

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 16 FEBRUARY 2023

Please Note – These are draft minutes and will not be ratified until the next meeting of this Committee

For the papers discussed at the meeting, please see the [Meeting Agenda of the Community & Environment Committee 16th February 2023](#)

PRESENT:

Committee members:

Cllr Kay Wesley (Chair)

Cllr Suzy Firkin

Cllr Robert Hemsley

Cllr Sally Ann Holland

Cllr Amanda Martin

Cllr Mark Rogan

Ex Officio Members: Cllr Margaret Gartside (Mayor) and Cllr Rob Moreton (Deputy Mayor)

Non-Committee Member: Cllr Suzie Akers Smith

Also present: Congleton Town Council Officers: David McGifford - Chief Officer and Jackie MacArthur - Communities and Marketing Manager and Deputy Chief Officer
Five members of the public. One member of the press

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from:

Committee Members Cllr Jean Parry, Cllrs Dawn Allen and Cllr Denis Murphy

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

CE/44/2223 Resolved to approve the [minutes of the Community & Environment Committee held on 3rd November 2023 as a correct record.](#)

Change of Order to the Agenda

CE/45/2223 Resolved to note that item 6 will be postponed due to the speaker not being able to attend and agreed that item 17 would be taken after item 7.

3. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Rob Moreton, Sally Ann Holland and Suzie Akers Smith declared a non-pecuniary interest on matters relating to Cheshire East Council.

4. Questions from Members of the Public

Questions were received from:

- Val Scaresbrook on behalf of the Climate Action Group Sustainable Travel Group about the condition of the Town Centre
- Sharon Neild re actions to protect the Swans at Astbury Mere and an update following the dog attack on a swan last year. [Full questions and Answers here.](#)

5. Urgent Items

No items were raised

6. Safer Streets – Violence Against Women and Girls Update

This item was postponed to a future meeting due to the presenter not being able to make the meeting.

7. Cheshire Police

Sergeant John Roberts gave a verbal update on Policing, see Appendix 1.

17. Case for Dog Agility Site in Congleton

Jack Boyce and Cllr Sally Ann Holland made a short presentation on the benefits of setting up a dog agility area within Congleton. This would use funds available from Cheshire East Council. **CE45/2223 Resolved** in principle the committee would support the idea, but would need a more detailed plan before making any commitment to any scheme.

8. Updates from Previous Community and Environment Committee

CE/46/2223 Resolved to receive updates from the Community and Environment Committee held on 3rd November 2022. This included: Chatty Benches, 750 round-up, Biodiversity Plan update, Ukraine Christmas party, Ukraine Hosts meeting, Tree Planting Update and Bromley Farm Hub.

Action: To check whether a Chatty Bench should have been added to the Bee Garden

Action: To look into a request to sponsor a bench in the town

9. Anti-Social Behaviour Working Group

CE/ 47/ 2223 resolved to accept the notes of the Anti-Social Behaviour Working Group [3rd November](#) 2022 and [12th January](#) 2023

10. Congleton Community Safety Charter update

The committee received a brief verbal update on the progress being made on the Community Safety Charter. The committee was pleased to learn that the ASB Working Group has been successful in obtaining £680 towards work in this area.

Actions: Add the Community Safety Charter to the website
Resend the email to Councillors on Bystander Training

11. Congleton Green Working Group

CE/48/2223 resolved to receive the notes of the Congleton Green Working Group held on [December 1](#) 2022 and the Green Calendar which evolved from the Wider Green Marketing Meeting held on January 18. The group received a verbal update from the working group held on February 16 2022

Action: Notes of February 16 2023 to next meeting

12. Low Mow Town

The committee noted a report about Congleton Town Council's plans to evolve into a Low Mow Town, which following actions agreed upon at the Town Hall and Assets Committee.

13. Congleton in Bloom Working Group

CE/49/2223 resolved to receive the minutes of the Congleton in Bloom Working Group from [November 4 2022](#) , [December 13 2022](#) and [January 20 2023](#) .

14. Integrated Transport Working Group

CE/50/2223 resolved to receive the minutes of the Integrated Transport Working Group held on [November 17 2022](#) and to receive a short report from the Chair.

15. White Ribbon Update

CE/51/2223 resolved to accept the recommendations by the White Ribbon Working Group to:

- Run a White Ribbon public awareness session in the Town Hall during June/July 2023.
- Organise a face-to-face Active Bystander session for officers and councillors

16. Congleton Christmas Lights

CE/52/2223 resolved to ask officers to produce a detailed plan for Council to consider.

- A replacement for the Merry Christmas Congleton sign at the bottom of Moody Street
- Replacement for the two cross street banners used on Swan Bank
- Replacements for the two lamp post banners on Mill Street
- Replacements for the six lamp post banners on West Street
- Replacement for the cross street banner in Lawton Street
- Consider some festive lighting for the Market Area

18. Congleton Cares – survey two update

The Committee received a short update on the interim results of the second Congleton Cares Survey. **Action:** Numbers of respondents were low so promote the survey to get a more representative view.

19 Events plans for 2023

The committee noted a report highlighting the key events for the town in 2023.

**Cllr Kay Wesley
(Chair)**

APPENDIX 1 - UPDATE FROM CHESHIRE POLICE - ITEM 7

Police Overview:

The overall incidents logged for the Town are slightly down from 660 in 2022 to 600 this year.

Anti-social Behaviour:

- 22 ASB incidents have been reported this year to date for Congleton, compared to 36 for the same period in 2022.

The overall Force Objective remains the same with the priority given to Violence against Women and Girls. During the review of figures for the ASB working group in January, for the period of November to January, Domestic Violence incidents were down from 101 during the same period to 89 for our current period. Arrests were up from 16 to 23.

The Force also has one of the best charge rates in the country for Domestic Violence offences. There were 10 reported sexual offences (3 x from schools). One of which was of significant local public interest. A suspect was arrested within a few hours. This is an on-going investigation. The suspect was charged and remanded for this matter. PC Andy CORNELL will be working with the local schools over the coming weeks and months to deliver preventative awareness.

Burglary :-

There have been 3 reported Residential Burglaries for 2023 this is compared to 12 during the same period last year. We now have a team of 2 x Sgts and 8 x DC's who are based at Congleton to look at Burglary for Cheshire East. This has only started this week.

Drugs:-

As with all areas, there are issues within Congleton with Drugs and Drug dealing, however, compared to neighbouring towns we perform very well, we have been working with our undercover proactive teams to disrupt the supply of drugs in our town, going forward we are looking to target street dealers, this will be in the form of visible patrols in key locations where there has been specific intelligence/information around dealing. As always with Drugs my main ask is we encourage our community to feed that information either via you as Councillors or through Crime Stoppers or directly to the Police.

PCSOs:-

We have 3 PCSOs for Congleton. I am pleased to report that Hannah THOMPSON has been successful in her application to become a Police Constable with Cheshire Police. She will be leaving us in the next few weeks. At this time there are no plans to replace her.

The PCSO Team's focus is on Primary School engagement and Parking with the New PCSO for the Area Carole HOLMES taking the lead on the engagement with the Schools. Speed enforcement is undertaken by the PCSO's on their respective areas.

Scooters:-

I am aware that E- SCOOTERS used by youths are and can be an issue. The law around these is not clear, we are confident that we can seize scooters using 2 legislation Section 59 Warnings and for

No Insurance. If you see anyone riding around or confident, we know where they are coming from please let me know and the team will look into getting them off our streets.