



Congleton Town Council

Historic Market Town

Chief Officer: **David McGifford CILCA**

Business Support Working Group

Minutes

29th April 2021, 3.30pm, Virtual Meeting

1. **Attendees:** Cllr David Brown, Cllr Russell Chadwick, Cllr Robert Douglas, Cllr Suzy Firkin, Cllr Kay Wesley, David McGifford, Jackie MacArthur, Martha Hayes
2. **Apologies:** None.
3. **Actions from the last meeting 11.03.21:** (Minutes approved by Chair and added to website)
 - **Festoon Lights (MH):** Switched on in the Town Centre from Monday 12th April, lit from 6pm- mid-night, this can be changed if needed as businesses start to open later for the evening economy. Bunting also installed on the same catenary wire.
 - **British Heart Foundation Vinyl (JMac):** Local printer and installer has quoted for the works, AD Profile has created the designs, to advertise the Congleton 750-year celebrations in 2022. All happy with design and cost. ACTION JMac- to progress with this. To be installed mid/ late May.
 - **Business Community Network (SF):** Cllr Firkin & Wesley have been working on this. Cllr Firkin spoke to Franklyn Financial Management to chase up on the business group they were looking to set up. SF also spoken to Senior Aerospace and Siemens with regards to the East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce. Cllr Wesley has been looking at the digital side of this project, as it is good to reach the businesses not on the High Street.
4. **Post Office Update (JMac/ SF):** Ongoing project and still in communication with officers at the Royal Mail. Other location options to be explored.
5. **Town Centre Maintenance Update (MH):** The town centre has recently been jet-washed in readiness for the return of the shops and visitors into the town, this has made the town look a lot cleaner. Cleaning on a scheduled basis throughout the year, with consideration to include cleaning of the pavements in the High Street and Lawton Street. From previous pictures of 'grot spots' walls have had bricks added to make complete and buddleia has been removed from buildings. The Congleton Market banner on Morrisons wall has been removed and replaced by Cheshire East.
6. **Market Area Redevelopment (DMcG):** Still stands with the Scarborough Development Group. Suggested that we need to push development of the town and its business opportunities under the business section of the CTC website.
7. **Shop Front Improvement Grant Discussion:** Chair, Cllr Chadwick would like to see if the Council would consider a grant to improve shop fronts. JMac undertook this work a couple of years ago on a 50/50 basis, up to the amount of £500- 10 businesses used this opportunity, mainly used for painting, new signage and a general tidy up. Group all in agreement to pursue it. ACTION RC, JMac & MH to meet and discuss details/ lessons learnt from previous project.



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8. **Independents Day Event- 3rd July (MH):** The Congleton Green working group looked to close the road at the front of the Town Hall for Clean Air Day. To make use of the closed road we are looking to host an Independents Day for mainly the Independent Shops to showcase what they have to offer. Road Closure and ESAG forms will be submitted to Cheshire East and then a mini programme of events to be formed on receipt of emailing the shops to gauge their interest.
9. **Congleton Library Wall- Bear Grills Area:** Owner of Bear Grills would like to see if the retaining wall by the Library could be removed to create a nicer area. After looking at the site, the ground on either side of the wall is uneven and so not as easy to just remove the wall. Need to investigate options of how to brighten this area, to be taken to the Congleton In Bloom group, ACTION MH.
10. **AOB:**
 - **Campervan Stop-over Sites-** RC asked the group for their thoughts on progressing Congleton to become a destination town, which a Campervan stop-over area in Congleton car parks would help with: <https://camppra.org.uk/>. Car Parks are a Cheshire East asset and so need to speak to them for the potential of a 6-month trial?
 - **'Say Hi' to the High Street, Cheshire East Campaign-** Set up by Cheshire East Council, much like the scheme in Summer 2020, helping to welcome people back into the town centres. Material to come from Cheshire East, ACTION MH to distribute on receipt of this.
 - **750 Year Celebrations-** A separate working group has been set up for this, looking at the potential for some large Medieval themed events in the Town Hall, Town Centre and Park.
11. **Date of next meeting:** TBC