



Congleton Town Council

Historic market town

Town Clerk: BRIAN HOGAN



22nd August 2013

Dear Councillor,

Community, Environment and Services Committee – Thursday 29th August 2013

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Community, Environment & Services Committee, to be held in the Town Hall, High Street, Congleton on **Thursday 29th August 2013 at 7.00pm.**

Please note that there will be a meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee on the same evening, commencing at 7.45pm

The Public and Press are welcome to attend the meeting. There may be confidential items towards the end of the meeting which the law requires the Council to make a resolution to exclude the public and press.

Yours sincerely,

TOWN CLERK

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence. (Members are reminded of the necessity to give apologies in advance of the meeting and to give reasons for absence).
2. Minutes of Last Meeting (enclosed)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 6th June 2013 as a correct.

3. Declarations of Interest

Members are requested to declare both "pecuniary" and "non pecuniary" interests as early in the meeting as they become known.

Congleton
beartown
where friends are made

Congleton Town Council, Town Hall, High Street, Congleton, Cheshire CW12 1BN

Tel: 01260 270350 Fax: 01260 280357

Email: info@congletontowncouncil.co.uk www.congleton-tc.gov.uk

4. Outstanding Actions

CES/02/1213

The Town Council to pursue all options available in order to resolve the problem of the Boat, including S215 enforcement via CEBC, in addition, the Clerk to contact McCarthy and Stone to elicit their assistance in the matter.

CES/34/1213

The Committee support the "Responsible Dog Scheme" pilot being introduced at Bromley Farm and will evaluate its success in 6 months with a view to rolling out the scheme throughout the town.

CES/05/1314

That the proposed arrangement on CCTV provision to be reviewed at the next meeting.

5. Floral Arrangement Working Group (enclosed)

To receive the minutes of the Floral Arrangement Working Group meeting dated 18th June 2013.

6. Boat on the River Dane (enclosed)

To receive an update on progress being made to resolve the issue of the boat on the River Dane and to receive correspondence from Mr R J Morris concerning a FOI request.

7. Propagation Unit (enclosed)

To consider the proposed agreement from Cheshire East Borough Council for the Town Council to acquire the Propagation Unit.

8. Eaton Bank Academy (enclosed)

To consider correspondence from Eaton Bank Academy concerning a proposed visit by students to the Town Hall.

9. Easements over Common Land and Village Greens (enclosed)

To receive and consider correspondence from Cllr David Topping concerning Hankinson's Field.

10. Free Car Parking after 3pm (enclosed)

To receive and consider correspondence from Cllr David Topping concerning free car parking in Congleton after 3pm.

11. Parking Outside Schools (enclosed)

To revive and consider a number of responses to the matter of parking outside schools.

12. Mountview Consultation (enclosed)

To consider the Mountview Consultation Report produced by Cheshire East Borough Council.

13. Changes to Permit Holders in Park Road and Park View (enclosed)

To receive and consider correspondence from Mr T Brough concerning changes to parking holders permits in Park Road and Park View.

14. Paddling Pool (enclosed)

To consider a letter expressing concern at the Paddling Pool activities.

15. Rural Fair Share Petition (enclosed)

To consider the notion of a Rural Fair Share Petition emanating from the Rural Fair Share Campaign.

16. Volunteers Policy (enclosed)

To consider and approve the proposed amendments to the Volunteers Policy.

17. Footpath Map (enclosed)

To consider a proposal from Jeremy Condliffe to produce a footpath walking map around Congleton, which includes seeking a name for the map and assistance towards funding.

18. Nuisance at Princess Street Car Park (enclosed)

To consider a number of letters relating to the nuisance which is occurring at the Princess Street car park.

19. Remembrance Sunday (enclosed)

To consider a request from the Cheshire Lord Lieutenancy to involve them in this year's Remembrance Sunday Service.

20. Congleton Market (enclosed)

To review and consider a translation of the Market Charters and an interpretation of the Charters contents produced by Ian Doughty of Congleton Museum.

21. Changes to Bus Services in Congleton (enclosed)

To consider information relating to changes in bus service provision in Congleton.

22. Community Assets Fund (enclosed)

To receive and consider correspondence from Fiona Bruce MP concerning the Community Asset Fund.

23. Heavy Goods Vehicles on Howey Lane (enclosed)

To consider a letter from a resident concerned at the volume of heavy goods vehicles using Howey Lane.

24. Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (enclosed)

To consider the problems with the funding formula for CCGs.

25. Cheshire Police

To receive and consider a verbal report from a representative of Cheshire Police on Policing matters affecting Congleton.

26. Resolution to exclude the Public and Press

To consider passing a resolution in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that public and press be excluded from the meeting for the matters set out below on the grounds that it could involve the likely disclosure of private and confidential information or staff matters.

To	Members of the Community and Environment Committee
	Appointed Member, Hon Burgess Mrs M M Williamson
ccs.	Other members of the Council and Honorary Burgesses (4) for Information; Press (3)

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY, ENVIRONMENT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 6TH JUNE 2013

PRESENT: Councillors G S Williams (Chairman in the Chair)
 Mrs D S Allen
 P Bates
 G Baxendale
 J S Crowther
 G R Edwards
 Mrs A M Martin
 D Murphy
 Mrs J D Parry
 N T Price

1. APOLOGIES.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Ms. L Bours, G.P Hayes (Town Mayor) and Miss R.K Williams.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

CES/01/1314 RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 21st March 2013 to be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are requested to declare both "pecuniary" and "non-pecuniary" interests as early in the meeting as they become known.

Cllr G. Baxendale declared a non-pecuniary interest in any matters relating to Cheshire East Borough Council.

4. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

CAE/02/1112

The Town Council to pursue all options available in order to resolve the problem of the Boat, including S215 enforcement via CEBC, in addition, the Town Clerk to contact McCarthy and Stone to elicit their assistance in the matter.

CES/24/1213

The Town Clerk to write to all Congleton Cheshire East Councillors asking for their support to lobby Cheshire East to take whatever measures are necessary to have the boat removed.

CES/33/1213

1. The Town Clerk to contact Cheshire East to expedite the improvement work on the boat.
2. Cllr D.Brown will provide an update at the next committee meeting on Cheshire East's work in the area.

4. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS continued..

CES/34/1213

The Committee support the "Responsible Dog Scheme" pilot being introduced at Bromley Farm and will evaluate its success in 6 months with a view to rolling out the scheme throughout the town.

5. FLORAL ARRANGEMENT WORKING GROUP

CES/02/1314 RESOLVED that the minutes of the Floral Arrangement Working Group meetings dated 4th April and 2nd May 2013 be received and signed by the Chairman.

6. BOAT ON THE RIVER DANE

It was noted that Cheshire East Enforcement Officers are currently working on a report to the Authority to take action via an S215 notice. The report has to go to Legal then requires an authorising signature before processing the notice.

CES/03/1314 RESOLVED that the action being taken by Cheshire East Borough Council be approved and endorsed.

7. PROPAGATION UNIT

The Committee considered a report on leasing the Propagation Unit from Cheshire East Borough Council on a peppercorn lease. It was noted that there were some matters still to resolve on the issue with the Borough Council.

CES/04/1314 RESOLVED that:-

1. The report be received.
2. The amended Lease Agreement to be received at the next meeting.

8. CCTV

A report on the future of CCTV provision in the Town was considered, and concern was expressed at the short sighted view being taken by Cheshire East Borough Council concerning the provision of CCTV.

CES/05/1314 RESOLVED that:-

3. The report be received.
4. That the proposed arrangement on CCTV provision to be reviewed at the next meeting.

9. EATON BANK ACADEMY

A group of letters addressed to the Town Mayor produced by students of Eaton Bank Academy on Global Warming were considered.

CES/06/1314 RESOLVED that:-

1. A letter of thanks to be sent to the Academy.
2. The students to be invited to discuss the issues and concerns they raised on Global Warming with a select number of Town and Youth Councillors.

10. MERCIAN MARCH & LINK WITH QUIEVRAIN

A summary of the arrangements for the Mercian March which takes place on the 14th June 2013, together with a request for the Town Council to consider linking with Quievrain to honour the bravery of the Cheshire Regiment in 1914 were discussed

CES/07/1314 RESOLVED that:-

1. The Town Council to provide suitable refreshments to the Mercian Regiment after the March on 14th June 2013.
2. To forge a link with Quievrain via Mayor TE Pickering (Ret'd).

11. HILARY AVENUE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

The Hilary Avenue Allotment Society provided notice of a change of Secretary.

CES/08/1314 RESOLVED that:-

1. The notice of change of Secretary be received.
2. A letter of thanks to be sent to the retiring Secretary for all her sterling work.

12. PCSO PARTNER LEVEL SERVICE AGREEMENT

A PCSO Partner Level Service Agreement for the provision of 4 PCSOs in the Town for a further 3 years was considered.

CES/09/1314 RESOLVED that:-

1. Clarification be sought for the need for a clause on TUPE.
2. Document to be updated to include Congleton Town Council where appropriate.

13. EASEMENTS OVER COMMON LAND AND VILLAGE GREENS

Documents produced by NALC on Easements Over Common Land and Village Greens, as well as a paper on Village Greens produced by Friends of Coombe Wood were considered.

CES/09/1314 RESOLVED that the Town Clerk write to Cheshire East Borough Council to seek assurances that Hankinson's Field will remain a green open public space.

14. HS2

A report on HS2 produced by Paul Nuttall MEP was noted.

15. WAR MEMORIAL

A report on the refurbishment programme for the War Memorial was discussed.

CES/10/1314 RESOLVED that:-

1. The report be received.
2. That the Town Council registers the land on which the War Memorial is located and the surrounding land.

16. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

There was no resolution to exclude the Public and press.

17. CHESHIRE POLICE

Sgt. Russel Thomas outlined the key points contained within the PCSO Partner Level Service Agreement and pointed out the vital role that PCSOs play in policing the Town.

It was also pointed out that comparatively speaking, Congleton's anti-social behaviour problems are far less than many other nearby Towns and certainly there are far less night time economy problems.

It was also noted that Cllr P. Bates had spent 2 nights on patrol with a PCSO and that other Councillors intended to take the opportunity to go on patrol with the Police. Concern was expressed at the parking issue around Marfields School and other schools in the area. It was noted that zig zag lines near schools were ineffective and that the Borough Council ought to replace them with double yellow lines.

CES/11/1314 RESOLVED that:-

1. The report from the Police be received.
2. Cllr Baxendale to raise the issue of installing double yellow lines instead of zig zag lines at all schools with Strategic Highways.

G Williams
Chairman (In the Chair)

MINUTES OF THE FLORAL ARRANGEMENT WORKING GROUP

Tuesday June 18th 2013

Cllrs. G. Williams (Acting Chairman)

J MacArthur
C Jones
P Pinto

1. Apologies for absence (Members are respectfully reminded of the necessity to submit any apology for absence in advance and to give a reason for non attendance)

Apologies for absence were received from R Edwards, N Price, D Parker, E Clarke, D Brown, B Hogan

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

FA/03/1314 Recommended that the minutes of the meeting held on the 18th May, 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Declarations of Interest

Members are requested to declare both "personal" and "personal and prejudicial" interests as early in the meeting as they become known.

There were no declarations of interest

4. Next Steps

FA/04/1314 Recommended

- a. Make sure that all the relevant sections of Cheshire East are aware of judging day on the 22 July and schedule grass cuts/ hedge cuts/ roundabout work to ensure areas on the route look their best for the 22 July (CJ/ DB)
- b. Anti-litter stickers to be put out on all bins – this has started. Handymen to complete (CJ)
- c. Portfolio needs to be prepared – JMacA to mock out a draft and ask for help where needed to make sure we can evidence all the areas in the judging criteria – include litter campaigns, Reedsmoor, tree planting, spring planting, winter tubs, Bath Vale sensory garden, community garden, wildflower meadow, all the improvement areas (JM)
- d. Make contact with everyone and brief all the groups being visited by the judges

Daven School (JM)
Childrens Centre (GW)

DB

Astbury Mere (JM)
New Life Church (JM)
Community Garden (JM)
Capitol Walk (PP)
Hilary Avenue Allotments (JM)
Siemens (JM)

- e. Anti-litter and dog mess campaign trial starting at Bromley Farm. (GW)
- f. Four litter picks have been organised by GW from 10am – 11am on the four Saturdays leading up to the judging day. Posters, press release and fliers to be sorted by JM. GW to put through doors.
- g. Schools being encouraged to sign up to Tidy Britain Litter campaign (PP)
- h. Check number of litter pickers available to schools (JM)
- i. Contact McDonalds, Shell, Tesco about litter picks (GW)
- j. Resolve fruit trees into land at rear of Fairground car park (GW)
- k. Check what's happened to Christian – volunteer helper (JM)
- l. Interpretation board for Community Orchard – upto £500 (PP)
Interpretation board of Community Garden (use noticeboard) (JM)
Interpretation board for Park – temporary (GW /Julie Byrne)
Interpretation sign for Capitol Walk (JM/PP)
- m. Possible use of bungalow facilities for groups clearing churchyard (GW)
- n. Planting around trees in big tubs on Mountbatten Way Park Road end (PP)
- o. Move 5 herb tubs from Polytunnel to Capitol Walk (CJ)
- p. Move 4 herb tubs from Polytunnel to Community Garden (CJ)
- q. Contact Olga about blueberry tubs for Community Garden (JM)
- r. Look to see how we can improve Welcome sign areas – use spare troughs? (GW) Order 10 more bags of compost for tubs (JM)
- s. Additional floral display units have been purchased and will be installed in the pedestrianized area. (JM/BH)
- t. Sort out a timeline to cover 3 hours 9am – 12 noon. Allow plenty of time to meet volunteers (BH/JM)
- u. Request for £300 to plant the area alongside River Dane walkway where the Princes Trust have been clearing and improving the area from In Bloom budget Agreed.(GW to action)
- v. Request to improve footpath cutting past Cheshire Tavern from West Road (CJ)
- w. Request to improve planters at the back of the car park near St Mary's (GW to look at potential Princes Trust)
- x. Request to look at the area by the cricket club/wall on West Road (CJ/GW)
- y. Need to remove a leaning conifer near Barclays Bank (CJ to look at)

5. Buglawton and Bromley Farm

- a. Buglawton has entered as a Neighbourhood, as has Bromley Farm
- b. Some additional planters now in place and looking good.
- c. Consider installing some planters/troughs at Edinburgh Road and near the entrance to the woods
- d. Neighbourhoods to ask asap for what support is needed/expected from CTC

AB

6. Volunteers

- a. Ensure there are noticeboards erected in key areas explaining planting, who has provided it etc.
- b. Determine how to attract volunteers (All)

7. Judging Route

- a. Identify special features to show the judges en route, Plaque in the Park, Park Live sculptures, roundabouts
- b. Start at Astbury Mere, include River Dane Walkway, Hilary Avenue Allotments
- c. New Life Church
- d. Siemens

Date of next meeting

TBA w/c 8/7/13



D Brown
Chairman

Brian Hogan

From: BAXENDALE, Gordon (Councillor) <Gordon.Baxendale@cheshireeast.gov.uk>
Sent: 08 August 2013 18:58
To: Brian Hogan
Subject: FW: Steamboat

Sent with Good (www.good.com)

-----Original Message-----

From: ACKERLEY, Deborah
Sent: Thursday, August 08, 2013 06:55 PM GMT Standard Time
To: BAXENDALE, Gordon (Councillor)
Subject: Steamboat

Dear Councillor Baxendale

I can confirm that a S215 (Untidy Site) Notice was issued on 7th August 2013 with regards to the Steamboat. It comes into effect on 9th September and allows a period of two months for compliance with its requirements which are to either remove the steamboat or carry out a schedule of works attached to the Notice.

There is a right of appeal through the magistrates court and I anticipate that Mr Morris will appeal.

I will endeavour to keep you appraised.

Regards

Deborah

*Deborah Ackerley
Principal Planning Officer (Enforcement)
01270 686750
Southern Office*

*Correspondence Address
PO Box 606
Municipal Buildings
Earle Street
Crewe
CW1 9HP*

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Brian Hogan

From: BAXENDALE, Gordon (Councillor) <Gordon.Baxendale@cheshireeast.gov.uk>
Sent: 05 August 2013 08:03
To: Brian Hogan
Subject: FW: Town Council Meeting 22nd August. CEBC Councillor's Report

Brian, thought that this would add. To the spate of emails flying around. This is not confidential so can be given to councillors.
Regards Gordon

Sent with Good (www.good.com)

-----Original Message-----

From: ACKERLEY, Deborah
Sent: Monday, August 05, 2013 07:54 AM GMT Standard Time
To: BAXENDALE, Gordon (Councillor)
Subject: RE: Town Council Meeting 22nd August. CEBC Councillor's Report

Dear Councillor Baxendale

I can confirm that this matter is in hand and that Cheshire East Council has been in communication with the owner of the boat. I can also confirm that he has failed to take the action requested consequently authority is being sought with regards to the issue of a S215 (Untidy Site) Notice in relation to the condition of the Pearl of the Dane.

Once authority has been given and the Notice has been issued I will advise you.

Regards

Deborah

*Deborah Ackerley
Principal Planning Officer (Enforcement)
01270 686750
Southern Office*

*Correspondence Address
PO Box 606
Municipal Buildings
Earle Street
Crewe
CW1 9HP*

From: BAXENDALE, Gordon (Councillor)
Sent: 04 August 2013 15:41
To: ACKERLEY, Deborah
Subject: FW: Town Council Meeting 22nd August. CEBC Councillor's Report

Deborah, I wonder if you give me a reply which I can use at Town Council on the 22nd of August. I will be very grateful for a statement that can be used at a public meeting and does not compromise ongoing actions
Very best regards Gordon Baxendale

Sent with Good (www.good.com)

-----Original Message-----

From: G GOODWIN

Sent: Sunday, August 04, 2013 08:04 AM GMT Standard Time

To: BAXENDALE, Gordon (Councillor)

Subject: Town Council Meeting 22nd August. CEBC Councillor's Report

Dear Councillor Baxendale

It is now some months (4/5) since it was agreed that CEBC would issue a S215 notice to the owner of the Pearl On The Dane.

Since it is evident that no work has yet been carried out on the boat, I would respectfully request that your CEBC Councillor's report should include confirmation that the notice has now been issued together with a current progress report / response from the owner.

Many thanks and best regards

Graham Goodwin

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Legal documents: The Council does not accept service of legal documents by email.

R.J. Morris

Freedom of Information Officer
Congleton Town Council
Town Hall
High Street
Congleton
Cheshire
CW12 1BN



07/08/13

Dear FOI Officer,

This is a request under the Freedom of Information Act and the Environmental protection Act. Could you please supply me with all files including any contemporaneous or internal notes, memo's etc the Town Council holds concerning Mr. Ray Morris also "The Pearl of the Dane" Congleton Quay, Mountbatten Way, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1AQ.

Please include copies of material which you hold in the form of paper and electronic records including emails.

I look forward to hearing from you promptly, as required by the legislation, and in any case within 20 working days.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to be "R.J. Morris".

Mr R. J. Morris

HEADS OF TERMS

14th June 2013

Licence Agreement – Congleton Propagation Unit

Licensors

Cheshire East Borough Council

Licensee

Congleton Town Council

Licence Area

As shown delineated red on the attached plan.

Period

12 month rolling licence

Licence Fee

£1.00 (if demanded)

Fees

£350 Legal fee

£350 Surveyors fee

User

Propagation Unit

Licensors Rights of Use

The Licensors peak periods of operation are:-

- 24th May – 21st June
- 23rd September – 21st October

During these periods the Licensors may require full use of the site for operational reasons.

The Licensors shall also be permitted to request the use of the Propagation Unit through the year with a minimum notice of 4 weeks to be provided to the Licensee.

Termination

Either party shall be entitled to terminate the Licence with no less than 6 months prior written notice.

Hours of Operation

To be agreed by the Licensee and Licensors (Cheshire East Council Streetscape Team).

Car Parking

The Licensee shall not be permitted to park within Congleton Park in any non parking areas without the prior consent of the Congleton Park Manager.

The Licensee shall be permitted to access the Licence Area with vehicles for deliveries only.

Security

The Licensee will be responsible for the security of any items within their ownership during occupation.

Permissions

It is the responsibility of the Licensee to ensure that any necessary permissions statutory or otherwise have been acquired if necessary.

Health and Safety

The Licensee will be responsible for complying with all statutory regulations and bye laws in connection with the operation of the site.

Nuisance

The Licensee shall not in any way interfere with any other use of the land by other persons entitled to use the same or so authorised by the Licensee.

The Licensee shall not in any way interfere with the running of Congleton Park.

The Licensee shall not cause any nuisance to the residential residents as a result of their occupation of the Propagation Unit.

Insurance

The Licensee will indemnify the Owner against any actions, claims, costs, demands, losses, injuries, charges, expenses and liabilities whatsoever as a result of the Licensees occupation of the property.

To effect insurance to a minimum level of ten million pounds (£10,000,000.00) in respect of public liability and against all costs claims demands or legal proceedings for death personal injury or any loss or damage caused to property however caused arising or resulting from the occupation or use of the land by the Licensee or from the use or operation of any equipment machinery rides or sideshows on the land and to produce valid and current Certificates of Insurance to the Council prior to the signing of this Agreement

The Licensee will be responsible for the security and insurance of any items stored on site.

Alienation

The Licensee shall be permitted to allow community groups to use the Propagation Unit subject to prior written consent being granted by the Licensor (such consent not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed)

Maintenance

The Licensee shall be responsible for the day to day maintenance of the Propagation Unit whilst in occupation. This will be Subject to agreement between the Licensee and Licensor (Cheshire East Council Streetscape Team). The following items shall not be used by the Licensee:-

- Heating System
- Irrigation System

Reinstatement

All areas will be reinstated to the reasonable satisfaction of the Licensor upon expiry of the Licence.

Assets & Facilities
Cheshire East Council

TANSEY, Patrick

From: GRIFFIES, Charlie
Sent: 05 April 2013 13:42
To: TANSEY, Patrick; BOFFEY, Ruth
Subject: Congleton Park



Charlie Griffies
Streetscape Operations Manager (South)
Cheshire East Council
Pym's Lane Depot
Crewe
CW1 3PJ

Tel: 01270 686840
Mob: 07971 575509
Email: charlie.griffies@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Web: www.cheshireeast.gov.uk

Brian Hogan

From: Congleton Town Council
Sent: 02 July 2013 09:07
To: Brian Hogan
Subject: FW: FAO Brian Hogan

From info

From: Sarah Longshaw [mailto:][redacted]
Sent: 01 July 2013 19:41
To: Congleton Town Council
Cc: George Hayes
Subject: FAO Brian Hogan

Dear Mr Hogan

Thank you for your invitation for Y7 to visit the Council to further discuss the letters they wrote relating to global warming, and which you have so thoughtfully responded to. I am sorry that it will not be possible for us to do this - although we did very much enjoy our visit from Councillor Holland. It has been great to get feedback from the Council, in the form of letters and to know that you have considered the students concerns. I am sure that this will help the students to feel that their opinions matter and that it will encourage them with activities like this in the future.

Yours sincerely
Sarah Longshaw

Eaton Bank Academy
Jackson Road,
Congleton
Cheshire,
CW12 1NT
T. 01260 273000
F. 01260 297352
W. www.eatonbank.org

'BELIEVE IN SUCCESS''

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Printing this email? Please think environmentally and only print when essential!

Brian Hogan

From: TOPPING, David (Councillor) <David.Topping@cheshireeast.gov.uk>
Sent: 10 June 2013 18:13
To: Brian Hogan
Cc: BROWN, David (Councillor); Glen Williams (glen1971@hotmail.co.uk); Paul Bates
Subject: RE: Hankinson's Field

Brian

There is no plan of which I am aware to change Hankinson's Field from its current designation.

David Topping (Cllr.)
Cabinet Member for Environment
Cheshire East Council
Tel: 01260 272987
Mob: 07772 866 896
e-mail: david.topping@cheshireeast.gov.uk

From: Brian Hogan [bh@congletontowncouncil.co.uk]
Sent: 10 June 2013 15:03
To: TOPPING, David (Councillor)
Cc: BROWN, David (Councillor); Glen Williams (glen1971@hotmail.co.uk); Paul Bates
Subject: Hankinson's Field

Cllr Topping,

At a meeting held last week of the Community, Environment and Services committee of Congleton Town Council, the members requested that I seek assurances from Cheshire East relating to Hankinson's Field, which they want to see remain as a green public open space

Kind regards

Brian

Confidentiality: This email and its contents and any attachments are intended only for the above named. As the email may contain confidential or legally privileged information, if you are not the above named person or responsible for delivery to the above named, or suspect that you are not an intended recipient please delete or destroy the email and any attachments immediately.

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Access as a public body: The Council may be required to disclose this

Brian Hogan

From: TOPPING, David (Councillor) <David.Topping@cheshireeast.gov.uk>
Sent: 14 June 2013 15:40
To: Brian Hogan; BURNS, Paul (Parking)
Cc: 'larry@barker07.orangehome.co.uk'; Jackie MacArthur; 'bobed@sky.com'
Subject: Re: Car Parking

Categories: Red Category

Brian

I knew you would be interested as will other towns. It will be only one car park in Macc and this will be the plan for other towns to follow soon after. No dates available yet but we'll keep you informed. I do not want undue delay.

David Topping (Cllr)
Tel: 01260 272987

From: Brian Hogan [mailto:bh@congletontowncouncil.co.uk]
Sent: Friday, June 14, 2013 09:04 AM GMT Standard Time
To: BURNS, Paul (Parking)
Cc: Larry Barker (larry@barker07.orangehome.co.uk) <larry@barker07.orangehome.co.uk>; Cong Town Council; Bob Edwards (bobed@sky.com) <bobed@sky.com>; TOPPING, David (Councillor)
Subject: Car Parking

Paul,

I understand that certain car parks in Macclesfield are to offer free car parking after 3pm. We would like to be updated on the success of this scheme as this is something that the Town Council have considered previously and would like to see introduced in Congleton

Kind regards

Brian Hogan
Congleton Town Council

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Access as a public body: The Council may be required to disclose this

Brian Hogan

From: Russell Thomas <russell.thomas@cheshire.pnn.police.uk>
Sent: 10 June 2013 15:28
To: 'LAWSON, Alan'; HOWARD, James; WELCH, Rob; 'peter.shields@cheshirefire.gov.uk'
Cc: BAXENDALE, Gordon (Councillor); TOPPING, David (Councillor); Brian Hogan
Subject: RE: Parking outside schools ~[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]~

Hi Alan

As discussed, as far as I am aware, none of the Congleton primary schools have signs and I am not aware of TRO's in place for them.

If there are TRO's then this needs suitable signage to back up enforcement.

In addition, the yellow lines are virtually invisible around Waggs Road.

The below link is very helpful and backs up my comments about obstruction.

If there are TROs in place, it would help if we have sight of them and also correct signage.

Regards

Russell Thomas (SGT 2440)

Congleton Police Station
Market Square
Congleton
CW12 1FL

From: LAWSON, Alan [mailto:alan.lawson@cheshireeast.gov.uk]
Sent: 10 June 2013 11:43
To: HOWARD, James; WELCH, Rob; 'peter.shields@cheshirefire.gov.uk'
Cc: BAXENDALE, Gordon (Councillor); TOPPING, David (Councillor); 'Brian Hogan'; Russell Thomas
Subject: RE: Parking outside schools

For more information

<http://www.drivingtesttips.biz/yellow-zig-zag-lines.html>

Alan Lawson
Congleton Local Area Partnership Manager
Cheshire East Council

Telephone: 01625 383843
Mobile: 07776 198 973



From: HOWARD, James
Sent: 10 June 2013 11:30
To: LAWSON, Alan; WELCH, Rob; 'peter.shields@cheshirefire.gov.uk'
Cc: BAXENDALE, Gordon (Councillor); TOPPING, David (Councillor); 'Brian Hogan'; 'Russell Thomas'
Subject: RE: Parking outside schools

Folks

The premise that parking on zig zags is only enforceable if causing an obstruction is false. Both yellow lines and zig zags need a TRO to back them up but both are enforceable.

Yellow lines (without a loading ban) are given 5 mins observation to see if loading and unloading is taking place (which would be allowed). Zig zags can be an instant ticket (therefore a preferred option).

Hope this helps

Regards

James

James Howard

Project and Development Manager

www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/parking

01625 378193

From: LAWSON, Alan

Sent: 10 June 2013 11:17

To: WELCH, Rob; 'peter.shields@cheshirefire.gov.uk'

Cc: BAXENDALE, Gordon (Councillor); TOPPING, David (Councillor); 'Brian Hogan'; 'Russell Thomas'; HOWARD, James

Subject: Parking outside schools

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I also wondered however what the views of Highways (e.g. Minor Works??) and the Road Safety Partnership would be on this and what role there might be for those two bodies in taking forward any work on this issue?

So I would welcome your views.

Best regards,

Alan.



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Driving theory test tips for passing the theory test

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Yellow zig zag line

School Keep Clear road markings were initially introduced in the 1964 Traffic Signs Regulations. They were originally consisting of broken white lines that formed a box containing the words 'School Entrance'.

In 1975 these markings were changed to the current yellow zig zag lines with the words 'School Keep Clear' placed between the zig zag lines.

Due to the success in helping to prevent accidents between motorists and children, these yellow zig zag lines are now seen at the majority of school entrances.

Yellow zig zag lines can also be found at the entrance or exits of hospitals, fire stations, police stations or ambulance stations and are used to indicate the length of road where you should not wait, stop or park a vehicle.

Where there is an upright sign, there is a mandatory prohibition of stopping during the times shown. Yellow and white zig zag road markings are placed to show that the area must be kept clear to allow an unrestricted view for approaching drivers and riders or children wanting to cross the road.

Parking on yellow zig zag lines

It is possible to park on yellow zig zag lines legally under certain circumstances:



Yellow zig zag lines outside of a school

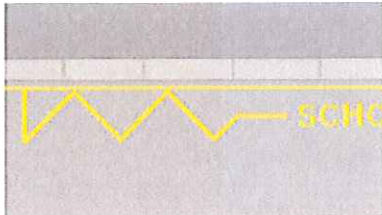
Yellow zig zag lines with signs
Yellow zig zag lines outside of a school that have signs erected to inform motorists of the hours of operation will have parking restrictions that are enforced legally by local councils. Signs must be placed near the yellow zig zag lines to allow a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to be effective and will provide the local council with powers to issue a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) by use of CCTV or Civil Enforcement Officers. Motorists are legally permitted to park on the yellow zig zag lines outside of the hours marked on the signs, unless other road markings indicate otherwise (see below for further details).

Yellow zig zag lines without signs
Yellow zig zag lines without signs to accompany them do not have a Traffic Regulation Order giving the local council powers to issue PCN fines. Therefore it is technically legal to park on yellow zig zag lines without signs at any time. However, these zig zag road markings are placed there to advise motorists not to wait or park on these lines for the safety of children and although the local council do not have the powers to enforce penalties, police frequently issue tickets in such cases. Tickets are issued on the grounds of causing an obstruction to either other motorists or pedestrians and not for parking on the yellow zig zag lines directly.

Yellow zig zag lines with single yellow line

A yellow zig zag line with a single yellow line indicates two sets of instructions must be followed. If the yellow zig zags have a time plate sign as described above to restrict parking and also the restriction placed by the single yellow line.

Single yellow lines have parking restrictions at certain times of the day at certain days of the week. These are detailed by either road-side signs or are part of a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ).



Yellow zig zag lines with a single yellow line

A CPZ is an area with controlled parking instead of a single street. All possible entrances into the CPZ area have signs telling a motorists they are entering a CPZ and restrictions that apply.

4 Ways to Avoid Running Out of Money During Retirement

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Yellow zig zag lines rules and law

- [Road markings and lines](#)
- [Yellow zig zag lines](#)
- [Double yellow lines](#)
- [Single yellow lines](#)
- [Keep clear road markings](#)

Signs found at yellow zig zag lines

Yellow zig zag lines that have restricted parking enforced by local councils or the police must have a sign to accompany the lines.

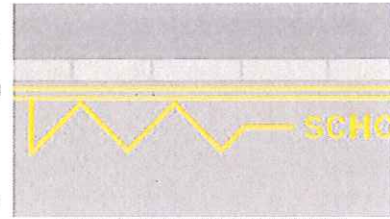


Yellow zig zag lines sign

Yellow zig zag lines with double yellow line

Restrictions may be in force for the yellow zig zag lines and restrictions for parking due to double yellow lines.

Double yellow lines have limited restrictions. Disabled blue badge holders can park for up to 3 hours in areas where no loading restrictions are in place. Motorists and commercial vehicles may unload or load vehicles for a prescribed time outside of restricted loading areas and motorists may stop to drop off or pick up passengers providing there are no waiting restrictions in force.



Yellow zig zag lines with double yellow line

Yellow zig zag lines Penalty Charge Notice (PCN)

Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) are issued to motorists that do not conform to the rules restricting them from waiting, stopping or parking even to pick up or drop off children to school on yellow zig zag lines if restrictions are in force. Civil Enforcement Officers issue PCNs if restricted parking is dealt with by local councils.

[Parking Management](#)

www.combinedparkingsolutions.com

Regain your car park in a few days - free to setup and effective



The vast majority of parking or waiting fines in the UK are now enforced as a civil (local council) rather than a criminal (police) matter. A PCN doesn't result in a criminal record or points on a licence if dealt with by the council.

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In areas where the local authority doesn't have civil parking enforcement powers parking is enforced by the police or police-employed traffic wardens who will issue a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) enforced through the criminal justice system.

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Over 55 years of age? Get up to 40% more pension income.



[Yellow zig zag parking fine](#)

Fines vary due to the location of the offence. Stopping in a restricted area outside a school will result in a higher fine. The fee is halved if paid within 14 days and you have 28 days to pay or challenge.

AdChoices 

Brian Hogan

From: LAWSON, Alan <alan.lawson@cheshireeast.gov.uk>
Sent: 10 June 2013 11:17
To: WELCH, Rob; 'peter.shields@cheshirefire.gov.uk'
Cc: BAXENDALE, Gordon (Councillor); TOPPING, David (Councillor); Brian Hogan; 'Russell Thomas'; HOWARD, James
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Best regards,

Alan.

Alan Lawson
Congleton Local Area Partnership Manager
Cheshire East Council
Telephone: 01625 383843
Mobile: 07776 198 973



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Hope this helps

Regards

James

James Howard

Project and Development Manager

www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/parking

01625 378193

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Brian Hogan

From: BAXENDALE, Gordon (Councillor) <Gordon.Baxendale@cheshireeast.gov.uk>
Sent: 07 June 2013 12:59
To: LAWSON, Alan
Cc: TOPPING, David (Councillor); Brian Hogan
Subject: RE: School parking

Alan, the main issue started with parking at Marlfields and then widened to other schools within the area. Russell was speaking as a very experienced officer and an. Ex school governor when stating that in his opinion zig zags do not stop people parking. I think the best way forward is what you suggest I. e. the management board look at this and widen their views if necessary
Regards Gordon

Sent with Good (www.good.com)

-----Original Message-----

From: LAWSON, Alan
Sent: Friday, June 07, 2013 10:29 AM GMT Standard Time
To: BAXENDALE, Gordon (Councillor)
Cc: TOPPING, David (Councillor); 'Brian Hogan'
Subject: RE: School parking

Morning Gordon,

It's difficult to give an informed comment without knowing the reasons for this damnation. Is it a safety issue? Or more a legal one?

Whatever the issue, if this is something the Police feel strongly about then perhaps it's something they could raise at the LAP's Management Group meeting - there's one coming up on 27th June. Sgt Russell Thomas and/or Inspector Stuart York normally attend these meetings. I don't know who gave this report at the Town Council meeting, but I'd imagine Russ and/or Stuart would be aware of the issue.

On the other hand, this may well be an issue that goes beyond our LAP and affects the whole of the Borough - in which case some Borough-wide forum may be a more appropriate one within which to consider this. There is, for example, a multi-agency Road Safety Group that covers the Borough and maybe that's where this issue should be addressed. I don't know the details of the group off the top of my head, but I could do a bit of digging around if required.

Let me know what you think anyway - happy to discuss.

Best regards,

Alan.

Alan Lawson
Congleton Local Area Partnership Manager
Cheshire East Council
Telephone: 01625 383843

1

-----Original Message-----

From: BAXENDALE, Gordon (Councillor)

Sent: 07 June 2013 10:08

To: LAWSON, Alan; TOPPING, David (Councillor); 'Brian Hogan'

Subject: School parking

At last nights Town Council meeting the police report gave a damning indictment of zig zag lines outside schools, should all be replaced by double yellows!! could I instigate a discussion LAP wide on this issue to test the depth of feeling amongst other parishes . Strategic highways may also want to give a view.

Very best regards Gordon

Sent with Good (www.good.com)

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Mountview Consultation Report

May 2013

Cheshire East Council

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Introduction

A consultation on Mountview Community Support Centre in Congleton was held between 7th March- 25th April 2013. Its aim was to understand the views of customers and the public on a proposal to review the delivery of services at Mountview and to invest funds instead in the two other Council Community Support Centres located in Crewe and Macclesfield. It was asserted by the Council that Mountview was the centre that was least able to be developed to meet the Council's future aspirations for its customers.

If Mountview did close, the following alternatives were suggested:

- A care service at an alternative Cheshire East Council building;
- Alternative local services offered by the independent sector;
- Care in the customer's (or carer's) home through home care or the Shared Lives service;
- Take up of a Direct Payment – an amount of money to be used by a customer to purchase care services from the independent sector to meet their needs.

It was underlined that customers would continue to receive a service which would meet their assessed care needs.

Consultation Process

Publicity

Customers of Mountview (and relevant carers) were informed about the proposals and how they could respond to the consultation via a letter. An easy read version was also sent to customers who had been identified as having a learning disability. This was followed by a reminder letter to those who had not replied as well as a telephone call, in an attempt to maximise representation from service users.

Awareness of the consultation with the general public was built through a number of different methods. This included:

- The consultation Information Pack was made available at Mountview, Congleton Library, Congleton Chronicle Press Offices, Congleton Leisure Centre, online on the Cheshire East Council website (and on request by telephoning the Cheshire East Council Consultation & Participation Team). Posters were also put up in some of these locations.
- Press releases were issued which were published in the Congleton Chronicle.
- An interview was conducted about the consultation on Radio Stoke
- Prominent coverage of the consultation was featured on the front page of the Council website.

Face to face consultation meetings

Face to face meetings were arranged for Mountview customers, their families and carers during the consultation period. Seventy five 30 minute slots were available to pre-book, with a Senior Council Manager and a member of the Consultation and Participation Team present at each meeting.

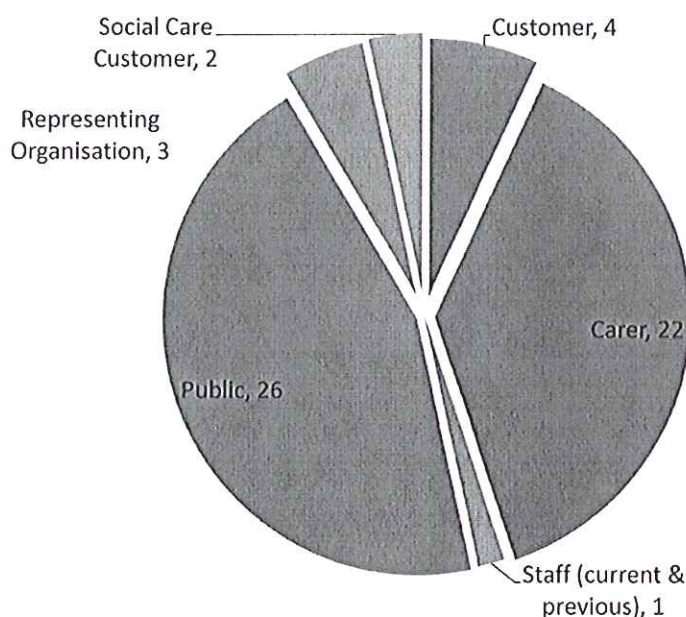
This format was selected because it was felt that it was best suited to the individuals directly affected by the proposals, allowing issues and concerns to be discussed in a calm and friendly environment. Experience has shown that when dealing with consultations where vulnerable adults are affected, this more personalised approach to the consultation is the most favourable.

Any customers and/or their representatives who were unable to attend any of the drop-in sessions were encouraged to contact the Consultation Team to arrange a time and location convenient to themselves. During the course of the consultation, 6 face to face meetings were held with customers in total, and 32 with relevant carers.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire was made available on the Local Authority website and as a paper copy. The questionnaire concentrated on asking questions relating to the proposal and the way it would affect the respondent or the person they care for (where applicable). It also collected information on the potential equality impacts of the proposals on the respondent. There were two versions of the questionnaire: a standard version and an easy read version which was aimed at customers with a learning disability. Of these a total of 58 surveys were received; this included twenty two from carers/family of individuals at Mountview , and four from Mountview customers themselves. The graph below shows this breakdown in full.

Graph 1:



Petition

A petition was presented to Cllr Janet Clowes on Monday 22nd April 2013. The petition contained 1,608 signatures mostly from people living in the Congleton area although some outside it as well. The main covering statement was as follows:

'Mountview Community Care Centre is threatened with closure. It provides the only centre in Congleton for respite and day care for

older persons. Without it they would face time-consuming and expensive journeys to alternative facilities in Crewe and Macclesfield.'

See Appendix 1 for further information about this petition.

Public Meeting

A public meeting was held at Congleton New Life Church by members of the community outside of the official consultation process. It would not have been appropriate to use arguments summarised from this meeting due to the indirect way these would have been received. However, participants were encouraged at the time to supply their views via the questionnaire, by letter and through the other consultation feedback mechanisms.

General questions raised at the consultation

Has the decision already been taken?

Cheshire East Council has tried to make this consultation as transparent and fair as possible. No final decision will be made until Cabinet considers the proposals and the accompanying report in June 2013.

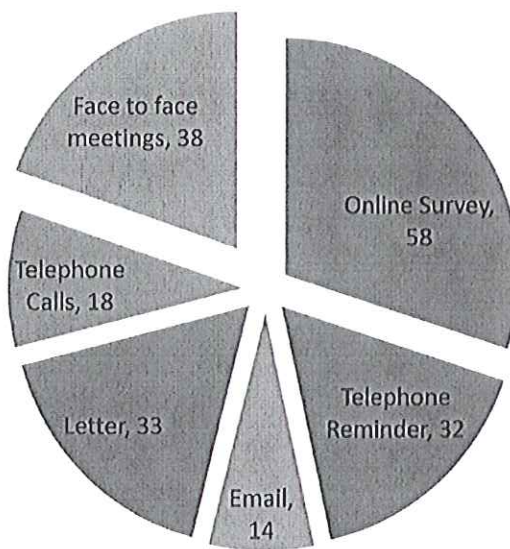
Why did you not hold a public consultation meeting?

Every customer and their carer/advocate was invited to a 30 minute drop-in session where their views, questions and concerns could be raised with a Senior Manager and a member of the Consultation and Participation Team. It was felt this offered a more personalised approach, and enabled more vulnerable customers to have the opportunity to have their say in a calm and confidential environment.

Other individuals had the opportunity to give their views to the Consultation and Participation Team via letter, email and telephone. An online survey was also available for them to complete. It was anticipated that this would give any future users or members of the public sufficient opportunity to give their feedback.

Feedback Analysis

In total 193 separate responses were received to the Mountview consultation. This includes such mechanisms as the online survey, telephone calls, face to face meetings etc. A breakdown of exact figures for how responses were received is shown below.



Of these responses, 74 were received either from customers of Mountview or by carers/family of users at Mountview. This meant a 72% response rate for representation of customers of Mountview.

Although the manner in which responses were given in did vary, it is nevertheless relatively straightforward to integrate them together to give a synopsis of issues raised. This analysis is shown next.

Caring

Headline: Mountview is highly valued by customers and is vital for carers

A large amount of the responses received (from over 40 separate sources) praised the quality of services offered at Mountview. A few sample remarks were:

"Mountview Centre provides an excellent service and if closed will cause insurmountable problems for service users"

"May I suggest that the people trying to make these cost saving decisions should visit the unit for a day to day experience the truly wonderful labour of love that takes place here. ..."

"Mountview's services are extremely good, attractive, clean & more than adequate."

"I disagree with the proposal. My brother goes to respite there and the staff are brilliant. "

"...it is clean, comfortable, staff friendly and the food is nice. Nice little touches such as a little valentines cake on valentines day....".

"CEC should be proud of its staff and they should be commended. They know John well enough to deal with his Type 1 Diabetes."

As in the last example, staff were singled out for praise by many, with a recognition that they were responsible for making it 'a home from home' through their personalised care. This was very important to a number of carers as it gave them the reassurance that their loved ones were being well cared for. Only a tiny number of responses were received at the opposite pole, criticising the quality of services run there (for instance, the inability to get a bath during a stay there).

Continuity of Care:

Continuity of care was seen as a vital element to caring by many. The importance of having the same routine, and same building was viewed as essential for customers particularly those with dementia.

"Father does not like going to new places, as such closing Mountview would create damaging disruption to his wellbeing"

"the elderly, dementia and special needs sufferers is a cruel decision to make which will pile on yet more distress for all concerned."

The social element that respite and day care provided at Mountview was also highly prized. For instance, a customer who attended Mountview once a week, stated that it was the only day that they spent in company a week and that it was very important to their mental wellbeing. Another customer stated that she had no social contact during the day before she went to Mountview, because her family worked during the day. Mountview was seen as being the source of continuing friendships provided by both staff and fellow customers.

"It is important for people to have the social contact that they wouldn't get if they had care in their own home. "

"Generally people who attend Mountview do not like change, they build friendships and relationships that would cause them a lot of upset if it changed."

Carer Breakdown:

A number of carer's stressed the importance of the day and respite care offered by Mountview in providing a break from their caring role.

"Many carers rely on the service provided by Mountview myself included and it is the only time that we can get a break from the trying time of constantly being with someone suffering from dementia"

As such, it was argued by many carers that any withdrawal of services would lead to carer breakdown and therefore a greater reliance on services in the future.

"I couldn't cope with her at home every day. If Mountview closed she would have to go into a care home."

"Closure would be a short-sighted decision because any removal of this local service will lead to the Council having to intervene more often as the carers themselves start to suffer burnout and stress. "

The amount of savings carers generated for the Council was commented on, as was the fact that early intervention and prevention had been signalled as a priority by the Council in its Strategic Plan.

Mountview Facilities

Headline: Having a local centre in Congleton is more important than en-suite facilities

General facilities:

There was a clear and strong message that Mountview should remain as a local facility for local people. Although the majority of respondents wanted the service to remain in the present building, some felt that it was not the building that was important, but that the service remained within Congleton possibly in alternative premises.

It was mentioned by a number of respondents that Mountview was a purpose built facility, which was only 25 years old, and had extremely good facilities. Some also could not understand why the Local Authority was looking to close Mountview when it had recently received investment.

"Mountview is only 25 years old and has been recently extensively refurbished - closing now is bizarre."

"The Council say they need more modern services. Mountview's services are extremely good, attractive, clean & more than adequate."

Concerns were also raised about the loss of experienced staff as a result of the 90 day notices and the consultation itself. Vulnerable people, particularly those with dementia or a learning disability, needed staff continuity in order to build trust with them.

En-suite Bathrooms and Expansion:

The lack of scope for developing Mountview to accommodate en-suite bathrooms was included in the Information Pack as part of the rationale behind the proposal to close Mountview. Although not a current requirement under the Care Quality Commission (CQC) for the building, this was something now required by the CQC for new builds. As such, the Local Authority felt it needed to develop these facilities to anticipate both rising standards and customer expectations.

A large amount of feedback was received in relation to the suggested alterations to provide en-suite facilities at Mountview. Nearly three quarters of comments received about en-suite facilities were from carers. Only one respondent was in favour of en-suite facilities. All other respondents felt that the potential provision of en-suite facilities was not a requirement.

"I do not believe the clients complain about not having an en-suite, certainly none ever said that to me and I have visited many people in Mountview".

Some argued that the Local Authority was using the current lack of en-suite facilities as one of the main reasons for the proposed closure of Mountview:

"The lack of en-suite facilities cited by Cheshire East Council appears to me to be an excuse to close Mountview down".

"...surely the care it offers in its current state is better than no care at all..."

Most also felt that there were sufficient bathrooms at Mountview currently, and that converting some of the bedrooms to allow for en-suite bathrooms to be fitted would be a waste of money. They felt that the availability of commodes for those requiring them was sufficient to meet most customers needs.

"The lack of en-suite facilities is no big issue. High standards of cleanliness for the shared facilities and commodes offsets the vanity of en-suite accommodation. An en-suite toilet doesn't mean good care or a happy home."

Many carers highlighted the fact that customers at Mountview did not have en-suite facilities at home, and therefore they would not expect them elsewhere.

In relation to accessibility, it was felt that en-suite facilities were unimportant to those who lacked mobility or capacity. Indeed, they would require larger bathrooms where staff could assist them, not small en-suite bathrooms.

"My brother-in-law uses Mountview for respite. I do not believe that the services are not fit for purpose. The rooms are a good size and he has never used an en-suite facility as he is an elderly, ordinary person. Other more physically disabled people need the specialised bathroom and en-suite would be useless for them."

"The argument that there are no en-suite facilities at Mountview is of little relevance as most of the residents need assistance and so would not use en-suite facilities. Although government guidance is that new facilities should have en-suite there is no requirement to fit en-suite into existing facilities."

Suggestions about how Mountview could be adapted if en-suite facilities were deemed a necessity were put forward such as trying to extend it outwards or by building another level.

"Has the Council considered expanding Mountview by building another floor?"

"Why could the building not be extended upwards if the location was a problem (in terms of development?)."

Comparisons were also made between Mountview and the Council's other Community Support Centres. For instance, it was suggested that Lincoln House (Crewe) was an older building than Mountview with a similar lack of space for expansion.

Occupancy:

Headline: Mountview is not underused and demand for day and respite services will only increase in the future.

Occupancy Statistics:

A number of comments were received relating to usage of Mountview. These comments may have been prompted, at least in part, by the initial letter to Mountview customers which stated under occupancy as a reason for reviewing the future of the centre (although this was clarified as under use of the Council's total social care centres in the Consultation Information Pack).

Several issues were raised over how occupancy statistics themselves were calculated. Firstly, there was puzzlement over why customer no-shows were not included in occupancy figures, as it was felt that failure to do this unfairly impacted on the raw occupancy statistics. Secondly, it was argued that occupancy did not reflect the staffing required for level of customer need. For instance, the example was given that no respite places had been available for a period of time last year, because a lady staying there had such challenging behaviour that she occupied the time of all the staff (one respondent suggested that there should be more flexibility with staffing, so that extra staff should be made available in these situations). Thirdly, building work that had taken place at Mountview (which resulted in a reduction in the amount customers the centre could take) was also seen as distorting occupancy figures by making it appear artificially underused. Lastly, it was proposed that the underuse only existed in the respite unit for learning disabilities and that this problem would diminish if it was converted for older people.

Occupancy and Booking:

Questions raised over Mountview's supposed underuse were further underlined by the problems customers and carers reported in booking respite. A number of carers stated that they had tried to book places only to be told none were available. Furthermore, it was stated that bookings had been cancelled at short notice. Two quotes which underline this are:

"Over the past 5 years, in my professional capacity, I found that when requesting day care or respite care from social services, places were

frequently not available. Day care in particular took months to obtain. I question the statement that demand has fallen."

"If as you state, the number of customers using the service has fallen, why is it so difficult to get into Mountview and why have we been told on more than one occasion that there are no beds available?"

Following on from this was a suggestion put forward by a small number of respondents, that the underuse displayed in occupancy statistics may have in fact been engineered.

"When my Mother suggested that MV was her provider of choice she was told that this facility was for 'social services customers' [note – this customer was full cost] and it was only with my mum's insistence that we were granted a referral. This has led us to feel that the levels of use can, and have been manipulated and obstructed by social services for reasons unknown to us."

A cluster of comments centred on difficulties with the booking process at Mountview and its impact on total occupancy. This included a pair of comments relating to whether Mountview's services were promoted sufficiently well at care assessment (as referred to under 'Occupancy Statistics') and in other settings (e.g. via the GP or hospitals). It was also suggested that the Council should have encouraged customers to use their agreed allocation of respite nights:

"We have not always used our allocated amount of respite days thinking I wasn't being greedy and letting others get a chance to go. I think CE should have encouraged me to use it to the full 56 days we are allowed. I thought I was doing the right thing but now I have struggled without respite when it was the wrong thing to do."

Adding further weight to the arguments about booking, was the suggestion that the process was not as streamlined as it could be. This was because it was necessary to go through a social worker to secure a place rather than to book directly with the centre. Better communication between these parties was highlighted as important. One carer also reported that there was a requirement to book respite far in advance which was limiting. Another

individual expressed concern that customers were not able to use Direct Payments to purchase services from Mountview.

Note: In order to clarify these points, it should be said that any customer who has had a one-call letter can book directly with Mountview. One-off bookings do need to go through a Care Manager though as this will ensure that usage is accurately recorded on the Council's systems.

Future Demand:

In addition to comments on current usage of Mountview, many respondents made a case that demand would be likely to increase in the future. Factors such as population growth and the ageing population (including a proportionate increase in those with dementia) were referred to. Reference was also made to statistics and findings such as those in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, a report by Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee, the Local Plan and nationally from AgeUK; all which displayed evidence of expected increasing demand for services (particularly dementia services in the future).

"To have only three CSC's operated by Cheshire East Council is currently inadequate especially given the Government predictions for the increase in those aged 80 and over in next 20 years which will put great stress on such facilities in coming years and it does not indicate that a reduction in CSC's is a sensible proposal"

"A report commissioned by the Council written by the Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee, has stated that currently there are estimated to be 4,500 people living with dementia in CE over the age of 65. CE has a higher than average older population and it is predicted that this will continue to rise in an upward trend. As the older age group increases in size so the number of people with dementia is also likely to rise and the estimate is that by 2030 there will be 9100 people over the age of 50 living with dementia. Significantly I must add, the figures I have quoted refer only to dementia, without any regard to other long term degenerative conditions...."

The argument was also put that there was a greater requirement for respite and day services in Mountview than elsewhere. For instance, it was asserted

that Congleton had a larger older population than for example, Macclesfield, and that it had a higher incidence of dementia in comparison to the Borough's other LAP areas (Local Area Partnerships). As such, the central tenet to all these arguments was that there a need for "joined up strategic thinking" and that closing Mountview would be a short term measure which would have to be reversed in the future in order for the Council to meet its duty of care.

One carer felt that there were too many barriers to accessing services at Mountview, for instance, transport costs and restrictions on payment methods. The feeling was that if these were lowered this would encourage more people to attend and future demand would increase. Another carer felt that some people were unaware that respite existed, and more needed to be done to publicise it.

Capacity:

Another set of arguments which link with questions of demand, relate to the overall ability of alternative Council services to support Mountview customers. For instance, it was suggested both that the alternative Council services at Hollins View (Macclesfield) and Lincoln House (Crewe) did not have sufficient places to take on these customers (for example due to the need to provide intermediate care), or that future growth in populations in their locales would mean this capacity would be used up.

"My neighbour has been admitted to Mountview a number of times over the last 18mths. As she lives in Alsager and was sent via Leighton Hosp she could quite easily have been sent to Lincoln house in Crewe but wasn't as no beds were free, if they had no spaces then what's the chance of availability once Mountview closes?"

"I was alarmed to discover that if Mountview were to close the only local authority dementia respite provision for the whole of the Cheshire East area would be almost halved from 22 to 12, with the only remaining facility at Lincoln House, Crewe."

The fact Hollins View had places reserved for intermediate care (care for people leaving hospital requiring specialist support) was also noted.

The problem of an emergency situation arising was also put forward once more:

"In addition, infection outbreak at times causes the homes to be 'closed' for periods of time - this is sure to happen again. The pressure to find beds will escalate when half the beds in CEC are closed instead of just a third of the beds as presently happens"

It was also suggested that people resident in these areas may be favoured over people from Congleton in the future.

Finance

Headline: Closing Mountview does not make sense financially, alternatives will cost more

Many comments were received discussing the closure in financial terms. For some of these people the proposal was purely a cost-cutting measure rather than one aiming to use resources better (as proposed in the original Consultation Information Pack).

"In view of the current crisis in Cheshire East whereby 1000 jobs are to be lost and each department sheds 20% of its workforce I can only conclude that this is a cost-cutting exercise which is being disguised as something else!!"

"This proposal appears to be solely based on cost saving and is poorly researched and thought through in terms of serving vulnerable customers in Cheshire East."

"Appalling to deal with elderly people on a "cost effective" basis!"

Questions were raised over the accuracy of the savings figure of £275K (the figure quoted here is the one stated in the initial Council report). It was also queried whether additional transport, direct payments and additional social worker time had also been properly factored into calculations.

Another band of arguments advanced the point of view that whilst closing Mountview might achieve short term cost savings, greater expenses would be

incurred in the long term. For instance; due to increasing demand for these services; as a result of the cost of procuring independent sector services; the growing local population; or as a result of detrimental impacts on the local Congleton economy:

"I understand this it costs a substantial amount of money to run this centre however the long term benefits of retaining it are numerous. It employs people locally which obviously ensures that the local economy benefits financially, it retains a key number of people in a variety of services including the medical profession, catering profession, gardening and community care service."

One respondent felt the proposals would also put an additional burden on the NHS in terms of possible carer and service user breakdowns.

A small number of respondents gave examples of where they felt money had been wasted by the Council. This included; chairs for Councillors, larger school buildings, a loan to Tatton Park, a motorway link road, the Lyme Green case, and excessive wages for senior Cheshire East Council Managers. It was also suggested that parts of the Mountview building could be used for other activities to save money, for instance, home care could be run from Mountview, customers could be charged for booking a place even if they were not able to attend. Raising Council Tax was also mentioned by two individuals as was raising the fees charged for services at Mountview, or offering more days to customers for a further charge. The cost of alternative services was a further issue for some. This is picked up below.

Alternative Services

Headline: Mountview is superior to the services offered by the independent and voluntary sector (which are limited in any case)

Independent Sector:

A key part of the Consultation Information Pack was to ask customers and carers to consider alternative services to Mountview. The first of these options was to receive services from the independent sector. Some respondents felt

that there simply was a lack of these services available in Congleton, especially for customers with more complex needs. It was also felt that this would lead to a fragmentation of services. One comment was:

"It is claimed that Cheshire East is looking for services in the private sector - what are these services and where would they be provided?"

"For 22 months, they were promised a service but this didn't happen. Nothing seemed to fit the criteria for ____, lots of places were offered but nothing ever happened. They were told in most cases that it was the cost of the service."

Leading on from this, it was remarked that whilst the Consultation Information Pack mentioned that the Council would work with the independent sector to develop services, this work hadn't even begun yet, and that suitable services (including in terms of cost) had not been identified. It was argued that this groundwork would have to be completed before closure could even be considered.

It was also put that this lack of capacity would create longer hospital stays. For instance,

"I have bought a Retirement Apartment and witness the problems some residents have in finding suitable care when discharged from hospital, beds are not always available in local care homes which leaves many elderly and vulnerable people waiting for respite care locally"

One related problem which was highlighted was the capacity of the local market to respond to a care home closure.

Points were also raised about the quality and reliability of the services offered in the independent sector, particularly compared to Mountview. For instance, one respondent stated that they felt that their Mother had lost her independence after using an independent sector nursing home for respite which eventually resulted in her having to go into residential care. Another respondent regarded such homes as too impersonal. It was also stated that staff in private care homes were not used to the turn-over of customers that

occurs at a respite centre and that they would not offer the stimulating activities needed for short breaks or day care. Questions were also raised about what guarantees there would be on the standard of independent services and whether monitoring by the local authority would be put in place.

There was also criticism of the quality of care at the alternative Council centres. For instance, a carer stated that they had been told that their mother was too demanding for Hollins View and felt that the open door policy was inappropriate for someone with dementia. Another individual suggested that the quality of care was worse at Lincoln House (Crewe).

Cost was also a key factor for some. Reserving beds for respite care in private care homes was seen as potentially expensive and it was generally felt that as the independent sector was required to make a profit, fees would inevitably be high. Moreover, it was felt that they would prefer the earning potential of longer-term residential care.

"They had looked previously into their mother attending _____ Nursing Home which was close to them, but the costs were very high."

A few respondents referred to day type services in the voluntary sector, which were also not seen as a suitable alternative option. This was either because the relevant customer had needs which were too high level for this kind of environment, adequate training was not given to staff, or because these services were very limited.

"A 2 hour luncheon club is no good for me, I would be clock watching to see what time she needs picking up. I need a break as well as mum."

A few individuals giving responses, said that they did not mind which building services were offered in as long as these services were locally available (some suggestions were made). A couple of respondents also stated that they also wanted this local location but did not mind if the services were run by the independent sector. For instance;

"I think that providing the option of funding (towards) care in the private sector is available then this will provide a flexible, local solution. If this

option is not available, then losing a facility in Congleton will mean greater travelling for carers in our area."

Direct Payments and Care Options:

The option of Direct Payments (which is one of the ways to access independent sector services) received a generally negative response. It was perceived as an preference which required intensive work (especially by the carer) and was regarded as an expensive use of public money compared to traditional service delivery.

" 'Choice' pushes carers over the limit it puts the responsibility back on families and carers when they are already at breaking point."

"In general, direct payment is not a scheme suited to the elderly, particularly those requiring respite. They are not in a position to 'shop around' for suitable care, particularly in an emergency. During 5 years as a Matron, not one of my clients used direct payment.....the need for respite and day care services will continue to exist and with dementia diagnosis increasing, demand will increase."

The problem of Direct Payments creating double costs for the Council was raised (as there would be a need to continue to run Council facilities but also to fund independent services).

One respondent even felt that talking up these options was a deliberate strategy on the part of the Council,

"Personalisation and direct payments is being used as an opportunity to move people away from Mountview".

Again, the issue of insufficient independent sector services to purchase with a Direct Payment was raised. One carer referenced two research papers which identified failings in the concept of Direct Payments/Personal Budgets. Choice was seen as something that was not desired by Mountview customers.

Likewise, personal assistants and home care were also not deemed a valid option. It was felt they could not offer the social element that is characteristic of day care and would be an inadequate substitute for respite care due to their

failure to give the carer a genuine break. A couple of respondents also noted that respite care needed to be in place as a complement to services such as home care.

"People that have 'home care' still need respite care occasionally, the two are not mutually exclusive as your brochure suggests."

There was little comment about the Shared Lives service. However, a carer did state that having used both, they felt their Father had benefited more from having services from Mountview due to the social element that day care provided.

Travel and transport

Headline: Travel to services out of the Congleton area would affect carer and customer wellbeing hugely

The majority of comments relating to the issue of carer travel and transport were made during the drop in sessions by carers, although some comments were also made by letter/email and over the telephone.

The main concerns raised centred on the extra travel carers and their loved ones would have to undertake if Mountview were to close. Time, cost, distance and expense were the main themes in this area. These applied to both day care and respite services.

However, one carer contrasted many other comments by saying that she felt that it was not the location of the centre that mattered, but the quality of the service.

Cost:

Carers of those attending Mountview had concerns about the additional expense of the extra travel, not only for themselves, but also for other visitors who may wish to visit their friend/loved one.

Some carers did not have their own transport, and although taxis were a possible option, it was felt that this would be expensive. This was particularly

the case where a carer would have to accompany the customer (dementia customers cannot be transported without a carer by taxi).

"To expect family members/carer friends to travel to other towns to see their loved ones is impractical. Public transport is just not good enough. Taxis would be exorbitant. Not everybody has their own transport and many carers are elderly and frail themselves."

Distance:

Many carers explained that the extra mileage incurred travelling to an alternative centre would impact on them adversely. Many felt that they would struggle to travel the additional distance to another town, particularly during the winter months (which would result in less or no visits to customers by carers) and also because of traffic.

"I would personally be deterred by the necessity to drive (from journeys each session) particularly in the winter time."

"As Mr X is physically disabled and uses a wheelchair the journey from home to Mountview is quite difficult even for a short journey. At least with them all living locally they can all help with this".

Concerns were also raised about the extra distance impeding the carer's ability to respond quickly in an emergency.

"Frank recently fell ill at Mountview and because of the closeness to our home we were able to get to him quickly".

"My husband suffered a severe stroke and attended Mountview, one day a week, being local was important in order to be on hand for the many emergencies which arose."

Time:

Another argument, linked to the issue of distance, was the problem of increased travelling time. Carers of customers attending Mountview felt that it would be impractical to transport their loved ones to Crewe or Macclesfield.

For some this would mean travelling much further distances, up to two or three times per week. Furthermore, many felt the additional travelling time spent transporting their loved ones would deprive them of the essential time away from their caring duties:

"Taking my wife to a day centre in Macclesfield or Crewe would add too much to the burden on carers in terms of the time required. Local day care provision vital."

"Should a person from Congleton area travel to another centre it would cause a wasted day for anyone accompanying the admittee using public transport as this would not allow time to return home before having to return to the facility to assist the admittee home".

Indeed, one carer explained that her husband attended day care for three hours per day, three times per week. The additional travel times would mean that time would reduce to just over one hour of respite from her caring role.

"If she [the carer] had to travel to Hollins View that would take an hour from her three hours of respite, this would push her [the carer] to the limit".

Alternative transport:

Many carers reported that they did not have their own transport and that public transport was inappropriate due to its infrequency and lack of accessibility. Some customers required specialist transport to enable them to travel in their wheelchairs. Other customers would not be able to travel alone. A couple of carers felt that the inconsistency of alternative transport would cause the person they cared for a great deal of distress.

Questioning took place around the explanation of transport support in the Information Pack. Many did not feel reassured that the Local Authority would give sufficient assistance with this.

Transport - other implications:

Issues around the administration of medication and GP access were also raised. Carers often worked closely with staff at Mountview to ensure medication for the person they cared for was discussed. This would not be possible if their loved one received their care further away. In addition to this, customers would not be able to access their own GP should they become unwell at a centre which was not based in the local area. This caused some carers a great deal of worry. Access to their own GP was very important to them.

Some carers also felt that their loved ones would struggle with changes to their routine. Transporting them to an alternative centre would cause the person they cared for a great deal of distress, and the carer increased levels of worry.

Consultation

A number of concerns were raised about the consultation process itself. This included the way customer's were informed, how they could give feedback and the contents of the Consultation Information Pack.

Integrity:

Some anxiety was expressed about the integrity of the consultation. A number of respondents were concerned that the decision to close Mountview had been taken prior to the consultation, and that it was a 'done deal'. There was also the perception that because staff at Mountview had been served with 90 day notices, that Mountview was earmarked for closure prior to the consultation period.

"Our experience of "consultation" periods is that decisions have already been made and consultation is just part of the inevitable process to implement them. Hence our anxiety! Hopefully we will be proved wrong this time."

"What is the point of a consultation with carers when the decision to close Mountview has already been taken, seeing that the staff have received 3 months notice?"

"Don't understand why waste money on so called 'consultation' when decision to close Mountview already made??"

Information Pack:

Some respondents felt that there was insufficient detail within the Consultation Information Pack. They felt there was little evidence to support the proposals.

"The Councils proposals are unsupported by any data and little evidence has been presented".

"It [the Information Pack] is very poor. There is no cost benefit analysis or information about take-up rates."

"There is a very weak argument put forward for closure and totally insufficient information has been provided to make a more informed decision backed up by facts and statistics, and strong reasoned argument. "

One respondent wondered if customers really had the capacity to understand the proposals.

Opposing arguments were made in relation to the inclusion of information within the pack about alternative provision. A couple of respondents felt that there was a lack of detail regarding alternative providers in the local area. However, a separate remark was given that the Information Pack concentrated *too much* on alternative care provision options, and this was detrimental to the option of actually keeping Mountview open.

"This [the Information Pack] concentrates the focus on the alternatives to the proposed closure of Mountview but fails to say why Mountview

was really chosen first and if it is currently running profitably or not."

Public Meeting:

Comments were received about the omission of a local authority run public meeting.

"Think that there should be a public meeting, and that future users of the centre should have been given an opportunity to speak to Council officers."

It was also felt that the Council should have been properly represented at the meeting which was independently organised at New Life Church Congleton (although it is true to say that some Cheshire East Councillors were in attendance). Leading on from this, one respondent felt that the drop-in sessions did not allow future customers to give their views on the proposals.

"Concerned that the consultation 1-2-1 interviews, do not take into account views of future users."

Miscellaneous Comments

Various other concerns were raised which were not categorised in other sections of the analysis. To ensure that all arguments have been included in the report, they are detailed below;

General:

- References were made to the ending of Council services at Fellowship House and the fact the building was now only partially used. There were also similar references to Primrose Avenue.
- The fact the dementia centre at Bexton Court (Knutsford) had closed despite lots of opposition.
- It was put forward that there was a lack of clarity in communications from the Council that the consultation was about the potential closure of Mountview.

The Council:

- The necessity for a genuinely democratic process to take place before any decisions should be taken on warning of legal challenge.
- The contention that Lorraine Butcher had already stated that Mountview would close at Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee on 22nd February.
- The need for the decision-makers to consist of Members actually based in Congleton.
- The importance of decision-makers visiting Mountview to understand the strength of the facility.
- More clarity regarding the process i.e. what happens next.
- The proposals were vehemently opposed by Members of the Congleton Town Council. They also felt that pertinent information required to understand the decision on Mountview was not available.

Service users and carers:

- “I feel that public provision is rapidly being dismantled without proper discussion or debate. This is relatively easy to accomplish when dealing with services for the most vulnerable, those without power or influence.”
- The argument that letters sent to customers had caused distress, and that proposals should have been explained via the telephone
- There were frustrations about the constant changes to customers’ social workers.
- The importance of resolving the issue quickly because of the stress on staff and customers.
- The need for Mountview to have a dedicated phone-line for emergencies.

- One respondent would have liked to see a new build as a possible option.

Alternative Services:

- A remark as to whether the feasibility of the independent sector running Mountview had been considered.
- Whether there was the possibility of customers opting for cross-border services.

Equality

The Mountview questionnaire included a second main question which was designed to capture the consequences of the proposals on individuals belonging to different equality groups (e.g. people with disabilities, people of different ages, people who are carers etc). This information would be used to inform a document which the Council is legally required to produce when considering consultation proposals, known as an 'Equality Impact Assessment' (EIA). This explains what the potential implications are of proposals and what the Council can do to lessen their impact on individuals.

Many of the responses received to this question merely repeated remarks expressed in the question before and as such lacked direct relevance to this issue. Some respondents also stated that the proposal did have an impact on them without asserting what it was. Nevertheless, it was possible to capture impacts for the EIA by carefully analysing all feedback received.

Where impacts were given they most related to the increased travel that the proposal could result in. It was stated that this would result in increased journey time, increased cost and the potential problem of travel not even being possible at all due to the individual's disabilities or medical condition. It was also viewed that carer's visits might be reduced/might completely stop due to the amount of travel required. These factors were seen as impacting on a number of protected characteristic groups such as disability, the elderly and carers. Other impacts included the disruption a change in service could have on

the elderly or disabled e.g. with dementia. It was argued that this would mean increased reliance on carers and therefore greater impacts on them.

A full account of these points is contained within the Equality Impact Assessment document itself.

Summary of Themes

A large amount of feedback was received both from customers and the general public in relation to the review of Mountview. This was almost entirely against the proposal to end services here and to move present and future customers to alternatives within the Borough.

There were numerous different arguments given for this stance. This included lack of available alternative services in Congleton such as from the independent sector and difficulties in travelling to Council services in other parts of the Borough such as Macclesfield and Crewe. Questions were raised over whether Mountview was underused as the Council had originally asserted, and whether there was a genuine need to offer improved facilities such as en-suites if it meant closure of facilities in Congleton. The risk of carer breakdown was stressed by many if locally based services were not available and there were comments about how the wellbeing of customers would be adversely affected by any change.

The consultation process itself was also questioned including concerns that the decision had already been taken, and over whether a public consultation meeting should have taken place. Strong feeling about the proposal was evidenced in the presentation of a petition to the Council and in the arrangement of a public meeting by the local community outside of the official consultation process.

This report, together with the business case for any revised proposal, and the Equality Impact Assessment, is likely to be considered by the Council's Cabinet in June.

Appendix 1: Petition

A petition was presented to Councillor Janet Clowes (portfolio holder for Health and Adult Social Care) by 'The Save Mountview Team'. The signatures were collected in Congleton with the majority of signees also living in Congleton. A minority of names are from people living in surrounding areas but still in Cheshire East and a smaller number of signatures from people who live outside of Cheshire East Borough.

The signatures were presented in one file but containing papers in three different formats:

1. Petition to Cheshire East Council – the introduction for this featured a paragraph about the petition summary and background:

'Mountview Community Care Centre is threatened with closure. It provides the only centre in Congleton for respite and day care for older persons. Without it they would face time-consuming and expensive journeys to alternative facilities in Crewe and Macclesfield.'

This form of the petition had 1,341 signatures from people who live in Congleton and surrounding areas including: Sandbach, Crewe, Alsager, Biddulph and Scholar Green.

2. Petition to Cheshire East Council – this form of the petition had 31 signatures but has no mention of Mountview or what the petition is for. All the people who signed the petition live in Congleton.

3. Petition Save Mountview – This form of the petition had 236 signatures; of these 219 people live in Cheshire East, 13 in Staffordshire and 4 in other parts of the country.

Total signatures: 1,608

There are also 104 signed leaflets in the petition file from Congleton Labour Party which have been noted but not included in petition numbers because names were given to request further information.

Appendix 2: Response from Congleton Town Council

25 March 2013:

Congleton Town Council at its meeting of the Community, Environment and Services Committee held on Thursday 21st March 2013 considered the Consultation Document for the Mountview Community Support Centre in Congleton

The members were unanimous in stating that they are vehemently opposed to the closure of Mountview and requests that Cheshire East continues to keep this facility open for the benefit of Congleton residents and the surrounding areas

Appendix 3: Letter from Fiona Bruce MP

I have received a number of letters from constituents who are concerned about the proposals on the part of Cheshire East Council to consider closure of Mountview. As you may also be aware, this is in addition the subject of considerable press interest in Congleton on a weekly basis with numerous letters having been published in the press.

I, therefore, considered it right and proper that I acquainted myself with the facilities at Mountview before making any personal or public comment, other than I have sent on some of the residents communications to me to the Council.

I, therefore called in at Mountview on Saturday afternoon last, and spent over an hour there.

I have to say that I was much impressed. I met almost every resident currently at Mountview and spoke with many of them. Universally, they were positive about their experience there. One lady, Pam, had actually been, for a long period of her working life, a Cheshire County Council Care Home Manager and

had said it had long been her aspiration to stay at Mountview because of the high standard of facilities and care there.

Other residents spoke positively of the personal care which they receive and of the good relationships with the Cheshire East staff. Many were very concerned about, indeed deeply opposed to, the possibility of Mountview closing.

I was particularly struck with the variety of needs which staff at Mountview accommodate – whether caring for someone transitioning from hospital back to home, those who were still living independently but needed extra support from time to time to enable them to do so, those staying at Mountview to give their families respite and those with longer term needs.

If as Cheshire East says, it is committed to offering choice in its provision then this would appear to offer a form of support which would be a loss to the Congleton community if it were to close down.

Many of the residents said that if Mountview closes, they would, if they could obtain similar provision have to travel some distance, for example to Crewe, and that would make a material difference to them and those visiting and ongoing support their families can provide whilst resident at Mountview.

The facilities struck me as far from dated! This was a purpose built property which has been maintained to a very high standard – certainly as high as any I have seen whether in the public or private sectors. The bathrooms were fresh and clean with sophisticated recently added hoist equipment and the fact that they are not en-suite was not something which appeared to concern anyone. All the bedrooms I saw had, in any event their own sinks and were clean and spacious and I cannot think that the fact that bedrooms are not en suite could possibly justify the closure of this facility (I know this has been cited as a facility shortfall, but in my view it is minor).

I noted the ‘family atmosphere’ in the living rooms and dining areas and the layout of the building providing for these for groups of residents, I felt it was a very positive arrangement and not one I had seen before in quite this layout. Access would not appear to be a problem – there is a lift, level access from the car park and level outside sitting areas, which although near the main road are

secure.

I also saw the Day Centre facilities and whilst not able to speak with any users of these facilities was again impressed with their clean and modern appearance – both in terms of the structure and furnishings.

The staff I spoke to were positive and caring about their roles and informed me that there is some interaction with the local community such as children from local schools/Brownies (although I felt that this is something which could possibly be developed).

I noted that areas of the facility were currently under occupied and was surprised at this bearing in mind that I frequently receive pleas from constituents at my surgeries for additional care support or respite care whilst they seek to care for (particularly younger) less able relatives. I have to say I did wonder whether management of the facility in terms of referring users to it could be improved.

With this need for respite care and with the increase in the already high elderly population in my constituency and more widely across Cheshire East – something which the Council has asked me to highlight in the House of Commons as a major concern – and which I have done – I am frankly amazed that the Council could be considering closure of Mountview. There may well be other types of provision which the Council may wish to promote – whether care at home or in the independent sector or otherwise – but I do not believe that, whatever the budget constraints, this should be at the expense of losing this valuable and purpose built and well maintained local facility.

Indeed, such budget savings as maybe calculated could well prove short term, since it is clear that Mountview enables many people to remain either living independently or with their families. Without the boost which respite care such as that at Mountview provides, many of the residents (not to mention those who receive day care) may need to be permanently housed and cared for by the Council, with the attendant exponential additional costs.

I should be most grateful if you would be good enough to respond to this letter

by close of business on Friday 22nd March in view of the fact that a number of constituents are seeking public comments from me, but I felt it only right to communicate my views and concerns to the Council first and to give you an opportunity to respond.