



Congleton Town Council

Historic market town

Town Clerk: **BRIAN HOGAN**



28th February, 2013

Dear Councillor,

Town Council Meeting – Thursday 7th March, 2013

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Council, to be held in the Town Hall, Congleton on **Thursday 7th March, 2013** commencing at 7.00pm.

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.

Please note that there will be a presentation starting at 6.30pm on the same evening by Cllr Robbie Brightwell on the Eaton Bank Project

Yours sincerely,

B. Hogan
TOWN CLERK

AGENDA

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).

2. Minutes (enclosed)

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th January, 2013.

3. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

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

4. Mayor's Announcements (enclosed)

To receive any announcements by the Town Mayor and to receive a list of the Mayor's Engagements.

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where friends are made



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Tel: 01260 270350 Fax: 01260 280357

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



5. Outstanding Actions

None.

6. Questions from Members of the Public

To receive any questions from Members of the Public at the meeting and, notified in advance in writing.

7. Cheshire East Councillors' Reports

To suspend Standing Orders to allow Councillors from the principal authority to report on relevant issues and to receive questions from members.

8. Planning Committee

To receive the minutes of the meetings held on 3rd, 24th January and 14th February 2013. (enclosed)

9. Community, Environment & Services Committee

To receive the minutes of the meetings held on 7th February 2013. (enclosed)

10. Finance & Policy Committee

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd January and 14th February, 2013. (enclosed)

11. Accounts

- (a) To approve payment of the accounts listed (enclosed).
- (b) To approve payment of any expenditure agreed at this meeting.

12. Urgent Items

Members may raise urgent items but no discussion or decisions may be taken at the meeting.

13. Youth Committee/Junior Council

- a) To receive the minutes of the Youth Committee and Junior Council Meetings held on 8th January 2013 and 5th February 2013. (enclosed)
- b) To deal with Questions from Members of the Youth Committee present at the meeting.

14. Outdoor Digital Display Unit

To consider a report on progress with the Outdoor Digital Display Unit. (enclosed)

15. Town and Village Centre CCTV

To receive and consider correspondence from Peter Hartwell, Head of Community Services, Cheshire East Borough Council requesting financial support for operation of CCTV in Congleton. (enclosed)

16. Quality Parish Council Scheme

To receive and consider correspondence from Chalc concerning the review of the Quality Parish Council Scheme and its request for responses to the consultation. (enclosed)

17. Localisation of Council Tax

To consider a report aimed at seeking support from Fiona Bruce MP to ameliorate the impact of the new regulations on the Localisation of the Tax Base. (enclosed)

18. Corporate Business Plan and Business Risk Assessment

To receive and consider the Corporate Business Plan for 2013-14 including SWOT analysis and risk assessment review. (enclosed)

19. Amendments to the Constitution (enclosed)

To consider and approve the following document updates and amendments:

Contents of Constitution
Standing Orders
Investment Policy
I.C.T. Policy
Mayor's Allowance
Town Hall Letting Policy
Marketing and Communication Policy

To: Members of the Town Council, Press 3, Burgesses (5), Mayor's Chaplain,
Members of the Youth Committee
MP, Cheshire East Councillors (4), Library, Congleton TIC.

Congleton Town Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Thursday,
10th January 2013 in the Town Hall, Congleton.

PRESENT: Councillors D S Allen
 L D Barker
 P Bates
 G Baxendale
 J S Crowther
 G Hayes
 Mrs A M Martin
 Mrs S A Holland (Town Mayor)
 D Murphy
 D A Parker
 J. D Parry
 R.K Williams

1. **APOLOGIES**

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 Councillors R. I Brightwell, N.T Price, E.Wardlaw and G.S Williams.

2. **MINUTES**

CTC/71/1213 RESOLVED- That the Minutes of the meeting held on the 6th December 2012 be approved and signed by the Mayor.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST**

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

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

4. **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Town Mayor drew attention to the various engagements that she and the Deputy Mayor had fulfilled since the last Council meeting.

5. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

None.

6. **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Question to the Town Mayor Mrs S Holland

My question concerns the development of the new supermarket.

The original programme for redevelopment of the Bridestones showed that the development works should now be complete and the building in operation but, in fact, no work has yet started. It was recently reported that the current delay is due to a question over the ownership of the road adjacent to the Bridestones.

Whilst it is accepted that it is often difficult to accurately forecast how long negotiations are likely to take, will the Council liaise with CEBC to provide the residents of Congleton with an update of the situation relating to the progress of the negotiations and the best estimate of when the negotiations are likely to be completed?

From Graham Goodwin

Response by the Town Mayor

Thank you for your question which I will respond to on behalf of the Town Council.

The Council has contracted the Developer, Scarborough Developments and Cheshire East Borough Council to obtain an update on the status of the progress on negotiations to complete all of the outstanding agreements related to the planning application.

Both parties have been working hard with the objective of completing all of the outstanding matters before Christmas, and in fact both had agreed a draft S106 Agreement in the second week in December. However, Cheshire east have stated that they need to have Marshalls who own the Bridestones 1 site, included in the S106 Agreement as a party to it, as some of the car parking spaces identified in the new development are located on land that they own.

This has held up the completion of the final document, although Scarborough have approached Marshalls directly to obtain their consent to the S106 Agreement.

Whilst the S106 Agreement was not actually concluded before Xmas, all outstanding matters have now been resolved, but, the agreement needs to be signed by Scarborough, 2 Banks, Marshalls and Cheshire East. This process is expected to take about a week and it is anticipated to be fully signed by early next week when the Planning Consent Certificate can then be issued by Cheshire East.

Once the certificate is signed this then moves the process into the 13 week challenge and review period.

Other outstanding issues are the land ownership of Princess Street. At the moment it is believed that Thameside Council, who manage the Greater Manchester Pension Fund, may own the street as they took over the financing of the original Bridestones 1 Development via the pension fund, but, they are searching their records to verify this.

Other matters which need concluding include the Land and Developers agreements, but, again both parties are making good progress in this area and this should be concluded within the 13 week period.

As a consequence construction is likely to start on the new supermarket in July 2013, with a construction agreement being signed in mid-May and the market moving in June.

7. **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

Cllr G.Baxendale reported that the application by Tesco to remove the conditions on the size of vehicles used for deliveries at the Waggon and Horses is not scheduled to be considered at the January meeting of the Southern Planning Committee (CEBC).

8. **ACCOUNTS**

CTC/72/1213 RESOLVED-

- (a) To approve the payment of the accounts listed.
- (b) To approve payment of any expenditure agreed at this meeting.

9. **URGENT ITEMS**

The Town Clerk informed the Council that the election for the casual vacancy for West Ward had been set for Thursday 7th March 2013. As yet no election notice had been provided by Cheshire East. Nomination packs for the election are obtainable at the Elections Office, Cheshire East Borough Council.

The Town Mayor reminded Councillors that the Civic Dinner and Mayor's Ball will take place on Friday 15th March 2013 and requested Councillors to support this event.

10. **YOUTH COMMITTEE/JUNIOR COUNCIL**

It was noted that the Youth Committee are making good progress on developing a website which is expected to be available by the end of April.

11. **COUNCIL TAX BASE**

The Town Clerk explained the basis of the changes to the tax base which have come about because the government are replacing the Council Tax Benefit Scheme with a locally based scheme.

It was noted that Cheshire East Borough Council were providing a grant of £75,354 to fund Congleton's Council Tax Benefits, but, concern was expressed that the funding may reduce over time putting an extra burden on the town Council and local rate payer.

CTC/73/1213 RESOLVED That the report be received.

12. **BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2013-14**

CTC/73/1213 RESOLVED that:-

1. That the revenue and capital budget for 2013-2014, as set out in Appendix 1, be approved. (submitted during 6th December 2012 meeting)
2. That a level of precept for 2013-14 of £693,826 be approved which will be funded by a local precept of £618,472 with a grant from Cheshire East Borough council of £75,354.

13. **MEADOW AVENUE**

Cllr Bates requested that the Council note the contribution made by Cheshire East Councillors D. Brown, P. Mason and D. Topping in supporting the local residents in respect of the planning application on land to the East of Meadow Avenue.

Mrs S A Holland

TOWN MAYOR

TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

2013

11 th January	Quinta School – Opening of New Classrooms
11 th January	Calendar Presentation to Sponsors
17 th January	Pantomime – Daneside Theatre
19 th January	A.T.C. Presentation Evening – Chimney House Hotel
20 th January	Crewe Charter Trustees – Civic Service
22 nd January	Stepping Stones Pre-School 20 th Anniversary Celebration
22 nd January	Rotary Club Young Musician Competition
24 th January	Congleton High School Awards Evening
5 th February	Congleton Players – Daneside Theatre
6 th February	Congleton Town and Schools Presentation - Town Hall
16 th February	Daneside Theatre Production
20 th February	Fashion Show – Town Hall
21 th February	Fashion Show – Town Hall
1 st March	Prayer Day – Wellspring Church
1 st March	Rotary Swimathon

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY, 3rd JANUARY 2013

PRESENT Councillor L. D. Barker (Chairman)

P Bates
G. Baxendale
R. I. Brightwell
D. T. Brown
J. S. Crowther
G. P. Hayes
Mrs. S. A. Holland
Mrs. A. M. Martin
D. Murphy
D. A. Parker
Mrs. J. D. Parry
N. T. Price

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Mrs. D. S. Allen, G. R. Edwards and Miss R. K. Williams.

2. **MINUTES**

PLN/26/1213 RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 29th November 2012 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

Councillor G. Baxendale declared a "non pecuniary" interest due to his membership of Cheshire East Council

Councillor D. T. Brown declared a "non pecuniary" interest due to his membership of Cheshire East Council and also due to his membership of the Strategic Planning Committee. Councillor Brown did not vote on any items.

4. **OUTSTANDING ITEMS**

There were none

5. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

PLN/27/1213 RECOMMENDED: That the following comments be made to East Cheshire Borough Council:



Weeks of 30th November and 7th December 2012

12/4329C	Pedley House Farm, Pedley Lane, Congleton, CW12 3QD	NO OBJECTION
Councillor D. A. Parker declared a "non pecuniary" Interest in application 12/4329C		
12/4550C	36 Beech Close, Congleton, CW12 4YL	NO OBJECTION
12/4607C	28 Valley View, Congleton, CW12 EN	NO OBJECTION
12/4675C	81 Padgbury Lane, Congleton, CW12 4HU	NO OBJECTION
Subject to checks that the plans are in accordance with the required distances in respect of privacy		
12/4637T	Land rear of 20-22 Atkin Close, Congleton, CW12 4WJ	NO OBJECTION
Subject to usual conditions		

Week ended 14th December 2012

12/4537C	30 Rood Hill, Congleton, CW12 1LQ	NO OBJECTION
12/4666C	Junction of Sandbach Road & Heath Road, Congleton	NO OBJECTION
12/4711C	9 Newcastle Road, Congleton, CW12 4HN	NO OBJECTION

Week ended 21st December 2012

12/4558C	41 Wiltshire Drive, Congleton, CW12 1NX	NO OBJECTION
12/4612C	Tall Ash Farm, Buxton Road, Congleton, CW12 2DY	NO OBJECTION
12/4693C	Marlfields School, Waggs Road, Congleton, CW12 4BT	NO OBJECTION
Councillors P. Bates and J. S. Crowther declared "non pecuniary" interests in application 12/4693C		
12/4891C	4 Tudor Way, Congleton, CW12 4AS	NO OBJECTION
12/4807D	22 Brooklands Road, Congleton, CW12 4LU	NO OBJECTION

Applications 12/4785C and 12/4776C were considered together.

12/4776C	Land off The Moorings, Congleton	REFUSE
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12/4785C	Land off Goldfinch and Kestral Close, Congleton	REFUSE
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THE DECISION WAS TAKEN TO REFUSE APPLICATIONS 12/4776C AND 12/4785C for the following reasons.

- Long term traffic issues created by an estimated extra 320 vehicle journeys entering and leaving the estate on a daily basis. The entrance to the estate next to the Wellspring church can already be inaccessible at times due to hospital workers parking on one side.
- Increased traffic volume on Canal Street. This road is not suitable for heavier traffic flow due to its two narrower road sections heading towards the town centre creating pinch points.
- Concern at safety of pedestrians on Canal Road due to the extremely narrow pavement alongside Burns Garage and the likelihood of more accidents occurring.
- Impact on flora, fauna and wildlife in the area
- The Draft Local Plan is currently available for consultation (Development Strategy for Jobs and Sustainable Communities) and the preferred sites for development are to the North West of the Town.

6. **PLANNING APPEALS**

The following Appeal was noted -

12/1537C -- APP/R0660/A/12/2187677/NWF -- 36 Rood Hill, Congleton - Appeal to be dealt with by written representations and a site visit by an Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate.

It was suggested that Cheshire East be requested to provide details of the reasons for any Appeals to the Town Council.

7. **DRAFT LOCAL PLAN**

It was noted that the Consultation process regarding the draft Local Plan has been announced by Cheshire East and can be viewed on the Website. Councillor Brown provided information on the consultation and stated that a presentation on the Plan could be organised if required.

8. **LICENSING APPLICATIONS**

None to report.

9. **HIGHWAYS ISSUES**

Concerns were expressed regarding the poor condition of drains and the number of pot holes in the roads. It was suggested that a working party be arranged to co-ordinate a detailed response to Cheshire East Council.

10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Councillor Bates provided information on a site visit which was due to take place regarding the Meadow Avenue application.

Councillor Baxendale gave information on the current position of the Waggon & Horses Tesco application.

L. D. Barker (Chairman)



CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY, 24th JANUARY 2013**

PRESENT Councillor L. D. Barker (Chairman)
Mrs D Allen
G. Baxendale
J. S. Crowther
G R Edwards
G. P. Hayes
Mrs A. M. Martin
D. Murphy
Mrs. J. D. Parry
Mrs E Wardlaw

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors P. Bates, D. T. Brown, R Brightwell, Mrs S. A. Holland, D A Parker, N Price, G Williams and Miss R. K. Williams.

2. MINUTES

PLN/28/1213 RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 3rd January 2013 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Councillor G. Baxendale declared a "non pecuniary" interest due to his membership of Cheshire East Council

Cllr G R Edwards declared a non-pecuniary interest in planning application 13/007/C and Cllr Mrs D Allen declared a non-pecuniary interest in planning application 13/0113c

4. OUTSTANDING ITEMS

There were none

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

PLN/29/1213 RECOMMENDED: That the following comments be made to East Cheshire Borough Council:

Weeks of 11th January 2013

13/0072C	16 Lawton Street, Congleton, CW12 1RP	NO OBJECTION
13/0113C	24 Eardley Crescent, Congleton, CW12 1ND	NO OBJECTION
13/0152C	122 Boundary Lane, Congleton, CW12 3JF	NO OBJECTION
12/4709D	69 Moss Road, Congleton, CW12 3BN	NO OBJECTION

Week ended 18th January 2013

12/4480C	10 Holford Street, Congleton, CW12 1HA	NO OBJECTION
13/0161C	Sutherland Works, Weathercock Spur, Congleton	
	To be left to Cheshire East to make appropriate comments	
13/0194C	20 Oakwood Close, Congleton, CW12 4UU	NO OBJECTION

6. PLANNING APPEALS

None to report.

7. LICENSING APPLICATIONS

None to report.

8. HIGHWAYS ISSUES

None to report.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted that the government is going to relax the information required to be provided by landholders and developers to gain outline planning permission. The aim behind such amendments is to make the planning system less onerous and more efficient. The changes come into effect on the 31st January 2013

10. CHESHIRE EAST LOCAL PLAN – A DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR JOBS AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES WITH THE TOWN STRATEGY

The members considered a report produced by the Town Clerk which compared the Town Strategy to the Congleton content of the Cheshire East Development Strategy.

PLN/30/1213 RESOLVED that the following be approved and recommended to Cheshire East Borough Council to be noted in the Development Strategy

1. The first phase of the Northern Link Road should be designated as the Radnor Park extension
2. The playing fields at Back Lane should be protected and its status established
3. Once the Northern Link Road is completed, it should be noted that the committee considered that, at some stage, it would be desirable to extend the southern end of the road to link with the A34 at Astbury – therefore providing options for traffic to travel north via the M6 at Holmes Chapel or South via the A34/M6 through Newcastle. This would also facilitate easier access to Crewe via the A534.
4. The Cheshire East Development Strategy for Jobs and Sustainable Communities (Shaping Our Future) is accepted and approved with the above caveats

L. D. Barker (Chairman)

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY, 14th FEBRUARY 2013

PRESENT Councillor D. A. Parker (Vice Chairman)
Mrs. D. S. Allen
P. Bates
G. Baxendale
D. T. Brown
J. S. Crowther
G. R. Edwards
G. P. Hayes
Mrs. S. A. Holland
Mrs. A. M. Martin
D. Murphy
Mrs. J. D. Parry
N. T. Price
Mrs. E. Wardlaw

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors L. D. Barker, R. I. Brightwell, G. S. Williams and Miss R. K. Williams.

2. **MINUTES**

PLN/31/1213 RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 24th January 2013 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

Councillor G. Baxendale declared a "non pecuniary" interest due to his membership of Cheshire East Council

Councillor D. T. Brown declared a "non pecuniary" interest due to his membership of Cheshire East Council and also due to his membership of the Strategic Planning Committee. Councillor Brown did not vote on any items.

4. **OUTSTANDING ITEMS**

There were none

5. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

PLN/32/1213 RECOMMENDED: That the following comments be made to East Cheshire Borough Council:

Weeks of 25th January 2013

13/0301C	Durham Ox, 54 West Street, Congleton, CW12 1JY	NO OBJECTION
13/0312C	Astbury Mere Country Park, Sandy Lane, Congleton, CW12	NO OBJECTION

Week ended 1st February 2013

13/0300C	2A Back Lane, Congleton, CW12 4PP	NO OBJECTION
13/0411C	1 Pool Bank Cottages, Weathercock Lane, Congleton	NO OBJECTION
13/0420C	New Life Church, West Road, Congleton, CW12 4EY	NO OBJECTION
Councillors Mrs. A. M. Martin and N. T. Price declared "non pecuniary" interests in 13/0420C		
13/0429C	5 Troutbeck Avenue, Congleton, CW12 4JA	NO OBJECTION
Subject to concerns regarding adequate car parking spaces at the property being noted		
Councillor G. Baxendale declared a "non pecuniary" interests in application 13/0429C		
13/0401D	Waggon & Horses, West Road, Congleton, CW12 4HB	REFUSE – the
discharge of all three conditions – concerns were expressed in particular regarding		
noise.		
13/0383T	17 Minton Close, Congleton, CW12 3TD	NO OBJECTION
Subject to usual conditions		

Week ended 8th February 2013

13/0442C	Bridestone Shopping Centre, Victoria Street, Congleton	NO OBJECTION
13/0487C	1 Leamington Road, Congleton, CW12 4PF	NO OBJECTION

6. PLANNING APPEALS

It was noted that the following planning appeals have been lodged with Cheshire East Borough Council.

12/3025C – APP/R0660/A/12/2188605/NWF - Land Off Goldfinch Close and Kestral Close, Congleton

12/3028C – APP/R0660/A/12/2188604/NWF - Land Off The Moorings, Congleton

It was agreed that delegated authority would be given to Councillors Barker (Chairman), Parker (Vice Chairman), Mrs. Holland (Mayor) and Edwards (Leader) to meet and agree the Town Council's response to the enquiry in respect of applications 12/3025C and 12/3028C

12/3536C – APP/R0660/A/13/2192123/NWF – Land East of Meadow Avenue, Congleton

It was agreed that Councillors Bates and Mrs. Martin would represent the Council, if required, at any enquiry.

12/4114C – APP/R0660/D/13/2192567 – 116 West Road Congleton

7. APPLICATION 12/4785C LAND OFF GOLDFINCH AND KESTRAL CLOSE
APPLICATION 12/4776C LAND OFF THE MOORINGS, CONGLETON

It was noted that these applications had been withdrawn.

8. LICENSING APPLICATIONS

None to report.

9. HIGHWAYS ISSUES

The following public footpath diversion was noted -

Footpath No. 10 (part) – parish of Congleton – Public Path Diversion Order 2013 dated 7th February 2013

10. **LINK ROAD**

It was noted that a letter has been received from the Congleton Partnership dated 28th January 2013 in respect of the Link Road. Some Councillors who had attended that meeting, commented that they did not recall the comments regarding Macclesfield, referred to in the letter.

11. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Concerns were discussed regarding pot holes in the roads. It was noted that members of the public may report pot holes either on-line, at the library or by telephone directly to Cheshire East or via the Town Council. Councillor Brown gave an update on the programme of works and offered to keep the Town Council updated on progress.

D. A. Parker (Vice Chairman)

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY, ENVIRONMENT AND SERVICES
COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 7TH FEBRUARY 2013**

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

1. APOLOGIES.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs.S.A Holland (Town Mayor). Apologies were also received from Cllrs G.P Hayes and G.Brittain who are not members of this particular committee.

2. MINUTES

CES/22/1213 RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 15th November 2012 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.

Cllrs D.Murphy and D.Parker declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 10.

Cllr G.Williams declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 5.

Cllr N.Price declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 18.

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

4. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

CAE/40/1112

A report on the Boat on the River Dane noted that a group of local businessmen had offered to remove the boat at no cost.

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.

5. CONGLETON CHILDREN'S CENTRE

Sarah Bishop provided a presentation on the work being carried out by Congleton Children's Centre.

It was noted that the service which is part of Cheshire East; Family Service covers Congleton, Holmes Chapel, Middlewich and Sandbach.

There are facilities at Daven School and Bradshaw House with a staff of 9. It was also noted that the imminent change to the Welfare Benefit Scheme will have a further negative impact on deprivation in areas such as Bromley Farm, Buglawton and the Town Centre.

CES/23/1213 RESOLVED that the presentation be received.

6. BOAT ON THE RIVER DANE

Cllr Price provided an update on the latest situation with the Boat on the River Dane. It was noted that a business man may be interested in taking over the boat for an office, but, was seeking advice on change of use.

Mr G. Goodwin also raised a question asking when residents would finally see the eyesore removed.

CES/24/1213 RESOLVED that the Town Clerk 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.

7. SPEED SIGN ON MANCHESTER ROAD

Correspondence from Cheshire East Traffic and Road Safety Team confirmed that action was being taken to extend the 30mph section on Manchester Road and to also introduce a short 40mph limit leading into this section.

It was noted that the officer's decision report on this issue has been passed to Cheshire East Legal Department for checking in readiness for signing and advertising.

CES/25/1213 RESOLVED that the correspondence be received.

8. RESIDENTS STREET PARKING

Correspondence from a resident in Park View and Mr Howard from Cheshire East concerning the proposed change to parking regulations in Park Road and Park View was considered.

CES/26/1213 RESOLVED that the correspondence be received and noted.

9. STREET LIGHTING CARBON REDUCTION SCHEME

Kevin Melling, Head of Highways and transport at Cheshire East, provided a report on the Borough's plans to reduce their carbon footprint by switching off or dimming street lighting on certain roads.

The roads affected are:

1. A534 Clayton By Pass and Newcastle Road.
2. Mountbatten Way, Buxton Road and Burton Road.
3. Park Lane
4. A536 Macclesfield Road junction with the A34.

CES/27/1213 RESOLVED that the Council support this initiative as it fits in with the Council's Transition Town Status. Any issues concerning this change to be reported to John Tickle at Cheshire East.

10. TOWN TRUST TRUSTEES

A request from Jo Money to consider recommending Robert Boston and James Morris as Trustees of the Town trust for a further 4 years was discussed.

CES/28/1213 RESOLVED that the nomination of R.Boston and J.Morris as Trustees of the Town Trust be confirmed.

11. FELLOWSHIP HOUSE

It was noted that Fellowship House had provided a letter of thanks to the Council for the provision of a Christmas tree.

12. CHESHIRE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

The Town Clerk provided a report on the work of the Cheshire Community Foundation which was supported by the Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire. It was noted there is to be a presentation in the Town Hall on the 5th March concerning the Foundation and local business people and charitable organisations will be invited.

CES/29/1213 RESOLVED that the Council fully supports the aims and objectives and will provide financial support for the buffet.

13. FLEXIBLE TRANSPORT SERVICES

Correspondence from Cheshire East Council outlining a new flexible transport service operating in Congleton to registered members of Dial a Ride was noted.

14. MERCIAN MARCH

Correspondence from Cheshire East Corporate Management Team concerning the planned parade of the Mercian Regiment in Congleton on the morning of Friday 14th June was discussed. It was noted that Cheshire East only had a limited budget for the march taking place in 3 towns in Cheshire East and that the Town Council may need to supplement this budget.

CES/30/1213 RESOLVED to receive the correspondence and note the budget constraints of Cheshire East.

15. CHALC MEETING WITH CHESHIRE POLICE COMMISSIONER

Notes of a ChALC Executive Board meeting with John Dwyer, Police Commissioner were received.

16. FUNDING OF PCSOs

Correspondence from Cheshire Constabulary thanking the town Council for its continuing financial support for the PCSOs was considered. It was also noted that the cost of the service remains unchanged.

17. NATIONAL GRID GAS WORK – CANAL STREET

A report from the Town Clerk outlining the work to be carried out by National Grid to replace cast iron gas pipes in Canal Street was considered. It was noted that the work will start on 11th March 2013 and should be completed by 8th April 2013.

18. PARKING ON BUXTON OLD ROAD

Correspondence from a resident of Buxton Old Road concerned at the parking on this street during school start and finish times was considered.

CES/31/1213 RESOLVED that the Clerk write to Cheshire East to request an improvement to safety around the school including a reduction in the speed limit to 20mph. Cllr A Thwaite will also be contacted to seek his support.

19. LOVE LOCAL LIFE

Jackie MacArthur, Town Centre Manager, provided a report outlining the current status of the Love local Life scheme.

CES/32/1213 RESOLVED that the Council continue to ring fence £1,500 of funding and to consider the matter again at the next meeting of the Committee on 21st March 2013.

20. HIGHTOWN SHOPS

Cllr G. Williams pointed out some of the concerns with parking around the shops at Hightown which are still occurring despite the improvements to parking facilities at the train station. It was noted that Cheshire East have yet to complete some improvement work in this area.

CES/33/1213 RESOLVED that:-

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

21. DOG FOULING

Concern was expressed at the amount of dog fouling taking place in the town which was typically taking place in the evening. It was noted that Bromley Farm are introducing a scheme to deal with the issue.

CES/34/1213 RESOLVED that 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.

22. WAR MEMORIAL

The Town Clerk reported that a group of residents were setting out to refurbish the War memorial which would require extensive work; In particular the retaining wall at the rear of the War Memorial is cracked and in danger of collapsing. Funding is required to produce a feasibility scheme and plans to submit to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

CES/35/1213 RESOLVED that the committee supports the notion of refurbishing the War Memorial, but, suggested that some skills may be provided free to assist in the production of a Lottery submission.

23. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

CES/36/1213 RECOMMENDED: that 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 discussions of private and confidential information or staff matters.

24. DRUG AND ALCOHOL RELATED ISSUE

Concern was expressed at drug and alcohol related issues leading to anti-social behaviour.

CES/37/1213 RESOLVED that the Anti-Social Behaviour Working Group examine this problem and to liaise with other agencies including the Police and Plus Dane.

25. CHESHIRE POLICE

There were no representatives of the Police present.

G Williams
Chairman (In the Chair)

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 3rd January 2013

PRESENT

Councillors

Mrs J D Parry (Vice Chairman)
G Baxendale
L D Barker
P Bates
G P Hayes
R I Brightwell
Mrs S A Holland (Town Mayor)
D A Parker
D Murphy
N T Price
G S Williams
E A Clarke
D. Brown

Appointed Members

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G.R. Edwards and G.Brittain.

2. MINUTES

FAP/46/1213 RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 29th November 2012 be agreed and signed by the Vice Chairman.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs G. Baxendale and D. Brown declared a non-pecuniary interest in all matters related to Cheshire East Council.

Cllr D. Brown refrained from voting on all matters.

Cllrs P.Bates and D.Murphy declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 7.

Cllr G.Williams declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 8.

Cllr G Hayes declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 10.

4. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

There are no outstanding actions.

5. GRANT APPROVALS AND COMMITMENTS 2012/2013

A summary of grant approvals and commitments was considered by the committee and it was noted that £18,700 is available for grants.

FAP/47/1213 RESOLVED: That the grant summary be received.



6. NEW APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

FAP/48/1213 RESOLVED That:

1. GR.22/1213 Congleton Performance Arts Centre (C.P.A.C) that the application for a grant be refused.

7. DEFERRED GRANT APPLICATION GR 17 12/13 CONGLETON JAZZ & BLUES FESTIVAL

FAP/49/1213 RESOLVED that a grant of £500 be awarded to Congleton Jazz & Blues Festival.

8. NEW GRANT ACTIVITIES MONITORING FORMS

A grant activities monitoring form submitted by Congleton Harriers was considered.

FAP/50/1213 RESOLVED that the monitoring form be received and noted.

9. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR APRIL - NOV 2012

FAP/51/1213 RESOLVED: That the Management Accounts for November 2012 be received.

10. CIVIC REGALIA

A report produced by the Town Clerk on Town Council Civic Regalia was discussed by the Committee.

FAP/52/1213 RESOLVED that:-

1. The Deputy Mayor can make use of the Working Chain when it is available.
2. To purchase a new pendant for the Deputy Mayor to go with the Working Chain.
3. To purchase a pendant for the Mayor's Consort and Deputy Mayor's Consort.



J.D Parry
Vice Chairman

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 14th February 2013

PRESENT

Councillors

Mr G R Edwards (Chairman)
Mrs J D Parry (Vice Chairman)
G Baxendale
DT Brown
P Bates
G P Hayes
A M Martin
Mrs S A Holland (Town Mayor)
D A Parker
D Murphy
N T Price

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R. I Brightwell and G. S Williams.

2. MINUTES

FAP/53/1213 RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 3rd January 2013 be agreed and signed by the Vice 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 Hayes declared a pecuniary interest in item 6 (ii) and left the room when this item was discussed.

Cllrs G. Baxendale and D. Brown declared a non-pecuniary interest in all matters related to Cheshire East Council.

4. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

There are no outstanding actions.

5. GRANT APPROVALS AND COMMITMENTS 2012/2013

A summary of grant approvals and commitments was considered by the committee and it was noted that £18,200 is available for grants.

FAP/54/1213 RESOLVED: That the grant summary be received.

6. NEW APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

FAP/56/1213 RESOLVED That:

1. GR.23/1213 Sol Theatre school that a grant of £250 be approved.
2. GR.23/1213 Team Congleton to be invited to provide a 5 minute presentation at the next committee meeting of F&P.

7. NEW GRANT ACTIVITIES MONITORING FORMS

A grant activities monitoring form submitted by Congleton Film festival was considered.

FAP/56/1213 RESOLVED that the monitoring form be received and noted.

8. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR APRIL - DEC 2012

FAP/57/1213 RESOLVED: That the Management Accounts for December 2012 be received.

9. BAD DEBTS

The notion of an outstanding debt of £918 for hire of Town Hall facilities was considered. It was noted that court action had been taken, but, the debt had not been recovered.

FAP/58/1213 RESOLVED that the debt be written off in this financial year, but, letters should be sent to the debtor to remind them of the outstanding payment.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

It was noted that the Community, Environment & Services Committee had recommended providing finance for a buffet lunch for the Cheshire Community Foundation event to be held at the Town Hall.

FAP/59/1213 RESOLVED that the cost of the buffet for the Cheshire Community Foundation be provided in conjunction with Plus Dane up to a value of £750.

11. CORPORATE BUSINESS PLAN AND BUSINESS RISK ASSESSMENT

The 2013-14 Corporate Business Plan and Risk Assessment was considered by the members.

FAP/60/1213 RESOLVED that:-

- I. The Business Plan be placed on the next agenda of Full Council for consideration.
- II. Cllr A.Martin to co-ordinate responses from other Councillors and liaise with the Town Clerk.

12. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Medium Term Financial Strategy was presented to the committee for consideration collating the year 2013-17.

FAP/61/1213 RESOLVED that the Medium Term Financial Strategy be approved.

G.R Edwards
Chairman

Congleton Town Council

RBS Current/I Access Acct

List of Payments made between 01/12/2012 and 31/01/2013

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Cheque Ref</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
03/12/2012	Shell UK Ltd	dd	92.57	S03921807/3550/Van diesel
03/12/2012	Cheshire East	DD	2107.00	Business Rates
03/12/2012	CCP	005740	717.56	Grant xmaslights electric
03/12/2012	Congleton Players	005741	500.00	Grant Congleton Players
05/12/2012	Petty cash reimbursed	005742	149.90	Petty cash reimbursed
10/12/2012	Chris Booth	005743	200.00	167/3520/xmas lights switch on
10/12/2012	Chubb Electronic Security Ltd	005744	222.50	3715962/3521/security system
10/12/2012	Creative Marketing	005745	235.20	12/3522/Xmas Banners
10/12/2012	Heads (Congleton) Limited	005746	108.00	75825/3523/xmas advert
10/12/2012	Frank Henshall Photographer	005747	420.00	P10/0136/3524/Pics of Mayors
10/12/2012	Lesniak Swann	005748	228.00	IN4514/3526/website changes
10/12/2012	Maximeyes Security Ltd	005749	42.00	19558/3528/alarm call out
10/12/2012	Maxigene Enviromental Service	005750	45.00	15354C/3529/Sanitary bins
10/12/2012	Town Hall Studios	005751	74.99	004358/3531/Partnership MMW plc
10/12/2012	Talke Chemical Company Limited	005752	7.32	62372/3532/Tie wraps
10/12/2012	Travis Perkins Trading Company	005753	23.18	3640ACH315/3533Handyman materials
10/12/2012	United Utilities	005754	17.28	271112/3534/Allotments
10/12/2012	Congleton Glass Co. Ltd	005755	14.93	Repair picture glass
10/12/2012	British Telecom	005756	354.21	MR74673400Q026WV/3537/Phones
10/12/2012	Cheshire Electrical Supplies L	005757	19.90	C1651740/3539/Bulbs
10/12/2012	Posh Nosh Parties Ltd	005758	568.79	5012/3544/Plus Dane TC9985
10/12/2012	Mrs K Pugh	005759	50.00	251112/3547/paint bear project
11/12/2012	T Mobile	DD	21.00	V00873889836/3530/JM Phone
12/12/2012	British Telecom	d d	45.82	MR74673199Q050ZU/3536/Fax
14/12/2012	Wirehouse	DD	102.00	Health & Safety consultancy
18/12/2012	Adullum Homes Housing Associat	005760	133.00	SONEIN/520/3551/catering partnership
18/12/2012	Angel Springs	005761	105.13	1677049/3552/Water
18/12/2012	BDR Voice & Data Solutions Ltd	005762	324.00	212289/3553/phone system maint
18/12/2012	B & P Motors	005763	117.15	69/3554/Van Service
18/12/2012	Mr K Blease-Bourne	005764	100.00	171212/3555/radio show in town
18/12/2012	British Youth Council	005765	54.00	1213128/3556/BYC membership
18/12/2012	Cheshire Electrical Supplies L	005766	9.06	C1652448/3557/Bulbs
18/12/2012	Chubb Electronic Security Ltd	005767	223.20	3730833/3559/alarm service
18/12/2012	Chubb Fire	005768	216.00	3730833/3582/Firealarm service
18/12/2012	Heads (Congleton) Limited	005769	64.80	76366/3560/Polar Bear Advert
18/12/2012	Congleton Garden Centre	005770	39.98	0351/3561/xmas tree stands
18/12/2012	Congleton Learning Partnership	005771	1053.60	875/3562/Partnership unemployed courses
18/12/2012	D&B Electricis	005772	135.00	9274/3563/radios xmas lights
18/12/2012	D & M Nurseries	005773	305.50	75/3564/winter tub fill
18/12/2012	Eventmen Ltd	005774	1178.40	1475/3565/stalls xmas lights
18/12/2012	JAF Graphics	005775	270.00	17305/3566/change to road sign
18/12/2012	LAC Autoparts	005776	124.40	474766/3567/wiper blades
18/12/2012	MPH Services	005777	25.00	816/3569/jump start van
18/12/2012	Posh Nosh Parties Ltd	005778	93.00	4312/3573/Cheshire Training
18/12/2012	Prism Business Developments Li	005779	1482.60	9883/3574/upgrade & JP PC
18/12/2012	Rode Hall Silver Band	005780	100.00	261112/3575/playing at xmas li
18/12/2012	The Stationery Cupboard	005781	220.90	0095/3578/Stationery
19/12/2012	Wirehouse	DD	153.60	HR support
20/12/2012	West Mercia Energy	D d	2385.55	1033312/3517/West Mercia Energ
20/12/2012	West Mercia Energy	dd	2820.87	1029901/3482/P Pool Electric
20/12/2012	RBS Autopay	AUTOPAY	23085.83	Salaries December 2012
24/12/2012	Shell UK Ltd	dd	1.80	S03938096/3577/card membership
27/12/2012	Prism Bus Developments	DD	564.41	IT support December 2012
27/12/2012	West Mercia Energy	dd	1210.96	1036522/3516/West Mercia Energ
28/12/2012	Plus Dane	DD	36.08	Garage for Allotment
31/12/2012	Sita UK Ltd	DD	202.14	28484505/3548/Waste removal

02/01/2013	CEast	DD	2107.00 BusinessRates
02/01/2013	Shell UK Ltd	dd	88.05 S03956349/3576/fuel for van
02/01/2013	United Utilities	Dd	335.97 010412/3118/United Utilities
07/01/2013	Blitz Fireworks Ltd	005783	552.00 171212/3583/xmas fireworks
07/01/2013	Cheshire Electrical Supplies L	005784	30.78 C1652962/3584/bulbs for TIC
07/01/2013	Chubb Electronic Security Ltd	005785	220.87 3761780/3585/wrk to Intr alarm
07/01/2013	Investors In Publishing Ltd	005786	360.00 15668/3586/xmas ads
07/01/2013	Jewson Limited	005787	57.96 0767/0163894/3587/Paint
07/01/2013	The Leaflet Team	005788	368.00 CTC0014/3588/Dist of B Necess
07/01/2013	Maximeyes Security Ltd	005789	42.00 19723/3589/alarm call out
07/01/2013	Posh Nosh Parties Ltd	005790	1686.54 5312/3590/recharges & buffet
07/01/2013	St John Ambulance	005791	100.80 SP12003559/3594/1st aid cover xmas light switchon
07/01/2013	Cong Jazz & Blues	005782	500.00 Grant Cong Jazz & Blues
08/01/2013	T & S Electrical Limited	005792	77.39 8037/3596/stairlift museum
08/01/2013	T Mobile	dD	21.30 V00879265228/3595/JM mobile
10/01/2013	Purchase Power	d d	213.00 BA224020/3592/Post charges
11/01/2013	The Leaflet Team	005793	287.50 CTC0015/3598/leaflet drop
11/01/2013	E Cheshire Chamber of Comm & E	005796	72.00 110113/3597/chamber dinner
11/01/2013	CCP	005794	766.75 Grant CCP
11/01/2013	Cllr R Brightwell	005795	75.98 Cllr expenses reimbursed
14/01/2013	Wirehouse	DD	102.00 health &safety consultancy
14/01/2013	West Mercia Energy	D D	1578.15 1039044/3579/Town Hall Gas
15/01/2013	AWC Electrical Ltd	005797	1807.20 2210/3599/grant store xmas light
15/01/2013	Angel Springs	005798	56.57 1707273/3600/Water
15/01/2013	Cavern Protective Clothing	005799	66.00 17372/3601/gloves & fleece
15/01/2013	Cannon	005800	82.69 CN18286342/3602/waste
15/01/2013	Canda Copying Ltd	005801	780.41 308251/3604/ photocopying
15/01/2013	Congleton Community Projects	005802	140.00 100113/3605/community flag
15/01/2013	Congleton High School	005803	89.50 097/3606/Printing CSG
15/01/2013	Holland Construction	005804	746.40 1137/3607/P/ship fencing for footpath
15/01/2013	JAF Graphics	005805	54.00 17355/3608/car park stickers
15/01/2013	LITE Limited	005806	600.00 600025/3609/Grant storage of lights
15/01/2013	Mitten Clarke	005807	218.40 11477/3610/PAYE etc
15/01/2013	Otis Ltd	005808	456.03 01053027/3611/lift maintenance
15/01/2013	The Stationery Cupboard	005809	57.94 0097/3612/ Stationery
15/01/2013	Town Hall Studios	005810	109.50 004374/3613/mayors xmas card
15/01/2013	Vibrant Graphics Ltd	005811	658.00 025370/3614/Bear Necessities
17/01/2013	Petty cash	0005812	143.24 Petty cash
21/01/2013	Wirehouse	DD	153.60 HR Consultancy
22/01/2013	Autopay Salaries	AUTOPAY	22533.86 Salaries Jan 2013
22/01/2013	Shell UK Ltd	D D	1.80 S03972397/3640/fuel van
22/01/2013	Electric Picture House	005814	600.00 EPH P/ship
22/01/2013	NW in Bloom	005813	120.00 NW in bloom entry
25/01/2013	Prism	DD	572.42 IT support Jan 2013
28/01/2013	Allpay (plus Dane)	DD	36.08 Garage rental allotments
31/01/2013	Sita UK Ltd	dd	202.14 28523238/3593/Waste removal
29/01/2013	Cheshire East Council	005815	192.50 290113/3619/Planning permission advertising board

Total

83325.43

Congleton Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Youth Committee held on Tuesday 8th January 2013 in the Town Hall, Congleton

PRESENT Youth Councillor Maddy Summerfield (Chairman)

Nathan Davies
Catherine Hassall
Joseph Hearson
Kirby Jennings
Matthew Procter
Jon Foster
Matthew Jones
Thomas Minshull

Councillor Liz Wardlaw
Councillor George Hayes

Linda Minshull

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Hannah Booth, Beth Evans, Tom Heyes and Councillors Larry Barker and Sally Holland.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 20th November 2012 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3. YOUTH COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERING WEBSITE

Nathan gave an update on the progress of the Volunteering Website. Work is currently progressing well on the development of the site. Discussions will continue with Larry for advice on the terms and conditions. Maddy and Matt will contact organisations when the terms and conditions are completed.

4. YOUTH COMMITTEE BANK ACCOUNT

It was reported that the balance stands at £773.92 as at 8th January 2013.

Discussions took place regarding future fundraising and distribution of the fund.

Congleton Town Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Youth Committee held on Tuesday 5th February 2013 in the Town Hall, Congleton

PRESENT Youth Councillor Maddy Summerfield (Chairman)

Nathan Davies

Beth Evans

Joseph Hearson

Jordan Goodwin

Matthew Jones

Thomas Minshull

Emma Satchwell

Councillor George Hayes

Linda Minshull

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Hannah Booth, Matthew Procter, Tom Heyes and Councillors Larry Barker, Sally Holland and Liz Wardlaw.

Councillor George Hayes, Deputy Mayor presented a gift on behalf of the Youth Committee to Emma Satchwell for her work on the Youth Committee.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 8th January 2013 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3. RESIGNATION

Linda reported that she had received the resignation of Ellen Wilkinson. Linda has forwarded a letter of thanks to Ellen.

The Youth Committee has three informal members in Tom, Thomas and Matthew. It was agreed to offer the formal places to the informal members in order of the oldest first. Therefore this vacancy will be offered to Tom Heyes and future vacancies offered to Thomas followed by Matthew.

4. YOUTH COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERING WEBSITE

Nathan gave an update on the development of the Website. The terms and conditions will be completed by this week-end and Nathan will forward these to Larry for his comments.

5. **YOUTH COMMITTEE BANK ACCOUNT**

It was reported that the balance remains at £773.92.

6. **DRUGS EDUCATION**

Linda informed the meeting of copy correspondence from Fiona Bruce M.P. to both the High Schools. Linda has spoken to Harriett at Fiona's Office who will be organising a meeting with the schools and the Youth Committee.

7. **JEANNE WHITEHURST FELLOWSHIP**

Linda distributed information on the initiative. Members agreed to promote the scheme in the schools.

8. **FIVE YEAR ANNIVERSARY**

Further discussions took place on this item but no decision on date or venue is yet decided.

9. **YOUTH COMMITTEE MEMBERS ITEMS**

Mayor's Ball

Linda reminded members to return their Mayor's Ball ticket orders as soon as possible.

10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Maddy informed the meeting of the British Youth Council A.G.M. to be held on Saturday 2nd March in London. A few members discussed going as an unofficial Youth Committee visit.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 18th March 2013 at 7 p.m.

Maddy Summerfield (Chairman)

Report to the Town Council

7th March 2013

Outdoor Digital Display Unit

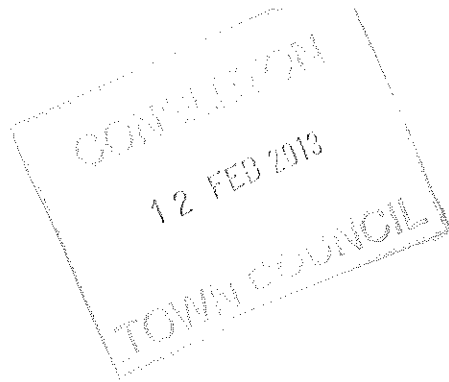
1. The Town Council has been concerned for some time at the lack of public response to the various initiatives undertaken by the Council which leads to very few residents taking part and expressing their views on a wide variety of issues effecting how people live, work and enjoy leisure activities in and around the Town.
2. In the past a number of different mediums have been exploited, including the press and radio to advise residents of consultations going on in the Town or to simply inform them of an event taking place. Despite this numerous people will still complain that they haven't been informed and know nothing about what has been planned.
3. In order to address this issue in an impactful and highly visible manner, the notion of purchasing a SimNet Outdoor Display Unit was approved by the Finance and Policy committee on the 30th August 2012.
4. The original objective was to find a suitable site to locate a single sided display unit in the pedestrian area in Bridge Street, but, no suitable site could be found. In order to move the project forward it was decided the best option was to utilise a free standing double sided display unit which then only required permission from Cheshire East Borough Council to be sited on the public realm. The cost however is higher and is circa £k25.
5. Originally it was assumed that planning permission was not required to site the unit as authority from Cheshire East Highways department was given very quickly. Nonetheless, to be prudent advice was sought from the Planning Department, but, after a period of 8 weeks or so no advice had been provided and a planning application was submitted to move the matter forward which is awaiting consideration under delegated powers.

Recommendation

To continue with the project to install a Digital Display Unit in the Town Centre

Brian Hogan

26.02.13



Mr B Hogan
Clerk to Congleton Town Council
Town Hall
High Street,
Congleton
Cheshire
CW12 1BN

Westfields
Middlewich Road
SANDBACH
Cheshire
CW11 1HZ

Tel: 01270 686639

www.cheshireeast.gov.uk

Date: 11 February 2013

OUR REF: PH/ls

YOUR REF:

Dear Mr Hogan

RE: TOWN & VILLAGE CENTRE CCTV

We are writing to all Town and Parish Councils who have CCTV in their area to begin a discussion on the future operation and funding of this service. Cheshire East Borough Council operates 256 cameras across 14 town centres providing 24 / 7 / 365 coverage of this network through its new control room in Macclesfield.

The Council has recently invested almost £1m in this control room, bringing together the three former district council's ageing facilities.

The ongoing cost of monitoring and maintaining this service is approximately £700k per annum and as the cameras age and technology changes, this cost continues to escalate year on year. This represents an average cost per camera of £2,695 per annum.

The purpose of the CCTV network, as set out in our Code of Practice, is the prevention and detection of crime and disorder. The service has certainly played its part in helping reduce crime by over 6% and anti social behaviour by over 15% (since 2009/10) and helps ensure Cheshire East remains a safe place for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The question has arisen whether we have the mandate to provide this service for you.

The Council has the legal power to operate CCTV but this is not a statutory duty. At a time when all of our services are under pressure to reduce costs, CCTV must provide improved value for money too.

We are currently undertaking a review of all our cameras to ensure they are fit for purpose and in the right location to reflect current crime and disorder patterns and crime types and we are working with the Police Crime Data Analyst and NPU teams to do this.

In addition, we are reviewing our operators' rota to identify savings whilst retaining 24 / 7 / 365 monitoring and we have recently re-tendered our network circuit contracts in the hope that further reductions can be achieved in the costs of transmission.

The Council has a CCTV Code of Practice, approved by the Information Commissioner. This code is fully compliant with the legislation framework of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998 as well as conforming with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 for any directed surveillance requirement.

Cheshire East Borough Council is doing all it can to continue to provide a value for money service for town and village centres and the Police.

I am writing to Town and Parish Councils to tell us if they want the service to continue and to consider making a financial contribution to the cost of monitoring and maintaining each camera in your area.

It is anticipated that where no commitment is made the cameras will remain in place on the 'tour' cycle but will not be actively monitored by our operators or be maintained or replaced.

There are 8 cameras operating across your council area, at an average cost per camera of £1,800 per annum, after taking account of the planned savings in our 2013/14 budget.

Cheshire East Borough Council is seeking your mandate through a contribution to continue to actively monitor the cameras on a 24 hour, 7 day per week operation.

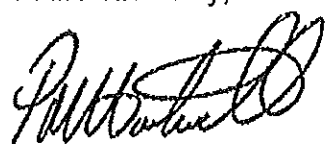
To start this discussion I would welcome the opportunity to meet with a representative from each of the Town and Parish Councils to explain the current financial and operational issues affecting CCTV as well as listen to your thoughts on how we can work together in the future.

I would be grateful if you could discuss this matter with your Town or Parish Council Members at the earliest opportunity and respond with the name and availability of your representative by 28th February 2013 so that the meeting can be arranged.

If you require any further information, particularly covering the existing network coverage and local crime data for your area please let me know.

I look forward to working with you to continue to provide a professional CCTV service and together helping keep Cheshire East a safe place to live, work or visit.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Hartwell', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Peter Hartwell
Head of Community Services

Brian Hogan

From: Denise French <AssistantClerk@middlewich.org.uk>
Sent: 22 February 2013 14:38
To: nicola.clarke21@btinternet.com; Ann Banks (clerk@sandbach.gov.uk); Brian Hogan; clerk@holmeschapelparishcouncil.gov.uk; David Naylor (clerk@bollington-tc.gov.uk); Ian Hope (nantwichtc@nantwichtowncouncil.gov.uk); Malcolm Adams (malcolm.adams@poyntontowncouncil.gov.uk); Matthew Jackson (townclerk@wilmslow-tc.org.uk); Steve McQuade (steve.mcquade@knutsfordtowncouncil.gov.uk); Clerk
Subject: Cheshire East Council request for contributions towards CCTV funding

Hello everyone

Following on from the discussion at last week's meeting, I set out below Middlewich Town Council's response to Peter Hartwell's letter seeking financial contributions towards CCTV. The Town Councillors were also keen that we work closely with our Town and Parish Council colleagues on this matter.

"Thank you for your letter of 11 February and the Town Council notes the information set out.

The Town Council is unhappy with this request which has been received at a time of year when the Council has already set its budget for 2013 – 14 and submitted the precept request. Councillors have asked for clarification as to when any change in the service will take effect and what will be the impact if larger Town Councils decide not to make a financial contribution to the service? This is bearing in mind that some Town Councils have around 30 cameras which could mean that many CCTV cameras in Cheshire East are not being monitored and the service provided is minimal.

Middlewich Town Council has therefore resolved not to make a financial contribution to Cheshire East regarding CCTV in Middlewich and requests that this service continues to be funded by Cheshire East Council. "

Please get in touch if you have any queries

Best wishes
Denise

Denise French

Assistant Town Clerk

Middlewich Town Council
Victoria Building
Lewin Street
Middlewich
Cheshire
CW10 9AT

Telephone: 01606 833434

Email: assistantclerk@middlewich.org.uk

Brian Hogan

From: Hazel Merrill <hazelmerrill@chalc.org.uk>
Sent: 21 February 2013 12:31
To: Simon Palmer; Mr David Naylor; Brian Hogan; Julie Mason; Mary Webb; Denise Draper; David Norbury; Jo O'Donoghue; Jeanette Hughes; Ann Wright; Doreen Woods; Steve McQuade; Jonathan Williams; Ian Hope; Ann Wright; Chris Shaw; Malcolm Adams; Ann Banks; Julie Mason; John Macdonald; Julie Mason; Suzi Pollard; Alan Warburton
Subject: Timetable and format of the Quality Parish and Town Council Scheme Review

Good Afternoon

Please see the information below regarding the Quality Town and Parish Council Scheme.

Dear all,

As you all know, in September 2012 the National Stakeholder Group for the Quality Parish and Town Council Scheme agreed to review the Scheme with the aim of re-launching an updated standards scheme in 2013.

Since then, the National Stakeholder Group have considered the scope and content of the sector consultation which will inform the review, using the focus group data on the future of the Scheme collected in 2011/12, and input from sector stakeholders. I am writing to confirm that the format of the consultation will be as follows:

Online survey

A short online survey is being drafted with the help of statisticians at the Department for the Environment & Rural Affairs. The survey will focus on gathering quantitative data and it will be open to anyone with an interest in the Scheme to respond. **Please note that because of the nature of an online survey we will be seeking responses from individuals rather than from councils as corporate bodies.** The link will be made available on the NALC and SLCC websites, and will be distributed as widely as possible via NALC and SLCC networks. The survey will be open for responses for approximately 3 weeks.

Structured interviews

A small number of brief structured telephone interviews will be carried out to collect qualitative data to support the results of the survey. The interviews will be targeted both at those groups who have not historically been involved with the scheme, and are therefore unlikely to complete a survey, and at key individuals who have been nominated by sector stakeholders. There will also be an opportunity to self-nominate for a structured interview in the online survey, although due to timescales not everyone who self-nominates will be interviewed.

Written submissions

A number of written submissions have already been received from County Accreditation Panels and other sector stakeholders, and these will be used in conjunction with the data from the survey and interviews. Due to time constraints in analysing the results of the consultation we will not be actively seeking further written submissions.

Support from County Associations

I am asking County Associations to support the consultation by publicising the online survey to their network of councillors, clerks, county accreditation panel members, county association executive members and principal council officers and members.

Due to the tight timetable and the high level of interest in responding to this consultation I would be very grateful if you could send out specific emails alerting people to the consultation timetable and link as well as including details in any regular newsletter.

I would be very grateful if County Officers could specifically support the consultation in the following 3 ways:

1. Please contact your network as soon as possible after receiving this briefing to make them aware that the consultation will open in early March and close on 1st April 2013.
2. When the consultation period begins I will send you a link to the survey. Please distribute this as widely as possible throughout your network with a reminder of the consultation dates.

3. During the consultation period I will send a number of reminder emails prompting people to take the survey.
Please forward these on to your network.

In addition, in those areas where County Associations have a member of staff who is employed specifically to promote Quality Parish and Town Council Scheme I would be very grateful if they were able to support the consultation by carrying out structured telephone interviews during March 2013. Please email tamsin.hewett@nalc.gov.uk if this is a possibility. I would also be grateful for any contact details for relevant officials or councillors at principal councils who I might invite to take part in a structured interview.

Provisional timetable for Quality Parish and Town Council Scheme consultation

Please note this timetable is provisional and may be subject to change as the review progresses:

Invitations for first round of structured interviews sent out	End February 2013
Consultation launched - survey link released	First 2 weeks March
Structured interviews	March 2013
Reminders sent	Mid-March 2013
Consultation ends	1 st April, 2013
Analysis of consultation results supported by DEFRA statisticians	April 2013
New Quality Parishes Scheme drafted	May 2013
New Quality Parishes Scheme finalised	June 2013
New Quality Parishes Scheme shared with sector	July 2013
Workshops & training events for CALCs on new scheme	July - October 2013
Applications open for new Quality Parishes Scheme	October 2013
End of freeze on Quality Status	December 2013

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any queries or if you would like to book in a date for a workshop about the new scheme later this year.

Thanks and regards

Tamsin
Tamsin Hewett
Improvement & Development Manager
Direct Line: 020 7290 0319
National Association of Local Councils
109 Great Russell Street
London
WC1B 3LD

Hazel Merrill
Cheshire Association of Local Councils

Web: www.chalc.org.uk

Report to the Town Council
7th March 2013

To Fiona Bruce MP

Localising Support for Council Tax & the Impact on Town & Parish Council Funding

I write seeking your help regarding the impact on the Parish & Town Council sector that the new Regulations in the Localisation of Council Tax has in setting our budgets and the rate levied on our ratepayers.

In monetary terms for 2013-14 the localising support for council tax has led to a decrease of income from the precept of £75,354 for Congleton Town Council.

Thus the tax base for precepting has decreased by 1121.37, meaning that for us to levy the same Band D Rate of £67.20 our precept would need to increase by 12.2%, in the absence of any grant entitlement.

In the coming financial year this though, has been mitigated by our share of a transitional grant passed to Cheshire East Borough Council and then distributed to the Town and Parish Councils in Cheshire East. However, whilst we received 100% support from the Principal council this year, we are concerned at what level of grant we will recover next year and in subsequent years.

Congleton Town Council is very unfortunate in that the precept represents roughly 78% of our income fund and therefore is our main income stream. This year a rise in the tax base from new dwellings has marginally helped reduce the impact, but, this is money we would have normally benefited from and is required to offset against the additional expenditure required in the town as the principal council continues to reduce services, in particular streetscape.

Our position is also unique in the area, in that we are in the process of possibly agreeing devolution of streetscape and ground maintenance services from Cheshire East to the Town Council. But, the likely budget provided by the Borough would be insufficient to maintain even the current level of service which is deteriorating day by day. There is no doubt that efficiency gains will replace some of the shortfall in funding, but, not to the level which satisfies the expectations of the residents. To maintain a high level of service, if that is what residents demand, may result in a requirement to increase the precept, which would probably need to increase by 9.5% annually to ensure sustainability. We now face the threat that any planned increase would trigger a referendum should the Secretary of State be mindful to extend such sanctions to our sector.

This year we have been prudent to accommodate the changes to our funding, but, the uncertainty of the transitional grant is our concern for the future. Will it be increased or will it decrease, will it adjust as dwellings are moved in and out of the tax base if they are in receipt of benefits. In these uncertain economic times more households are receiving

benefit thus reducing the council tax base and precept even further, will the transitional grant increase to reflect this?

The added complication is that the transitional grant is paid directly to Cheshire East Council and distributed how they decide with no consultation with us or any other Town or Parish Council in the county.

Cheshire East Borough Council may in future years determine not to identify separately the localising Council tax transitional grant and it may become wrapped up in the formula grant Cheshire East Council receives, meaning there will be no measure as to how much should be filtered down to the minor precepting authorities. Additionally as the funding of the major precepting authorities contracts, there may be less of a willingness to pass any funding down.

Potentially then there could be long-term sizeable impacts on Town and Parish Councils' ability to deliver local services and this level of uncertainty means that the ability of Town and Parish Councils to determine their own destiny and deliver localism is further away than ever.

If we can no-longer guarantee the levels of funding that we require to deliver basic frontline services, there is no room for manoeuvre in providing anything else. We already operate lean and mean business-models with minimal tiers of management ,therefore, addressing these potential cuts to core budgets means reductions in service delivery affecting those key pillars by which local people judge their local councils, clean streets, litter bins emptied, grass cut, an absence of graffiti and other detritus.

I hope that you can help us, possibly with your colleagues in Cheshire East and with other respective Members of Parliament to seek representations with the Minister and Civil Servants at DCLG to put our concerns across to them which may hopefully influence how they perceive our sector.

I look forward to hearing from you.

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

Corporate Business Plan 2013 - 2014

Background

Congleton received its first charter in 1272, with civic government developing gradually until the ancient Borough was dissolved under the Municipal Corporations Act 1835. The reformed Congleton Borough was a non-county borough, responsible for a range of local government functions within the geographical area of Congleton Town. It served as a principal authority within a two tier local government system, sharing duties with Cheshire County Council. It continued until March 1974, when its powers transferred to the new District (Borough) of Congleton, formed in April 1974 by the merger of 5 former urban and rural authorities including Congleton BC. Both Congleton Borough Council and Cheshire County Council ceased to exist from 1st April 2009, being replaced by the new Cheshire East Council as a unitary principal authority.

Congleton Town Council is one of the largest of 108 local councils within East Cheshire. It was inaugurated in 1980 to provide the local council tier of local government for the town of Congleton. It became fully operational in April 1981 and exists to serve as a vehicle of local opinion; to provide an effective link between the local residents and council tax payers with Cheshire East Council; to express local feelings and interests and to keep watch on all developments within the Town. It has the statutory responsibility to examine plans due for consideration by the Cheshire East Council as planning authority. It also manages a range of local services and facilities.

The Council is composed of 20 Councillors, representing 2 Town Wards. Council elections take place in May every 4 years, when a new Council is elected. The next full elections will be held in May 2015.

This, the eighth Business Plan, is a management tool intended to identify how the financial, human and technological resources available are to be used to achieve declared objectives as set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy.

The Plan concentrates on the current year but some actions stretch beyond this period. It is a living document which will be modified as situations develop or be adapted to support different funding applications, and builds upon the considerable experience and success of the Council.


Introduction

The Council adopted its first Corporate Strategy "Making Localness Count: 2006-2008" in April 2006 which enabled it to transform its role in the Town, its services and the way it was managed. In April 2009, the Council adopted its current Corporate Strategy following public and stakeholder consultation, which builds on strengthening the Town Council whilst placing greater priority on regeneration, the economy and sustainability. It sets out how the Council will respond to issues identified either by a strategic analysis of the Town's needs or identified in recent reports prepared as part of the processes to develop both the Town Strategy and Public Realm Strategy. The Strategy recognises the priorities of the council and Community

encompassed within the Council's Medium Term Corporate Strategy. It commits the Council to work with Cheshire East Council and the Local Strategic Partnership as they develop policies for the area. The Council will remain committed to working in partnership with other public bodies as well as the voluntary and community organisations for the good of our Town.

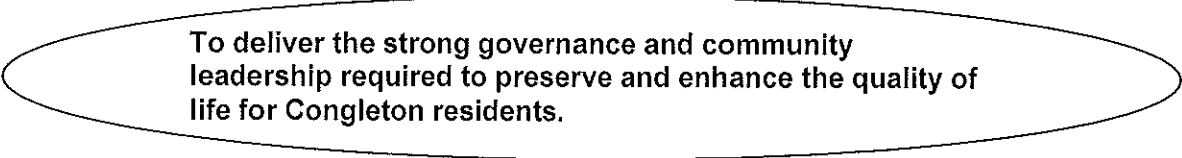
Working with Cheshire East Council on local governance and service devolution will continue to be a key priority. The Town Council has developed a protocol to steer its direction in this respect. Cheshire East Council's Strategies and Policies will inevitably have an impact on the Town and it will be important that the Town Council is able to influence their development. The lack of consistent direction and slowness to commit to action by Cheshire East Council is becoming a growing frustration to the Town. Negotiations are still underway over the devolution or transfer of local services to the Town Council, and this will be the major task and decision for the coming year. It also presents a further risk area for the town Council, particularly in today's challenging economic climate

VISION



A flagship town, vibrant, enterprising and sustainable, which remains as attractive to visitors, investors and workers, as it is to live in

MISSION



To deliver the strong governance and community leadership required to preserve and enhance the quality of life for Congleton residents.

OUR CORE VALUES

The principles by which we will operate the Council are:

- **Democracy and openness**
- **Equality**
- **Working with others**
- **Value for money**

STRATEGIC GOALS

Community facing:

GOAL 1: AN ACTIVE AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY

1. To support, develop and empower the community & voluntary sector
1. To promote community cohesion
3. To promote health and fitness amongst our residents and workforce
4. To engage with the Town's present and future generations

GOAL 2: A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

1. To protect and enhance the local environment
2. To work to make our Town safer

GOAL 3: A CELEBRATED AND PROTECTED HERITAGE

1. To protect our heritage
2. To promote our heritage

GOAL 4: A STRONG AND DIVERSE ECONOMY

1. To lead the development of a re-vitalised Town Centre as set out in the Public Realm Strategy
2. To identify Congleton as the "enterprise hub" of Cheshire East
3. To improve access and communications to and within the Town
4. To promote Congleton and the Northern Link Road

Inward facing:

GOAL 5: OPERATIONAL QUALITY

1. To develop capacity and a diverse skill base within the Council
2. To deliver excellent services according to both need and consumer choice
3. To achieve high performance by taking a more integrated approach to management.

An overview and analysis of the Town

Congleton Town covers an area of 2255 hectares (22.55 sq. km or 8.7 sq. ml), with a population of almost 28,000 (49% males, 51% females) and an electorate of 21,717. There are 11,902 households.

The age structure of the Town is broadly similar to the national profile. The population was forecasted to increase by some 4% by 2021, by which time there will be an overall fall in the number of children and a substantial increase in the number of people aged 65 and over.

However, with the new Local Plan which encompasses the development of 3,500 houses, the population increase is more likely to be about 12% and exceed 20% by 2030.

Except where stated otherwise, the statistics in this profile relate to Congleton Town (defined as the area covered by the current wards of Congleton East and Congleton West, or, equivalently, Lower Layer Super Output Areas E01018395 to E01018400 inclusive).

Educational standards are high: in 2009/10, the proportion of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs (or equivalent qualifications) at grades A*-C at the end of Key Stage 4 was very similar to Cheshire (the pre-2009 County area) and the North West¹, as was the 2010/11 proportion of 10-11 year-olds reaching Level 4 or above in Key Stage 2 Reading, Writing and Mathematics.²

Adults' qualifications compare well with the regional and national figures, with 29.2% of residents aged 16 and above being qualified to degree level at the time of the 2011 Census (compared to averages of 24.4% and 27.2% for the North West and England & Wales respectively). However one of the threats to the local economy is the potential for a skills gap to develop between the changing requirements of business and the skills of the population. Furthermore, over a fifth of the Town's 16+ population (22.1%, or 4,800 people) have no qualifications: this is slightly below the England & Wales average (22.7%), but is a greater proportion than in Cheshire East as a whole (19.6%).³

The Experian 2012 Mosaic Consumer Classification shows Congleton has almost twice the national average (22.6% compared to 11.5%) of households in the "Affluent Households" category: i.e. people with rewarding careers who live in sought-after locations, affording luxuries and premium quality products.⁴

The mean annual household income of people living in the Town (£38,100 in 2010) is 8% above the Great Britain average (£35,300).⁵ Earnings data are not available at town level, but for full-time employees who live in Congleton Parliamentary Constituency⁶, median gross weekly earnings were £524 in 2012. This is higher than the equivalent figures for Cheshire East (£500) and the UK (£506). However, for full-time employees who work at a site in the Constituency, median gross weekly earnings are significantly lower, at £459 (compared to £479 for full-timers working in Cheshire East and £506 for those working in the UK).⁷

¹ GCSE and Equivalent Results for Young People by Gender in England (Referenced by Location of Pupil Residence), 2009/10, Neighbourhood Statistics, ONS. 2010/11 data not available for part of Congleton Town.

² National Curriculum Assessments at Key Stage 2 by Gender in England (Referenced by Location of Pupil Residence), 2011, Neighbourhood Statistics, ONS.

³ 2011 Census (Table KS501EW), ONS. Crown Copyright.

⁴ MOSAIC customer segmentation data, Experian 2012.

⁵ Paycheck 2010, CACI Ltd.

⁶ The Constituency has exactly the same boundary as the former Congleton Borough Council.

⁷ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2012 (Provisional Results), ONS, November 2012. The figures quoted above include overtime.

According to the Government's most recent Index of Multiple Deprivation (2010), Congleton Town has just one Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) in the top (most deprived) 20% of England's LSOAs. This LSOA (code E01018400) is east of the town centre and has a percentile value of 13.17% (i.e. it is among England's top 14% of LSOAs, but outside the top 13%). Among Cheshire East's LSOAs, it is the 10th most deprived. No other Congleton Town LSOAs fall within the top 10% of Cheshire East LSOAs.⁸

Of the current population in the Town (26,500), some 73.3% (19,400) are aged 16-74⁹. Among this latter group, 69.4% (13,500) are economically active, which is a similar rate to Cheshire East (70.6%) and England & Wales (69.7%)¹⁰. The traditional Manufacturing areas of textiles and engineering have been affected by the effects of globalisation: for example, in 2001, Manufacturing accounted for 25.2% of the town's employment (3,200 jobs), but by 2011 this had fallen to 14.8% (1,900). However, the Manufacturing sector's employment share is still well above the England & Wales average (8.9% in 2011, down from 15.0% in 2001). Wholesale & Retail (15.9% share in 2011) and Human Health & Social Work (12.1%) are the other two sectors that account for more than a tenth of the Town's employment.¹¹

Congleton is, not unexpectedly, a net exporter of labour: at the time of the 2001 Census, there was a net commuting outflow of 1,300, with 6,800 local residents commuting to a workplace outside the town, but only 5,500 people commuting inwards.¹² However, the impact of this can be reduced by adopting more environmentally sustainable methods of travel and by ensuring local employment opportunities are taken advantage of.

As of December 2012, 2.6% of Congleton Town's 16-64 year-olds were claiming Jobseeker's Allowance. This claimant unemployment rate is slightly above the Cheshire East average (2.3%), but lower than in the North West (4.2%) or the UK (3.7%).¹³

The town has an estimated 900 VAT registered businesses. There is an inevitable shift to the finance and professional, tourism and retail sections, but this will need to be managed if local labour is to be used in the higher value jobs.

⁸ English Indices of Deprivation 2010, Department for Communities and Local Government (published in March 2011). In the light of the population changes shown in the 2011 Census, some LSOA boundaries have been revised, including some in Cheshire East (though no Congleton Town boundaries are affected). As a result, the Borough now has 234 LSOAs (previously it had 231). However, the 2010 Indices of Deprivation statistics predate the 2011 Census and are therefore based on the original LSOA boundaries.

⁹ 2011 Census (Table KS102EW), ONS. Crown Copyright.

¹⁰ 2011 Census (Tables KS601EW to KS603EW), ONS. Crown Copyright.

¹¹ 2011 Census (Tables KS605EW to KS607EW), ONS; and 2001 Census (Table (CAS036). Crown Copyright.

¹² 2001 Census, ONS. Crown Copyright. 2011 Census data on commuting flows are not yet available.

¹³ [1] Claimant Count, ONS, NOMIS. Crown Copyright. [2] Cheshire West and Chester Council, Research, Intelligence & Consultation Team's Small Area Population Estimates. All estimates are constrained to the Registrar General's Annual Estimates of Population for 2010. ONS Crown Copyright 2013.

Congleton has common issues with other market towns across Britain such as pressure on local high streets, general and specialist stores closing, a struggling market, loss of much needed local facilities on economic grounds, and insufficient footfall to attract key anchor stores. Congleton's retail sector has suffered more than its neighbours during the recession with currently 10% of empty shops, although in early 2012 the vacancy rate was much higher at 20%. The Town Centre Plan is an evidenced based blueprint for revitalising the hub of the Town adopted in 2008. A major new shopping complex and Town Square now has planning permission with development scheduled to commence in July 2013. This is complemented by a well thought out and robust Public Realm Strategy and broader Town Strategy which over time will help revitalise the town centre and town.

The Town is strong on distinctiveness which is the basis of local pride and it is this that successful regeneration can be built upon. Distinctiveness is difficult to pin down, but it has to be in the minds of local people and is usually rooted in history. Assets need to be more than economic, and community spirit or pride, a sense of responsibility and business distinctiveness are capable of bringing people together.

The Town has a good civic structure and is quite well served for information with a well-stocked library, information points for Cheshire East Council and a tourist information centre. Congleton has a very active and engaged community. A Cheshire Community survey found that 49% of respondents belonged to a charity, voluntary group or community group, which compares well with a County average of 43%. Congleton has an exceptional voluntary sector, consisting of 4000 registered volunteers and 154 local voluntary organisations, which rise to 209 if ones based outside the Town are included. It is estimated that the voluntary and community sections contribute significantly to the local economy.

Congleton has a low crime rate even by Cheshire standards. Fear of crime however remains disproportionately high and is a concern to many residents; indeed concern about drug related issues has become the focus of attention recently.

The Town is an attractive place to live, and there is evidence that people want to come to the town. The average house price within Congleton in December 2011 was £182, against a Cheshire average of £196. The price to earnings ratio is high at 8 and some local people may be priced out of the housing market, particularly first time buyers. In the Town, over 78% of households are owner occupied, compared with 68% nationally. The attractiveness of the area brings other pressures, in that developers at times of a good housing market are inclined to build larger detached executive homes, which often do not cater for local needs. A greater range of affordable and subsidised housing is needed. There are 139 over crowded houses in Congleton and 1,517 under occupied homes which equates to 13.4% of the housing stock. The town has 534 vacant dwellings giving a vacancy rate of 4.4%. On average there have been 62 new homes built per year over the last 5 year period.

Facilities for young people however need to be developed and there is a feeling the Town is poorly served in this respect, despite good examples such as Visyon and a variety of sports, cultural and youth organisations.

The Town has a pleasant and healthy environment with low pollution levels. Traffic rather than industry may give rise to pollution hotspots. There are sometimes local nuisance and noise problems where industry and homes co-exist.

Health facilities are generally good with 3 G.P surgeries and local hospital facilities at Congleton War Memorial.

Key issues facing Congleton are:

- an aging population
- a competitive environment for business and attracting external funding
- retention of young people
- danger of becoming a commuter town
- need to diversify the Town employment structure
- need to stimulate enterprise
- current economic and market conditions
- need to revitalise the Town Centre
- need to attract high tech-high value business and raise wage levels
- Congleton's development will be constrained without the delivery of sufficient quality employment land
- All economic issues are made even more important by the current World recession.
- need to address climate change
- traffic congestion
- need for more housing in general and in particular affordable housing

A little history of the Town Hall & its management

Congleton Town Hall embodies Italian and French Gothic design influences. The building is two storied at street level and has a central machicolated and battlemented tower rising flush with the façade. The building to the frontage has a steeply pitched roof pierced by sharp dormers. The main hall being two storeys vaulted with exposed hammer beam roof trusses under a mansard roof with clerestory lighting.

The building is currently listed under the Town and Country Planning Acts and is graded 2 star. Although the 2 star grading includes the interior, it is generally accepted the internal listing mainly reflects the qualities of the main hall space and the internal stonework.

The Town Hall was subject to a major re-furbishment of significant investment (£975k) in 1996, which saw much of its interior, brought back to its original design with the aid of a Single

Regeneration Budget Grant. Mechanical and electrical installations were upgraded together with essential repairs to the external fabric. Although some essential repairs and electrical upgrades were undertaken to the second floor areas within the scope of this study, no other works of improvement were undertaken, the area remaining is originally as built.

The Market Square Chambers were let to The Museum Trust on a 25 Year lease, commencing May 2002.

In the late 1990s, major external fabric repairs were undertaken by the Borough Council. Prior to April 1974, the building was owned and managed by the original Congleton Borough Council, and transferred to the post April 1974 Borough Council on reorganisation. Following the internal works, Congleton Town Hall Trust was established in 1998 to operate the facility at community level. Financial resources and local politics conspired against it and management soon reverted to the Borough Council.

Congleton Town Council took over the freehold and management in June 2008 and spent the first few months learning and integrating the operation into the Council culture. A commercial partner, Posh Nosh has been recruited to operate the bar and catering franchise and to jointly promote and administer events. Posh Nosh has opened De Laceys Cafe and is promoting the Town Hall as a wedding venue.

During 2009, all external backlog maintenance work was undertaken along with outstanding disabled access works and a new boiler. Further work completed in 2010 included removing the suspended ceiling and renovation of the Bridestones Suite; provision of a Restroom and a new disabled toilet on the First Floor; and provision of a cafe/restaurant and a First Aid Facility on the Ground Floor. New security arrangements were also put in place in 2011. Additional capital works were completed in 2012 which included a new bar and increased kitchen area.

Situational Analysis for the Town Hall

The Town Hall had been a low priority, non-statutory service for the Borough Council, which has received minimal investment since the 1990s and had become run down. It looked jaded and in parts dirty. As one walked up the High Street, on the majority of occasions, one was faced with large closed wooden door. The building was under used and un-welcoming.

The important main architectural features of the building such as the hammer beams in the main hall are in good condition but the facility badly needed upgrading if it was to attract the high value commercial businesses which will be necessary to reduce the annual revenue deficit. A major capital works programme was approved, to take place over two-three years. This included 6 years backlog maintenance, DDA compliance, conversion of the Brassiere to a café with a High Street frontage, energy conservation and improvement works which open up new areas and restore the Bridestones Suite (Conference Room) to its former glory. The works have been disruptive and resulted in reduced bookings in 2010 and therefore reduced income, but much of the programme has been completed. Works for this year include outstanding electrical

and other services work, but, a major issue to tackle, is to undertake repairs to the various roofs around the Town Hall in an effective but economic way.

The Town Hall is a valuable community asset; however it has not yet become the vibrant civic centre or the natural choice of venue for prestige events. It has car parks close at hand but no dedicated parking for the public. There are some 8 parking spaces at the rear for staff and certain High Street businesses have an informal access to their parking spaces.

Staff have now built up considerable experience in the operation of the building and working with the commercial partner has provided commercial experience. The Council will in future be able to capitalise on catering profits and key corporate events and weddings. The Town Hall also requires more imaginative and better marketing and promotion, which is currently being undertaken in order to attract more corporate customers.

Policies

The Council has an Equalities Policy which sets out its commitment to equal treatment of both clients and staff irrespective of ethnic origin, gender, religion, disability, age, marital status, or sexual orientation. It contains a section "Positive about Disability" which makes a firm commitment about adaptation of premises now and in the future. A full disabled audit of all premises has been undertaken some time ago and substantial compliance works were carried out to the Town Hall in 2009-10. The Policy was reviewed in 2011 and strengthened in the areas of its Gender Equality Scheme and Age Discrimination Statement.

The Safety Policy, which was endorsed by full Council, states a firm commitment to health, safety and welfare. It clearly allocates responsibilities and states how hazards will be tackled. A risk assessment has been undertaken of all premises and services and a programme of improvement is currently being implemented with the assistance of our Health and Safety Advisor, Wirehouse.

Personnel Policies have been approved by the Personnel Committee and an Employee Handbook issued to all staff, which will need to be reviewed from time to time because of legislative changes and as a consequence of amendments initiated by Wirehouse. A comprehensive set of operating procedures have been developed as part of the Integrated Management System which has also been reviewed and amended in conjunction with Wirehouse. During this review, the relevant employees were consulted and fully involved in the process.

The Council's Community & Social Policy is a commitment to strengthening the Town's communities and to recognising their diversity and development. The Customer Care policy makes a commitment that the Authority will treat all members of the public in a courteous and professional manner whilst recognising their needs as an individual or as part of a local community.

The Quality Policy confirms the Council's belief that its commitment to continuous improvement will guarantee the success of the Council by fulfilling its strategic objectives. The Environmental Policy is linked to the Council's Quality Policy, and is intended to ensure environmental considerations are central to the ethos of the organisation.

The Council adopted both a Child and Vulnerable Adult Policy and Marketing & Communications Strategy in 2008 and adopted a Volunteers Policy for the first time in 2009.

Stakeholders and Clients

The main stake holders in the activities of the Council are the electors, residents and businesses of the Town, all of which benefit from an improved town environment and protected heritage, better services and an improved civic centre at the Town Hall. Other stakeholders are our partners such as the Cheshire East Council, voluntary and community groups, local trusts and other public and private organisations who work for the good of the Town.

Our clients are the individuals, organisations, visitors, tourists and users of the Council's facilities and services or who benefit from its financial support. Of particular importance will be to identify and attract new users to the Town Hall, as well as considering service standards when evaluating taking over additional local services.

Capability Analysis

Appendix 1 sets out the SWOT analysis which examines the strengths and weaknesses within the organisation and the opportunities and threats which it faces. The Business Plan has built on the strengths and opportunities and developed a response to the identified weaknesses and threats. This appendix also includes a summary of the Pest Analysis which uses the four headings of Political, Economic, Social and Technological factors to assess the wider environment in which the Organisation operates.

Appendix 2 sets out a SWOT analysis specifically related to the Town Hall, as it currently remains the Council's single largest service and a significant risk.

Appendix 3 summarises the key business risks which have been taken from a more in depth exercise using a new model developed in house, as the former LCRS system had become less relevant as the Council's services become more complex. A number of risks have been lowered over the last year, particularly around staff training/ continuity, the Town Hall, Paddling Pool and IT. Many of the more significant risks now revolve around the possibility of taking on devolved services from Cheshire East Council and implementation of the Town Strategy, Town Centre Plan and Public Realm Strategy.

The self-assessment element of the "Chamber Assure" Integrated Quality Management System is on-going and it continues to be a considerable influence on the development of this Business Plan.

It is clear from these analyses; the Council has a number of experienced and active Councillors many of whom also play other key roles in their communities. Together they muster an array of skills, and show a passion for the Town. The Council has a well established Member Training and Development programme to ensure councillors are well prepared for the challenges ahead.

The officer establishment remains relatively small, but capacity has been built up considerably during the last five years. There is a full time Town Clerk and the Support Manager is appointed as RFO and acts as Deputy Town Clerk. Employee conditions of service adopted in 2006 are regularly reviewed with the intention of further helping staff become more fully engaged. A staff training plan is implemented each year based on priorities identified during the employee development reviews. Consultancy support has been used during 2012 via a low cost vehicle, Wirehouse, who provide a range of services, including health and safety and HR.

The Council are determined to maintain operational efficiency and will welcome the regulation of both auditors and other accreditation bodies. The Council have "quality town status" and in 2012 were re-assessed and gained reaccreditation.

The Council has built on its governance arrangements which include adopting a Constitution and revising its controlling policies and regulations. It will review its Information Policy to ensure that as much information as possible is available publically but that sensitive and confidential information is properly protected. The Volunteers Policy will ensure that the maximum advantage is gained from volunteers and that in turn they benefit from the experience and are treated fairly.

Like all local councils, Congleton Town Council is restrained by limited powers and the "ultra vires" doctrine with the power to spend up to £6.80 per elector in 2013-14 under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, in the interests of all or some of the inhabitants of the local area. Looking ahead, it is hoped that a General Power of Competence will be available during 2013-14 as the Town Clerk will be undertaking the appropriate training and accreditation to enable this power to be adopted by Council. The Council will develop its services to the public gradually, allowing capacity and economies of scale to be achievable for the future. It has the financial robustness to deliver policies and aims and its Medium Term Financial Plan looks forward 5 years and is designed to resource its Corporate Strategy .

The detailed Risk Analysis has identified that Town Hall development and maintenance remains a significant, but, lower risk, and that the viability of the commercial partner needs to be monitored. A considerable advantage is the enthusiasm, local appreciation and determination to succeed by town councillors, the Town Hall is seen as a "jewel in the crown" service.

Although the transfer of the freehold of the Town Hall came at a notional cost, there has been no legacy from the Borough Council to help with community use, development or long term maintenance. (The Borough Council made a £360k interest free loan available over 10 years to enable the disabled access works to be completed).

The Town Council has a long held ambition to take on more local services currently provided by the principal authority, where it can add value and it is these which may now present the highest risks. It has always expected funding to follow functions and has made budget provision over the last four years to raise standards, but not to replace the Cheshire East Council (CEBC) funding. CEBC now have a policy to devolve or transfer a range of services, but, it is however fair to assume that the main driver will be financial savings, which gives rise to concerns over whether sufficient funding will be transferred to maintain the current level of service.

Where CEBC have a statutory duty or policy to continue services such as street cleaning, and grass cutting are considering devolving them to "host" towns or parish councils, who will receive an agreed sum of money for carrying out work under a service level agreement to a defined standard. The "host" authorities will be asked to provide services on behalf of a cluster of smaller parishes which are unable or unwilling to take services on. Congleton currently is acting as a Pathfinder for devolved services and is anticipating taking over street cleaning and grounds maintenance services, subject to Town Council approval, in 2013. However, Cheshire East's current policy on devolution is unclear and this represents a risk in the future particularly in the area of funding provision.

CEBC has stated its intention to cease many non-statutory services, particularly where local councils have concurrent powers. These included Christmas trees, Christmas lights, hanging baskets which the Town Council finance in 2012. Other functions such as play areas, open spaces, public toilets, and street furniture could well be transferred to the Town Council at some future date with Local Councils being given the opportunity to take them on, but without funding.

Congleton Town Council is a willing and able partner to Cheshire East Council (CEBC) and is a significant Town Council in terms of budget, population and functions, and has an excellent skills base and management structure. It is more able to take on these services than almost any other local council in Cheshire East, but, they will still be significant services compared with those already operated and will present a higher level of both business and safety risk.

Cheshire East have set an unclear time table on devolved services which make the notion of a decision being taken by the Town Council sometime early in 2013 equally unclear. The Town Council has prepared a 12 month project Plan to ensure the Town Council is able to meet any new or revised deadline; however we are still waiting for information from Cheshire East on the availability of officer's time and some clarity on the direction the Borough wishes to pursue in respect of service devolution.

The Town Council has worked up a delivery model for each service and understands exactly what will be included within each service which CEBC offer for transfer and devolvement, what assets & equipment will be passed over and what are the TUPE liabilities. The Council officers have spent considerable time quantifying the services e.g. length of roads, number of litter bins, area of grass to be maintained. For transfer services, the Town Council will need to identify the need for each within the Town, and to consult on its findings. Once CEBC offer a completed funding formula, the Council can negotiate from an informed base and decide whether it is able to add value. At this stage it will be in a position to see whether it is willing and indeed can afford to take over any services.

The other area of work is regeneration and economic development. Whilst CEBC has the statutory duty and more resources, it is clear that unless the Town Council and Partnership drive local initiatives, Congleton will get squeezed out within the Borough. The Public Realm Strategy, Employment Site Review, Town Strategy and robust responses to the LDF consultations have helped to promote Congleton's strong case and such lobbying has resulted in the Northern Link Road and economic development of Congleton becoming a key focus area and priority within Cheshire East and the emerging Local Plan. However there are a number of important matters over which the Town Council has no direct control. It will stretch its resources to encourage the Scarborough development proposals to finally result in the site being constructed, to gain support for the development of the Fairground site, ensuring a high value employment site is put into the LDF and that Section 106 money is directed to the Town Centre and Public Realm Projects.

Marketing & promotion

Congleton Town Council's main areas of promotion are:-

- The Town - Promotion of the Town to attract day visitors, shoppers and tourists
 Promotion to attract people looking to live in the Town
 Promotion to businesses looking to invest in the Town

- The Council- Statutory and other information to help residents and businesses to understand its decision making.
 Marketing of its services to ensure accessibility for all and to maximise income.

The Council will promote the Town on its Web-site, by improving signage, by supporting local events, by supporting local tourism and business initiatives and by helping local organisations with media articles and press releases. It will also introduce a digital display unit into the pedestrianised area in Bridge Street to improve communication with residents, to promote Town Council activities and other events taking place in the Town.

The Council will market its services and promote local governance through its website, by providing a newsletter and notice boards and by supporting promotions of other public bodies and the voluntary and community organisations. It will work with the Congleton Partnership's Marketing Group to promote the "Beartown Brand. The registration of a trade mark for the Town to reflect the Beartown Brand has been completed in 2011. This will enable local organisations and businesses to use part of the common brand within their own headings, and promote themselves as part of the Town.

The Town Council itself incorporates the Beartown Brand into its corporate letter headings, but alongside its more formal crest, thereby keeping the individuality and civic position of local government whilst making a clear statement that it is part of the Congleton "family"

ICT Plan

Congleton Town Council considers e-business as vital to its efficiency. It will ensure it keeps abreast with technology, and will adopt it where it delivers a proven benefit.

The Council's small but networked facility had a central server and increased capacity added during 2012-13. It has an IT maintenance & support contract with a local company and launched a new website in 2011. During 2012 some older PC based systems were replaced and this process of upgrading will continue. The Council has appraised its Omega Accounting software and upgraded it accordingly. It currently has a support package in place for this.

An Asset Management system provided by Pear Technology was introduced during 2012 which allows the Council to photograph and record every asset owned in significant detail. An additional advantage is the system comes with a mapping facility of the Congleton area which is proving useful during Planning Committee meetings. Its real purpose though is to locate and record assets held externally which will become particularly useful when we take over devolved services.

Staff Development

Congleton Town Council has adopted the collective agreement known as the "Green Book" issued by the NJC for Local Government Services (comprising representatives of employers & employees). The Green book contains four parts. Part 1 is Principles and Part 4 joint advice. It divides terms and conditions into key national conditions (Part 2) and national provisions which may be modified locally (Part 3). The Council's Employee conditions of service as set out in the Employee Handbook, build on the Green Book. The handbook also sets out the Council's approved Personnel Policies and Rules of Employment and was revised in March 2009.

The Council sets out to reward the commitment of its staff, consistent with its financial resources and to provide a satisfying and flexible working environment in which all staff has the opportunity to develop. In 2012 a detailed job evaluation exercise was undertaken by an external consultant which resulted in some staff regrading, but, more importantly introduced the possibility of incremental grading improvement for most staff members.

The Council has a core team of 14. This is supplemented by casual Paddling Pool Attendants during the summer season and casual facilities officer. Within the Team, all are part-time with the exception of the Town Clerk, Facilities Manager and Handy Persons who are full time. This enables the growing Council to retain a considerable body of skill and experience, and a range of professional disciplines without incurring excessive overhead costs.

Brian Hogan became Town Clerk on 1st December 2009 and brings considerable private sector senior executive experience and was formally Town Clerk at Poynton. Jackie MacArthur took up the role of Town Centre and Marketing Manager in February 2008, having held both administrative and marketing posts previously. Chris Jones took up what was a new post of Facilities Manager in April 2009 and is responsible for managing the Town Hall, Handy Person Service, Paddling Pool and allotments. Chris is also assuming day to day responsibility for the street cleaning and grounds maintenance services of Cheshire East based at Brunswick Wharf as part of the Pathfinder project. Chris joined the Authority in November 2006 and has held posts of Handy Person and Facilities Officer. Jacqui Potts took up her current role as Support Manager from April 2008, having previously held the position of Finance Officer. She is responsible for financial and support services and is the Responsible Financial Officer and holds the CiLCA qualification as does the Town Clerk.

Linda Minshull started her role of Civic Administration Officer in April 2008, leading on Mayoral support, Youth Committee, planning support and grants. Linda is the longest serving employee having been in administration since 2002. Linda also holds a CiLCA qualification. Andrea Morris-Wild joined the Administration Team in 2012 and amongst other things leads on getting the committee paperwork out on time. Sue Trow who started at the Council 3 years ago, has amongst her duties the responsibility for keeping the award winning website up to date. Melvyn Hulme, who transferred from the Borough Council in June 2008, became a Facilities Officer in the New Town Hall structure, where he has ten years' experience. He is joined by Tim Muston as Caretaker, Al Shaw as a Facilities Officer and Pete Forster as a casual Facilities Officer. Chris Banks and Mark Worthington are the two Handypersons. Mike Smith joined the staff in April 2010 as Communities Officer and is employed to provide support to Congleton Partnership.

All of the Team work to personal and team targets, related to Business Plan objectives. An appraisal system is now well established and staff takes part in regular team meetings.

The Council have developed an annual training plan based on the needs identified from appraisals. All staff have undergone basic Health and Safety training and training on the Chamber Assure Quality Management System and has undergone training on the IT network along with a range of individual requirements.

Member Development

Members bring a vast range of skills and experience to the table, however both local government and the business world are fast changing. The Council in recognition of this introduced a formal Development Programme for Members in 2006, based on the following approach:

- Seminars & Workshops to raise general awareness of topical issues.
- Training or awareness raising prior to making a key decision or policy
- Skills development for individual members or groups of members.

Committee Structure

The Council has well defined terms of reference for and delegation to its Finance & Policy; Personnel; Town Hall; Planning; and Community, Environment & Services committees, and has a Strategy Working Group to develop future ideas and direction.

Financial Appraisal

This Corporate Business Plan is intended to be read alongside the 2013-14 Budget (Appendix 6) and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The 2013-14 Budget is obviously structured to deliver the Corporate Strategy, however its greatest pressure will come from the earlier decisions to take on the freehold and re-vitalise the Town Hall, uncertainties from Cheshire East Council over devolved services, low interest rates for the Council's investments and a need to invest in the regeneration of the Town. Provision is again made to continue the build-up of capital reserves for future use and the General reserve in accordance with best practice. Over the last six years the Council has set in place an ambitious programme of service enhancement and community leadership, which has necessitated its capacity, skill levels and inevitably its costs to be increased. Whilst continuing to make provision for the next stages, including delegation of local services, regeneration of the Town and building a sustainable agenda. The 2013-14 Budget has had to recognise the adverse effects of the recent recession on the Town, the pressure on family budgets, but, also to take into account general inflation running at about 3%, utility costs increasing by about 9% as well as recognising that there may be some costs associated with taking over devolved services from Cheshire East.

2012-13 Outturn

The projected expenditure to March 2013 is anticipated to show a saving of approximately £k6. Although there have been minor variations to both income and expenditure during the year, the main variations are summarised below, a number of which will affect the 2013-14 Budget.

- A saving on corporate management costs of £k3.6

- Audit fees £k2 less than anticipated
- Rebate from CEBC of £k18.7 for double taxation
- Increase in Investment income of about £k3 as bank interest was assumed to be a little lower when the budget was set
- Savings of £k2 on training and conference costs
- Increase in costs of £k2.6 for HR and HS support
- Savings on Paddling Pool costs of £k1.5
- Savings on Floral Displays of £k2
- Increase in costs of rates of £k1 for water, and gas of £k4
- Letting income for the Grand Hall below budget by £k10 and Spencer Suite by £k3
- Handyman service below budget by £k10 as an additional person for devolved service enhancement has not been recruited in second half of the year
- Savings on property maintenance of £k1.5
- Savings of £k3 on vehicle maintenance as second vehicle not purchased

Budget Format

The budget is divided into its main spending committees and within each cost centres and income/expenditure codes

Reserves

The General Reserve at the year-end is anticipated to be £160k, General Capital contingency £212k, Devolved Services £k30, vehicle replacements/equipment £20k, Public Toilets £k22, Play Areas £k12, Legal Fees £k10 and Public Realm £k5

The Council is recommended to have a minimum of 3 months General reserve equal to net revenue expenditure, which equates to £k149,262, whilst actual reserves for 2013-14 are projected to be £k148,245. A minor underfund of £917 is not going to cause a problem.

Town Hall

Expenditure on the Town Hall is expected to be £k12 less than last year, however, letting income for the Grand Hall is £k10 below budget and £k3 below budget for the Spencer Suite. This has meant that this year no inroads have been made into reducing the Town Hall deficit.

An income of £4k is again included for subsidised room hire for community/ voluntary groups, which effectively top slices the Grants Budget, because such expenditure is legally Section 137 expenditure, the £4,500 notional museum rent is similarly treated.

General Budget Assumptions

The Medium Term Financial Strategy had originally indicated an anticipated Precept increase of 9.97 % for 2013-14, mainly to accommodate the cost of some devolved functions and some increase in office capacity. However the actual increase has been reduced to 1.79% because much of the service improvement costs for devolved services have been withdrawn during the budget framing process.

However, the impact of the cost reduction efficiency targets demanded by Cheshire East Borough Council when taking responsibility for Devolved Services has increased our costs by about £k23.

A number of budget costs over which the Council have little control are energy costs, where a 9% increase has been assumed.

Salary increases have been assumed to be about 2% as the assumption is that a third year of a pay freeze is probably untenable.

- £15k has been included for 2013-14 for the CAB.
- £16k has been included for Community Projects; however, this level of support will be a challenge to the organisation as their operating costs are significantly higher than this.
- Grant provision for the Congleton Partnership is £k14, which is the same level as the current year, but, which was supported by a £k8 grant from CEBC which may or may not be forthcoming next year. Clearly a reduction or removal of this contribution will result in fewer projects for the Town being realised.
- A budget of £k5 has been included for the Mercian March which has been taken out of the Grants Budget
- Costs have been included to take on devolved services which include some additional support staff, but , the costs are assumed to be effective from the 1st April 2013 which is a full 12 months
- No provision has been made to provide a grant to the Congleton Disabled Group as the original commitment was to provide funding for 3 years which has now expired
- £21k has been included for an additional Handyman to provide a Rapid Response service

Investment Policy

The Council is required to maintain and review its Investment Policy at least annually. A review has recently been completed and only small changes are recommended. Investment income is again anticipated to be similar to previous years.

Key Achievements in 2012-13

During the past year the Council has tackled an ambitious agenda, amongst its achievements:-

- High Street facing office facilities maintained
- Four Police Community Officers for the Town
- Further improvements to the operation of the Paddling Pool resulting in lower costs
- Marketing of the completed Bridestones Suite and other facilities within the Town Hall
- Maintained allotments at Hillary Avenue
- A quarterly Town Council and Community Newsletter (Bear Necessities)
- Maintained Town Handy Person Scheme
- Christmas Fayre and Christmas Lights
- Town events including a Food Festival, Olympic Torch Relay, Jubilee Celebrations
- Young Council continued for all Junior Schools
- An Active Youth Committee for the Council
- Floral displays for the Town, winning RHS gold standard
- Winner Community Pride Award – Best Kept Large Town
- Won Best Community Web Site for www.congleton-tc.gov.uk
- Completion of Town Strategy
- Completion of Public Realm Strategy
- Commenced negotiations with Cheshire East Council on devolved services and partnership working to increase accountability within the Town
- High Profile Congleton Partnership & liaison with businesses
- Town Centre Management
- Commenced improvements to Radnor Park which should be completed by March 2013
- Grants for the voluntary and community sector
- Completed Environmental Audit
- Notion of Northern Link Road now priority in Cheshire East

The Way Forward

The key actions for 2013-14 are set out below in Priorities and Targets. The direction set out in previous sections of this Business Plan, will largely continue. The Business Plan really is about ensuring the goals and actions set out in the Corporate Strategy “Backbone of the Community 2009-2012” are delivered and properly resourced as we move forward.

The Town Council had up to 2005-6 concentrated on helping the Town’s development by giving financial support to organisations which contribute towards its aims. Its only major directly delivered service was the Paddling Pool. The Council is now providing strong community leadership, strengthening its local governance role in anticipation of increased powers and a working partnership with Cheshire East Council. It has also provided an increased number of services either directly or in partnership.

The Authority has set itself another ambitious, but realistic agenda for 2013-14. The services offered in the building will continue to be developed and promoted in partnership with Posh Nosh. All supply contracts have been identified, and re-let. These will be reviewed over time to ensure good value.

The Town Centre Plan, Town Strategy and Public Realm Strategy are on-going projects which will require considerable resource to bring about their implementation. Whilst the Town Council can lead a number of projects, in other areas they will need a partner or facilitator. The current economic down turn has made it essential to help local businesses and this will be undertaken in a number of ways including promotion of the Town via the Legacy Group formed out of the highly successful Expo, Town Centre Management, supporting the traders forum, supporting a Congleton enterprise centre, funding training and lobbying for adequate housing and employment growth in the Local Plan.

Sustainability and energy reduction are also of growing importance both for the Council directly and for the Town as a whole. The Council will support the Congleton Partnership's Sustainability Group in preparing to become a Transition Town.

The Council will also look to take forward their Protocol with Cheshire East Council to secure the delegation of key public realm services, however they will insist on reasonable funding.

The Council has adopted a keen performance management approach, and will continue to report on progress against the Business Plan to each committee cycle and to maintain both its status as a quality town council and its accreditation with Chamber Assure.

Lead Officers: TC= Town Clerk, SM=Support Manager, TCen&MM=Town Centre &Marketing Manager, FM=Facilities Manager CO=Communities Officer, CAO=Civic Administration Officer, Administration Assistants			
GOAL 1		AN ACTIVE AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY.	
		Conceptual Indicators A. No decrease in active community and voluntary organisations during 2013-14 B. Increased number of businesses signing up to Fair Trade-2013-14 C. Improved play facilities during year D. Increased no. of affordable houses E. 10 young people engaged in a youth committee	
ACTIONS & OUTPUT TARGETS		LEAD OFFICER	DATE
<u>TO SUPPORT, DEVELOP & EMPOWER THE COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY SECTOR</u> 1. Administer the Grant Scheme to forward the Council's strategic aims 2. Maintain essential support to Cheshire East CAB 3. Support the Cheshire East Local Area Partnership 4. Maintain a community hub/resource in the Town Hall 5. Continue to support Congleton Partnership as an informal LSP, for the Town 6. Support Community Projects as a Key Partner 7. Encourage more Town Centre activities 8. Encourage greater public participation in Congleton in Bloom		SM TC TC TC TC TCen &MM TCen TC/Cllrs	On going On going On going On going On going On going On Going April 13
<u>TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY COHESION</u> 1. Produce 4 editions of the Council/Community Newsletter 2. Monitor & review the Equalities Policy & staff awareness 3. Promote Fair Trade in the Town 4. Make the Town Hall available for community, social, leisure & educational pursuits 5. Review Publication Scheme Information Guide and Web Information 6. Produce regular media releases to share information about the Town Council 7. Lobby for increased housing including affordable and low cost houses in the Cheshire East LDF 8. Promote and organise the Mercian March in June 13		TCen&MM Con TC/ TCen&MM TC/FM TC TCen&MM TC	On going June 13 On going On going June 13 On going Feb 13
<u>TO PROMOTE HEALTH & FITNESS AMONGST OUR RESIDENTS AND WORKFORCE</u> 1. Support sport and leisure activities which promote healthy life style in conjunction with Team			

<p>Congleton</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby for play facilities at Astbury Lane Ends & Buglawton Lobby for improved primary health care facilities in the Town Maintain an Allotment Site & improved facilities Have offered improved facilities at the Town Hall for organisations which will promote health & fitness Deliver at least one home safety campaign 	<p>TC/ TCen&MM TC/FM TC FM TC/FM TC</p>	<p>On going On going On going On going November 13 October 13</p>
<p><u>TO ENGAGE WITH THE TOWN'S PRESENT & FUTURE GENERATIONS</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Support youth organisations and facilities both practically and financially Hold two Young Councillors events for juniors Maintain a Youth Committee & hold replacement elections if necessary Work with businesses to develop the skills of young persons Increase the use of the Town Hall by young people Support Cheshire East Youth Committee/Parliament Attempt to engage elder generations to apply their skills and knowledge within the local work-force and the voluntary sector Maintain the Mayor's Cadet Scheme 	<p>TC CAO CAO TC/CO TC/FM CAO TC CAO</p>	<p>To March 14 To March 14 To March 14 To March 14 To March 14 To March 14 To March 14 May 13</p>

<p>GOAL 2</p> <p>A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT.</p> <p><u>Conceptual Indicators</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Tangible improvements in the public realm More alternative energy produced Reduced carbon emissions Reduced crime/ anti-social behaviour Increased urban green areas 	<p>ACTIONS & OUTPUT TARGETS</p>	<p>LEAD OFFICER</p>	<p>DATE</p>
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TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

1. Maintain the Town Handy Person Scheme and introduce Rapid Response Team
2. Maintain signage provided through the Market Town Initiative
3. Support & develop the activity of the Clean Teams for the town and encourage more volunteers
4. Lead on the Town's Floral displays by provision of labour & plants
5. Update environmental audit on the Council's operation & revise action plan
6. Enhance or create at least one area of green open space
7. Support the quality maintenance of public footpaths & bridleways
8. Complete the Town Hall energy improvements
9. Protect and enhance areas of our natural environmental assets, directly or through lobbying
10. Lower Carbon footprint by at least 5%
11. Ensure Public Realm Strategy develops to a supplementary planning document
12. Enter Civic Pride Award
13. Enter "In Bloom" competition

FM

FM

TC/FM

TC/FM

TC

TC

TC

FM/TC

TC

TC

TC

TC/TCen & MM

TC/TCen&

MM/FM

Waiting for DS

To March 14

To March 14

Sept 13

July 13

February 14

January 14

March 13

To March 14

March 14

Local Plan

March 14

March 14

TO TAKE STEPS TOWARDS BECOMING A TRANSITIONAL TOWN

1. Continue to Support the principles of the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change
2. Support the Congleton Sustainability Group
3. Re-Measure the carbon foot print of the Town Council
4. Support the Dane Hydro Scheme, if still active

TC

TC & CO

TC

TC/CO

To March 14

To March 14

April 13

March 14

TO WORK TO MAKE THE TOWN SAFER

1. Support anti-social behaviour initiatives such as "Archangel", with the Police & other partners
2. Support 4 Police Community Support Officers
3. Comment on, lobby for, or support road safety improvement schemes. Link Road
4. Support and add values to the safer community initiatives on the Town
5. Work with Cheshire East to support Emergency Planning & the Flood Plan for the Town
6. Review the Crime & Disorder (Sec 17) Audit on the Council's activities
7. Comment on licensing & planning applications to the principal authority
8. Support Shop and Pub watch.
9. Support Cheshire East with adverse weather gritting

TC

TC

TC

TC

Con/TC

Con

TC/CAO

TCen&MM/ FM

FM

To March 14

To March 14

To March 14

To March 14

To March 14

September 13

To March 14

To March 14

To March 14

GOAL 4	A STRONG AND DIVERSE ECONOMY. <u>Conceptual Indicators</u> A. No increase in unemployment levels B. New development in Town Centre C. Increased tourism D. More people using leisure facilities E. Increased number of businesses F. Reduction in empty shops
ACTIONS & OUTPUT TARGETS	
<u>TO LEAD THE DEVELOPMENT OF A RE-VITALISED TOWN CENTRE</u>	
<div>1. Lobby Cheshire East to develop the Public Realm Strategy.</div> <div>2. Provide active Town Centre Management to support existing businesses and new business.</div> <div>3. Work with partners to deliver the priorities from the Town Centre Plan and Town Strategy.</div> <div>4. Lobby for the development of the Fairground site</div> <div>5. Be an advocate for improved leisure facilities.</div> <div>6. Lobby for use of Section 106 money for Town Centre Strategy & regeneration projects.</div> <div>7. Actively support good quality, sympathetic and innovative redevelopment.</div> <div>8. Work with retailers to maintain trade group(s).</div> <div>9. Hold a Christmas Fayre event.</div> <div>10. Install Ice Rink for Xmas promotion</div> <div>11. To maintain the Town Hall as the recognised civic hub of the Town.</div> <div>12. To facilitate the Christmas lights.</div> <div>13. Support Cheshire East Sustainable Towns Initiative</div> <div>14. Determine actions from the AMT Benchmarking Report Dec 2013</div>	
<u>TO IDENTIFY CONGLETON AS THE "ENTERPRISE HUB" OF CHESHIRE EAST</u>	
<div>1. Facilitate the delivery of the priorities from the Public Realm Strategy. (See Project Plan)</div> <div>2. Prioritise growing and protecting existing businesses and improve existing business parks where Appropriate, via the Legacy team</div> <div>3. Support local businesses having access to good quality advice and support.</div> <div>4. Work with partners to help businesses survive the recession and help individuals back into work.</div> <div>5. Lobby for increased hotel/conference facilities in the Town.</div>	
LEAD OFFICER	DATE
TC TCen&MM TC/Con/TCen&MM TC TC TC TC TCen & MM TCen & MM TCen & MM TC TCen & MM CO TC/ TCen & MM	To March 14 To March 14 To March 14 January 14 To March 14 To March 14 To March 14 To March 14 December 14 December 14 On-going December 14 February 14 February 14
TC/CO TC/CO TC TC TC	To March 14 To March 14 To March 14 To March 14 December 13

6. Support the training of the Town work force. 7. To facilitate a Business Group within the Town. 8. Lobby to ensure sufficient and suitable land, premises and infrastructure for high value employment. 9. Support Freshers Fayre event for schools 10. Support Link2Prosperity Business Group	TC TC/MM TC TCen & MM TC/Cllrs	To March 14 To March 14 To March 14 October 13 To March 14
<u>TO IMPROVE ACCESS AND COMMUNICATIONS TO & WITHIN THE TOWN</u> 1. Be an advocate for improved public transport links. 2. Support the development group for Congleton Station/rail services. 3. Support the Dial a Ride operation for the Town 4. Lobby for sustainable & fair parking facilities and enforcement with Cheshire East Council. 5. Lobby for the inclusion of a Northern Link Road in the Cheshire East Local Plan. 6. Help develop safe routes to Schools. 7. Lobby for more link ways for pedestrians and cycle movements through Public Realm Strategy 8. Support highway schemes which help disabled access. 9. To facilitate provision or improvement of bus shelters where proven need exists.	TC TC/CO TC TC TC TC TC TC TC	To March 14 To March 14 To March 14 March 14 Feb 13 February 14 January 14 March 14 December 13
<u>TO PROMOTE CONGLETON</u> 1. Maintain the Council Website with up to date information. 2. Provide current information on the Town Council and community groups on notice boards. 3. Work with partners to promote the Congleton through the Bear Town Brand 4. To contribute to promoting Tourism in support of "Congleton Renaissance". 5. Support the Food Festival 6. Support the Music Festival (Jazz and Blues) 7. Support the TIC and maintain the information kiosk. 8. Support Parklive. 9.. Support Congleton Carnival	TCen &MM/ST SM/FM TCen & MM TCen & MM TC/TCen & MM TC TCen & MM TC/TCen & MM TCen	To March 14 To March 14 To March 14 To March 14 June 13 June 13 To March 14 July 13 To March 15

GOAL 5	OPERATIONAL QUALITY. <u>Conceptual Indicators</u> O. Excellent audit reports P. Maintenance of Quality Town Status
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	Q. Maintaining Accreditation of an integrated quality system R. Reduced accidents S. Increased number of staff with key skills				
ACTIONS & OUTPUT TARGETS					
<u>TO DEVELOP CAPACITY AND A DIVERSE SKILLS BASE WITHIN THE COUNCIL</u>					
1. Have updated the Member training & Development Programme & implemented it 2. Have completed Employee Development Reviews. 3. Have revised and implemented a Staff Training Plan. 4. Have undertaken a business risk assessment as part of Business Planning. 5. Have updated the safety risk assessments and action plan. 6. Have implemented H&S action plan. 7. Have reviewed the Safety Policy against legislation 8. Have fully developed & commenced use of electronic files 9. Have established Archive files & reviewed document retention policy		TC TC TC TC TC FM/TC TC TC/SM SM	March 13 May 13 June 13/Mar 14 March 13 March 13 July 13 On going To March 14 October 13		
<u>TO DELIVER EXCELLENT SERVICES ACCORDING TO BOTH NEED AND CONSUMER CHOICE</u>					
1. Maintain the Allotments and review its operation. 2. Continued operation of the Paddling Pool & enhance service. 3. Maintain the Handy Person Service. 4. Have completed Phase 1 of Devolved Services Pilot with CEBC. (See Action Plan) 5. Have completed Phase 2 of Devolved Services Pilot with CEBC. (See Action Plan) 6. Have completed Phase 3 of Devolved Services Action Plan 7. Have prepared any transfer services for handover in accordance with Action Plan		TC FM FM TC/SM/FM TC/ SM/FM TC/ SM/FM TC/ SM/FM	October 13 September 13 To March 14 July 2012 October 2012 March 2013 October 2013		
<u>TO ACHIEVE HIGH PERFORMANCE BY TAKING A MORE INTEGRATED APPROACH TO MANAGEMENT</u>					
1. Have retained Quality Town Status 2. Have gained the general power of competence and reviewed operations accordingly 3. Have updated the Constitution 4. Have carried out the necessary audits for Chamber Assure & instigated corrective action. 5. To continue the continuous improvement element of Chamber Assure Integrated Quality System. 6. Have completed the Corporate Business Plan for 2014-15		TC TC TC TC TC TC	Completed March 13 March 13 To March 14 To March 14 March 14		

7. Have maintained Performance Management System	TC	To March 14
8. Have completed all VAT & Internal Revenue returns	SM	To March 14
9. Produce 6 weekly Management Accounts and associated reports	SM	To March 14
10. Have reduced the Town Hall Operating Deficit	TC & all mgrs	To March 14
11. To have reviewed Personnel Policy/ procedures under changing legislation	TC	April 13
12. To have reviewed data protection compliance	TC	August 13

Appendix 1		SWOT Analysis
<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committed Members with range of skills Support from key community & public partners Considerable skill & experience in staff & advisors Dedicated staff Robust Vision & Strategy Achievable but challenging objectives Council prepared to make necessary financial commitment Adequate financial reserves & medium term financial plans Developed strong business like ethics Developed strong community links & empowered voluntary sector Continuously developing capacity to expand Structure to take on devolved services Contained politics Centrally located offices Improving IT capability <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased local services to improve standards Possibility of Infrastructure Levy Devolution of powers from Cheshire East Council Build capacity of organisation Further improve marketing & promotion Long term regeneration of Town through Regeneration Strategy Implement Town Centre Plan Implement Public Realm Strategy Further improve operating efficiency Develop Town Hall potential General power of competence Implement Public Realm Strategy Establish Northern Link Road 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of experienced councillors at election Limited range of powers until general power of competence obtained Limited financial capacity Limited but developing IT capacity Uncertainty over likelihood of taking on devolved functions Limited opportunity for grant funding Potential loss of skills & support during year Considerable number of initiatives, could outstrip capacity Uncertain partnership funding Uncertainty over Local Development Framework Current economic climate adversely affecting businesses & limiting development Possible delay in Town Centre redevelopment Lack of funding to develop Public Realm Strategy Loss of income through change in tax base and uncertainty over Cheshire East funding 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of match funding for projects Cost of transferred/devolved services Services expanding faster than capacity Loss of professional expertise Loss of Quality status or decline in Quality system Devolution to neighbourhoods not Council Public apathy Reduced Cheshire East funding High cost of Town Hall Managing expectation Upheaval following local government reorganisation Current economic climate adversely affecting funding

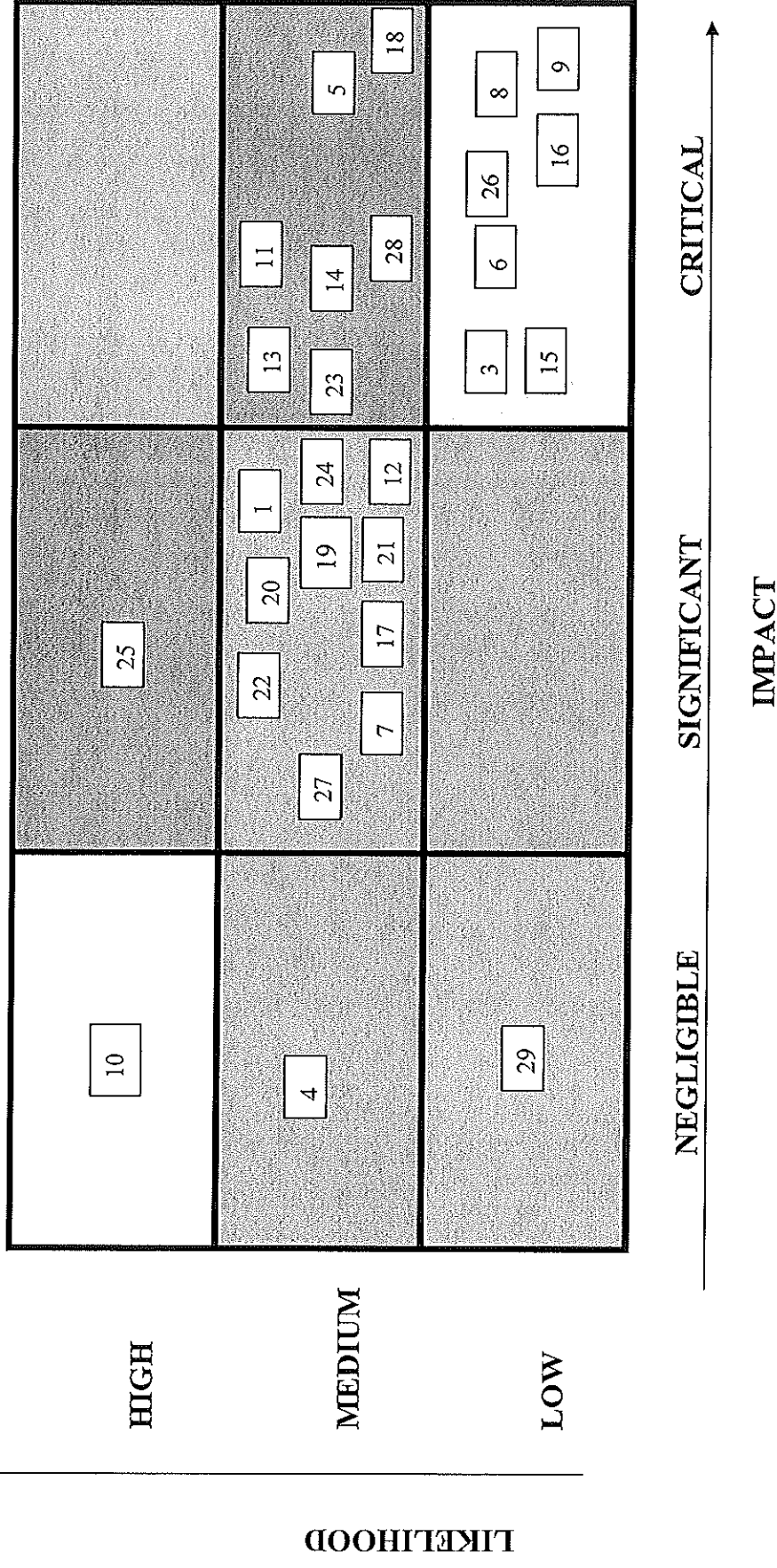
<p>Political</p> <p>Government funding cuts to local government & communities Uncertainty of approach of coalition government to local councils Cheshire East Council policies unclear Cheshire East Council cuts services Uncertainty over new LEP effectiveness</p>	<p>Economic</p> <p>Weak national economy Consumer spending is low Effects of global economy Demand for grants outstrips availability Reduction in public spending in some critical areas Local wage rates low in Town</p>
<p>Social</p> <p>Pockets of deprivation in a prosperous community Recession & public sector cuts biting residents & businesses Strong community spirit in Town Low interest in local government</p>	<p>Technological</p> <p>Fast developing e-technology More E-business as a method of trading IT soon becomes obsolete</p>

Appendix 2 SWOT Analysis of the Town Hall	
<p>Strengths</p> <p>Architecturally valuable building High Street location Town Council presence Community Hub Acknowledged community asset Huge support from Town Councillors Public support for improvement Earmarked funding Free asset Good disabled access Staff dedicated and now experienced Commercial partner gaining experience</p>	<p>Weaknesses</p> <p>High maintenance liability Still remaining maintenance & improvement works outstanding Still under utilised Not yet attractive to prestige business Little client car parking Only limited marketing so far Limited market research Operational financial deficit Professional management & flair still needs developing Problems with roof leaking</p>
<p>Opportunities</p> <p>Complete maintenance & improvements to facilities</p>	<p>Threats</p> <p>Lack of external funding for development</p>

<p>High standards of upkeep Involve & empower staff Improve marketing & promotion Develop with commercial partner Improve operating efficiency & management Continue to lower business & safety risks Attract grants More exciting events Further develop use of premises Long term extension</p>	<p>Loss of experienced staff & untrained new staff Competition from other venues Risk of unforeseen maintenance costs Uncertain market Uncertain viability of commercial partner Antisocial behaviour Delays in capital works</p>
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Appendix 3

Summary Map of Risks to Congleton Town Council



KEY

1	Computer –Crash of IT system & recovery	18	Regeneration & Economy
2	Loss & damage to ancient records	19	Town Centre Development delays
3	Employment-equality & succession	20	Highways-maintenance of street furniture
4	Risk of obligation for closed churchyard	21	Paddling Pool-Vetting & Barring rules
5	Cost of taking on Bus Shelters	22	Planning-cost of responding to LDF
6	Committee Services	23	Public Conveniences-Cost & service provision
7	IT-Data Protection	24	Town Hall Building security
8	New Members/ loss of experience	25	Play areas-transfer service
9	New ethical framework	26	Entertainment at Town Hall
10	Financial Banking Services	27	Allotments-Associations safety standards
11	Financial investment spread	28	Allotments-Financial provision if further demand
12	Increased demand for grants	29	Retaining quality Town status
13	Local delegated functions-Grounds Maintenance		
14	Local delegated functions-Street cleaning		
15	War memorial		
16	Town Hall-Maintenance		
17	Town Hall-Commercial risk		

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	8	Mar 2013
Summary and Explanation	7	June 2012
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Standing Orders	8	March 2013
Standing Orders for Contracts	3	March 2012
Financial Regulations	5	June 2010
Committee terms of Reference and Delegation		
Council	5	April 2011
Finance & Policy Committee	5	March 2012
Personnel Committee	5	March 2012
Community, Environment & Services Committee	4	March 2012
Town Hall Committee	3	March 2012
Planning Committee	5	April 2011
Strategy Working Group	3	April 2008
Youth Committee (<i>informal committee of Youth Councillors</i>)	1	April 2008
Complaints Code	1	Nov 2005
Corporate Strategy	4	April 2009
Council Policies:		
Environmental Policy	2	April 2011
Equality Policy	3	April 2011
Information and Data Protection Policy	3	March 2012
Community & Social Policy	3	April 2011
ICT Policy	3	Mar 2013
Quality Policy	1	Dec 2006
Child & Vulnerable Adult Policy	2	Sept 2010
Grants & Funding Policy	4	Jan 2011
Investment Policy	5	Mar 2013
Customer Care Policy	2	Mar 2010
Communications & Marketing Policy	3	Mar 2013
Procurement Policy	1	July 2007
Town Hall Lettings Policy	3	Mar 2013
Volunteers Policy	2	Sept 2010
Pensions Discretion Policy	1	Sept 2010
Business Plan (including Budget & Med Term Forecast)	5	April 2011
Codes and Protocols:		
Members' Code of Conduct	4	Aug 2012
Officers' Code of Conduct	2	Feb 2007
Protocol on Member/Officer Relations	1	Apr 2006
Management Structure	7	Apr 2011
Committee Structure	2	March 2012
Policy Decisions	5	April 2012
Appendices		
Appendix 1 Glossary of Terms & Acronyms	3	April 2011
Appendix 2 Document Retention Policy	3	Jan 2008
Appendix 3 Asset Register	6	March 2012
Appendix 4 Employee Handbook & Personnel Policies	4	April 2012
Appendix 5 Publication Scheme & Information Guide	2	Dec 2008
Appendix 6 Mayor's Allowance Scheme	5	Mar 2013
Appendix 7 Town Hall Hire Charges	5	April 2012

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
STANDING ORDERS (Amended March 2013)

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MEETINGS

- 1a. Meetings of the Council shall be held in each year on such dates as the Council may direct. In addition to the Statutory Annual Meeting at least three other statutory meetings shall be held in each year.
- b. Meetings of the Council shall be held at the Town Hall, Congleton, at 7.15 p.m. unless the Council otherwise decides at a previous meeting, or the Mayor takes the decision in advance of the notice of the meeting, as a matter of expediency.
- c. Smoking is not permitted at any meeting of the Council, committee, sub-committee, working party or informal meeting.
- d. Additional meetings shall be held as required by the Town Council. The Mayor (or Deputy Mayor in the Mayor's absence) may convene an extraordinary meeting at any time. Any two Members may convene an extraordinary meeting, having previously requisitioned the Mayor and received a refusal or where the Mayor has omitted to call such a meeting within seven days of requisition.

THE STATUTORY ANNUAL MEETING

- 2a. In an election year shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office and
- 2b. In a year which is not an election year shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.

NOTE: Any reference in these Standing Orders to the powers and duties of the Chairman shall also apply to the powers and duties of the Town Mayor.

CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING

- 3a. The Mayor will preside at the Council meeting if present. In the Mayor's absence, the Deputy Mayor will preside.
- b. If both the Mayor and deputy Mayor are absent, the Council will approve a chairman from amongst the Councillors present.
- c. The person residing at a meeting may exercise all the powers and duties of the Mayor in relation to the conduct of the meeting.

PROPER OFFICER

4. Where a statute, regulation or order confers function or duties on the proper officer of the Council in the following cases, he/she shall be the Town Clerk:-
 - a. To receive declarations of acceptance of office.
 - b. To receive and record notices disclosing personal and prejudicial interests.
 - c. To receive and retain plans and documents.
 - d. To sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Council.
 - e. To receive copies of bylaws made by the Borough Council.
 - f. To certify copies of bylaws made by the Town Council.
 - g. To sign summons to attend meetings of the Council.
 - h. To keep proper records for all Council meetings.
 - i. To receive any communications or requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000
 - j. To sign and serve on councillors by post, delivery or electronic means, a summons confirming the time, date and venue and the agenda of a meeting

of the Council or committee or sub-committee at least 3 clear days before the meeting. (3 clear days excludes the day on which the notice is served, the day of the meeting, Sundays, a day of the Easter break or a bank holiday)

- k. To give public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least 3 clear days before a meeting of the Council, committee or sub-committee.

The Town Clerk and other officers of the Council shall have the authority and duties given to them under the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

QUORUM OF THE COUNCIL

5. Seven members shall constitute a quorum.

6. If a quorum is not present or if during a meeting the number of councillors present (not counting those debarred by reason of a declared personal and prejudicial interest) falls below the required quorum, the meeting shall be adjourned and business not transacted shall be transacted at the next meeting or on such other day as the Chairman may fix.

(For a quorum relating to a committee or sub-committee, please refer to standing order 53.)

VOTING

7. Members shall vote by show of hands or, if at least two members so request, by signed ballot.

8. If a member so requires, the Clerk shall record the names of the members who voted on any question so as to show whether they voted for or against it. Such a request may be made before or after the vote but in any event before moving on to the next business.

- 9a. Subject to (b) and (c) below the Chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in any case of an equality of votes may give a casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.
- b. The Chairman may not give an original vote in the election of the Chairman on any occasion when he will himself immediately after such election retire from the Council (except at the election after the parish or community elections).
- c. The person presiding must give a casting vote whenever there is an equality of votes in an election for Chairman.

ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

- 10a. Following an election, Councillors should execute Declarations of Acceptance of Office in the presence of a proper officer previously authorised by the Council to take such declaration, before the annual meeting commences.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

11. At each Annual Meeting the first business shall be:-

- a. To elect the Town Mayor.

- b. To receive the Town Mayor's declaration of acceptance of Office or, if not then received, to decide when it shall be received.
 - c. To elect a Deputy Town Mayor.
 - d. To receive the Deputy Mayor's declaration of acceptance of Office or, if not then received, to decide when it shall be received.
 - e. **In the ordinary year of election of the Council to fill any vacancies left unfilled at the election by reason of insufficient nominations.**
 - f. To appoint representatives to outside bodies.
 - h. To appoint statutory or standing committees as may be required by the Town Council.
 - i. To consider the payment of any subscriptions falling to be paid annually.
 - j. To inspect any deeds and trust instruments in the custody of the Council; and shall thereafter follow the order set out in Standing Order 14.
12. **At every meeting other than the Annual Meeting the first business shall be to appoint a Chairman if the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are absent and to receive such declarations of acceptance of office (if any) as are required by law to be made, or if not then, received to decide when they shall be received.**
13. The annual review of the pay and conditions of service of existing employees shall be undertaken by Personnel Committee in accordance with the national pay negotiations. Any review outside of this shall be referred to Council for ratification.
14. After the first business has been completed, the order of business, unless the Council otherwise decides on the grounds of urgency, shall be as follows:-
- a. To read and consider the Minutes: provided that if a copy has been circulated to each member not later than the day of issue of the summons to attend the meeting, the Minutes may be taken as read.
 - b. **After consideration to approve the signature of the Minutes by the presiding Chairman as a correct record.**
 - c. **To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done.**
 - d. To receive such communications as the presiding Chairman may wish to lay before the Council.
 - e. To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
 - f. To answer questions from councillors.
 - g. To consider motions or recommendations in the order in which they have been notified.
 - h. To receive and consider reports and minutes of committees, sub-committees, working parties and advisory committees.
 - i. To receive and consider reports from officers of the Council.
 - j. To authorise the sealing of documents.
 - k. To authorise the signing of orders for payment if necessary (see Standing Order 61).
 - l. Any other business specified in the summons.

URGENT BUSINESS

15. A motion to vary the order of business on the ground of urgency:
- a. May be proposed by the Chairman or by any member and, if proposed by the Chairman, may be put to the vote without being seconded, and

- b. Shall be put to the vote without discussion.

RESOLUTIONS MOVED ON NOTICE

16. Except as provided by these Standing Orders, no resolution may be moved unless the business to which it relates has been put on the Agenda by the Town Clerk or the mover has given notice in writing of its terms and has delivered the notice to the Town Clerk at least 7 clear days before the next meeting of the Council.
17. The Town Clerk shall date every notice of motion or resolution when received by him/her, shall number each notice in the order in which it was received and shall record it in a form which shall be open to the inspection of every member of the Council.
18. The Town Clerk shall insert in the summons for every meeting all notices of motion or recommendation properly given in the order in which they have been received unless the member giving a notice of motion has stated in writing that he/she intends to move it at some later meeting or that he/she withdraws it.
19. If a resolution or recommendation specified in the summons is not moved either by the member who gave notice of it or by any other member, it shall, unless postponed by the Council, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.
20. If the subject matter of a resolution comes within the province of a committee of the Council, it shall, upon being moved and seconded, stand referred without discussion to such committee or to such other committee as the Council may determine for report; provided that the Mayor, if he considers it to be a matter of urgency, may allow it to be dealt with at the meeting at which it was moved.
21. Every resolution or recommendation shall be relevant to some subject over which the Council has power or duties or which affects its area.

RESOLUTIONS MOVED WITHOUT NOTICE

22. Resolutions dealing with the following matters may be moved without notice:-
- a) To appoint a Chairman of the meeting.
 - b) To correct the Minutes.
 - c) To approve the Minutes.
 - d) To alter the order of business.
 - e) To proceed to the next business.
 - f) To close or adjourn the debate.
 - g) To refer a matter to a committee.
 - h) To appoint a committee or any members thereof.
 - i) To adopt a report.
 - j) To authorise the sealing of documents.
 - k) To amend a motion.
 - l) To give leave to withdraw a resolution or amendment.
 - m) To extend the time limit for speeches.
 - n) To consider otherwise than in a committee, a question affecting an employee of the Council.
 - o) To exclude the public or press. (see Order 71 below)

- p) To silence or eject from the meeting a member named for misconduct. (see order 34 below)
- q) To give the consent of the Council where such consent is required by these Standing Orders.
- r) To invite a Member having a personal & prejudicial interest in the subject matter under debate to remain (see Order 63)
- s) To suspend any Standing Order. (see Order 83 below)
- t) To adjourn the meeting.

QUESTIONS

- 23. A member may ask the Mayor any question concerning the business of the Council, provided 7 clear days notice of the question has been given to the person to whom it is addressed.
- 24. A Member may ask the chairman of a committee, sub committee or working party any question concerning the business of the committee, sub-committee or working party, provided 7 clear days notice of the question has been given to the person to whom it is addressed.
- 25. No questions not connected with business under discussion shall be asked except during the part of the meeting set aside for questions.
- 26. Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.
- 27. A person to whom a question has been put may decline to answer or opt to provide a written answer before the next meeting.
- 28. A member without notice may ask the Chairman of a Committee any question upon the business of the Committee then before the Council if the question is put before the Council's consideration of those proceedings is finished.

RULES OF DEBATE

- 29. No discussion shall take place upon the Minutes except upon their accuracy. Corrections to the Minutes shall be made by resolution and must be initialled by the Chairman.
- 30a. A resolution or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded, and, unless proper notice has already been given, it shall, if required by the Chairman, be reduced to writing and handed to him before it is further discussed or put to the meeting.
- b. A member when seconding a resolution or amendment may, if he/she then declares his/her intention to do so, reserve his speech until a later period of the debate.
- c. A member shall direct his/her speech to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or to a question of order.
- d. No speech shall exceed 5 minutes except by consent of the Council.

- e. An amendment shall be either:-
 - i) To leave out words.
 - ii) To leave out words and insert or add others
 - iii) To insert or add words.
- f. An amendment shall not have the effect of negating the resolution before the Council.
- g. If an amendment be carried, the resolution, as amended, shall take the place of the original resolution and shall become the resolution upon which any further amendment may be moved.
- h. A further amendment shall not be moved until the Council has disposed of every amendment previously moved.
- i. The mover of a resolution or of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding 3 minutes.
- j. A member, other than the mover of a resolution, shall not, without leave of the Council, speak more than once on any resolution except to move an amendment or further amendment, or on an amendment, or on a point of order, or in personal explanation, or to move a closure.
- k. A member may rise to make a point of order or a personal explanation. A member rising for these purposes shall be heard forthwith. A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by him/her which may have been misunderstood.
- l. A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer with the consent of the Council, which shall be signified without discussion, and no member may speak upon it after permission has been asked for its withdrawal unless such permission has been refused.
- m. When a resolution is under debate no other resolution shall be moved except the following:-
 - i. To amend the resolution.
 - ii. To proceed to the next business.
 - iii. To adjourn the debate.
 - iv. That the question be now put.
 - v. That a member named be not further heard.
 - vi. That a member named do leave the meeting.
 - vii. That the resolution be referred to a committee.
 - viii. To exclude the public or press or both.
 - ix. To adjourn the meeting.
- 31. A member or officer shall stand when speaking unless permitted by the Chairman to sit on account of infirmity.
- 32. a. the ruling of the Chairman on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be discussed.
- b. Members shall address the Chairman.

- c. If two or more members rise, the Chairman shall call upon one of them to speak and the others shall resume their seat.
- d. Whenever the Chairman rises during a debate all other member shall be seated and silent.

CLOSURE

- 33. At the end of any speech a member may, without comment, move "that the question be now put", "that the debate be now adjourned" or "that the Council do now adjourn". If such motion is seconded, the Chairman shall put the motion but, in the case of a motion "that the question be now put", only if he is of the opinion that the question before the Council has been sufficiently debated. If the motion "that the question be now put" is carried, he shall call upon the mover to exercise or waive his right of reply and shall put the question immediately after that right has been exercised or waived. The adjournment of a debate or of the Council shall not prejudice the mover's right of reply at the resumption.

DISORDERLY CONDUCT

- 34a. All members must behave in a manner required by the Code of Conduct currently adopted by the Council.
- b. No member shall at a meeting persistently disregard the ruling of the Chairman, wilfully obstruct business, or behave irregularly, offensively, improperly or in such a manner as to scandalise the Council or bring it into contempt or ridicule.
- c. If, in the opinion of the Chairman, a member has broken the provisions of paragraph (a) or (b) of this Order, the Chairman shall express that opinion to the Council and thereafter any member may move that the member named be no longer heard or that the member named do leave the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion.
- a. If either of the motions mentioned in paragraph (c) is disobeyed, the Chairman may suspend the meeting or take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce them.

RIGHT OF REPLY

- 35. The mover of a resolution shall have a right to reply immediately before the resolution is put to the vote. If an amendment is proposed the mover of the amendment shall be entitled to reply immediately before the amendment is put to the vote. A member exercising a right of reply shall not introduce a new matter. After the right of reply has been exercised or waived, a vote shall be taken without further discussion.

ALTERATION OF RESOLUTION

- 36. A member may, with the consent of his seconder, move amendments to his own resolution.

RESCISSION OF PREVIOUS RESOLUTION

- 37a. A decision (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special resolution, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least 6 members of the Council, or by a resolution moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.
- b. When a special resolution or any other resolution moved under the provisions of paragraph (a) of this Order has been disposed of, no similar resolution may be moved within a further six months.

VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS

38. Where more than two persons have been nominated for any position to be filled by the Council and of the votes given there is not an absolute majority in favour of one person, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken, and so on until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person.

DISCUSSIONS AND RESOLUTIONS AFFECTING EMPLOYEES OF THE COUNCIL

39. If at a meeting there arises any question relating to the appointment, conduct, promotion, dismissal, salary or conditions of service, of any person employed by the Council, it shall not be considered until the Council or committee (as the case may be) has decided whether or not the public shall be excluded. (See Standing Order No. 71.)

RESOLUTIONS ON EXPENDITURE

40. Any resolution (which is moved otherwise than in pursuance of a recommendation of the Finance & Policy Committee or of another committee after recommendation by the Finance & Policy Committee) and which, if carried, would, in the opinion of the Chairman substantially increase the expenditure upon any service which is under the management of the Council or reduce the revenue at the disposal of any committee, or which would involve capital expenditure, except when this impact is already accommodated in an approved budget shall, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council, and any committee affected by it shall consider whether it desires to report thereon (and the Finance & Policy Committee shall report on the financial aspect of the matters).

EXPENDITURE

41. **Approved cheques and other Orders for the payment of money shall be signed by two members, from a minimum of four Members nominated by Council at the start of the four year cycle but reviewed annually.**
42. Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations. **The Financial Regulations shall be reviewed once a year.**

43. The Financial Regulations may make provision for the authorisation of the payment of money in exercise of any of the Council's functions to be delegated to a committee, sub-committee or to an officer. Payments made under delegated authority must be included in a report in accordance with Order 44.

ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

- 44a. All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the Financial Regulations and must be reported to the next ordinary Council meeting.
- b. Where it is appropriate in the efficient execution of Council business to make a payment before it has been authorised by the Council, or Finance & Policy Committee, but is not a payment delegated to the Town Clerk or Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) for approval, such payment shall be certified as to its correctness and urgency by the appropriate officer. Such payment shall be authorised by the committee, if any, having charge of the business to which it relates, or by the Town Clerk or RFO for payment in consultation with the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Finance & Policy Committee.
- c. All payments ratified under sub-paragraph (b) of this Standing Order shall be separately included in the next schedule of payments before the Council.

ESTIMATES / PRECEPTS

45. Any committee desiring to incur expenditure to be defrayed out of the rates shall, not later than 31st December, give to the Town Clerk a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year, and such estimate shall be submitted to the Council at its meeting in January when the Council shall approve its Budget and Precept for the coming financial year.

SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

- 46a. A document shall not be sealed on behalf of the Council unless its sealing has been authorised by a resolution.
- b. Any two members of the Council named in a resolution moved under the provisions of paragraph (a) of this Order may seal, on behalf of the Council, any document required by law to be issued under seal

COMMITTEES & SUB COMMITTEES

47. The Council may at its Annual Meeting appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as are necessary clearly defining roles of the committees and any delegated powers, but subject to any statutory provision in that behalf:-
- a. Shall not appoint any member of a committee so as to hold office later than the next Annual Meeting.
- b. May appoint persons other than Members of the Council to any Committee (Except Finance & Policy Committee), but such persons will not have power to vote; and

- c. May subject to the provisions of Order 37 above at any time dissolve or alter the membership of committee.
48. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Leader of Council ex-officio shall be members of every committee.
49. Every committee shall at its first meeting before proceeding to any other business, elect a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman who shall hold office until the next Annual Meeting of the Council, and shall settle its programme of meetings for the year. For standing committees these issues shall be determined at the Annual Council meeting.
50. The Chairman of a committee or the Mayor may summon an additional meeting of that committee at any time. An additional meeting shall also be summoned on the requisition in writing of not less than a quarter of the members of the committee. The summons shall set out the business to be considered at the special meeting and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting.
51. Every committee may appoint sub-committees for purposes to be specified by the committee.
52. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the committee shall be members of every sub-committee appointed by it unless they signify that they do not wish to serve.
53. Except where ordered by the Council in the case of a committee, or by the Council or by the appropriate committee in the case of a sub-committee, the quorum of a committee or sub-committee shall be three Members or a third of its total membership whichever is the larger, except in relation to Planning Committee where the quorum is 5 Members.
- If however circumstances arise where the Finance and Policy Committee is not a quorate at a particular meeting and other non committee members of the Council are present, the chairman will have the discretion, at that meeting only, to co-opt such councillors onto the committee as voting members to make the meeting quorate.
54. The Standing Orders on rules of debate (except those parts relating to standing and to speaking more than once) and the Standing Order on interests of members in contracts and other matters shall apply to committee and sub-committee meetings.

WORKING PARTIES & ADVISORY COMMITTEES

- 55a. The Council may create working parties to look at specified issues and advise it accordingly. It must determine the terms of reference and membership as for a committee. Usually working groups will operate on a task and finish basis.
- b. Voting in a working group will be as for a committee see Orders 57 & 58 below.
- 56a. The Council may create advisory committees, whose name, and number of members and the bodies to be invited to nominate members shall be specified.
- b. The Council shall determine the terms of reference of the committee.

- c. An advisory committee may make recommendations and give notice thereof to the Council
- d. An advisory committee may consist wholly of persons who are not members of the Council.

VOTING IN COMMITTEES

- 57. Members of committees and sub-committees entitled to vote shall by show of hands, or, if at least two members so request, by signed ballot.
- 58. **Chairman of committees and sub-committees shall in the case of an equality of votes have a second or casting vote.**

PRESENCE OF NON-MEMBERS OF COMMITTEES AT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- 59. A member who has proposed a resolution which has been referred to any committee of which he/she is not a member, may explain his resolution to the committee but shall not vote.
- 60. Any Council member shall, unless the Council otherwise orders, be entitled to be present as a spectator at the meetings of any committee or sub-committee of which he is not a member.

RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 61.a. The Responsible Financial Officer (R.F.O.) of the Council shall be the Town Clerk or RFO upon a resolution of Council. The Town Clerk and other officers of the Council shall have the authority and duties given to them under the Council's Scheme of Delegation.
- b. The duties of the R.F.O. shall include the following:-
 - (i) To prepare financial reports for the Finance & Policy Committee, and/or the Council.
 - (ii) To prepare draft estimates. When approved by Council these will form the basis of budget monitoring during the year. To report thereon to Finance & Policy Committee.
 - (iii) To submit the precept to the Borough Council and supply any breakdown requested.
 - (iv) To bank regularly (daily if necessary) all money received and expended by the Council.
 - (v) To ensure that all money due to the Council is billed and collected promptly.
 - (vi) To manage cash flow and control investments and bank transfers.
 - (vii) To control payments by cheque.

(viii) To handle the overall management of payroll. To ensure prompt payment of tax and national insurance to Inland Revenue monthly.

(ix) To take overall responsibility for submission of VAT returns and to deal with VAT inspections.

(x) To verify and code (i.e. allocate to expenditure heads) suppliers' invoices prior to certification for payment.

(xi) To prepare and balance final accounts in accordance with the regulations and report thereon to Finance & Policy Committee and the Council.

(xii) To produce accounts and records for external audit in accordance with the regulations.

(xiii) To arrange for internal audit material of all aspects of the Council's financial affairs in accordance with regulations.

(xiv) To monitor compliance with the Council's financial regulations and to ensure correct financial systems are in place.

(xv) To manage insurance risk. To process claims as necessary. To report annually to Finance & Policy Committee or Council on insurance risk covered.

(xvi) To maintain the Council's register of property and assets.

(xvii) To be familiar with and administer the computerised accounts system.

INTERESTS

62. If a member has a non-pecuniary interest as defined by the Code of Conduct for Members 2012 currently adopted by the Council then he/she shall declare such interest as soon as it becomes apparent, disclosing the nature and extent of that interest as required.

63a. If a member who has declared a non-pecuniary interest then considers the interest to be pecuniary, he/she must withdraw from the meeting and not take part in any discussion or vote during consideration of the item to which the interest relates.

b. Unless dispensation has been granted, you may not participate in any discussion of, vote on, or discharge any function related to any matter in which you have a pecuniary interest as defined by regulations made by the Secretary of State. Additionally, you must observe the restrictions the Council places on your involvement in matters where you have a pecuniary or non pecuniary interest as defined by the Council.

64a. The Town Clerk shall hold a copy of the Register of Member's Interests in accordance with instructions received from the Monitoring Officer of the Responsible Authority and/or as required by statute.

b. Officers' interests declared under the Officer Code of Conduct must also be recorded in the Register

c. The Register shall be available during reasonable hours of the day for the inspection of any Member.

65. If a candidate for any appointment under the Council is to his knowledge related to any member of or the holder of any office under the Council, he and the person to whom he is related shall disclose the relationship in writing to the Town Clerk. A candidate who fails so to do shall be disqualified for such appointment, and, if appointed, may be dismissed without notice. The Town Clerk shall report to the Council or to the appropriate committee any such disclosure.

CANVASSING OF AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY MEMBERS

- 66a. Canvassing of members of the Council or of any committee, directly or indirectly, for any appointment under the Council shall disqualify the candidate for such appointment. The Town Clerk shall make known the purport of this sub-paragraph of this Standing Order to every candidate.
- b. A member of the Council or of any committee shall not solicit for any person any appointment under the Council or recommend any person for such appointment or for promotion; but, nevertheless, any such member may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment, providing they are not part of the selection process.
67. Standing Order Nos. 65 & 66 shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

68. A member may for the purpose of his duty as such (but not otherwise), inspect any document in possession of the Council or a committee, and if copies are available shall, on request, be supplied for the like purpose with a copy.
- 69a. All minutes kept by the Council and by any committee or sub-committee shall be open for the inspection of any member of the Council.
- b. All requests for information held by the Council shall be processed in accordance with The Council's Publication Scheme and Information Guide and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

UNAUTHORISED ACTIVITIES

70. No member of the Council or of any committee or sub-committee shall in the name of or on behalf of the Council:-
- a. Inspect any lands or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
 - b. Issue orders, instructions or directions
 - c. Issue or make a statement to the press or media
- unless authorised to do so by the Council or the relevant committee or sub-committee.

ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS TO MEETINGS

- 71a. The public shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council and its committees and sub-committees but not working parties, which may, however, temporarily exclude the public by means of the following resolutions:-**

“That the Council/Committee resolve to exclude the press and public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, from the matters set out below on the grounds that it could involve the likely disclosure of private and confidential information or staff matters”.

- 71b. The Council shall state the special reason for exclusion.**

- 72a. At all meetings of the Council the Chairman may at their discretion and at a convenient time in the transaction of business, adjourn the meeting so as to allow any members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business to be transacted at that meeting.**

- 72b. At all meetings of the Council, the Chairman shall adjourn the meeting so as to allow any members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the relevant business to be transacted at that meeting where Council invite a Member having a personal and prejudicial interest in the subject matter under debate to remain only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, in accordance with Order 22 (r) and 63b.**

- 73. The Council have a public question session at ordinary meetings of full Council and a total of 10 minutes is allocated for members of the public to address the Council on any matter relevant to the work of the Council, questions will be asked and answered without discussion. It may introduce a public question session at any of its other meetings. The following operational rules will apply:**

a. General

Individual members of the public may speak for up to 5 minutes, but, the Chairman (Mayor) will decide how the period of time is allocated for public speaking and it will be apportioned where there are a number of speakers.

The Council or Member responding to the question may answer the question, may decline to do so, may agree to reply at a later date or may refer the question to an appropriate committee. Questions will be asked and answered without discussion

It is not required to give notice of the intention to make use of public speaking provision but, as a matter of courtesy, a period of 24 hours notice is encouraged

Members of the public requiring a response, may also ask questions of the Chairman (Mayor) of Council, at any ordinary meeting of that body by giving the requisite notice.

b. Order of questions

Questions will be asked in the order that notice of them was received, except that the person presiding may group together similar questions.

c. Notice of questions

A question may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing or by electronic mail to the Town Clerk no later than midday 7 working days before the day of the meeting. Each question must give the name and address of the questioner and must clearly identify the Member of the Council to whom it is to be put.

d. Number of questions

At any one meeting no person may submit more than one question and no more than one such question may be asked on behalf of any one organisation.

e. Scope of questions

The Town Clerk may reject a proposed question if it:

- is not about a matter for which the Council has a responsibility or which affects the Town;
- is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
- is substantially the same as a question which has, in the past six months, been put at a meeting of Council or any Committee or sub-Committee.
- requires the disclosure of confidential information.
- relates to a planning application or any matter of a personal nature
- discloses no question

f. Asking the question at the meeting

The chairman of the meeting will invite the questioner to put the question to the Member named in the notice. If a questioner who has submitted a written question is unable to be present, they may ask the chairman to put the question on their behalf. The chairman may ask the question on the questioner's behalf, indicate that a written reply will be given or decide, in the absence of the questioner, that the question will not be dealt with.

g. Response

An answer may take the form of:

- (a) a direct oral answer;
- (b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
- (c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner.

Any question which cannot be dealt with during public question time, either because of lack of time or because of the non-attendance of the Member to whom it was to be put, will be dealt with by a written answer.

h. Supplementary question

An elector asking a question may ask one supplementary question without notice to the Member to whom the first question was asked. The supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply. The Member to whom the supplementary question is asked may deal with it in accordance with g above.

i. Time for electors' questions

The period allowed for putting questions shall be fifteen minutes in total, commencing immediately following the confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting.

74. The Council have introduced a Public Speaking Session at ordinary meetings of Planning Committee, which Council has the right to suspend or discontinue at its discretion. Public speaking will only apply in relation to planning applications on which the Council is consulted. Interested parties will be able to make statements to Committee, but not ask questions of Committee or of any other party. It will not apply when Committee is considering its response to consultation or planning policy, such as the Local Development Framework, Regional Strategic Planning or supplementary planning guidance.
The operational rules for Public Speaking at Planning Committee, will be as approved by that Committee and set out in the Members Planning Guide.

PETITIONS

75. At any meeting any Member may present a petition, signed by persons other than Members of the Council, which is relevant to some matter for which the Council has a responsibility or which affects the Town.
- (a) A Member wishing to present a petition shall give notice of his/her intention to do so to the Town Clerk at least twenty-four hours before the beginning of the meeting at which it is to be presented.
 - (b) The presentation of a petition will last for no more than three minutes.
 - (c) No discussion will take place on any petition, but any Member may move that a matter raised by a petition be referred to the appropriate Committee or sub-Committee. Once seconded, such a motion will be voted on without discussion.
76. **The Town Clerk shall afford to the press reasonable facilities for taking their report of any proceedings at which they are entitled to be present.** There shall be no audio or video recording or photographs of the meeting without the express approval of the Council.
77. If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chairman may, after warning, order that he/she be removed from the meeting.
78. Working parties and advisory committees are not normally public meetings as they are not formal decision making bodies.

CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

- 79a. No member of the Council or of any committee or sub-committee shall disclose to any person not a member of the Council any business declared to be confidential by the Council, the committee or the sub-committee as the case may be.
- b. Any member in breach of the provisions of paragraph (a) of this Standing Order shall be excluded from the confidential part of any meeting of the Council and may also be in breach of the Members Code of Conduct.

LIAISON WITH COUNCILLORS OF THE PRINCIPAL AUTHORITY

80. A notice of meeting of full Council shall be sent together with an invitation to attend, to all Councillors who represent the Town on the Principal Authority. Council may suspend Standing Orders to allow such councillors to address it.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- 81a. The Town Clerk shall, as soon as it is received, keep a file copy of every planning application notified to the Council.
- b. The Town Clerk shall refer every planning application received to the Planning Committee for consideration.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

82. The Council shall deal with complaints made against it or by any officer or member in accordance with the Complaints Procedure adopted by the Council, except for those complaints which should be properly directed to the Standards Board or Monitoring Officer for consideration.

VARIATION, REVOCATION AND SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

83. Any or every part of the Standing Orders except those printed in **bold type** may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.
- 84a. A resolution at a meeting to permanently add, vary or revoke a Standing Order shall when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.
- 84b. Standing Order 84a will not apply where the proposed amendment is a response to a written report on a review of Standing Orders, circulated in advance with the Agenda of the Meeting.

STANDING ORDERS TO BE GIVEN TO MEMBERS

85. A copy of these Standing Orders shall be given to each member by the Town Clerk as part of the Constitution upon delivery to him of the member's declaration of acceptance of office and written undertaking to comply with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.

CONSTITUTION

- 86a. The Council shall maintain and periodically update a Constitution to advise Members and the public how the Council conducts its business and how decisions are made.
- b. The contents of the Constitution will be determined by Council but will always contain Standing Orders, Standing Orders for Contracts, Financial Regulations, Members' Code of Conduct and the Publication Scheme.

TOWN MEETING

- 87a. The Council will facilitate the annual Town Meeting, to be held between the 1st March and 1st June (both inclusive) each year.
- b. The Town Council will fix the day and time of the Town Meeting but it must not commence earlier than 6pm.
- c. At least 7 days public notice must be given of the meeting, specifying the time and place thereof and the business to be transacted.
- d. The press and public have the same rights of admission as they have to a meeting of the Town Council.
- e. The Town Mayor, if present presides at the Town meeting or in his/her absence the Deputy Mayor. If neither are present, the meeting elects a chairman from the local government electors for the Town who are present.

LEADER OF COUNCIL

88. The Council may appoint one of its Members as Leader of Council as defined in the Constitution.
89. The Council may appoint one of its Members as Deputy Leader of Council as defined in the Constitution.

HONORARY BURGESS

90. The Council may award a title of "Honorary Burgess" in recognition of service to Congleton Town. There is no legal significance to this title nor does it confer any rights or privileges. Burgesses are however invited to all full Council meetings and sent copies of agendas and non confidential reports.

To mark the conferring of this title, the Council will present the recipient with a document which will take the form of a resolution of the Council.

The number of "Honorary Burgesses" shall be restricted to 25 living persons.

Recipients must be residents of Congleton Town who, by their actions, have served the Town for the benefit of the Community. Employees and sitting Member of the Council shall not be recipients.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

91. The Council will determine and execute an annual training plan for its Members.

CERTIFICATES IN RECOGNITION OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE

92. The Council may award a Certificate in recognition of outstanding service to an individual, on the recommendation of the Mayor, for service to the Town during the Mayor's year of office.

YOUTH COMMITTEE

93. The Council may make provision for an informal committee of young persons which will operate in accordance with a Constitution approved by Council. Members of the Youth Committee may attend Council meetings and will at the discretion of the Mayor be allowed to make reports, ask questions or raise issues on a specific item on the Council Agenda. They may not ask questions or raise issues under this agenda item for any matter which is the subject of a separate agenda item.
94. The Mayor may, subject to being advised 48 hours in advance of the meeting, ask Council to waive Standing Orders to allow members of the Youth Committee to make a statement or ask a question when any other agenda item is being considered.

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

INVESTMENT POLICY (Amended 21st February 2013)

The Council will only maintain reserves for the following reasons:-

1. A sum approximately equal to 25% of its Net Revenue Expenditure will be maintained as the General (non-ear marked) Reserve, in accordance with good practice.
2. A capital reserve will be built up to meet any needs identified in its Medium Term Financial Forecasts or for unexpected expenditure or emergencies.
3. Other reserves which are ear marked for specific purposes or future development, or to meet commitments, will be maintained as necessary.

Investment Strategy

In accordance with Investment Guidance issued by the DCLG and best practice, this Council's primary objective in relation to the investment of public funds remains the security of capital. The liquidity or accessibility of the Council's investments followed by the yields earned on investments is important, but are secondary considerations.

1. With short term interest rates low for even longer, an investment strategy will typically result in a lengthening of investment periods, where cash flow permits, in order to lock in higher rates of acceptable risk adjusted returns. The problem in the current environment is finding an investment counterparty providing acceptable levels of counterparty risk.
2. In order to diversify an investment portfolio largely invested in cash, investments will be placed with a range of approved investment parties in order to achieve a diversified portfolio of prudent investments.
3. Maximum investment levels with each party will be set to ensure prudent diversification is achieved.
4. The Council will invest its reserves and other monies not immediately required so as to maximise return and accessibility and to minimise risk. It will take advice from its Accountant where appropriate. The Town Clerk is authorised to spread investments in accordance with this advice and following a risk assessment.
5. The Council will continue to invest through its bank, were appropriate, by a series of linked accounts, which allow transfer of money not immediately required to successively higher interest investment.

Banking Arrangements

The Council banks with RBS at the current time and the RBS branch in Congleton is used for all the Councils bank transactions. Currently £150,000 is on a fixed rate

deposit until 22nd May 2013 at 2.25%. This is the general reserve which should not need to be accessed short term. The bulk of the rest of the Council's reserves are held in a Direct Reserve account earning 1.25%, which is an instant access account.

The Council will periodically review its banking arrangements by a competitive process which balances returns, high street presence, accessibility of funds, service level, bank charges and ethical credentials.

Borrowings

Provision will be made in revenue budgets to re-pay borrowing within the planned period.

Review Date

The Council will, in accordance with its Standing Orders, review this policy at least annually.

The next formal review will take place during 2013-14.

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

I.C.T. POLICY (Amended March 2013)

Introduction

The Council uses its computer network, software packages and the internet, (including e-mails), to further the efficiency of its business and to provide the best service possible to its customers and partners. Any disruption to the use of these facilities will be detrimental to the Authority and may result in actual financial loss. This Policy sets out how the Council intends to regulate the use of those facilities.

The Council has a duty laid down in the Data Protection Act 1998, to ensure the proper security and privacy of its computer systems and data. All users have, to varying degrees, some responsibility for protecting these assets. Users also have a personal responsibility for ensuring that they and, where appropriate, the staff they supervise or have control over, comply fully with this policy – See also the Council's Information and Data Protection Policy.

For the purposes of this document the terms "computer" (or "computer system") and "computer data" are defined as follows:

"Computer" (or "computer system") means any device for automatic storing and processing of data and includes mainframe computer, minicomputer, microcomputer, personal computer (whether hand-held laptop, portable, standalone, network or attached to a mainframe computer), workstation, word processing system, desk top publishing system, office automation system, messaging system or any other similar device;

"Computer data" means any information stored and processed by computer and includes programs, text, geographic, pictures, video and sound.

General Operation

All hardware, software, data and associated documentation produced in connection with the work of the Council, are the legal property of the Council.

The Council will maintain an external support contract for the hardware, major items of software and provision of internet facilities.

The Council will not knowingly breach copyright of another person.

The Council will include an assessment of risks from its use of IT in its Business Risk assessment.

The Council will routinely back up its essential data and organise contingency plans.

The Council will make a detailed inventory of its ICT equipment on its Asset Register.

The Council will consider the location of equipment and provide documentation to ensure optimum physical security.

The Council will maintain a record of training to each individual user.

The disposal of any ICT equipment, software, waste or data must be authorised, undertaken safely and properly documented.

Compliance with Legislation

The Council's policy in respect of the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 is set out in its Information and Data Protection Policy.

Under the Computer Misuse Act 1990, the following are criminal offences, if undertaken intentionally.

- unauthorised access to a computer system or data;
- unauthorised access preparatory to another criminal action;
- unauthorised modification of a computer system or data;

All users should be made aware that deliberate unauthorised use, alteration, or interference with a computer system or its software or data, whether proprietary or written "in-house", will be regarded as a breach of the Council policy and may be treated as gross misconduct. In some circumstances such a breach may also be a criminal offence.

It is an offence under the Copyright, Design and Patent Act to copy licensed software without the consent of the copyright owner. All copying is forbidden by the Act, unless it is in accordance with the terms and condition of the respective licence or contract.

Security

Consideration must be given to the secure location of equipment and documentation to help safeguard the Council's ICT assets. Portable equipment must be locked away when not in use and must not be removed from the premises without permission.

Only persons authorised by the Town Clerk may use Council computer systems. The authority given to use a system must be sufficient but not excessive and users must be notified that the authority given to them must not be exceeded.

Operating procedures are required to control use of ICT equipment.

Access to the Computers is subject to a password, which is periodically changed.

Virus Controls

Viruses are undesirable pieces of computer code that can corrupt systems, equipment and data. They are a serious, increasing threat to the computer systems of the Council.

All computer and servers will have loaded and operate the Council's standard virus detection software for scanning diskettes and fixed drives.

Diskettes of unknown origin should not be used in the Council's computers.

No software should be located onto the Council's equipment without the permission of the Town Clerk.

If a virus is suspected, the equipment should be switched off and isolated and the Council's support contractor should be contacted.

Misuse

This Policy applies to the activities which constitute unacceptable use of the network operated by the Council. The policy applies equally to employees, councillors, clients, visitors and others who may be allowed to use the facilities on a permanent or temporary basis. All misuse of the facilities is prohibited including specifically but not exclusively the following:

1. The creation or transmission of any offensive, obscene or indecent images, data or other material or any data capable of being resolved into obscene or indecent images or material.
2. The creation of material which is designed or likely to cause annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety.
3. The creation or transmission of defamatory material.
4. The transmission of material in any way that infringes the copyright of another person.
5. The transmission of unsolicited commercial advertising material to networks belonging to other organisations.
6. Deliberate actions or activities with any of the following characteristics:
 - Wasting staff effort or networked resources
 - Corrupting or destroying another users data
 - Violating the privacy of other users
 - Disrupting the work of other users
 - Other misuse of networked resources by the deliberate introduction of viruses
 - Playing games during working hours
 - Private use of the facilities without specific consent
 - Altering the set up or operating perimeters of any computer equipment without authority

World Wide Web (WWW) resources

These facilities are provided for use to achieve Council objectives. Any use for unauthorised purposes will be regarded as gross misconduct. If you are unsure whether use would be authorised, you must seek advice from the Town Clerk in advance.

Health and Safety

Computers are now a part of everyday life. If they are not used correctly, they can present hazards. Computers may be called Display Screen Equipment (DSE), Visual Display Units (VDU's) and the immediate environment where they are used i.e. desk/chair etc. is referred to as a workstation.

The Display Screen Equipment Regulations, 1992 regulate the use of computers at work and refer to the persons affected as "users".

"Users" are persons who "habitually use VDU's as a significant part of their normal work and regularly work on display screens for two/three hours each day or

continuously for more than one hour spells". The Regulations also apply to employees working at home.

To meet the requirements of the Display Screen Equipment Regulations, the Council will provide a free eye test for all staff who use VDU equipment as a major part of their job role.

It is the Council's intention to optimise the use and application of display screen equipment within the Organisation, whilst safeguarding the health, welfare and job satisfaction or learning experience of those involved in using such equipment.

Staff "users" will have their name entered onto the list of "Designated Computer Users".

Risk assessments of all workstations are carried out to highlight any problems - this is done using the Workstation Assessment Questionnaire which is also a useful training tool.

If you are a "defined computer user":-

- Your workstation must be designed for computer use. There must be sufficient space to position your keyboard so that you can rest your wrists in front of it;
- The screen should be fully adjustable and must be positioned to avoid glare from lights, windows etc.;
- Your chair must be of the fully adjustable type with five castors and must be adjusted to support your lower back. It must be set at the correct height for your desk. Your feet should rest on the floor and you may need a footrest;
- Report eyestrain, headaches or aching limbs to your manager.
- Ensure your computer has an adjustable keyboard;
- Ensure your working environment is comfortable. Problems with ventilation, temperature or lighting should be reported to your Manager.
- Take a few minute break every hour

Appendix 1.

PROTOCOL FOR USING CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL'S WEBSITE (Feb 2013)

Background

The Town Council website was re-designed by Longton Company, Cyberzia Ltd; it went live in September 2011. Cyberzia have since been bought out by a company called Lesniak Swann who continue to host and support the website. The site www.congletontowncouncil.co.uk is owned by the Town Council.

Updating the Site

The site will be updated on a daily basis or when required by Town Council staff. It is important that the site remains fresh, relevant and current. Should Councillors wish to have any content added or amended, please inform the Town Clerk.

Agendas will be uploaded onto the site at least 3 days prior to meeting dates;
Minutes will be uploaded within 1 week of meeting dates.

Councillor details can be found on the 'Meet the Councillors' page of the site, personal contact details are listed with the permission of each Councillor. Also listed are any Appointments to Outside Bodies and any Declarations of Interests, if any changes need to be made the Town Clerk must be informed.

The Home page of the site has a 'twitter' feed which shows the 5 most recent 'tweets' sent from @Congleton Town, this can only be updated by the Town Centre & Marketing Manager and Town Council staff. Any 'tweets' sent out must be non-political, uncontroversial and used to promote/highlight events in the Town.

CONGLETON TOWN MAYOR'S ALLOWANCE SCHEME

2012-13 (Amended - Council Min 53: 1st Nov 2012)

Town Mayor £ 3000.00

No allowance will be paid to the Deputy Mayor, but, he/she will be entitled to claim expenses.

The Town Mayor's allowance is to be used for the following items and any remainder to be used as the Town Mayor wishes.

The Mayors' allowance is covered by the Local Government Act 1972, sections 15(5) and 35(5). Generally they are to provide recompense for appropriate clothing, transport, contribution towards telephone, small tokens such as flowers, donations to charities, tickets to functions etc. There is no requirement for strict accounting for the expenditure, but a general report on activity to Council suffices.

The Allowance will be reviewed annually as part of the Budget process.
The Allowance must be declared for tax purposes.

Specifically:

1. Civic Service and Remembrance Day

Donations & invitations

(Room hire, postage and refreshments are from the Civic Hospitality Budget)

(Costs of Wreaths for Remembrance Sunday, are covered by a grant to British Legion)

2. Annual Meeting

Bouquet (outgoing consorts)

(Room hire, correspondence and refreshments are from the Civic Hospitality Budget)

3. Town Meeting

(All costs are from the Civic Hospitality Budget)

5. Christmas

Christmas cards from Mayor

(Postage is paid by Council)

6. Mayor's Ball & Other Charity Fund raising events

All costs including postage (but not letter headings) and income are dealt with through the Mayor's Charity Account.

(Room hire, postage, entertainment and refreshments are from the Civic Hospitality Budget minus any income received from ticket sales)

7. Civic Guests

Expenditure incurred in entertaining civic guests including cost of neighbouring civic heads attending Mayor's Ball be met from Civic hospitality account

**CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN HALL LETTING POLICY- MARCH 2013 (AMENDED MARCH 2013).**

The objectives of the Policy are as follows:-

- To ensure the Town Hall facilities are well used by the community, local residents and businesses.
- To allow the Town Hall to contribute to the wider strategic objectives of the Town Council.
- To achieve the correct balance between community facility and commercial undertaking.
- To work with a commercial partner to reduce the operating deficit of the Town Hall

Under the Terms of Reference and delegation approved by Council, the Town Hall Committee has the following powers in respect of Bookings and Charging:-

- To approve a pricing structure within Budget and Council Policy
- To recommend to Council, a Town Hall letting policy
- The Town Clerk can let office space within Policy
- The Town Hall booking staff may accept bookings and the Town Clerk may reject them
- Costing of hall hire, functions and catering is delegated to the Facilities Manager
- Determination of concessions as set out in this Policy
- The Support Manager may waive the booking deposit in the case of public sector bodies (e.g. local authorities, PCT, Health trusts, Police, Fire, Ambulance, Blood Donors) and regular commercial customers.
- Long term bookings will be given 3 months notice of change (except in the case of VAT changes which will be applied from the due date).

When revised charges are agreed by the Town Hall Committee, existing cost confirmations (for which deposits have been received/waived), but not un- accepted quotations will be honoured.

It is essential that the Town Hall trading account accurately reflects income and expenditure incurred, and does not subsidise other parts of the Council's operations. The Town Council will therefore continue to pay rent from its Management Account, and pay for room hire by internal transfer. Similarly room hire by Congleton Partnership is paid for directly from the Regeneration Budget, for which the Town Council is the accountable body.

Concessions to voluntary/community groups are not permitted from the Town Hall trading account. Such help can be given through the Section 137 provisions and therefore part of the Grant Budget will be allocated or separated out, for this purpose.

The policy of Cheshire East Council on giving concessionary grants has not yet been determined. The administration of concessions from the Town Council is delegated through the Town Hall Committee to the Town Clerk.

Registered Charities and other voluntary/community groups which **directly** benefit the Town and are contained on the Town Council's list be given:-

Hire of rooms or facilities	for weekdays 8.00 to 6pm	Discount 20%
Hire of rooms or facilities	for weekday evenings & weekends 8am to 6pm	Discount 20%
Hire of facilities on Friday or Saturday evenings	but limited to six maximum for each night per year	Discount 50% excluding any concession by CBC/ Cheshire East
Hire of facilities on Sundays	Any time	Discount 50%

(Hirers would be encouraged to apply for a concession to Cheshire East Council)

No concessionary bookings will be accepted more than 1 year in advance and no organisation may have more than 2 Friday or Saturday evenings in any one year. Applications will be considered on a first come first served basis.

Concessions will be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman & Vice Chairman of the Town Hall Committee.

All rates will include for the cost of supervisory staff from the Town Council to be present at all times.

For two years (from June 2008), no rental income will be received for the TIC and One Stop Shop (combined rental value £13k p a) although service charges will be made. The museum is let on a peppercorn rent, which effectively means a £4.5k subsidy. This will be shown in the Council's main accounts.

The Town Clerk may approve the following Regular Booking Discounts:
Regular weekly/Monthly bookings for more than 3 months 20% discount

These are not in addition to any other discounts, concession or offer.

Residents of the Town are entitled to a 10% discount, which will not be given in addition to any other discount, concession or offer.

Weddings

Inclusive and tailored Wedding packages are available for booking directly through our commercial partner Posh Nosh Ltd. They will arrange both the ceremony and reception or the reception to support a ceremony conducted elsewhere.

These may be in either the Grand Hall or the Bridestones Suite, or at your preference, both. (In any case the main venue will be inclusive of side rooms and preparation & clear-up times). The rooms will be hired from the Council by the commercial partner who will pay the council the approved wedding rate.

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

Communications and Marketing strategy 2013-14

1. Introduction

This Strategy is designed to guide the Town Council's Communications and Marketing activities over the coming months and years.

Communications activity is a key driver in public perception of overall Council performance. Research shows that keeping residents informed, listening to their concerns and involving them when making decisions has a significant impact on their satisfaction with the Council and its services.

Marketing techniques are an integral part of a forward looking communications strategy. If it is to be meaningful and have some longevity, the communications and marketing strategy must reflect the corporate aims and priorities of the Council. It will also reflect the principles set out in the Equalities Policy, Information and Data Protection Policy and Customer Care Policy as well as being a vehicle for the delivery of other Council policies.

2. Background

The Town Council's Corporate Plan 2013-14 gives the main areas of promotion as:

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| The Town - | Promotion of the Town to attract day visitors, shoppers and tourists
Promotion to attract people looking to live in the Town
Promotion to businesses looking to invest in the Town |
| The Council- | Statutory and other information to help residents and businesses understand its decision making.
Marketing its services to ensure accessibility for all and to maximise income. |

Key priorities for the coming year will be:

- Continuous development of the Town Council's award-winning web-site
- Increasing the town's on-line presence and twitter account
- Marketing the Town Hall to increase usage
- Promoting Congleton as a visitor attraction
- Promoting the Link Road, Public Realm Strategy and other initiatives supported by the Council,
- Supporting events for the town such as the Food and Drink Festival, Parklive, Mercian March, Arts Festival, Jazz Festival and Christmas Lights
- Working with Cheshire East and service providers on boosting Congleton's tourism offer.
- Supporting initiatives to increase the attractiveness of the Town Centre.

3. Communication and Marketing Strategic Objectives

Vision – “to enhance Civic Pride and the image of Congleton by communicating openly and effectively with the Council's various audiences”

We aim to:

1. Improve two way communications with our stakeholders; to have an understanding of what they want, consult with them and listen to their views
2. To increase involvement and interest in Council activities and to engage the public in the democratic process
3. Ensure the Council receives a higher level of recognition for its achievements and promote its reputation
4. Ensure that Council's communications are accessible and timely, taking into account hard to reach groups and people with disability.
5. Establish our website as a top Congleton site
6. Maximise income for the Council's commercial services

These strategic objectives will inform the Council's approach to public relations, design, marketing, customer care, consultation, and website.

4. Stakeholders/key audiences

The stakeholders/key audiences of Congleton Town Council are:

- Residents
- Members
- Partners within the public sector (Cheshire East Council, PCT, Police etc)
- Special interest groups including those with language or disability needs
- Business community
- Voluntary/community organisations and groups
- Schools
- Press/media -(mainly Chronicle, Cheshire Independent, Silk FM, Signal FM and Radio Stoke, Beartown FM, Canalside Radio, Moorlands Radio, Congleton Effective Directory - but could potential attract regional or specialist media for some areas)
- Town Council employees
- Potential user groups

6. Principles

The following principles will be adopted in all communications:

- Integrity and honesty
- Clarity
- Openness and accessibility
- Inclusiveness
- Listening and responding
- Accountability
- Consistency
- Accuracy

8. Primary publications and communications media

The following are the primary publications and communications media used by Congleton Town Council

8.1 Publications

Bear Necessities; The Town Council and Community Groups newsletter, published 4 times a year and delivered to 11,500 households through door to door delivery. Print run 12,000 Also available in the library and Tourist Information Centre and sent out to schools and MP..

Agendas, reports and minutes: Are sent to the press, the Burgesses and councillors. Public copies are available in the Tourist Information Centre, the Information Point of the Library and Noticeboards. Agendas and Minutes are also uploaded on to the web.

Town Guide: produced every other year. Congleton Town Council retains editorial control. 8,500 copies to be distributed via estate agents, tourist outlets, leisure facilities etc. Next edition due 2014.

Publications/leaflets: Annual Report, Strategy Documents, Shopping Guide, Christmas flyer, Come to Congleton leaflet.

Noticeboards: The Town Council updates seven community notice boards. These are updated every Monday by the Town Handymen.

1. West Heath Shopping Centre –
2. West Street Car park
3. Bus Station, Market Square
4. St John's Road, Buglawton
5. Parnell Square, Bromley Farm
6. Mossley Village Hall
7. Canal side noticeboard – off Canal Street

Cheshire East Publications

PACE – the Partnership Newsletter is produced as an on-line publication every other month. The Town Council regularly contribute to this publication.

8.2 Media Relations

Press releases and feature material: Produced through the Town Centre and Marketing Manager,

Media statements: These are mostly reactive and cleared with the Town Clerk

Advertisements: produced for information, promotional and recruitment purposes and to meet statutory requirements (e.g. public notices).

8.3 E: Communication

Town Council Website: www.congleton-tc.gov.uk is major vehicle for informing local people about local events.

The town council also provides www.mybeartown.co.uk with information and updates the real

E-mails: We have a growing database of groups and organisations and this can be an effective method of getting out messages quickly.

Twitter: The Council updates @Congletontown twitter account. In 2013/14 the number of followers should be over 1,000.

8.4 Face to Face

Annual Town Meeting: Chance for residents to hear an update on events for the town and to give comments. Once a year before the end of May

Surveys and Market Research: Previously these have largely been conducted through the Congleton Partnership and via close working with Manchester Metropolitan University Business Unit.

8.5 Through Close working with Congleton organisations

These include:

- Congleton Business Association
- Congleton Community Projects
- Congleton Partnership
- Congleton Sustainability Group
- East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce
- Friends of Congleton Park
- Pub Watch
- Shop Watch
- Team Congleton 2012
- The Bear Team
- The Congleton Community Education Partnership
- The Youth Council

8.6 Events/Opportunities in 2013

- Wedding Fayres – March and October
- Mayor Making – Thursday 13 May
- Opening the Paddling Pool - Saturday 29 May – (until Sunday 5 September)
- Mercian March – 14 June
- It's a Knockout - June
- Food and Drink Festival – Sunday 16 June
- Tasty Town Week 16-23 June
- Teddy Bears Picnic – 21 June
- Civic Parade – tbc
- Parklive 12-13 July
- Civic Pride Competition – Summer 2013 (awards early October)
- In Bloom Competition – Summer 2013 – (awards October)
- Jazz and Blues Festival 24-25 August
- Open day for town treasurers – Heritage Week September
- Arts Festival – 27-29 September
- Concerts in the Park - through the summer
- Sports Awards - October
- Christmas Lights Switch on Friday 22 November
- Icerink – December

Ongoing

Giving Grants – ensuring the Town Council gets publicity from the organisations benefiting from our grants

Congleton Partnership

Team Congleton/Active Congleton

Events with partners

8.7 Internal

Project Update Sheet - once a month – 1st Wednesday of the month

8.8 Branding

The following should all clearly be identifiable as from Congleton Town Council and contain the Town Council Logo

- Letter headed paper
- Compliment slips
- Purchase orders
- Business cards for Councillors and key staff
- Fax header sheets
- Public notice advertisements

The following should be clearly identifiable as Congleton Town Council:

- Handyman Van
- Offices
- Litter-pickers and other equipment for hire
- Staff uniform – handyman, town hall staff and paddling pool staff

8.8 Accessibility

Our contact details should always be kept up-to-date and freely available to make it as easy as possible for people to contact us via email, phone or fax. The office is staffed Monday – Friday 9-5pm.

9. Commercial Activities (separate plan)

The Town Hall is a flag-ship service for the Town Council. It is a major asset in need of better marketing to increase weekday bookings. Wedding and weekend bookings have been increasing through better promotion on the website and via Wedding Fayres.

Research is on-going into similar halls to establish best practice. Future potential markets for the building also need to be considered, as will local competition, pricing policies, promotions and improvements to the product.

A customer satisfaction is gained after events to gain a better understand the current and recent users needs and expectations.