

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Sandbach Partnership ("SP") held
At St Peter's Church Hall, Elworth**



Thursday 19th October 2023

Start time 19:00

Attendees

Helen Dorney (HD)(Chair)	Sandbach Partnership Management Team
Nicola Kapusniak (NK)	Sandbach Partnership Management Team
Anne-Marie Robinson (AMR)	Sandbach Partnership Management Team
Peter Darby (PD)	Sandbach Partnership Management Team
Linda Bilsborrow (LB)	U3A
Sue Wood (SW)	Dementia Friendly & Ashfields PGG
Eric Cowhill (EC)	Sandbach Rotary
Jill Whittenbury (JW)	Saxon Players
Jean	Saxon Players
Mark Cook (MC)	Sandbach Clean Team
Linda	Sandbach Clean Team
Barbara West (BW)	Sandbach Garden Trail
Laura Crane (LC)	Public (Cheshire East representative)

Apologies

Jonathan Granger	Sandbach Woodland and Wildlife Group (SWWG)
Mike Swaits	Friends of Wheelock Playing Fields
Dave Whitworth	Dementia Friendly Sandbach

1. Welcome & Introductions

HD welcomed attendees to the meeting, conducted a round of introductions and declared the meeting open.

a. Confirmation of any proposals for agenda received by 12th October 2023

AMR confirmed that no items had been proposed for inclusion ahead of the meeting. HD asked the attendees if there was anything further to add. None declared.

b. Confirmation of any new nominations for the Management Team received prior to the AGM

AMR confirmed no new nominations for the Management Team had been received ahead of the meeting. HD asked attendees if there were any nominations to be put forward. None declared.

2. Minutes of the last AGM

a. 28th Feb 2022

HD presented the minutes of the last management team and noted that they were available to view on the SP website.

3. Constitution Update

a. Presentation of revised draft Constitution

HD outlined the need to refresh the previous constitution due to some inaccuracies, inconsistencies and to modernise the operation of Sandbach Partnership.

HD set out the 5-step work programme undertaken in bring the revised constitution for adoption including review and comment by forum members.

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HD highlighted key topics of note as being Officers roles and management team – co-opted and observers, voting of ordinary and organisation members, disillusionment, membership – applying, reaffirming, ceasing and responsibilities and the introduction of a membership fee.

HD opened the floor up to discussion.

The discussion centred around the introduction of a nominal membership fee. The majority of members present were in favour of a small fee with supportive comments made by EC, LB and MC that a small fee seemed reasonable for the benefits received in peer-to-peer networking and that it demonstrated a commitment by members to the Partnership.

AMR noted that the nominal fee was proposed at £10 per annum which would be used to pay for the hire of meeting facilities for the quarterly forum meetings which benefits all members. Should there be surplus this would be rolled over and fees reduced for the following year or utilised to member benefit.

b. Ratification (by vote of members) of updated Constitution

i. Confirmation of quorum for the AGM

HD noted that the current level of the membership as 21 organisations and with representatives of 7 member organisations being present plus the current management team – 8 members present and thereby the meeting was held as quorate.

HD proposed the revised draft constitution be adopted by members, AMR seconded, and asked for a vote in favour of adoption. Vote carried in favour 8/8 with one absentee vote – result 9/9.

HD requested AMR make the new constitution publicly available on the SP website.

ACTION

ii. Confirm Annual Membership Fee £ Value

HD proposed the fee to members, AMR seconded, and asked for a vote in favour of the introduction of a £10 annual membership fee. Vote carried in favour 7/8 plus one absentee vote – result 8/9. Further details to be shared on payment method and due date. **ACTION**

SW asked what would happen if a member was unable to pay the fee. HD advised that the new constitution sets out that if membership is not paid then membership would cease.

BW asked what would happen in relation to members not present. HD advised that members would receive a communication following the meeting. **ACTION**

4. Chairs Report

a. Presentation of activities post Feb 2022 AGM

New Management Team Selection

HD provided a review and noted on 28th February 2022 towards the end of last financial year at the AGM of Sandbach Partnership (minutes available on website) none of the management team put their names forward for nomination. Sandbach Partnership was handed to Sandbach Forum for them to recruit a new management team.

Public announcements and notices were issued for new management members to put their names forward by completing an application form and submitting it by 2nd November 2022. The application process was administered by Mark Cook, Co-ordinator of Sandbach Clean Team.

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There were 9 applications received in total. 3 withdrew before the interviews were arranged. Interviews were arranged with 6 applicants. The panel for the interviews was made up of the previous Vice Chair Sue Wood (also a Forum member with Ashfields Patient Partnership Group), Gill Merry (Chair of Friends of Elworth Park) and Mark Cook (Co-ordinator of Sandbach Clean Team). Interviews were held during the last week of November 2022. Each applicant was sent the list of questions they would be asked ahead of interview.

On 29th November 2022 Sandbach Forum met to discuss the outcome of the interviews. The Sandbach Forum members present were Sue Wood, Gill Merry, Mike Benson, Dave Whitworth, Barbara West, Linda Bilsborrow and Malcolm Bugler. Mark Cook sent his apologies to the meeting (both other members of the interview panel were present).

The Forum members present at the meeting, voted to accept the candidates put forward by the interviewing panel. The vote was unanimous in favour of the candidates and was ratified by a quorum majority.

The successful candidates were:

Chair: Helen Dorney (resident since 2014)

Vice Chair: Anne-Marie Robinson (resident since 2021)

Vice Chair: Nicola Kapusniak (resident since 1998)

Assistant: Peter Darby (resident since 2019)

It was agreed that a notification would be placed in the local paper and on social media. These can be found on review of – Sandbach Hub – Sandbach Chronicle – Sandbach Partnership Website.

Each of the new management team were advised on 1st December 2022 that they had been successful, and the Chair was provided with the contact information of the others to enable the first management meeting of the new team.

Handover Activities

HD noted the newly appointed officers of Sandbach Partnership met for the first time on 7th December 2022. During the meeting as well as introducing themselves to each other the officers agreed items for the agenda of the handover meeting with the previous officers.

The new Chair, Helen Dorney, met with Keeley Todd (the previous Chair) and Sue Wood (the previous Vice Chair on 14th December 2022. A comprehensive handover was undertaken covering the following topics: the exchange of keys to the office premises and noticeboards, details of the Partnerships finances including accounts, stakeholder contact details together with all digital IT files as well as information on the history of the Partnership.

The new officers continued to meet weekly to progress handover actions and to become more familiar with the requirements of the Constitution of Sandbach Partnership.

The requirements of the Constitution of Sandbach Partnership at that time were:

- Signed Declaration of Acceptance of officers – these were signed by each Officer on 4th Jan 23
- Maintain list of Members (Forum and Individual)
- Hold monthly management team meetings.
- Hold quarterly SP Forum meetings.
- Preparation and auditing of annual financial accounts



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- Annual Action Plan / Works Plan
- Hold AGM in October

The new management team of Sandbach Partnership was therefore formed following signature of the declaration of acceptance of officers on 4th Jan 2023.

Jan- Mar 2023 Activities

In the following three months of the financial year there has been significant progress into the operational management of Sandbach Partnership notably:

- Review of all historic files (both paper and electronic) and rationalisation
- Understanding the legal standing as an Unincorporated Constituted Community Group and the requirements on the officers and abilities of the group within the law
- Investigation of insurances including trustee, public liability, employer and event insurance
- Understanding of and management of licenses
- Understanding of and management of legal agreements that Sandbach Partnership had entered into
- Coordination with Cheshire East around occupancy of Sandbach Enterprise Centre, future arrangement options including tenancy, and consequentially providing vacant possession by 31st March 2023.
- Engagement with many stakeholders throughout the community to understand the involvement, requirements and future aspirations of Sandbach Partnership
- Introduction to the 5 towns partnership at a challenging time when funding is being terminated by Cheshire East
- Ongoing management of notice boards in Sandbach
- Getting access to the Sandbach Partnership bank account which was finally completed on 31st March 2023
- Updating social media platforms with new management team information and starting to engage with the community
- Investigation of projects for undertaking during financial year 2023-24
- Updating the Purpose, Objectives and Vision of Sandbach Partnership to reflect the new management team.

Sandbach Partnership presented at Sandbach Town Council Annual Meeting on 22nd March at the request of STC.

The first meeting of Sandbach Forum was held on 28th March 2023 and was well attended. The Forum then met in June and Sept 2023.

b. Presentation of activities since ratification of new Management Team Nov 2022

HD recapped that on Sunday 23rd April the Youth Engagement Showcase (YES) was held in Sandbach Town Hall. Over 200 people attended the 3hr event which took place on the second day of the transport festival.

On Monday 8th May as part of the Coronation weekend, Sandbach Partnership coordinated with forum members to put together the Big Help Out, a day of volunteering across the nation in honour of the new King. Despite the weather, the event was well attended with over 75 volunteers turned out to pick and plant at the train station and Scotch common. Special thanks to Mark Cook, Barbara West, Keith Haines and John Scarrott who all led their designated task groups admirably. Due to the weather conditions, the painting had to be postponed, however there are plans to reschedule. A

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great amount of support and positive comments received online for the work undertaken together with a very complimentary article by Sandbach Nub News.

Repair Café Sandbach has been initiated with an induction event held in August and first café held in September. HD noted that this is closely aligned with our environmental theme and aimed to reduce items going to landfill. HD advised that the next Café was scheduled for 21st October 2023 at St Peter’s Church Hall.

Spooky Saturday planned for 28 October 2023 a family event bringing together the diverse population of Sandbach.

5. Financial Report

a. Presentation of audited accounts 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022

HD presented the accounts for the period and noted that these were already publicly available on the SP website following the early AGM of the previous management team.

b. Presentation of audited accounts 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023

HD presented the account for this period and noted them as unremarkable except for one inaccuracy in the form of a credit from ANSA which was incorrect transferred to the Partnership and had since been investigated and returned in this new financial year.

HD noted that no funding had been received from Cheshire East Council. HD commented that this was following their decision not to fund any of the 5 town partnerships which had in turn forced the wind up of Alsager and Middlewich.

HD noted that no funding had been received from Sandbach Town Council for 2022/23 or 2023/24 and so far as the Partnership was aware, there is no allocation for 2024/25.

HD advised that the SPMT had conducted a review of its core operational costs and discussed the monies held on account to date. HD updated that a decision had been taken by the SPMT to ringfence three years’ operational costs and split the remaining monies across the three years which would act as co-investment for future projects.

AMR added that the intention would be to operate beyond the three years, but this would be dependent on securing funding for future core operational costs and securing co-investment/grant funding for projects.

6. Election of the Management Team

a. Confirmation of current Management Team intention to re-stand

HD requested confirmation from HD, AMR, NK and PD to re-stand in their current roles on the Sandbach Partnership Management Team. All confirmed a yes intention.

b. Any nominations for the Management Team received at the AGM

HD asked attendees whether there were any new nominations for the Management Team. No response – accepted that there were no further nominations.

c. Election of the Management Team (by vote of members)

HD asked attendees to vote for those standing to be re-appointed in their current roles on the SPMT. Vote carried in favour 7/7.

7. Membership re-affirm

a. Confirmation from Members (both Individual and Organisations)

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HD proposed a vote by one representative of each member organisation to re-affirm their membership of Sandbach Partnership for the forthcoming year. Vote carried in favour 7/7 with one absentee vote also in favour – result 8/8.

HD noted that all absent members on the current membership list would receive a communication following the meeting to re-affirm their position. **ACTION**

b. Presentation of impact report intention

AMR highlighted the responsibilities of members as per the newly adopted constitution and provided an overview of the benefits of being a member of Sandbach Partnership.

AMR set out the benefits as:

- Quarterly peer to peer networking with other Partnership members
- Opportunities to collaborate on projects with other volunteer organisations
- Free quarterly education sessions on various topics nominated by members
- Free online marketing of member groups and activities utilising Sandbach Partnership website and social media
- Free access to Project, Marketing, Communication (including online channels) and Funding advice
- Use of the ‘Sandbach Partnership Impact report’ for use with external funding and grant agencies which demonstrates return on investment (subject to contribution)
- Free Public liability insurance cover (subject to terms)
- Free access to standard printing, copying, laminating

AMR provided an insight into the approach for the ‘Sandbach Partnership Impact Report’ and set out that data such as volunteer hours, funding received, benefit to the community would need to be provided to develop the content which could be used beneficially by all when seeking funding from external bodies.

AMR opined that the approach by Management Team was intentionally more collaborative with its members with the aim to act more as one Partnership.

Attendees were receptive to the change in approach. AMR to circulate the note to those not in attendance and provide members with more details on data required and when.

ACTION

8. Plan for 2023-24

HD provided a read out of a draft works plan for the next calendar year 2024 which included an outline of 12 initial ideas for projects/events.

HD noted that all 12 would go through an assessment process to review their feasibility in relation to need, cost, resources etc.

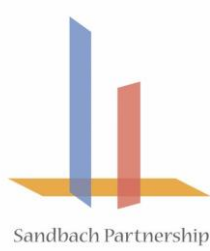
A healthy discussion was held with topics such as inclusivity, accessibility amongst others considered. HD noted that the document would be circulated to members following the meeting and that it was open for comments and other suggestions for projects/events to be added. **ACTION**

9. Any Other Business

No other business was raised for discussion.

a. Date of next Membership Meeting (Forum Meeting)

HD noted that the next quarterly forum meeting should be scheduled for Christmas week and given the timing proposed that it be moved to mid-January. Members agreed.



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HD advised the education session as part of the next meeting was listed as insurance provision. NK to provide the dates of 16th or 23rd January to potential speaker for availability and thereafter a venue can be secured. **ACTION**

HD to set the date for the next quarterly forum meeting and secure venue. **ACTION**

HD thanked all who attended the meeting and the meeting closed at 20:40.

Nicola Kapusniak
Vice – Chair
Date 21 November 2023

ACTIONS

	Numbered point	Description	Owner	Due date
1	3bi	Make new constitution available on SP website	Anne-Marie Robinson	15.11.2023
2	3bii	Details of how to make annual membership fee and due date to be circulated to members	Anne-Marie Robinson	15.11.2023
3	3bii	Communication to be sent to all absent members noting constitutional changes and requesting reply	Anne-Marie Robinson/Helen Dorney	15.11.2023
4	7b	Guidance note to be provided to members regarding data required for new Impact Report	Anne-Marie Robinson	15.12.2023
5	8	Circulate a copy of the Works plan proposed for 2024 with members	Anne-Marie Robinson	15.11.2023
6	9a	Seek to secure insurance speaker for next quarterly forum meeting to be held in January	Nicola Kapusniak	30.11.2023
7	9a	Set date for the next quarterly forum meeting and secure venue	Helen Dorney	31.12.2023