to hold a market every Thursday in the town was granted by Queen Elizabeth I in 1579. During the Civil War, a party of nearly 1,000 exhausted Scottish troops rode through Sandbach as they retreated from the Battle of Worcester. A skirmish occurred as the local people attacked the Scottish troops. The central common in Sandbach has since been known as Scotch Common.

During the late 16th and early 17th centuries, Sandbach was noted for the production of fine worsted yarns and malt liquor, which together with the fairs and market, made the Town "modestly affluent". In the 1820's and 30's, Sandbach was an important coaching stop. Later in the 19th Century, the Town produced silk, boots and shoes and enjoyed extensive trade with its corn mills and salt works along the Trent and Mersey Canal. Sandbach is within the Silk, Cotton and Market Towns area in the Cheshire East Council Design Guide

The 20th Century saw the upsurge of heavy vehicle manufacturing industry within the Town and heavy goods vehicles were produced by both E.R.F. and Foden.

The Sandbach Conservation Area consists of one major historical delineation which takes in Hightown to the bottom of High Street at the Bridge plus later additions.

Wheelock Village, was recorded in the Domesday Book under its original name of Hoileck/Hoiloeh. The name Wheelock was finally settled upon in 1390. In 1801 the population was 189, and by 1901 it was 685. Wheelock had its own Mayor up until 1849. An historian in 1850 described Wheelock as "a township and pleasant village in a neighbourhood richly diversified with picturesque beauty, intersected by the North Staffordshire Railway and the Trent and Mersey Canal. There were once

three salt works, two sawmills, two breweries, a soap factory, and three silk factories. Virtually all of these industries have now disappeared and the North Staffordshire railway branch from Kidsgrove to Sandbach (Elworth) ceased passenger service in the 1930's and closed for freight traffic in the 1960's. This disused track has since become the "Wheelock Rail Trail" and is used extensively by walkers and cyclists.

Elworth Village is described as "a village approximately one mile to the west of Sandbach". It has several pubs and a few shops. St Peter's Church has a large modern community hall. It also has the railway station serving Sandbach, which is on the main line between Crewe and Manchester. A branch line to Middlewich is under consideration for reopening for passenger traffic services through to Northwich. The railway encouraged the establishment of the local industrial base and Elworth was the home of Foden the lorry makers until 1980. The Trent and Mersey canal runs to the southwest of the village.

Ettiley Heath grew out of the narrowboat trade on the Trent and Mersey Canal. It was home to many of the salt workers from Sifta Salt, which operated where Springvale Industrial Estate is situated today. The salt factories grew out of the brine pumping locally

Sandbach Heath is separated from the main settlement of Sandbach by the *Dingle Brook* that runs across Sandbach. The land rises up the valley sides until you reach a flat area of land which represents the main area of the Heath. Sandbach Heath was once a woodland area but now, St John the Evangelist Church (1861, designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott), can be seen from many miles. The settlement borders open agricultural countryside north and west and a private golf course to the east. The Trent & Mersey canal forms part of the western boundary.

Over the years, derelict or contaminated land has been brought back in to use for development in preference to greenfield sites. Examples include land at Ettiley Heath and the former bone works at Rookery Bridge.

As you would expect in a rural town, air quality in the parish is generally good. Monitoring of smoke and sulphur dioxide was undertaken in the Town from 1979 until the early 2000, during which time, levels decreased and no breaches of the EEC directive were recorded. In the late 1990s spot samples were taken for Carbon Monoxide with results significantly below health guidelines. Airborne lead levels reduced as unleaded petrol became the norm.

As a rural community private car ownership and usage is the predominant method of transport; with approximately 43% of all homes owning at least 2 or more cars. Sandbach is located directly adjacent to the M6 J17 which provides good connectivity, however it is also a major threat due to the amount of through traffic this generates on key routes through the town. Congestion and standing traffic are common and likely to increase with the proposed Middlewich Bypass. There is currently an Air Quality Management Area at the Junction of A534 and A5022 due to nitrogen dioxide levels. A further AQMA on Middlewich Road was only revoked in 2021, but concerns remain.

The Neighbourhood Plan states "areas of high biodiversity and geodiversity value will be protected and enhanced". Enhancement measures will include increasing the total area of valuable habitat and linking up existing areas of high value habitat to create 'ecological stepping stone sites', 'wildlife corridors' and 'Nature Improvements Areas'. Ecological networks and connectivity are vitally important in sustaining sites and addressing the impacts of climate change".

The town centre provides a range of planting, seating, and gateway features, but the majority of the public realm across the town is in need of upgrades and maintenance as pavements present some uneven surfaces. The 'cobbles' town square provides high quality public space and adds to the historic character as well as slowing down vehicles. Block paving is quite consistent in other parts of the centre, but more recent materials have been added which support vehicles and detract from clear, good quality paved pedestrian area. Street cleansing and grounds maintenance struggle to meet published standards since austerity cuts and the Town Council provides a Ranger service to supplement these services. Continuing from the days of Congleton Borough Council, the town's roundabouts have excellent floral displays with potential for future wildflower planting of highway grass verges.

We propose to:

Work to protect and enhance our local environment and public realm

- Adopt an Environmental and Sustainability Policy to support locally the climate change initiative which is so important to our younger generation and we will try to directly involve our local schools.
- Play our part in implementing the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan in relation to "Protecting the Countryside", "Preserving Heritage and Character" and "Adapting to Climate Change".
- Raise the standard of the public realm by tackling litter, fouling, graffiti and neglected or aesthetically displeasing areas. Work in partnership with existing responsible bodies and voluntary organisations such as the Clean Team to improve the look of the Town.
- Expand our Ranger service to widen its sphere of activity and to investigate taking on devolved public realm services from Cheshire East Council providing funding follows which avoids double taxation.
- Do all we can to preserve the natural environment, parkland, biodiversity and important landscapes. Initiate wilding of areas, wildflower and tree-planting, while also seeking to develop additional wildlife areas and community gardens. Produce a Biodiversity Statement to define how the Council will meet its statutory obligation.
- Act as an advocate and gateway to other agencies in order to resolve nuisance complaints.
- Undertake an Environmental Audit to determine the effect of the Council's activities and measure its carbon footprint as a simple benchmark against which to monitor future progress and draw up an action plan.
- Ensure that the next phase of development of the Town Hall complex is an exemplar of eco efficiency.
- Determine the benefits of working with like-minded organisations to make the Town sustainable and address climate change via a Local Authorities "joint pledge"¹ approach.

- Gather baseline data on the environment and sustainability within the Town, on which to prioritise future actions.
- Encourage and facilitate walking and cycling in and around the Town, between our communities and links beyond the parish to reduce the adverse impact of traffic.
- Use our communications channels to promote environmental awareness in the Town. Look in to the feasibility of an environmental walking trail.
- Add to the network of electric vehicle charging points in the Town where economic to do so.
- Provide an Environmental open day at the Town Hall.
- Investigate the feasibility of trialling real time monitoring of air pollution from traffic outside schools.

Work to protect and make our heritage more accessible.

- Develop more robust ways of working with local partners to maintain Town events that highlight our history which commemorate important historical events and local heritage, whilst making these interesting for younger people.
- Support reviews and maintenance of both listed buildings and buildings on a local list and of the Conservation Area.
- Use our role in the planning system to preserve green open spaces and vistas to key features.
- Ensure Sandbach's heritage is recorded and made accessible to all. Look to develop more online content on our website that captures the Town's look, memories, and history.
- Support a "virtual" museum for Sandbach. It could be in several linked locations, extending the Heritage Trail. It would provide access to the built and industrial heritage of the Town and also linked to the Cheshire Archive Centre at Crewe.
- Stage directly or with partners, events that raise the profile of the Town and encourage visitors.
- Use our website to encourage interest in family history and the Town's social history.

Footnote.

1. There are a number of UK initiatives where Councils join with communities and publicly pledge to tackle climate change and then draw up action plans.
 - In 2020 many leaders across England and Scotland pledged to do everything in their power to eliminate CO₂ from their communities by 2045.
 - "Act on CO₂" is a government led strategy to persuade every one to reduce our carbon emissions. They produce a guide for Town & Parish Councils.
 - UK:100 invite local councils to join a Local Climate Engagement programme.
 - Many Councils produce an individual pledge, often with other community leaders.
 - Across the UK, local authorities of all political persuasions have declared climate & ecological emergencies and are creating action plans to deliver on their ambitions.
 - The Nottingham Declaration on climate change is a voluntary pledge to address the issues of climate change. It represents a high-level, broad statement of commitment that any council can make to its own community.
 - Transition Town initiatives began in 2006 and Totnes was one of the first towns to declare itself to be in transition.' Which refers to grassroot community projects that aim to increase self-sufficiency to reduce the potential effects of peak oil, climate destruction, and economic instability.

AN ENGAGED COMMUNITY

Developing a sense of civic pride across all age groups, improving the level of public engagement and providing a place where people feel positive, in a historic market Town which promotes equality, diversity and Inclusiveness.

It is a fundamental requirement of the success of any community project that it is undertaken in partnership with the community. But more than this, working in partnership with the community, empowering it and helping it to become cohesive is at the core of our proposals.

CONTEXT

The population of Sandbach has risen from 17,976 in 2011, to approximately 21,000 (48.8% male and 51.2% female) currently. The age structure of the population is similar to that for Cheshire East. Both Sandbach and Cheshire East have lower younger and larger older populations than regionally or nationally

In Sandbach, the proportion of over 65's increased by 42% from 2001-2019, and are projected to increase by a further 17% from 2019 to 2030 as the town grows. The proportion of under 19's decreased by 9% from 2001- 2019, and are projected to decrease by a further 4% from 2019 to 2030. (Sandbach Housing Needs Report, 2021).

Working age adults are 62% of population (64.7% in England) and lone parent families are below the national average. Black and ethnic minority people make up only 3.4% of the population (20.2% in England). People born outside UK represent 3.4% (13.8% in England).

Total weekly household income is above both Cheshire East and National average. The net weekly household income estimate after housing cost is again above both Cheshire East and National average. This does not mean however that there are no pockets of deprivation. For example, many within our elderly population will be constrained by a fixed retirement income.

Sandbach has historically had a strong sense of community. Its first Town Hall was built in 1810, the Literary Institute in 1857, and 20 almshouses in the 1860s when the population was around 3500. The Wesleyan Society opened a Sunday school in 1871, behind what is now the Wesleyan Chapel. The Snapes "Britannia " Theatre (portable theatre) started a second season of plays on Scotch Common Sandbach in 1889. In 1891, the Marriott family donated land to the Town, which is now the Park and their house which became a library to be replaced by the current library in the 1960s.

There have been many celebrations in the town, including the 60th Anniversary of Queen Victoria's Coronation in 1897, the "Relief of Mafeking" in 1900, the event that eventually led to the formation of the FODEN'S BAND. In 1913, King George V and Queen Mary visited Sandbach and Wheelock held a "Peace Celebration" in 1919, celebrating the end of the Great War. The Queen's Platinum Jubilee later this year will continue this tradition.

Sandbach people have always been able to pull together in adversity, a committee for the purpose of sending Christmas presents to all the men from Sandbach who were serving at the front in 1915 and a money raising fund to help purchase a Spitfire for the RAF in 1943. This same "spirit" has again been witnessed during the recent Pandemic.

Today, Sandbach still has a strong community "feel" with many regular events organised by and for local people. The lively market town traditions still continue and the cobbled square, surrounded by black-and-white and thatched buildings along with the adjacent High Street and the nearby "Common" are venues for regular events such as markets, farmers markets, festivals, open-air concerts and fairs.

Some of the community groups hold events each year, such as a Beer Festival and Firework Displays,. The town was the home of Foden's and ERF Trucks and celebrates this with a annual Festival of Transport. In addition, the award winning and internationally-acclaimed Foden's Brass

Band is still based in Sandbach and is the core of the “Party in the Park” event. Other events organized by the Town Council include the Christmas Market and Lights, Family Funday and the Market Town Festival.

Clubs and societies in Sandbach have a high level of community involvement supporting a wide variety of activities, from sporting activities to cultural and community-based pastimes. There is a community Cinema at the Town Hall. Many of the organising groups present and promote their activities through “Sandbach Today organised by the Sandbach Partnership. Sandbach Partnership is a voluntary and community led organisation working with many local groups and statutory bodies. Their aim is to enhance the quality of life for the benefit of the people of Sandbach and the surrounding area.

Sandbach History Society meets monthly from September to April. Sandbach Amateur Dramatics & Operatic Society put on regular productions. There is also a Choral Society, Sandbach Garden Trail, Sandbach Woodland and Wildlife Group, Sandbach Footpath Group, a very active U3A and many more. The Town Council have a Community Grants Scheme to help such groups with set-up, expansion and projects.

The Council for Voluntary Services has a diminished role in the Town, as does the Citizens Advice Bureau. Efforts are now being made to establish a Community Hub, to galvanise, support and advise people and voluntary organisations. Lifeline Debt advice is available at the Wesley Centre.

Youth organisations in Sandbach include Scouts, Guides, Brownies, Air Cadets and other military cadet forces as well as Fire Cadets.

The town has two well respected single sex secondary schools and six primary schools.

We propose to:

Build an engaged and empowered Sandbach community

- Celebrate the diversity of our communities of place, origin, interest, or age, and proactively engage with them.
- Work with our community on determining how to best help it develop. We will work with other bodies which support, advise and develop community and voluntary groups such as Sandbach Partnership, CVS (East Cheshire) and help to establish the Sandbach Community Hub.
- Engage with, and support, the wide variety of voluntary and charitable organisations in the Town, which help us deliver our aims.
- Develop more sustainable arrangements for providing grant funding for Community/voluntary groups to ensure delivery of the maximum benefit to the community. Priority will be given to proposals which are in accordance with our strategic priorities.
- Reach out to young people and ensure they have things to aspire to, be it employment opportunities, safe activities, and places to engage in and an interest in their community and Council.
- Continue to support and campaign and where appropriate help provide for, our existing youth services and outreach activities.

- Take the lead to empower a volunteering culture within Sandbach by raising awareness of the benefits and promoting opportunities.
- Ensure our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy always reflects best practice in respect of employment, services and democracy.

Provide a voice for Sandbach

- Maintain either directly or in partnership, a programme of events to promote both the Town and the Council's other objectives.
- Develop a shared agenda to influence the improvement and effective management of local services through coordinating with stakeholders and relevant third parties, holding to account service providers responsible for delivery.
- Work more closely with Cheshire East Council to influence the delivery of coordinated services and development. Support the development of Cheshire East Sustainable Communities Plan where it benefits Sandbach.
- Promote and support events that build community cohesiveness or promote the Town, not only in the centre but in our smaller parish communities.
- Maintain an active and responsive programme of Mayoral engagements to support the community and promote the Town.
- Help to build social inclusion by linking all parts of the Parish and reaching out to new comers and minority groups.
- Look to improve voice for young people and increase their involvement in Town Council governance, possibly by reviving youth representatives or a youth council.
- Encourage more people to attend and speak at Council and councillor surgeries. We will remember that some people are more comfortable to take part in a community group than a council.
- Develop both a Council Social & Ethical Policy (to include a statement on modern slavery) and a Community Engagement Policy.

AN AGENDA FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Working with partners and other statutory services to increase community safety.

Investing in, enabling and campaigning for services which allow our residents to feel healthy and safe on both an emotional and physical level.

Encouraging our community to treat each other with kindness and respect.

Working with others to encourage better and additional leisure assets and promotion of arts and culture.

CONTEXT

During the Pandemic, life expectancy in the UK reduced, reversing a tradition going back decades. As we have seen, Sandbach is generally a relatively affluent area and it is not surprising that life expectancy for both males and females is higher than the regional and national averages. Consistently, smoking rates are lower and healthy eating rates higher than those for the region or UK. In a survey of the Cheshire East Council's Citizens Panel, 74% of respondents described their general health as 'good or very good' and 5% described it as 'bad or very bad'.

Sandbach is considered by the community to be a reasonably safe place to live. The crime rate (per 1,000 population) for Cheshire East (including Sandbach) is 29 against the North West average of 36.9 and country average of 37.6.

The Parish has had a considerable increase in the number of houses over the last decade from 8119 in 2011 to 10,818 in 2020. 19% of these additional houses were affordable, but this was below the 30% target. An additional 1089 dwellings have planning approval to be built.

The main medical facility is the Ashfield Primary Care and Pharmacy Centre. There are also 3 additional pharmacies and 6 dental practices. A number of charitable organisations also support health and wellbeing, including the Migraine and Me group and Dementia Friendly Sandbach.

Sandbach Leisure Centre (joint public/school use) provides an indoor sports hall, drama room and swimming pool and outdoor cricket, rugby, five-a-side astro turf pitches and tennis courts. Football pitches are available on Hind Heath Road, Ettiley Heath. It is interesting to note that the first public baths opened in 1853 on Newcastle Road.

Sandbach Park, Elworth Park, Wheelock Playing Fields, Church Lane on Sandbach Heath are the main open air recreational areas with, several smaller areas of open space containing play equipment. Notable footpaths/ walkways include Wheelock Rail Trail and Sandbach Wildlife Corridor along with several woodland trails linking to a footpaths network. Allotments are presently situated at a temporary location in Ettiley Heath, facilitated by the Council. There is an ongoing project to find a permanent site.

Sandbach Cricket Club was founded in 1886 and is currently situated in Hind Heath Road. Other sporting clubs include Sandbach Rugby Club, Elworth Cricket Club, Sandbach Golf Club and Sandbach United Football Club. Privately owned Gyms are available in Elworth, Wheelock and the Sandbach town centre.

Sandbach has a very well supported U3A who promote and encourage mental and physical education and activities for the many maturing residents of the area.

There is a very strong tradition of music in the area with Fodens and Lions Youth Brass, the Coop Wind Band together with the Love Music Trust, all encouraging musical engagement within schools and the wider population. Sandbach Concert Series promote 8 classical music concerts each year with professional musicians, preceded by a 30 minute section spotlighting young (school age) musicians.

We propose to:*Work to make our Town safer*

- Look at opportunities to work with Cheshire East Council to extend CCTV services.
- Work with the Police and other partners on community safety initiatives, ensure PCSOs remain in the Town and to disseminate information and ensure residents know where to report matters of concern.
- Work with Cheshire East Council's Community Enforcement Team to address anti-social behaviour and environmental crime.
- Ensure that Sandbach has a robust Town Emergency Plan, working with appropriate third-party organisations.
- Provide access to home safety & health advice/information through our website, social media and other STC channels.
- Support Cheshire Fire & Rescue fire safety campaigns through our website, newsletter and other channels.
- Undertake a Crime Reduction Audit on the Council's activities & facilities to enable us to lead by example.
- Look to utilise the Council's assets and resources to benefit the most vulnerable in our society, including potentially a "Safe Place" in the next development of the Town Hall complex.
- Lobby for road improvements and maintenance, which improves safety.

Work to improve health and wellbeing

- Support and partner initiatives that encourage residents to live a healthier lifestyle.
- Reduce social isolation and loneliness by supporting befriending schemes and community transport.
- Work with others to provide facilities for young people to meet in around the Parish, including opportunities for those who do not wish to join formal organised activities such as the uniformed organisations.
- To support the Community & Wellbeing objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- To undertake or initiate projects to prevent the isolation of specific groups of people within our community or to help address their wellbeing. An example is a "Men's Shed" after work facility.
- Lobby to ensure that the Sandbach community and neighbouring parishes have enough health and social care facilities and services and to contribute at a very local level to Sandbach's needs, where appropriate.

- To work in partnership to address food poverty, where it occurs.
- Lobby to ensure the housing proposed in the Cheshire East Council Local Plan is delivered in a sustainable way, has a mix of types for a balanced and diverse population (including affordable homes) and is of a design that preserves the character of Sandbach.
- We will be careful not to push unwanted development in the neighbouring parishes that don't have the resources to resist.
- Review our Equality Policy to ensure "diversity" and "inclusion" are given more prominence.

Work to improve the range of leisure and sporting assets

- Oppose new developments where recreation or sports facilities are lost unless equivalent provision is provided.
- Support, facilitate and promote the development of new sports and leisure facilities to meet the local and surrounding population's needs.
- Work with grant awarding and third-party bodies to maintain and upgrade the various play parks in the Town. Encourage and facilitate "friends of" groups.
- Support inclusive local sports and leisure organisations to expand and play a greater role in meeting the population's needs, encouraging residents to lead a healthier lifestyle.
- Open discussions with Cheshire East Council regarding taking on the maintenance of open space in the Parish.
- Promote cycling and walking, making routes accessible to all and to help funding the updating of maps.
- Work with other stakeholders to develop art and culture provision in the Town.

A COUNCIL TO DELIVER

Developing the capacity and skills within the Council, to equip it to deliver the outward facing priorities efficiently and effectively.

CONTEXT

Sandbach has been a seat of local government as we now know it, since the Sandbach Urban District was created in 1894. This was preceded by the Sandbach Urban Sanitary District 1875-1894. In 1974, the Urban District Council, along with the urban districts of Alsager and Middlewich, the original Congleton Borough and Congleton Rural District, was incorporated into a new Congleton Borough, which also had its headquarters in Sandbach. Congleton Borough was itself abolished in 2009 when Cheshire East Council was formed, taking over the Sandbach offices.

Sandbach Town Council was inaugurated in 1974, to provide the local council tier of local government for the town of Sandbach. Serving approximately 21,000 residents, it exists to serve as a vehicle of local opinion; to provide an effective link between the local residents and council tax payers with the Unitary Council, to express local feelings and interests and to keep watch on all developments within the Town. Cheshire East Council are currently consulting on a Local Governance Review which may result in changes to some ward boundaries and additional town councillors.

The Town Council is a consultee to examine plans due for consideration by Cheshire East Council as planning authority. It also manages a range of local services and facilities that includes: the Town Hall, the Towns historic Indoor and Outdoor Markets, the Ranger Service, public toilets, and Small Common Carpark. The Council also runs a number of well-regarded Town outdoor community events across the Town.

The Town Council has been a well-respected institution in the Town with several notable achievements. It had built a number of rewarding links in to the community and will strengthen these by fostering more formal links with schools and enabling a “youth voice” in to the Council.

During the last 3 years or so, the Town Council has been hampered by a plethora of issues which have prevented it functioning at its best. The Pandemic has been just one of these challenges, others include a plague of malicious communications and vexatious information requests. Despite these challenges, the Council has continued to support the community including through the People Helping People scheme and the work of the town Ranger as well as keeping services running such as the Indoor Market Hall and the outdoor markets.

The Council has been looking carefully at these issues, not to lay blame but so as to enable it to learn and prevent a recurrence. There is now clear ambition, drive and capacity across the Council. There is a determination for all councillors to work together, with staff, with other public and voluntary bodies and with the community for the benefit of Sandbach.

We propose to:

Take an integrated approach to Management.

- Develop capacity and a diverse skill base through a full understanding of our human resources and an active and ongoing Councillor and Officer training programme.
- Revise the Council staffing structure, which clearly differentiates areas of responsibility, led by a strong and empowered senior Management Team, with sufficient additional resources to cope with our initial plans. Recruit to the identified roles.
- Build our processes in accordance with our Quality Policy ensuring a culture of continual improvement.
- Be innovative in finding external funding for Council and other local community initiatives.
- Gain accreditation under the Local Council Award Scheme, where it furthers efficient practises.
- Deliver the Council objectives through outcome-focused delivery plans and related performance management. We will devise ways to measure the social value of our services and facilities.
- Improve operational efficiency by developing a range of quality based operating procedures.
- Regularly review our governance and policies to ensure they work to the best advantage.
- Ensure the Council's information technology is always fit for purpose and delivers value for the organisation. We will develop a Digitalisation Plan which will include on-line booking and transactions, more opportunities for remote and flexible working, facilitation of hybrid meetings and introduction of new software or services where they fit the Council's aims.
- Review Conduct rules both for councillors and staff and personnel policies.

Deliver excellent services.

- Determine priorities on objective need and public choice in the light of both business and safety risk assessments.
- Continue to deliver our existing services and develop outcome-based standards.
- Support or supplement essential services provided by others, and take on new or devolved services where it is necessary to preserve or improve them.
- Introduce new services and initiatives where we can satisfy need and choice cost-effectively.
- Remain eligible for the general power of competence and embrace other new powers made available, which benefit our aims, so as to increase our ability to offer services, local governance and influence.
- If requested and where capacity allows, to make our skilled Staff resource available to smaller neighbouring parishes, to advise, support and work together for the benefit of the wider community.

Provide excellent communications and transparency

- Seek to engage the public and communities through a variety of channels as set out in our Communications and Marketing Policy which we propose to develop, ensuring communication is two way and that we listen.
- Regularly report progress on actions in our delivery plans, including any unimplemented resolutions and delegated decisions. Develop a range of key performance indicators where they enable better communication of our progress.
- Ensure regular publication of key Council financial reporting and that published accounts that are easy to understand.
- Continually improve and increase the content of the Website. Develop the use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter, but in a factual way to make the Council more accessible and efficient.
- Reinstate a periodic newsletter for wide distribution.
- Keep our Publication Scheme and Information Guide current and exceed “data transparency” requirements.
- Continue to hold a public participation session at all public meetings.

Develop the Town Hall as a centre for everyone and as a strongly performing commercial enterprise.

- Develop the Town Hall & Council Building complex to provide modern office space, a welcoming reception and tourist information point at the centre of our community. (see also business support under “A Prosperous Town”)
- Provide a quality and engaging public interface for the Council's services and a gateway to services by other providers. This will include enhanced digital communication and noticeboards.
- Operate on a commercial basis, with a full cost understanding of all events and activities and the markets in which they compete.
- Provide a range of services and events to support and promote the Council's democratic processes, the community, citizens' wellbeing, supporting local businesses and job creation and protecting the Town's environment.
- Provide subsidised use of the facility by community organisations and charities which support the Council's strategic aims.
- Undertake a range of commercial events which help maximise the use of the facility.
- Offer an excellent standard of hospitality, ensuring that our contract caterers offer varied and value menus which offer healthy and sustainable options.

HOW IT WILL BE DELIVERED

Sandbach Town Council recognises that it does not have the legal powers or resources to bring about all of its priorities on its own. It will support all organisations and projects which take forward its priorities. It will put its corporate shoulder behind them and, where possible, help fill gaps in provision using its unique position.

It has to emphasised that this is Sandbach Town Council's Strategy, what they would like the town to become and their part in getting it there. The Council is committed to playing a key role in the delivery of other plans and strategies for the town which have been developed in partnership. Some of these are already in being such as the Neighbourhood Plan and Cheshire East Council policies referred to. It is inevitable and indeed desirable that the Council's future direction is bound up with other "direction of travel" documents.

Each of its priorities will be delivered through one or more projects for which action plans will be developed where necessary. Implementation of the action plans will be the responsibility of the Town Clerk, and will form the basis of more detailed and costed actions and will inform future budget decisions.

The Council will use its delivery plan to translate its Strategy into actions, providing details of how it will achieve and fund its aims and specify targets and timescales against which its progress can be judged. Performance data will be collected each Council cycle and reported to councillors, together with financial management information. We will invite like minded organisations and individuals to join us on our quest for a better Sandbach.

The Council will continuously revisit its delivery standards and performance to ensure it can sustain the momentum required to tackle the challenges which lie ahead.

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