

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Town Hall, Assets and Services		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	13 th January 2022 7.00pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Town Hall Manager – Mark Worthington		
AGENDA ITEM	10		
REPORT TITLE	Provision of Services at Congleton Town Hall		
Background	<p>Catering and event services at Congleton Town Hall have been provided by two separate commercial partners between the dates of 2011 to 2016 and 2016 to 1st March 2021. The intention of working alongside a commercial partner was to jointly develop the Business and use of the Town Hall in accordance with the corporate strategy of Congleton Town Council (CTC), balancing commercial activities with the building’s role as the civic and community hub of Congleton. The commercial partner provided all catering and beverage services for events within the Town Hall and paid an annual rent for the Café area at the entrance of the Town Hall, commercial kitchen, and office space to the rear of the Town Hall. The commercial partner also paid for utilities in these areas and was able to use these areas for events other than CTC events. As mentioned above, the contract between CTC and the commercial partner ended on 1st March 2021 and we are now looking at options for the provision of services at the Town Hall. As of 1st December 2021, all items belonging to the previous commercial partner have been removed from the Cotton Club area and kitchen. These items include the bar, fixtures and fittings. The Cotton Club area will require selective decoration to be in a condition to be advertised as a rentable space.</p>		
Update <p>The provision of services at Congleton Town Hall were advertised locally to gauge interest from individuals and businesses seeking further information. The number of enquiries were positive (10), and all interested parties were invited to the Town Hall for an informal discussion to ascertain their level of interest, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enquiries to lease the Cotton Club area for a stand-alone venture with no connection to Congleton Town Council.• Individuals and businesses interested in a lease agreement for the Cotton Club area for a food and beverage business with the option of providing catering for events within the Town Hall.• Two enquiries interested in operating only the bar services for events within the Town Hall. <p>Following initial discussions, the original ten enquiries were reduced to five applicants who were asked to attend a more structured discussion around providing services at the</p>			

Town Hall. Details in the chart below highlight the experience and areas of interest for the individual applicants.

Local estate agents have visited the Town Hall to provide a current market appraisal for the commercial unit formerly used as the Cotton Club. They advised that the unit should achieve a rental figure of approximately £12,000 per annum in its current condition and suggested negotiations with a suitable tenant regarding works carried out by Congleton Town Council as the landlord, prior to the tenancy commencing.

Applicant/Area of Interest	Cotton Club Bar Kitchen Catering	Cotton Club Kitchen Catering	Kitchen Catering Bar	Bar Only
A	√			
B		√		
C			√	
D				√
E				√
Applicant	Experience			
A	Owns 3 nightclubs. 30 years' experience in bar industry. Interested in the rental space as a Craft Beer Bar and also interested in providing catering and bar services for the Town Hall			
B	30 years' experience in catering including cruise ship catering management. Managed catering services at golf clubs for table service events and buffets, weddings. Organised entertainment for various events including singers and bands. Now operate a café/deli. Interested in a rental unit for café and providing catering services for the Town Hall. Not interested in the bar.			
C	Previously operated a café in Cheshire, which closed due to Covid. Provides catering and entertainment services for a local Civic Centre. Caters for events up to 200 and can provide all aspects of event planning. Interested in all areas of Town Hall operations relating to catering and bar, not including rental space.			

D	Operate from licenced premises. Experience in licensing and bar management. Interested in providing bar services only for Town Hall events.
E	Operate licenced premises. Previous experience includes operating catering and bar services for a Town Football Club at corporate level. Interested in providing bar services only for Town Hall events.
Decision Request	To receive the update report relating to the provision of services at Congleton Town Hall and for the Committee to agree the next steps required.