



Congleton Town Council

Historic market town

Town Clerk: **BRIAN HOGAN**



To: **MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE**

21st March 2014

Dear Councillor,

Finance and Policy Committee Meeting – Thursday 27th March 2014

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee to be held in the Town Hall, High Street, Congleton on – **Thursday 27th March 2014** 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.

Yours sincerely,

Brian 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 of Last Meeting (enclosed)
To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 20th February 2014.
3. Declarations of Interest
Members are requested to declare both “pecuniary” and “non pecuniary” interests as early in the meeting as they become known.
4. Outstanding Actions
There are no outstanding actions.
5. Grant Approvals and Commitments 2013-14 (enclosed)
To receive a statement showing the current position.
6. New Applications for Financial Assistance (enclosed)
 - i) GR 18 /1314 – SOL Theatre Summer School
 - ii) GR 19 /1314 – Bromley Farm Community Development Trust
 - iii) GR 20 /1314 – Congleton Building Preservation Trust

Congleton
beartown
where friends are made

7. Grant Activities Monitoring Forms (enclosed)

To receive the monitoring form from Bromley Farm Community Development Trust.

8. Letter of Thanks (enclosed)

To receive letters of thanks from Friends of Congleton Park and Ruby's Fund.

9. Management Accounts for April 2013 - Feb 2014 (enclosed)

To consider the Management Accounts to February 2014.

10. CCTV (enclosed)

To receive and consider a report on CCTV operation and cost in Congleton.

11. Internal Audit Report 2013-14 (enclosed)

To receive and consider the latest Internal Audit Report and recommendations.

12. Corporate Business Plan 2014-15 (enclosed).

To receive and consider the Corporate Business Plan 2014-15.

To: Members of the Finance and Policy Committee (and other Members of the Council for information); Press (3), Burgesses (5)

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 20TH FEBRUARY 2014

PRESENT

Councillors

P Bates
R I Brightwell
D T Brown
G R Edwards (Chairman)
D Murphy
Mrs J D Parry (Vice Chairman)
N T Price

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs G Baxendale, Mrs S A Holland and D Parker.

Apologies were also received from Councillors G P Hayes and G S Williams who are not members of this particular Committee.

2. MINUTES

FAP/28/1314 RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 9th January 2014 be agreed and signed by the Chairman.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

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

Cllr P Bates declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6 (i) and 9.

Cllr D Murphy declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6 (ii) and 9.

Cllr Mrs A Martin declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6 (ii).

4. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

There are no outstanding actions.

5. GRANT APPROVALS AND COMMITMENTS 2013-2014

A summary of grant approvals and commitments was considered by the Committee and it was noted that £17,536 is available for grants in 2013-14.

FAP/29/1314 RESOLVED that the grant summary be received.

6. NEW APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

FAP/30/1314 RESOLVED that:-

1. GR 16/1314 – Congleton Harriers

A grant of £250 be approved subject to the Town Council being able to nominate one of the charities that subsequent donations are given to.

2. GR 17/1314 – Friends of Congleton Park

A grant of £250 be approved.

7. NEW GRANT ACTIVITIES MONITORING FORMS

The Grant Activities Monitoring Form from Congleton Musical Theatre was noted.

8. LETTER OF THANKS

Letters of thanks from St Peter's Church and Congleton Choral Society for grants provided by the Town Council were noted.

9. RUBY'S FUND

FAP/31/1314 RESOLVED that a suitable auction gift be purchased to the value of approximately £50 as a donation to fundraising for Ruby's Fund.

10. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR APRIL 2013 – DEC 2013

FAP/32/1314 RESOLVED that the Management Accounts for December 2013 be received.

11. RBS BANK

The report was received and noted.

12. TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Treasury Management Policy for 2014-15 was considered by the Committee.

FAP/33/1314 RESOLVED that investment funds to remain with the RBS Bank and that the Town Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman make such investments as required to implement the strategy.

13. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Medium Term Financial Strategy covering the years 2014 -18 was considered by the Committee.

FAP/34/1314 RESOLVED that the Medium Term Financial Strategy be received and its assumptions noted.

14. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT GRANT

Correspondence from Cheshire East Borough Council confirming the level of Council Tax Support Grant of £65,558 for 2014-15 was considered.

FAP/35/1314 RESOLVED that the correspondence be received.

15. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

FAP/36/1314 RESOLVED that the following recommendations from the Town Hall Committee be approved:

THC/24/1314 RESOLVED that the following work be awarded to the lowest tender provided by AD Booth:

- a. Bridestones Roof - £16,020 + VAT.
- b. Roof over the main staircase - £2,450 + VAT.
- c. Repairs to the Museum, guttering and fascia boards - £11,700 + VAT.

FAP/37/1314 RESOLVED that the following recommendations from the Community, Environment and Services Committee be approved, but section b to be amended to:-

- I. Approval to purchase a second hand ride on mower up to a value of £20,000 + VAT, with 500 hours or less on the clock.
- II. If a suitable machine is not found within 4 weeks the Chairman and Town Clerk have delegated power to purchase a new machine.

CES/57/1314 RESOLVED that:-

- a. Ancillary equipment to be purchased at a cost of circa £16,000.
- b. Finance and Policy Committee to determine whether or not to purchase a new ride on mower at a cost of £35,000 or a second hand ride on mower at a cost of circa £20,000.

Mr. G.R. Edwards
Chairman

Congleton Town Grant Commitments										
Specific Budgets										
Date Grant Approved	To	For	Section	Minute Reference	EMR b/fwd	Budget	Approved 13/14	Paid £	Outstanding £	Date Paid
	Xmas lights	xmas lights	S144		4,917.00			4,917.00	0.00	20/11/2013
	Carnival Committee	Carnival Committee	S144		30.00	0.00		30.00	0.00	18/11/13
	Congleton Museum	Notional rent				4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	0.00	
	Community Projects	Project support	S144			16,000.00	16,000.00	16,000.00	0.00	09/04/2013
	Congleton Partnership	Rent				1,533.00	1,533.00	1,533.00	0.00	
	Citizens Advice Bureau	annual grant	S142			15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	0.00	29/04/2013
	Christmas Lights	Christmas Lights	S144			9,000.00	9,000.00	3,024.54	5,975.46	
	Carnival Committee	Bi-annual Congleton Carnival	S144			3,750.00	3,750.00		3,750.00	
	Mercian March	Mercian March through town	S137			1,797.75	1,797.75	1,797.75	0.00	
	Royal British Legion	Remembrance Day Parade	S137			650.00	751.00	751.00	0.00	29/10/2013
	St Peter's Church	Churchyard Maintenance	S215			3,000.00			0.00	
	St Peter's Church	Church clock maintenance	PCA1957 s2			250.00	250.00	250.00	0.00	03/12/2013
Totals					4,947.00	55,480.75	52,581.75	47,803.29	9,725.46	
	Ear marked reserve b/fwd		£4,947							
	Budget 2013/14		£55,481							
	Total approved to date		£57,529							
	Total awaiting application		£2,899							

Congleton Town Grant Commitments 2013/14									
Permitted and S137									
Date Grant Approved	To	For	Section	Minute Reference	Approved EMR b/fwd £	Approved 13/14 £	Paid £	Outstanding £	Date Paid
23/02/2012	Bromley Farm Community Trust	Bromley farm news	S137		500.00		500.00	0.00	10/03/2014
	Subsidised Use of Town Hall		S137			4,000.00	4068.37	-68.37	
29/11/2012	Beartown Patchwork Group	Support for exhibition 2013	S145	FAP/37/1213	100.00		100.00	0.00	16/07/2013
14/02/2013	Sol Theatre School	Summer theatre school 2013	S145	FAP/55/1213	1,000.00		1000.00	0.00	29/04/2013
28/03/2013	Congleton Learning Partnership	Replacement of old/obsolete computers	S137	FAP/64 /1213	1,000.00		1000.00	0.00	10/04/2013
28/03/2013	Team Congleton 2012	Legacy projects	S145	FAP/64 /1213	1,500.00			1500.00	
28/03/2013	Rotary of Congleton	Youth Makes Music Project	S145	FAP/64 /1213	200.00		200.00	0.00	05/04/2013
30/05/2013	Vale Juniors	Girls Trophies	S137	FAP/02/1314		273.58	273.58	0.00	08/07/2013
30/05/2013	Cong Musical theatre	Support for the Sound of Music	s145	FAP/02/1314		250.00	250.00	0.00	28/01/2014
30/05/2013	Eaton Bank academy	Ann Packer Centre support	S133	FAP/02/1314		1,000.00		1000.00	
29/08/2013	Congleton Harriers	Support for Congleton half marathon	S137	FAP/08/1314		250.00	250.00	0.00	20/09/2013
17/10/2013	Congleton Choral Society	Set up Children's Choir	GPoC	FAP/11/1314		250.00	250.00	0.00	02/12/2013
17/10/2013	Cong Jazz and Blues Festival	support for 2013 festival	GPoC	FAP/11/1314		500.00	500.00	0.00	29/10/2013
17/10/2013	Friends of Congleton Park	Cables etc for park events	GPoC	FAP/11/1314		200.00		200.00	
28/11/2013	The Smile Group	1 month costs	GPoC	FAP/18/1314		250.00	250.00	0.00	06/12/2013
28/11/2013	Bromley Farm Friendship Group	Support for Christmas meals/presents	GPoC	FAP/18/1314		250.00	250.00	0.00	14/01/2014
09/01/2014	Danielle Wright-Humphreys	Support for pagent	GPoC	FAP/24/1314		100.00	100.00	0.00	10/02/2014
20/02/2014	Congleton Harriers	Support for Cloud 9 Race	GPoC	FAP/30/1314		250.00		250.00	
20/02/2014	Friends of Congleton Park	Brass in the Park	GPoC	FAP/30/1314		250.00		250.00	
								0.00	
Totals					4300.00	7823.58	8991.95	3131.63	
	EMR b/fwd								
	Budget 13/14								
	Total approved to date			£80,341.00	Total Grant budget (Specific Budgets and S137)				
	Total money still available for grants								



Congleton Town Council

Application for Financial Assistance



Part 1: Applicant(s) and Project Details

Application Reference Number (office use only)	GR 18
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1.1	Applicant(s):	Colin Barlow
1.2	Representing:	SOL Theatre School
1.3	Email Address:	
1.4	Tel No.	
1.5	Project Title:	SOL Theatre Summer School
1.6	Project Objectives:	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Statement of Intent</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SOL Theatre School's intention is to train young people in performing and technical skills, relating to the production of a staged theatrical performance. As a direct result of this, young people will gain confidence, social skills, self reliance, communication skills and a sense of accomplishment which they can take forward in to their everyday lives.• SOL Theatre School will run a Summer School each year during the first two weeks of August, giving the young people of the area a focus and purpose other than being 'out on the streets' or left alone at home whilst parents go to work.• It is also the intention of SOL Theatre School to foster an interest in live performance thereby increasing the cultural life of the area.• The SOL Theatre School Summer School is open to all people between the age of 8 and 18 regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, physical/mental disability or offending background.
1.7	Brief Project Description:	Ten week days (9.00 – 17.00) training and rehearsals from the 4 th to the 15 th August 2014 culminating in two public performances of Andrew Lloyd Webber's Youth Group Production 'Cats' at the Daneside Theatre on the evenings of the 15 th and 16 th August 2014.
1.8	Details accounts/budgets	Please see attached expected expenditure/income sheet

Part 2: Cost Details / Resources / Timescale

2.1	Total Cost of Project:	£14,470.00 estimated (see show budget sheet attached)
2.2	Total contribution sought:	£1,000.00
2.3	What will the money be spent on?	We have estimated that we will spend on average £25 per child for costumes for the show. We are expecting at least 40 – 45 children to take part in this year's summer school.
2.4	Any ongoing costs:	Purchase of Show License, Music Hire and librettos. Advertising and promotional material.
2.5	Details of <i>confirmed</i> match funding include source <i>Cash:</i> <i>In kind:</i>	We have applied to a number of local organisations, like last year, but have not had any confirmed cash promised yet other than a small grant from the Congleton Carnival Committee. Next Grant Approval meetings are in April. We estimate, based on present costing, that the professional team taking part in this exercise and giving their time voluntary would be in the region of £9,000.
2.6	Resources needed:	Rehearsal and performing stage venue, rehearsal materials – music, scores and orchestral arrangements. Sound, lighting, stage set and props. Voluntary people to protect the children under our Child Protection Policy plus a Cheshire East Council Approved Matron. A large number of people to make costumes, staging, props and manage the theatre.
2.7	Estimated timescale of project from start to finish:	Two weeks during the children's summer holiday starting on the 4 th August 2014 from 9.00hrs to 17.00 hrs each week day.

Part 3: Potential Benefits / Outputs

3.1	What are the potential benefits/outputs to residents of Congleton	As stated in our constitution the children will benefit from being part of a happy and enjoyable team that we hope the parents will appreciate. Certainly the children do. The performance by the children on the two show evenings will enhance the cultural life of the town and make Congleton proud of the young people who take part. Also the 40 + people who give their time and commitment to such a good cause totally on a voluntary basis.
3.2	Are there similar services/projects provided in the area	Not to our knowledge.

Part 4: Evaluation

4.1	<i>How will the project be evaluated?</i>	SOL Theatre School members will evaluate each child's contribution to the project and are present with a certificate of attendance that they may use for future requirements. We have past members taking part in the stage version of 'Billy Eliot' in Manchester and appearing on television in the John Bishop show plus many take part in the local youth and senior operatic society productions. The main evaluation criteria are that the children tell their parents to arrange their family summer holidays around SOL Summer School so that they can take part.
4.2	<i>Who will carry out the evaluation?</i>	We invite a member from the NODA (National Operatic & Dramatic Association NW), which we are a member, to assess the performance. Also local dignitaries are invited who voice the opinion in many ways including commenting in the local paper, the Congleton Chronicle.

Signature:



12th February 2014

SOL Theatre School's Constitution, Child Protection Policy, Equal Opportunities Statement and Data Protection Policy can be viewed and printed from the web site www.soltheatreschool.co.uk

SOL Theatre accounts November 2012-October 2013

Income & Expenses (including items already invested)

<u>Income (from Samarkand)</u>	
Fees (from participants)	£8,950.00
Tickets (net of show fees)	£2,309.60
Grants.	£3,035.00
Refreshments, programmes, raffle, adverts (net of expenses)	£1,266.60
	<u>£15,561.20</u>

Expenses (from Samarkand)

Hire of theatre	(£3,350.00)
Costumes, props, staging for show	(£2,950.39)
Expenses for team incl. band (petrol, food, clothing etc.)	(£3,500.00)
CRB checks	£0.00
Licence to perform show (Weinbergers)	£0.00
Advertising incl. auditions (local papers/shows etc)	(£1,033.08)
Insurance premium	(339.00)
Bank charges	(192.10)
Misc - incl SOL clothing etc.	(£4,214.67)
	<u>(£15,579.24)</u>

Net movement from Samarkand

	<u>(£18.04)</u>
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£0.00

Net movement for the period December 12 to November 13

	<u>(£18.04)</u>
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Represented by:

Opening bank balance	23-Nov-12	£3,619.12
Net income above		<u>(£18.04)</u>
Closing bank balance	24-Oct-13	<u>£3,601.08</u>

Reviewed by : C. Carter (ACMA)



Summer School 2014 Budget Sheet

Expected Expenditure

License	£570.00
Music hire	£500.00(approx)
Theatre Hire	£3,300.00
Costume	£2,000.00
Props and Set Dressing	£1,000.00
Set	£1,000.00
Technical Equipment Hire	£500.00
Special Effects	£750.00
T Shirts for Presentations	£1,000.00
Expenses	
<i>(Travel, mileage, postage, presentations, incurred expenses relating to staging)</i>	£1,000.00
Band	£1,000.00
Advertising and Printing	
<i>(banners, tickets, programmes, adverts, newspaper articles)</i>	£1,500.00
Friday evening food for cast	£200.00
Bank Charges	£150.00
Total	£14,470.00

Anticipated Income

35 Participants Paying £275.00 Each	£9,625.00
6 Participants negotiated prices average £200.00 each	£1,200.00
Ticket Sales Approx 175 each for two Performances at Average £7	£2,450.00
Total	£13,275.00
Expenditure / income	-£1195.00



Congleton Town Council

Application for Financial Assistance



Part 1: Applicant(s) and Project Details

Application Reference Number (office use only)	GR19
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1.1	Applicant(s):	Glen Williams
1.2	Representing:	Bromley Farm Community Development Trust
1.3	Email Address:	bscdt@tiscali.co.uk
1.4	Tel No.	01260 279707
1.5	Project Title:	Bromley Farm News
1.6	Project Objectives:	To produce an eight page quarterly resident newsletter. To inform residents of what is going on in the Bromley Farm neighbourhood. To provide informative articles from partner organisations that have a relevance to life on Bromley Farm. To forge stronger links between organisations delivering services to residents of Bromley Farm and the residents themselves.
1.7	Brief Project Description:	The project is to continue to produce a popular and well received community based newsletter for a further 12 months. The newsletter is well established for over 5 years and this is the main way the Trust and other partner organisations can effectively communicate with the community directly into resident's homes.
1.8	Details accounts/budgets	Cost of each newsletter is currently £400 per edition Total cost for 12 months is £1600

Part 2: Cost Details / Resources / Timescale

2.1	Total Cost of Project:	£1600
2.2	Total contribution sought:	£400
2.3	What will the money be spent on?	The money will be spent on the production of the newsletter namely design contributions and printing costs.
2.4	Any ongoing costs:	None
2.5	Details of confirmed match funding include source	Bromley Farm Community Development Trust £400

	<i>Cash:</i>	Plus Dane Group £400
	<i>In kind:</i>	Cheshire Probation Service Community Payback Team will deliver the newsletter saving at least £300
2.6	<i>Resources needed:</i>	No specific resources except contributions of articles from partner organisations, and funding to print the newsletter.
2.7	<i>Estimated timescale of project from start to finish:</i>	March 2014 – February 2015

Part 3: Potential Benefits / Outputs

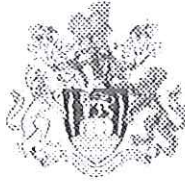
3.1	<i>What are the potential benefits/outputs to residents of Congleton</i>	<p>Bromley Farm residents from 1200 homes will be regularly updated with what events and activities are taking place in their neighbourhood. These residents will have the knowledge of what is planned in their neighbourhood and how they can get involved.</p> <p>Key information and advice will be provided through the newsletter. Provides a valuable link between organisations delivering services and the community.</p> <p>Demonstrates that organisations are responding to local priorities. Shows the benefits of partnership working in action. Provides an opportunity for residents to be engaged. Encourages volunteering in the community.</p>
3.2	<i>Are there similar services/projects provided in the area</i>	<p>Plus Dane's Unity magazine, but this is group wide and is only delivered to Plus Dane tenants and is not neighbourhood focussed.</p> <p>Bear Necessities, but this is a town wide newsletter and is not resident led and focussed directly on the needs of Bromley Farm residents.</p>

Part 4: Evaluation/Publicity

4.1	<i>How will the project be evaluated and who will carry out the evaluation?</i>	The project will be evaluated by the Trust through sample phone calls and home visits throughout the year. The last 12 months 56 such contacts were made with a 95% favourable response rate.
4.2	<i>Describe how you will promote the Town Council in your project</i>	<p>The town council's logo will appear in each edition.</p> <p>We also intend in our next edition to have an article specifically about the financial support towards the production of the newsletter.</p> <p>We will include articles from or about Congleton Town Council in the next 4 editions (a total of 8 such articles have appeared in these).</p>

Signature: G.S. Williams

Date: 18.3.14



Congleton Town Council

Application for Financial Assistance



Part 1: Applicant(s) and Project Details

Application Reference Number (office use only)	GR 20
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1.1	Applicant(s):	JOHN DAVIES
1.2	Representing:	CONGLETON BUILDING PRESERVATION TRUST
1.3	Email Address:	
1.4	Tel No.	
1.5	Project Title:	BATH HOUSE PHYSIC AND WILDFLOWER GARDEN
1.6	Project Objectives:	TO CREATE A PHYSIC GARDEN TO TELL THE STORY OF PLANTS THAT WERE USED IN MEDICINE AND IN INDUSTRY UP TO THE END OF THE 19 th CENTURY. WE ARE ALSO CREATING A WILDFLOWER GARDEN IN AN URBAN SETTING BEHIND LAWTON STREET IN CONGLETON
1.7	Brief Project Description:	WE WANT TO CREATE THREE TERRACES AND INSTALL A CONTINUOUS PATH AROUND THE SITE. SOME WORK WILL BE CARRIED OUT BY OUR VOLUNTEERS WHILST THE HEAVIER CONSTRUCTION WORK WILL BE DONE BY LOL. THE SITE IS OFF LAWTON STREET AND COLEHILL BANK. PLEASE GO AND HAVE A LOOK.
1.8	Details accounts/budgets	ATTACHED

Part 2: Cost Details / Resources / Timescale

2.1	Total Cost of Project:	£4,601
2.2	Total contribution sought:	£500
2.3	What will the money be spent on?	PURCHASE OF MATERIALS

2.4	Any ongoing costs:	NOT AT PRESENT BUT SMALL AMOUNT OF EXTRA COST IN THE FUTURE FOR PLANTS. WE HAVE SUPPORT FOR THIS
2.5	Details of confirmed match funding include source Cash: In kind:	APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT AID SUBMITTED. £500 CONFIRMED.
2.6	Resources needed:	FUNDS FOR PURCHASE OF MATERIALS
2.7	Estimated timescale of project from start to finish:	START AT END OF MAY AND COMPLETE BY END OF JUNE

Part 3: Potential Benefits / Outputs

3.1	What are the potential benefits/outputs to residents of Congleton	PROVISION OF A PEACEFUL SITE IN OUR TOWN CENTRE. IT WILL FORM PART OF A TOURIST TRAIL IN CONGLETON. THE LAND WAS DERELICT. INVOLVEMENT OF VOLUNTEERS.
3.2	Are there similar services/projects provided in the area	COMMUNITY GARDEN

Part 4: Evaluation/Publicity

4.1	How will the project be evaluated and who will carry out the evaluation?	WE HAVE AN OPEN DAY EACH YEAR WHICH INCLUDES AN EXHIBITION ILLUSTRATING THE HISTORY OF THE BATH HOUSE SITE WE HAVE RECEIVED HERITAGE LOTTERY FUNDING FOR FINGERPOST SIGNAGE
4.2	Describe how you will promote the Town Council in your project	ALL OUR SPONSORS WILL BE SHOWN AT THE BATH HOUSE SITE. WE WILL ENSURE THAT ALL EVENTS ARE PROMOTED IN THE CONGLETON CHRONICLE

Signature:

Date:

Congleton Building Preservation Trust Bath House & Physic Garden

Chairman: Bob Grayson CEng, BSc MIEE
Tel 01260 279073 bobgrayson@hotmail.com
Address for correspondence:
31 Lawton Street, Congleton, CW12 1RU



Pathways

174m of pathway 1.5m wide	£ (incl VAT)	
Underlay barrier 261m ² at £0.90/m ²	186	
Base aggregate 100mm deep 26m ³ at £30/m ³	780	
Finish gravel 100mm deep 26m ³ at £48/m ³	1248	
Slope tiles 23m ² at £24/m ²	552	
Fixings	60	
Total	2826	2826

Groundworks

For pathways		
3 days mini-digger hire	270	
Driver	300	
Total for pathways	570	570
For terracing	950	950

Fencing

22m Chestnut paling 1.5m high	220	
Fixings	35	
Total for fencing	255	255
Grand total		£ 4601



Supported by
The National Lottery[®]
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



Charity No.1091137
Company No.04305781 (England & Wales)



Town Council Grant

Activities Monitoring Form



1. Contact Details

Organisation name:	Bromley Farm Community Development Trust		
Address:	Bromley Farm Community Centre, Edinburgh Road		
Congleton, Cheshire	CW12 3EN		

2. Grant Information

Grant Reference Number:	Unknown		
Total project cost:	£2000		

Receipts Attached? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Receipt Amount:	£504.92
Please list receipts below: Crewe Colour Printers £395.00 Printerinks £109.92		

3. Project Information

When did the project commence?		April 2012	
Did you make a profit from the project? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
If yes, how will this be used?			
Please explain how the grant money was used: The grant was used to fund the production of our quarterly neighbourhood newsletter Bromley Farm News and to purchase materials to produce other publicity material such as the Bromley Farm Youth Club News.			

Please explain what difference the project has made to your organisation/local people:

The Bromley Farm News is delivered every three months to all 1200 homes on Bromley Farm. It is the main way we can communicate to all residents what is going on in their neighbourhood, what is planned for the future and allows key partners to put out their messages that have a relevance to life on Bromley Farm. Article contributions are made by up to 30 other organisations including Congleton Town Council. The financial support has ensured that the newsletter continues to be produced particularly as other previous funders have withdrawn financial assistance. Through the newsletter and other publications we have produced has meant that hundreds of residents have participated and benefitted from at least one event or activity delivered in the last 12 months. It has helped to strengthen the link between the trust and the town council and enables organisation such as the council, police, fire service and others to bring news and advice into resident's homes. The other financial support has enabled us to produce other event or activity specific publicity such as our Youth Club News which is delivered three times a year to youth club members. This has helped to increase membership of our youth clubs. It also enabled us to promote our youth club 5th birthday event to all young people in the neighbourhood.

4. Promotion

Please send an electronic photograph of your project/activity. Is this attached? Yes ☐ No ☒

Do you give permission for these photographs to be used on the Council's web site and in newsletters? (Please ensure that you seek permission for anybody photographed). Yes ☒ No ☐

Was the grant funding from Congleton Town Council acknowledged in any way? Yes ☒ No ☐

Please state how (i.e. on your website, event programme, tickets, etc)
Congleton Town Council logo included in the Bromley Farm News with other funders.

5. Feedback

What is your experience of using the Town Council Grant Scheme? Are there any comments or suggestions for improvements that you would like to make?

We were pleased with the ease of the application process.

How did you apply? Online ☐ Email ☐ Post ☒

Do you feel that you understood the process? Yes ☒ No ☐

Please rate the following elements:

	Excellent	Good	OK	Poor
Completing the application form	X			
Relevance of guidelines	X			
Length of the process from submitting an application to receiving notification	X			
Advice given from the Town Council Grants Team (if applicable)				



Dear Jackie,

On behalf of Friends of Congleton Park, I am writing to thank you for the grant towards Brass on the Grass and for your support for Friends of Congleton Park.

We look forward to seeing you and members of your organisation at the event.

Yours Sincerely

Alison Williams

Alison Williams
Secretary Friends of Congleton Park



Meridian House, Roe Street, Congleton CW12 1PG
Email: info@rubysfund.co.uk Tel: 01260 277666

Mrs J Potts
Congleton Town Council
Town Hall
High Street
Congleton
Cheshire
CW12 1BN

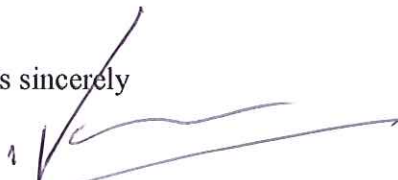
7th March 2014

Dear Mrs Potts

On behalf of Ruby's Fund may I say a huge thank you to the Town Council for the 2 framed pictures of the Town Hall which will be used as Auction prizes at the forthcoming Chamber of Commerce Awards Evening. As you know the proceeds of the Auction and Raffle at this function will be donated entirely to Ruby's Fund which has been the Chamber's chosen Charity of the Year for the past 12 months. . This will help enormously towards the provision of facilities at our new sensory centre and social café for children and young people with additional needs and disabilities. You will be interested to know that work has now commenced to make our dream a reality at Meridian House

Will you also please convey our sincere gratitude to your Members for this very kind donation

Yours sincerely


Ian Fynn
Director
Ruby's Fund



WWW.RUBYSFUND.CO.UK

Management Accounts February 2014

See attached Income and Expenditure sheet. These figures are for 11 months so the % of budget used would be 92% if the expenditure was regular monthly.

As we are nearing the financial year end it is time to look at moving any underspend into ear marked reserves (EMR). This enables the council to spend this money on specific items rather than it going into the general reserve which cannot then be used for expenditure.

Variance Analysis:

Finance and Policy Committee

Corporate Management

- Slight overspend on telephones due to the phone system support contract omitted from the budget.
- Slight overspend on IT support due to extra PCs and increase in costs.
- Slight overspend on legal and professional fees (Adept re-accreditation, War memorial land registry fees)

Grants

- £17,036 is available for new grant applications to 31/03/14.

Community, Environment and Services Committee

- Paddling Pool – chemicals, water and electricity charges were much higher than budget due to increased usage last summer.
- The Handyman Service is underspent on its staffing budget as an extra person was budgeted for but not appointed.
- Devolved services – the budget was for a full year's costs but only 3 months expenditure will be used.

Town Hall and Assets Committee

- A detailed trading account is provided to the Town Hall committee – Income is slightly more than budget and expenditure is slightly down. The final year figures are expected to be much better than 2012/13.

Personnel Committee

- The overall budget includes increased staffing costs for potentially taking on devolved services in from April 2013. For the management accounts a three month budget has been calculated and included for devolved services.

Congleton Town Council - Management Accounts - Feb 2014

	Current Month Actual	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	% of Budget
Finance and Policy					
101 Corporate Management					
Staff Costs (re-allocated)	10,416	106,314	119,656	13,342	89%
Travel	278	987	1,200	213	82%
Training / Conferences	210	1,173	2,600	1,427	45%
Rent Payable	1,163	12,788	13,950	1,162	92%
Reception - TIC	0	2,524	2,500	-24	101%
Miscellaneous Office Costs	17	68	300	232	23%
Telephone/Fax/Internet	262	1,615	1,400	-215	115%
Postage	221	2,653	3,360	707	79%
Stationery & Printing	64	1,546	1,800	254	86%
Subscriptions & Publications	0	1,625	2,000	375	81%
Insurance	0	3,597	3,700	103	97%
Computer/IT Costs	500	5,080	4,545	-535	112%
Photocopy Charges	0	2,504	3,465	961	72%
Recruitment Advertising	0	0	500	500	0%
Other Advertising	45	124	200	76	62%
Equipment Replacement\Tools	0	0	200	200	0%
Bank Charges	48	62	50	-12	124%
Bad debts written	0	588	0	-588	0%
Audit Fees - External	0	0	2,000	2,000	0%
Audit Fees - Internal	400	800	1,200	400	67%
Accountancy Support	0	1,624	3,675	2,051	44%
Legal & Professional fees	250	2,146	1,500	-646	143%
HR & H&S support	213	2,343	2,560	217	92%
Central Overheads reallocated	-2,967	-28,714	-31,012	-2,298	93%
Corporate Management:-Expenditure	11,120	121,447	141,349	19,902	86%
Interest Receivable	0	-6,974	-4,000	2,974	174%
Corporate Management :- Income	0	-6,974	-4,000	2,974	174%
Net Expenditure over Income	11,120	114,473	137,349	22,876	83%
102 Democratic Rep'n & Mgmt/Civic					
Staff Costs (re-allocated)	1,771	19,509	21,700	2,191	90%
Training / Conferences	0	900	1,000	100	90%
Stationery & Printing	49	399	250	-149	160%
Marketing/Promotions	0	78	1,000	922	8%
Council Newsletter	368	3,905	5,230	1,325	75%
Council Website	0	835	2,000	1,165	42%
Mayor's Allowance	0	3,000	3,000	0	100%
Members Expenses	0	0	360	360	0%
Civic Expenses	0	4,158	5,500	1,342	76%
Civic Regalia	0	16	100	84	16%
Hall & Room Hire	334	4,325	7,000	2,675	62%
Civic Artefacts and Treasures	0	810	500	-310	162%
Election Expenses	0	0	0	0	0%
Central Overheads reallocated	127	2,743	3,672	929	75%
Democratic Rep'n & Mgmt/Civic:-Expenditure	2,649	40,678	51,312	10,634	79%
Democratic Rep'n & Mgmt/Civic:-Income	0	-488	0	488	0%
Net Expenditure over Income	2,649	40,190	51,312	11,122	78%

Congleton Town Council - Management Accounts - Feb 2014

		Current Month Actual	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	% of Budget
107	<u>Grants</u> (see separate sheet for breakdown)	0	59,996	77,033	17,037	78%
F&P Income - Expenditure Totals		13,769	214,659	265,694	51,035	81%
	<u>Community, Environment & Services</u>					
201	Paddling Pool	76	24,784	22,621	-2,163	110%
212	Propogation Unit	0	0	1,000	1,000	
215	Floral Displays	523	16,138	17,500	1,362	92%
241	Allotments	30	335	180	-155	186%
251	Handyman service	3,777	50,555	74,311	23,756	68%
263	Public Toilets	0	0	0	0	
280	Devolved Services		4,245	37,773	33,528	11%
301	Congleton Partnership	2,164	23,799	25,963	2,164	92%
302	Community Development	2,107	27,193	32,272	5,079	84%
303	Police Community Support Officers	0	47,200	47,200	0	100%
305	Christmas Fayre/lights	-13	2,706	4,000	1,294	68%
321	Tourism	596	2,196	3,000	804	73%
341	Youth and Young People	54	1,444	2,000	556	72%
351	Fellowship House	90	4,750	4,557	-193	104%
					0	
		9,404	205,345	272,377	67,032	75%
	<u>Town Hall</u>					
221	Town Hall - Expenditure		135,892	152,560	-16,668	89%
	Town Hall - Income		85,184	93,583	8,399	91%
		0	50,708	58,977	8,269	86%
Total Net Expenditure		470,712	597,048	126,336		79%
	<u>Personnel</u>					
401	Staff Costs - Reallocated	45,854	311,129	389,526	78,397	80%

Reserves as at 28/02/14

General Reserve	161,141
Capital Vehicle Fund	24,000
Capital Contingency Fund	149,066
EMR Elections	15,000
EMR Crime Prevention/Traffic calmin	3,779
EMR Ancient Treasures	3,000
EMR Training	3,000
EMR Devolved Services	57,250
EMR Loan Repayments	2,075
EMR Public Toilets	19,426
EMR Play Areas	6,000
EMR Public Realm	3,906
EMR Legal Fees	10,000
	457,643

Report to Finance and Policy Committee
Thursday 27th March 2014
CCTV Operation in Congleton

The ongoing cost of running the CCTV Service is approximately £585k per annum. A large proportion of this cost is the amount Cheshire East pay to BT for the annual fibre rental which currently stands at £152,886.

Cheshire East Borough Council has requested all Town and Parish Councils to contribute towards the cost of CCTV provision and have proposed a cost of £1850 per camera. If no contribution is made by the Town to the CCTV operation the cameras will be left on, but, not monitored.

There are 8 cameras in Congleton two in the Park and one at Bromley Farm. CEBC will retain responsibility for financing the camera in Congleton Park

1. Congleton Town Council will pay for 5 cameras with effect from 1st April 2014
2. When a new camera is installed at the apex of the junction of Swan Street and Little street, that can be invoiced as camera 6
3. When a new camera is installed on Antrobus Street /Mill Street, subject to capital being available, that can be invoiced as camera 7
4. CEBC will continue to fund the camera in Congleton Park and will arrange with Julie Byrne for its replacement
5. A new camera to be installed on the Town Hall roof, CTC to investigate whether planning permission is required

Thus initially CCTV will cost the Town Council £9,250 p.a.,and when the additional cameras are added, this will increase the cost by a further £3,700 to £12,950

Brian Hogan
17.03.14

Congleton Town Council

Internal Audit Report 2013-14 (Interim update)

Prepared by Adrian Shepherd-Roberts

Stuart J Pollard

*Director
Auditing Solutions Ltd*

Background and Scope

The Accounts and Audit Arrangements introduced from 1st April 2001 require all Town and Parish Councils to implement an independent internal audit examination of their Accounts and accounting processes annually. The Council complied with the requirements in terms of independence from the Council decision making process by appointing Auditing Solutions Ltd to provide the function to the Council at the outset: this report sets out those areas examined during the course of our visits to the Council for 2013-14, which took place on 10th September 2013 and 20th February 2014.

Internal Audit Approach

In continuing out our review for 2013-14, we have again had regard to the materiality of transactions and their susceptibility to potential mis-recording or misrepresentation in the year-end Statement of Accounts and Annual Return. At our first visit, we updated our analysis of income and expenditure to include data for 2012-13, considering any significant variances that may exist compared with prior year detail feeding such into the planning of this year's work programme. Consequently, we have continued our review of the Council's financial control systems and procedures, undertaking appropriate testing as deemed necessary, to afford suitable assurance as to the soundness of those systems for their intended purpose and to ensure reasonable accuracy in the disclosure of information in the Council's detailed year-end Statement of Accounts, as summarised in the Annual Return that now forms the statutory accounts.

As the Council's Internal Auditor and under the revised audit arrangements, we have a duty to complete the internal audit certificate in the Council's Annual Return, which covers the basic financial systems and requires assurances in ten separate areas: this will be undertaken at our final visit for the year.

Overall Conclusion

We are pleased to conclude that, in the areas examined to date, the Council continues to have effective systems in place to help ensure that transactions are free from material misstatement and will be reported accurately in the Annual Return and detailed Statement of Accounts for the financial year.

We are pleased to acknowledge that Council members and officers continue to operate a sound, pro-active approach to risk management and corporate governance issues, together with the development and management of effective internal controls and procedural documentation.

Detailed Report

Review of Accounting Arrangements & Bank Reconciliations

Our objective here is to ensure that the accounting records are being maintained accurately and currently and that no anomalous entries appear in cashbooks or financial ledgers. To that end, we have: -

- Again ensured that the ledger remains in balance at the present date;
- Verified the opening trial balance for 2013-14 to the Statement of Accounts and Annual Return for 2012-13 to ensure that the closing balances have been brought forward accurately and completely;
- Checked and agreed transactions in the Council's main bank account cashbooks to the relevant RBS Bank statements for April, July, November and December 2013;
- Additionally, checked and agreed for the same months all inter account "sweep" transfers between the current and high interest bank accounts;
- Examined and verified the accuracy of transactions in the Council's two mayoral charity bank account cashbooks for the year to December 2013;
- Verified the accuracy of the bank reconciliations for the combined current and deposit accounts and Mayoral Charity accounts as at 30th April, 31st July, 30th November and 31st December 2013 to ensure that no long-standing uncleared cheques or other anomalous entries exist.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no issues have been identified in this area warranting further comment. We shall undertake further work at our final visit, including verifying the accurate disclosure of year-end balances in the detailed Accounts and Annual Return.

Review of Corporate Governance

Our objective is to ensure that the Council has robust corporate governance documentation in place; that Council and Committee meetings are conducted in accordance with the adopted Standing Orders and that, as far as we are able to ascertain, no actions of a potentially unlawful nature have been or are being considered for implementation. We noted previously that an updated Corporate Business Plan had been prepared and examined the content accordingly.

We previously reviewed Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and the Council's Code of Conduct during 2011-12 and note that the documents were re-adopted in May 2013.

We have continued our review of the minutes of the Full Council and Standing Committees, excluding Planning, to ensure that no actions of an ultra vires nature are being either considered or have been actioned, whilst also ensuring that the Council's

finances remain at a healthy level to provide appropriate funds for future planned development and current revenue spending plans.

We note that Council approved the adoption of the General Power of Competence at its meeting in May 2013.

Conclusions

No matters arise warranting comment or recommendation in this area at present: we shall continue our review of minutes and consideration of other governance issues at future visits.

Review of Expenditure

Our aim here is to ensure that: -

- Council resources are released in accordance with the Council's approved procedures and budgets;
- Payments are supported by appropriate documentation, either in the form of an original trade invoice or other appropriate form of document confirming the payment as due and/or an acknowledgement of receipt, where no other form of invoice is available;
- An official order has been raised in each and every case where one would be expected;
- All discounts due on goods and services supplied are identified and appropriate action taken to secure the discount;
- The correct expense codes have been applied to invoices when processed; and
- VAT has been appropriately identified and coded to the control account for periodic recovery.

We have continued work in this area now examining a total sample of 54 payments individually in excess of £2,000 plus every 25th payment processed in the year to December 2013 and the annual Non-domestic Rates totalling £306,150 and equating to 54% of all non-pay related expenditure to date.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no issues have been identified in this area: we shall extend testing for the remainder of the year at our final visit, also ensuring the accuracy of the year's VAT reclaims and accurate disclosure of the final quarter's VAT balance in the Annual Return.

Assessment and Management of Risk

Our aim here is to ensure that the Council has put in place appropriate arrangements to identify all potential areas of risk of both a financial and health and safety nature, whilst also ensuring that appropriate arrangements exist to monitor and manage any such risks identified in order to minimise the opportunity for their coming to fruition.

We have noted previously that risk assessment registers were in place using the LCRS software, which are subjected to routine annual review and update, detail being incorporated subsequently into the Council's Corporate Plan. An external agent (Wirehouse Limited) has now been contracted to undertake assessments in relation to HR and Health / safety issues. We also note that the previously completed LCRS assessments relating to areas of potential financial risk will be further reviewed internally during the course of the current financial year.

Zurich Municipal continues to provide the Council's insurance cover: we have examined the current year's schedule (to May 2014) and consider it meets the current needs of the Council appropriately with both Employer's and Public Liability cover set at £10 million and Fidelity Guarantee cover at £1 million.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no issues have been identified in this area warranting further comment. We shall continue to monitor the Council's risk management process at our final visit, also ensuring that the LCRS assessments have been updated and been re-adopted formally by the full Council, as required by current Regulations.

Precept Determination and Budgetary Control

We aim in this area of our work to ensure that the Council has appropriate procedures in place to determine its future financial requirements leading to the adoption of an approved budget and formal determination of the amount of the precept to be submitted to the District Council and that effective arrangements are in place to monitor budgetary performance throughout the financial year and that the Council has identified and retains appropriate reserve funds to meet future spending plans.

We note that the Council, at its December 2013 meeting, approved a precept of £656,714 for 2014-15, also noting that the Council would receive £63,825 by way of Council Tax Support Grant. We are also pleased to note that members continue to receive regular budget monitoring reports with over/under-spends and the level of earmarked reserves the subject of regular review.

We have examined the latest budget performance report in the accounting software to December 2013 with no significant variances apparent. We have also been advised that there will be amendments to the budget figures due to the additional devolved services from Cheshire East Borough Council in January 2014, which we will review further at our final visit.

Conclusions

There are no matters requiring formal comment or recommendation in this area of our review process at present. We shall, at our final visit, consider the appropriateness of the level of retained reserves to meet the Council's ongoing revenue spending requirements and any future development aspirations: we shall also review the year-end outturn seeking explanations for any significant variances that might arise between now and then.

Review of Income

In considering the Council's income streams, we aim to ensure that robust systems are in place to ensure that all income due to the Council is identified and invoiced in a timely manner and that effective procedures are in place to pursue recovery of any outstanding monies.

We have, at this update visit, examined the controls in place over the identification and recovery of income due to the Council from Town Hall hire, discussing detail of the operative procedures with the Finance Officer, also documenting the processes in place. We have identified detail of a week's hirings in November 2013 from the booking diaries, ensuring that hirers have signed the Council's Agreement Terms and Conditions of Hire, that an appropriate invoice has been raised for the correct fees and that income due has been received within a reasonable time frame. We are pleased to report that no issues arise in this area.

We have also examined the current Sales Ledger "Outstanding debt schedule" reviewing the action being taken to pursue any long-standing debts and are pleased to note that no significant debts exist at present.

We have also reviewed the detailed income nominal ledger transaction reports for the year to December 2013 to ensure that no obvious coding errors or other anomalous entries are apparent and are pleased to record that none are in evidence.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that there are no significant issues in this area. We shall undertake further work at our final visit, including the update of our year-on-year analysis of income across the various nominal account headings.

Salaries and Wages

In examining the Council's payroll function, we aim to ensure that extant legislation is being appropriately observed as regards adherence to the Employee Rights Act 1998 and the requirements of HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) as regards the deduction and payment over of income tax and NI contributions, together with meeting the requirements of the local government pension scheme, as regards employee contribution bandings as further amended with effect from 1st April 2013. To meet this objective, we have:

- Ensured that the Council has approved staff pay rates for the financial year, based upon the approved NJC rates: we also note the recent completion of a full review of staff grades and pay rates by an external contractor, the results being adopted by Council and being implemented with effect from 1st April 2013;
- Checked and agreed the computation of staff gross and net pay and salary deductions for August 2013, noting the continued use of a local, third party bureau service provider who utilises bespoke software for this purpose;

- Checked to ensure that appropriate tax codes and national insurance tables are being applied in the year and that the correct deductions / contributions have been deducted and paid over to HMRC in a timely manner;
- Ensured that the new year superannuation contribution rates have been applied, also ensuring that the deductions have been paid over to the County Council in a timely manner; and
- Examined time sheets and travel expenses supporting payments made through the August 2013 payroll to ensure that they have been approved for payment and processed appropriately.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues have been identified in this area.

Investments & Loans

Our objectives here are to ensure that the Council is “investing” surplus funds, be they held temporarily or on a longer term basis, in appropriate banking and investment institutions; that an appropriate investment policy is in place; that the Council is obtaining the best rate of return on any such investments made; that interest earned is brought to account correctly and appropriately in the accounting records and that any loan repayments due to or payable by the Council are transacted in accordance with the appropriate loan agreements.

The Council holds no specific investments and, as previously noted, has replaced the use of Treasury term deposits with a straightforward reserve account at RBS given the current low rates of interest returns.

We have verified the half-yearly loan repayments to PWLB and the interest free loan from Cheshire East BC by reference to their “invoice” advices as part of the aforementioned expenditure testing.

Conclusions

We are pleased to report that no issues have been identified in this area that warrant any further attention by officers or formal recommendation at present. We shall undertake further work in this area at our final visit, including ensuring the accurate disclosure of the outstanding loan liability at the year-end in the Annual Return.

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

Corporate Business Plan 2014 - 2015

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 ninth 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.

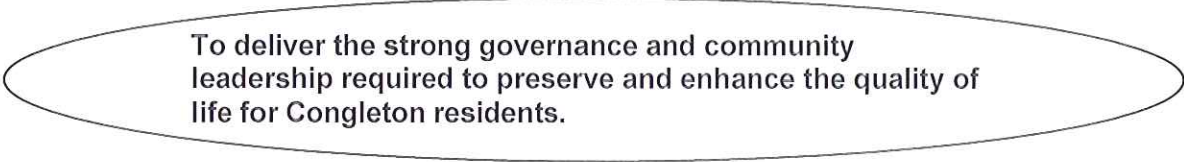
Working with Cheshire East Council on local governance and service devolution will continue to be a key priority. The Town Council has developed a protocol to steer its direction in this respect. Cheshire East Council's Strategies and Policies will inevitably have an impact on the Town and it will be 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 continue to promote Congleton and the Northern Link Road
5. To develop the Fairground site and Lifestyle Centre

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.
4. To develop and enhance the Streetscape Service

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 26,580 (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 29.27% 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, 27.2% of the Town's 16+ population 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 (24.7%).

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.³

The mean annual household income of people living in the Town (£36,314 in 2011) is 4.7% below the Cheshire East average (£38,119).

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.⁴

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 MOSAIC customer segmentation data, Experian 2012.

⁴ 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.

Of the current population in the Town (26,580), some 63.4% (16,860) are aged 16-64⁵. 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%)⁶. 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.⁷

Congleton has a working population of 15,910 and 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.⁸ 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%).⁹

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.

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 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

⁵ 2011 Census (Table KS102EW), ONS. Crown Copyright.

⁶ 2011 Census (Tables KS601EW to KS603EW), ONS. Crown Copyright.

⁷ 2011 Census (Tables KS605EW to KS607EW), ONS; and 2001 Census (Table (CAS036). Crown Copyright.

⁸ 2001 Census, ONS. Crown Copyright. 2011 Census data on commuting flows are not yet available.

⁹ [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.

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. Rates per 1000 population are 8.9 for burglary, 10.5 criminal damage, 18.9 theft stolen goods, 9.7 violence, 1.2 drug offences. 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 and continues to be so, despite the low incident rate.

The Town is an attractive place to live, and there is evidence that people want to come to the town. Owner occupier rates are 78.8%, social rented 14.3% and private rented 6.9%. The average house price within Congleton in December 2011 was £k182, against a Cheshire average of £k196. 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. 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 the Local Plan should though address this issue
- 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, although the Museum may shortly vacate the premises and move to Bradshaw House.

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 back 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.

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. Whilst in 2013 and this year extensive refurbishment of the 13 Town Hall roofs is being undertaken, the next step this year is to refurbish the roof of the Grand Hall.

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 a 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 to three years. This included 6 years backlog maintenance work, 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. 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 formal 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, bookings for which are improving all the time. 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 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 continued to be used during 2013-14 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 the General Power of Competence which is now available and has been adopted by Council will provide greater flexibility to the Council in determining what areas to support and finance in and around the locale. 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. To this we have now added Streetscape Services and it is a goal and ambition for that service also to be viewed both internally and externally as a another "jewel in the crown" for Congleton

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 had 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. Whilst this has now become a reality it has always expected funding to follow functions, in the main this has happened, but, there was no provision for overheads. But, the Council has made budget provision over the last four years to raise standards and cover some of these costs which have been kept to a minimum.

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 financed in 2013. Functions such as public toilets were transferred to the Town Council in January 2014, 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. Nonetheless, in a relatively short time of a few weeks the Streetscape and Grounds Maintenance Services have integrated well into the Town Council and already we have received some very positive feedback from Councillors and public alike who have commented on the excellent service they have received from the team.

There are though some areas of concern. The Mini Sweeper is an integral part of the Streetscape Team in the Town and considerable efforts have been made to persuade Cheshire East to transfer the vehicle and the employee to the Town Council, but, such efforts have come to nought. The concern is that this function is being retained in the new organisation being set up by CEBC for the Borough wide Streetscape operation, once there, the belief is the service to the Town will be reduced. At the moment the Mini Sweeper operates in the Town 7 days a week, this is unlikely to be maintained in the future.

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 now completed 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 becomes a reality as set out in the Local Plan and that Section 106 and CIL 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.

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 renewed during 2013. It has an IT maintenance & support contract with a local company Prism and launched a new website in 2011. During 2013 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 now that we have taken 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 internally, supplemented now by 10 Streetscape Operatives and a Streetscape Supervisor. This is supplemented by casual Paddling Pool Attendants during the summer season and casual facilities officer. Within the internal 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 allotments. Chris has also assumed day to day responsibility for the street cleaning and grounds maintenance services which continue to be based at Brunswick Wharf. 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. Ruth Boffey is the Streetscape Supervisor who joined in January 2014, she has taken on many of the administrative tasks as well as managing the team and has made the transfer of the function almost seamless.

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 2014-15 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The 2014-15 Budget is obviously structured to deliver the Corporate Strategy, however its greatest pressure will come from the earlier decisions to re-vitalise the Town Hall, 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 seven 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 2014-15 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 are some costs associated with taking over devolved and transfer services from Cheshire East.

2013-14 Outturn

The projected expenditure to March 2014 is anticipated to show a saving of approximately £k54. 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 2014-15 Budget.

- A saving on corporate management costs of £k6.5
- A saving on democratic management costs of £k3.1
- Paddling pool labour costs are up by £k1.7 reflecting the greater usage of the facility arising from a good summer and water and power are over budget by a similar amount £k1.7
- Floral displays are over budget by £k2.5 reflecting the increased expenditure on new hanging baskets in the town for traders offset by a similar amount of income
- Savings of £k15.4 on the Handyman service as no recruitment took place of an additional person to assist with devolved services requirements
- Congleton Partnership overspent by £k7 which shows in our accounts, but, is simply them bringing forward and spending their reserves on pre planned projects
- Marketing promotions was over spent by £k3.3 financing a promotion on Mountbatten Way for the banners, again offset by a similar amount of income
- Additional expenditure of £k2 on Fellowship House to pay for repairs to kitchen equipment
- Savings on gas and electricity on the Town Hall of £k4.3
- Total expenditure was below budget by £k54

Town Hall

Expenditure on the Town Hall is expected to be about £k2 less than budget, however, letting income is £k8 below budget, but this is offset by savings on gas and electricity of £k4.2. This has meant that this year the deficit has been reduced by £k4.

In the 2014-15 budget, the plan is to reduce this by a further £k5

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 £216k, General Capital contingency £169k, Elections £15, Devolved Services £k7, vehicle replacements/equipment £24k, Play Areas £k6, Legal Fees £k10 and Public Realm £k4

The Council is recommended to have a minimum of 3 months General reserve equal to net revenue expenditure, which equates to £156,040, whilst actual reserves for 2013-14 are projected to be £215,596

General Budget Assumptions

The Medium Term Financial Strategy had originally indicated an anticipated Precept increase of 8.5 % for 2014-15, mainly to accommodate the cost of some devolved functions and some increase in office capacity. However the actual total increase has been reduced to 3.91% because much of the service improvement costs for devolved services have been absorbed or withdrawn during the budget framing process.

Key Achievements in 2013-14

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
- Maintained allotments at Hillary Avenue
- A quarterly Town Council and Community Newsletter (Bear Necessities)
- Completed transfer of Streetscape to Town Council
- Provided new vehicles for Streetscape Team
- Maintained Town Handy Person Scheme and integrated into Streetscape Team
- Christmas Fayre and Christmas Lights
- Replaced many Xmas light decorations
- Town events including a Food Festival
- Young Council continued for all Junior Schools
- An Active Youth Committee for the Council
- Floral displays for the Town, winning RHS gold standard, overall winner and nominated North West in Bloom entry for Britain in Bloom
- Winner Community Pride Award – Best Kept Large Town
- Won Best Community Web Site for www.congleton-tc.gov.uk
- Completed 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
- Completed improvements to Radnor Park signage
- Grants for the voluntary and community sector
- Completed Environmental Audit
- Notion of Northern Link Road adopted in Local Plan

The Way Forward

The key actions for 2014-15 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 2014-15. 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 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.		
	<u>Conceptual Indicators</u> A. No decrease in active community and voluntary organisations during 2014-15 B. Increased number of businesses signing up to Fair Trade-2014-15 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. Continue to support Congleton Partnership as an informal LSP, for the Town 5. Support Community Projects as a Key Partner 6. Encourage more Town Centre activities and introduce a Digital Strategy for the Town Centre 7. Encourage greater public participation in Congleton in Bloom		SM SM/TC/Cllrs TC TC TCen/MM TCen TC/Cllrs	On going On going On going On going On going On Going April 15
<u>TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY COHESION</u>			
1. Produce 4 editions of the Council/Community Newsletter 2. Promote Fair Trade in the Town 3. Make the Town Hall available for community, social, leisure & educational pursuits 4. Produce regular media releases to share information about the Town Council 5. Lobby for increased housing including affordable and low cost houses in Cheshire East		TCen&MM TC/ TCen&MM TC/FM TCen&MM TC	On going On going On going On going On going
<u>TO PROMOTE HEALTH & FITNESS AMONGST OUR RESIDENTS AND WORKFORCE</u>			
1. Support sport and leisure activities which promote healthy life style in particular promote the notion of a new Lifestyle Centre 2. Lobby for play facilities at Astbury Lane Ends & Buglawton 3. Lobby for improved primary health care facilities in the Town 4. Maintain an Allotment Site & improved facilities 5. Have offered improved facilities at the Town Hall for organisations which will promote health		TC/ TCen&MM TC/FM TC FM TC/FM	On going On going On going On going On going

& fitness	TC	On going
<p><u>TO ENGAGE WITH THE TOWN'S PRESENT & FUTURE GENERATIONS</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support youth organisations and facilities both practically and financially 2. Maintain a Youth Committee & hold replacement elections if necessary 3. Work with businesses to develop the skills of young persons 4. Increase the use of the Town Hall by young people 5. Support Cheshire East Youth Committee/Parliament 6. Attempt to engage elder generations to apply their skills and knowledge within the local work-force and the voluntary sector 7. Maintain the Mayor's Cadet Scheme 	<p>TC CAO TC/CO TC/FM CAO TC CAO</p>	<p>To March 15 To March 15 To March 15 To March 15 To March 15 To March 15 On going</p>

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

<u>TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT</u>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain the Town Handy Person Scheme and integrate with Streetscape 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 & cycle-ways 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. Enter Civic Pride Award 12. Enter "In Bloom" competition 13. Enter Britain in Bloom and enhance displays and environment for judging day 	FM FM TC/FM TC/FM TC TC TC/CO FM/TC TC TC TC/TCen & MM TC/TCen & MM/FM TC/TCen & FM	To March 15 To March 15 To March 15 July 14 February 14 January 15 On going To March 15 March 15 Local Plan March 14 March 14 July 14
<u>TO TAKE STEPS TOWARDS BECOMING A TRANSITIONAL TOWN</u>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 15 To March 15 April 14 On going
<u>TO WORK TO MAKE THE TOWN SAFER</u>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. Comment on licensing & planning applications to the principal authority 7. Support Shop and Pub watch. 8. Support Cheshire East with adverse weather gritting, via Streetscape Team 9. Fund CCTV in the Town 	TC TC TC TC TC TC/CAO TCen&MM FM TC	On going To March 15 On going To March 15 To March 15 To March 15 To March 15 To March 15 On going

10. Support Street Pastors	TC/Cllrs	On going
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GOAL 3	A CELEBRATED AND PROTECTED HERITAGE. <u>Conceptual Indicators</u> K. Increase in number of people having access to Town Treasures & records L. Arts & Culture Centre for the Town. M. Architectural features of Town Hall restored N. Increased no. of people attend Museum		
	ACTIONS & OUTPUT TARGETS	LEAD OFFICER	DATE
<u>TO PROTECT OUR HERITAGE</u>			
1. Actively support the conservation area management plan. 2. Support reviews and maintenance of both listed buildings and local list buildings. 3. Proactively support at least one local heritage scheme.(Cenotaph renovation) 4. Support the development of Congleton Park, with the aim of it being a future devolved service. 5. Proactively Support an Arts and Culture Centre. 6. Maintenance of the War Memorial & surrounding area. 7. To lobby CEBC for a Shop Front Design Supplementary Planning Document 8. Support Museum's acquisition of Bradshaw House		TC TC TC TC TC FM TC TC/TCen & MM	To March 15. To March 15 On going To March 15 To March 15 On going To March 15 On going

<u>TO PROMOTE OUR HERITAGE</u>		
1. Make representations on regeneration projects and new development to ensure it reflects the heritage and traditional architecture of the Town including regeneration of Fairground site	TC	To March 15
2. Promote access to Town Treasures and Ancient Records via Storyboard project	TC	On going
3. Promote our civic role through Mayoralty and Town Crier.	TC/CAO	To March 15
4. Be an active partner of Congleton Museum and support its development.	TC	To March 15
5. Hold an open day for Town Treasures and support national heritage week	TC	Sept 15
6. Have increased performing arts events in the Town Hall.	TC/TC&MM	On going
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		DATE
<u>TO LEAD THE DEVELOPMENT OF A RE-VITALISED TOWN CENTRE</u>		
1. Lobby Cheshire East to develop the Public Realm Strategy, provide Lifestyle Centre	TC	To March 15
2. Provide active Town Centre Management to support existing businesses and new business.	TCen&MM	To March 15
3. Work with partners to deliver the priorities from the Town Centre Plan and Town Strategy.	TC/TCen&MM	To March 15
4. Lobby for the development of the Fairground site	TC	January 15
5. Be an advocate for improved leisure facilities.	TC	To March 15
6. Lobby for use of Section 106 & CIL money for Town Centre Strategy & regeneration projects.	TC	To March 15
7. Actively support good quality, sympathetic and innovative redevelopment.	TC	To March 15
8. Work with retailers to maintain trade group(s).	TCen & MM	To March 15
9. Hold a Christmas Fayre event and Xmas Promotions	TCen & MM	To December 14
10. Support Ice Rink for Xmas promotion	TCen & MM	To December 14
11. To maintain the Town Hall as the recognised civic hub of the Town.	TC	On-going

12. To facilitate the Christmas lights & renew where appropriate	TCen & MM	To December 14
13. Support Cheshire East Sustainable Towns Initiative	CO	February 15
14. Digital Strategy for Town Centre	TC/TCen&MM	March 15
15. Lead the Congleton input to High Street UK 2020	TCen&MM	On going
completed	completed	completed
<u>TO IMPROVE ACCESS AND COMMUNICATIONS TO & WITHIN THE TOWN</u>		
1. Support the development group for Congleton Station/rail services.	TC/CO	To March 15
2. Lobby for sustainable & fair parking facilities and enforcement with Cheshire East Council.	TC	March 15
3. Help develop safe routes to Schools.	TC	February 15
4. Lobby for more link ways for pedestrians and cycle movements through Public Realm Strategy	TC	January 15
5. Support highway schemes which help disabled access.	TC	March 15
<u>TO PROMOTE CONGLETON</u>		
1. Maintain the Council Website and Twitter Feed with up to date information.	TCen &MM/ST	To March 15
2. Provide current information on the Town Council and community groups on notice boards.	SM/FM	To March 15
3. Work with partners to promote the Congleton through the Bear Town Brand	TCen & MM	To March 15
4. To contribute to promote the Visitor Economy.	TCen & MM	To March 15
5. Support the Food Festival	TC/TCen & MM	June 14
6. Support the Music Festival (Jazz and Blues)	TC	June 14
7. Support the TIC.	TCen & MM	On going
8. Support the Queens Commonwealth Baton Relay Event	TC/TCen & MM	May 14
9. Support Congleton Carnival	TCen	To March 15
10. Introduce Digital Display Unit	TC	June 14

GOAL 5	OPERATIONAL QUALITY. <u>Conceptual Indicators</u> O. Excellent audit reports P. Maintenance of Quality Town Status Q. Maintaining Accreditation of an integrated quality system R. Reduced accidents S. Increased number of staff with key skills
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ACTIONS & OUTPUT TARGETS		LEAD OFFICER	DATE
<u>TO DEVELOP CAPACITY AND A DIVERSE SKILLS BASE WITHIN THE COUNCIL</u>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 15 April 14 June 14/Mar 15 December 14 March 15 On going On going To March 15 October 14
<u>TO DELIVER EXCELLENT SERVICES ACCORDING TO BOTH NEED AND CONSUMER CHOICE</u>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain the Allotments and review its operation. 2. Continue operation of the Paddling Pool & enhance service. 3. To develop and enhance the Streetscape & Grounds Maintenance Service 4. Maintain the Handy Person Service. 5. Implement Propagation Unit Agreement 6. Refurbish and enhance public toilet provision in Market Street 		TC FM FM TC/SM/FM TC/FM TC/FM	October 14 On going To March 15 April 14 On going December 14
<u>TO ACHIEVE HIGH PERFORMANCE BY TAKING A MORE INTEGRATED APPROACH TO MANAGEMENT</u>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make best use of 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 2015-16 7. Have maintained Performance Management System 8. Have completed all VAT & Internal Revenue returns 9. Produce monthly Management Accounts and associated reports 10. Have reduced the Town Hall Operating Deficit 11. To have reviewed Personnel Policy/ procedures under changing legislation 		TC TC TC TC TC TC TC SM FM/TC TC & all mgrs	On going On going March 15 On going To March 15 March 15 To March 15 To March 15 To March 15 To March 15 On going

12. To have reviewed data protection compliance	TC	On going
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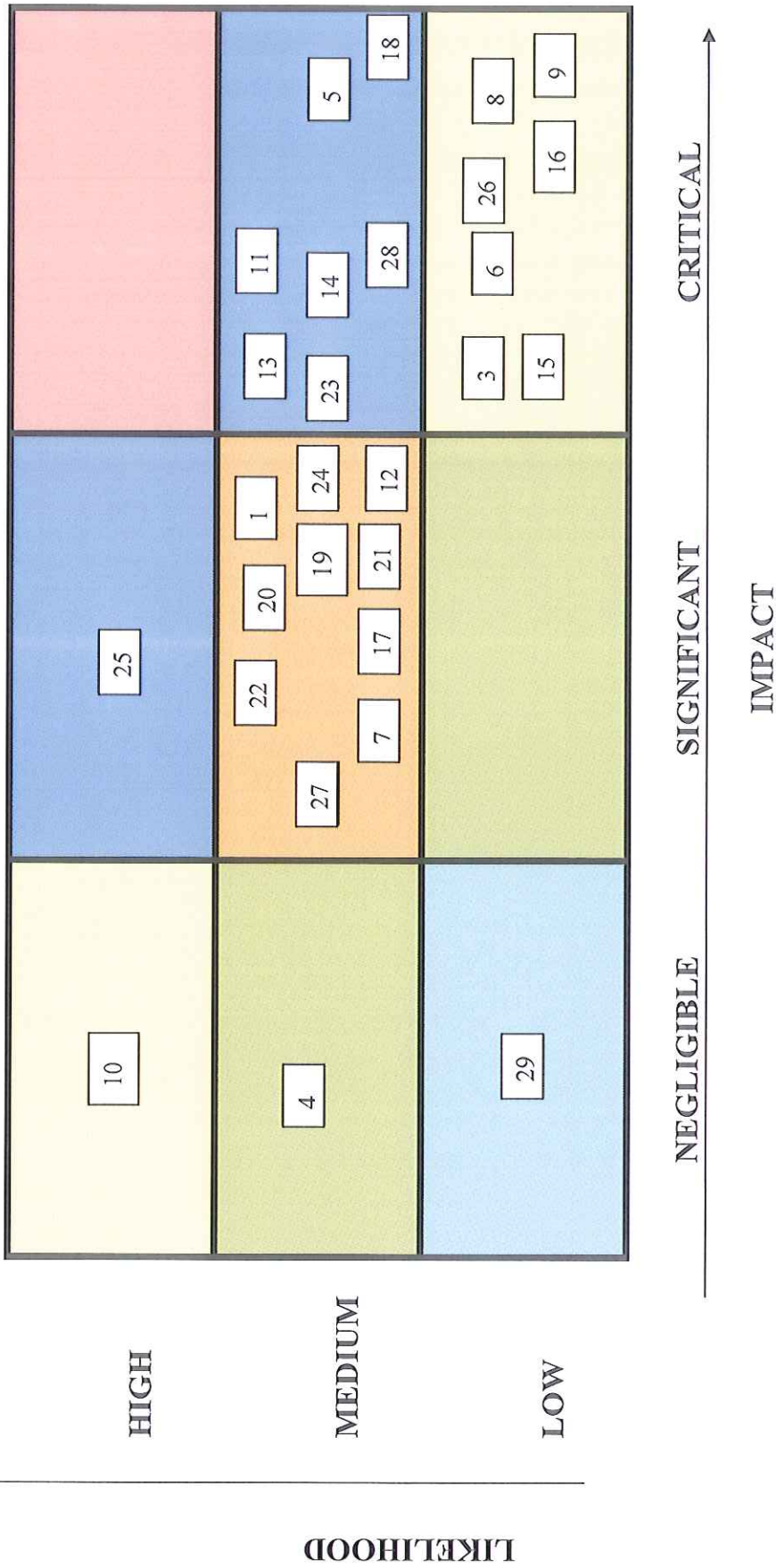
Appendix 1 SWOT Analysis	
Strengths Committed Members with range of skills Support from key community & public partners Considerable skill & experience in staff & advisors Dedicated staff Addition of Streetscape Robust Vision & Strategy Achievable but challenging objectives Council prepared to make necessary 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 Contained politics Centrally located offices Improving IT capability General Power of Competence enhances flexibility of decision making	Weaknesses Loss of experienced councillors at next election Limited financial capacity Limited but developing IT capacity 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
Opportunities 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 Fairground site Develop Town Hall potential General power of competence Implement Public Realm Strategy Establish Northern Link Road	Threats 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 expectations Upheaval following local government reorganisation and outsourcing of services Current economic climate adversely affecting funding
Political Government funding cuts to local government & communities Capping of precepts Uncertainty of approach of coalition government to local councils Cheshire East Council policies unclear Cheshire East Council cuts services Uncertainty over new LEP effectiveness	Economic Continuing 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
Social Pockets of deprivation in a prosperous community Recession & public sector cuts biting residents & businesses Strong community spirit in Town	Technological Fast developing e-technology More E-business as a method of trading IT soon becomes obsolete

Low interest in local government	
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Appendix 2 SWOT Analysis of the Town Hall	
Strengths 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	Weaknesses High maintenance liability Still remaining maintenance & improvement works outstanding, particularly Grand Hall roof Still under utilised Not yet attractive to prestige business Little client car parking Only limited marketing so far Limited market research Operational financial deficit
Opportunities Complete maintenance & improvements to facilities 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 Enhance public realm with new team	Threats Lack of external funding for development 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

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	Padding 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		