



# Congleton Town Council

Historic Market Town

Chief Officer: **David McGifford CILCA**

## Business Support Working Group

### Minutes

24<sup>th</sup> July 2020 1pm Virtual Meeting

**The Chair of this Working Group:** 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 D Brown, Cllr S Holland
2. **Appointment of Chair:** Cllr R Chadwick appointed as Chair, proposed by Cllr S Firkin, seconded by Cllr K Wesley.
3. **Agreed Terms of Reference:** Group agreed to the original terms of reference
4. **Objectives:** ACTION DMcG & RC to set SMART targets and present to group at the next meeting.
5. **Requirement of External Membership:** Suggested for an officer to join from the Cheshire East Regeneration team, Chair of the Beartown Business Collective (BBC) Geoff Baggott, who will represent the views of the traders group. Possibility of a local property owner to join the group on an ad-hoc basis. ACTION DMcG to invite the suggested people to the appropriate meeting.
6. **Town Centre/ Business Support:**
  - 6.1 **Advisory Scheme Update:** A new Business Support page is now live on the Town Council website, on here is a link to a Survey Monkey Business Support questionnaire; so far there are 18 responses, three of the completed questionnaires have asked for help from the Business Advisory Group (made up of five local business contacts). These questionnaires have gone out as a paper copy to all Town Centre businesses, also via email (twice), social media posts, CTC website, advertised twice in the Chronicle. Initial responses to the questionnaire, the main concern was Town Centre parking- this is being looked into. R Douglas is raising this with Cheshire East  
ACTION MH- to post out on social media more, as posts can easily get lost, also email to all Cllrs to get them to share with their email links.  
ACTION MH- to create a leaflet with the link to the CTC website page and survey and drop these to the main entrance of business buildings in Congleton (Dane Mill, Riverside etc.)
  - 6.2 **Traders Group/ BBC:** Having a traders group enables them to pool their ideas and collectively bring them to the Council to see where they can seek help, guidance and potential funding. Enables traders to work with the Town Council as a group instead of CTC dealing with individual ideas/ needs. Chair of the group is Geoff Baggott from Malbon Townsend with Vice Chair Maurice Walker from Walker Strings Music Shop. This group has adopted a constitution. Currently approx. 30 members in the group, not always this many at the meetings.  
Noted that the BBC Marketing group need to incorporate all businesses into their branding.



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## 6.3 Shop Vinyls, Flags:

**Vinyls:** Work has started at looking into the empty units in Congleton and finding the landlord. This has also been put out to the BBC group to investigate in case anyone knows of any details for the empty units. Looking into vinyl coverings for the shops to either cover with fake shop fronts or to have information to advertise Congleton and its many events. S Firkin suggested contracting a local artist to help with this, the vinyls would need designing and installing professionally. JMac looking into costings for this, ACTION JMac- to forward on quotes to the group.

**Flags:** These would work in the Christmas tree brackets above the shops, but as previously discovered, bright and bold colours work best. Flags for Mountbatten Way can also be looked into with company Bay Media for the fittings and TMC on the design- JMac previously worked on these.

**6.4 Marketing Strategy:** Congleton has unique selling points which need to be explored and advertised more- to be looked into.

**6.5 Council funding from COVID-19 Budget:** Suggested to cost out short term projects to be carried out whilst looking into the long term.

**7. Regeneration Areas for Review- Key Sites:** These are projects that will start to come together with smaller pieces of work leading to larger outcomes.

- **Scarborough-** ACTION DMcG & R Chadwick propose to meet with Scarborough to hear their detailed views and plans regarding the site.
- **Capitol Walk-** Would ideally like to see a replica of Macclesfield Picturedrome/ Food Hall- to be explored. Another option, as previously applied for would be housing.
- **Post Office-** Needs to be looked into and advertised for, to find a potential place in town for a post office, currently only Hightown and West Heath.

**8. Regeneration - Infrastructure:** Both points would be long terms plans for the town.

**8.1 Sports Hub**

**8.2 Link Road Extension**

**9. Next Steps:** To be discussed at the next meeting.

**10. Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2020- time TBC