



# Congleton Town Council

Historic Market Town

Chief Officer: **David McGifford CILCA**

## Business Support Working Group

### Minutes

13<sup>th</sup> August 2020, 3pm, Virtual Meeting

**The Chair of this Working Group is** Cllr R Chadwick

**Members:** Cllr D Brown, Cllr R Chadwick, Cllr R Douglas, Cllr S Firkin, Cllr S Holland, Cllr K Wesley

**The Council Officer(s) supporting this Working Group:** David McGifford, Jackie MacArthur, Martha Hayes

1. **Apologies:** Cllr S Holland, Cllr K Wesley
2. **Minutes from last meeting 24.07.20:** Approved (Proposed; SF, 2<sup>nd</sup>; RD)  
**Points arising from the minutes:**
  - Objectives and targets are currently being worked on and will be presented at the next meeting, ACTION DMcG, RC.
  - 6.1 RD confirmed that his letter regarding parking has been logged with Cheshire East. Noted that Congleton's parking issues have been a key article in the Chronicle.
  - 6.3 Shop vinyls- ACTION JMac to look into cheaper vinyls for the empty shops, also look into the ongoing problem of finding the landlord of the vacant buildings.
  - ACTION MH- to inform all businesses on the CTC database that the deadline for phase 3 of the Cheshire East Local Discretionary Grant is Monday 17<sup>th</sup> August at 8am.
3. **Review of requests from the BBC meeting 11.08.20:** Positive meeting, although the Beartown Business Collective (BBC) group are still in the early stages of forming as a constituted group. Some ideas mentioned at the meeting:
  - **Festoon Lighting-** Idea to have this in the town centre all year round and not just for Christmas, Macclesfield have this in place all year round. This is a possibility as the Christmas festoon lighting needs replacing, so once up, it could stay up. All wires and anchor points have been tested and are safe. Suggested to have bunting as well as the lights in the summer- to be explored closer to the time. Noted that the Christmas team are also looking into new lamppost lighting this year.
  - **Bearmania 2021-** Possibility for shops and businesses to purchase either 1ft, 3ft or 5ft bears to decorate themselves and to form a town trail, as in 2011. The BBC marketing group believe that they have sold 150 3ft bears already. Possibility to incorporate the old bears within the new trail. DB suggested that if approved CTC could underwrite this project. Costs, income, expenditure and sales of this project need to be clarified, ACTION DMcG to arrange a meeting with Dawn to discuss.
4. **Agree if required, proposal to Council 20.08.20:** Group discussed a draft paper going to the next Council meeting proposing a budget for town regeneration projects, such as the two highlighted above. Suggested that the paper needs to be more aligned with the working groups Terms of Reference and needs to be clear whether it will be used on all Congleton businesses or purely town centre businesses. ACTION DMcG, RC- to amend for the Council agenda and papers.



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5. **The Challenge of Childcare in the Workplace:** Supporting childcare services is key for a healthy economy. Work has been recently carried out by CTC officers to engage with Congleton care homes to find out their concerns and needs, suggested to do the same for Congleton nurseries. ACTION JMac, SF to work on a script for either community volunteers or CTC officers to use, stating what questions to ask the nurseries.  
Suggested to look into government funding to support this category of business. ACTION MH to speak to KW about this.
6. **Provision of a Post Office:** Currently provision in West Heath and Mossley, but would like to see the return of a town centre location as well. Suggested to make enquiries at possible venues, for example, SF has spoken to Congleton Library, RC mentioned about shared space in the VIC, ACTION SF- to contact Paul Bailey at Cheshire East to discuss.  
Also suggested that a satellite service from Hightown PO could be looked into again and also having post boxes in the town centre specifically for franked mail, as this could help the businesses.
7. **AOB:** Elected Vice Chair of this working group; Cllr R Douglas (Proposed; SF, 2<sup>nd</sup>; DB)
8. **Date of next meeting:** 01.10.20