

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Community Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	29 June 20223 7.00 pm	LOCATION	Town Hall, Bridestones
REPORT FROM	Jackie MacArthur, Communities and Marketing Manager & DCO		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	13. Forming a Project Group for Congleton Town Council Website Development		
Background	<p>www.congleton-tc.gov.uk is in need of a refresh and overhaul. An earmark reserve for this work was set aside in 2022/23 but work commitments did not allow time to concentrate on this major piece of work. The reserve was carried into the 2023-24 budget process.</p> <p>The Town Council’s first website was built in 2008 by a Congleton company that went into liquidation in 2010. It was a basic site developed in Dreamweaver and quickly looked dated.</p> <p>In 2011 Cyberzia won the bid to create a new site for the Town Council. This was built using concrete 5 and worked well but was not mobile-responsive. The content was not easily transferrable, and it was agreed the future website should be in a universal programme that could be moved to another supplier.</p> <p>In 2015 TMC Creative was awarded the contract to build the current site with the directive to make the site more easily navigable and responsive for mobile. The website is built using WordPress and CTC owns the site.</p> <p>The site has grown organically over the years and now is difficult to navigate. There is duplication, old content, broken links and some pages not used at all. The information architecture is not optimised for the various types of users we have in the town, and the site, although responsive, was not designed ‘mobile-first’ which is the new standard. Currently, 85% of views are on a mobile phone.</p> <p>The site requires a thorough review of content and navigation. It is also important to bring the Congleton Information Centre online (a new service for CTC since April 2021), to make it easier to view calendars and make bookings and create an online shop.</p> <p>The site will need to continue to meet all the accessibility criteria demanded of a public sector website.</p>		
The Plan	<p>With the agreement of the Committee, I would like to set up a small project group to drive this project forward. Work of the group will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An in-depth review of the current site using Google Analytics • Research into the best of other award-winning Town Council sites 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make recommendations for the future structure and content of the CTC website – and create a project brief (to be approved at Council) • Going out to tender in line with our Financial Regulations • Work with the Council’s chosen supplier on the creation/modification of www.congleton-tc.gov.uk <p>Officers on the group will consist of Debbie Coxon, Cathy Dean, Paolo Pinto and Jackie MacArthur. Ideally, 2-3 Councillors would like to get involved with this group.</p>
Recommendations	That the Committee agrees to set up a task and finish group to explore and make detailed recommendations and a brief on the future of the Town Council Website. This will go to the appropriate Committee for approval so that the work can be placed out to tender.
Financial Implications	CTC has anticipated that this work is needed and created an Earmarked reserve in 2022/23 for a new website. This reserve was carried forward into 2023/24 and CTC staff believe it should be sufficient for the works.
Environmental Implications	Access to all information online can save paper and wasted journeys. There is a lot of research into actions that can be taken to reduce the carbon footprint of websites, and this will be researched as part of the project to redevelop the site.
Equality and Diversity Impact	As a Public Sector website, every effort must be taken to make the site accessible to all. Redesigning our site is an opportunity to improve accessibility and this will be an objective of the project. There are several national schemes to help people to afford to get online.
PROPOSALS	To approve Councillors (To Be Confirmed) to join a task and finish group tasked with reviewing the current site, making recommendations for a new site and developing a brief to create a site that will be good for the next 5 or so years. www.congleton-tc.gov.uk