

**CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES**

<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	<b>Community Committee</b>		
<b>MEETING DATE AND TIME</b>	<b>3 August 2023 7.00 pm</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>Town Hall, Bridestones</b>
<b>REPORT FROM</b>	<b>Jackie MacArthur, Communities and Marketing Manager</b>		
<b>AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE</b>	<b>12. Engaging with Congleton Youth</b>		
<b>Background</b>	<p>Congleton Town Council set up a <a href="#">Youth Committee</a> in 2008, which ran for over a decade. The last set of <a href="#">minutes</a> posted by the group was in February 2019. The Youth Council originally consisted of 12 young people aged 11 – 18 who were elected to the role. In later years members were co-opted onto the committee. The aim was to provide young people with a means to link closely with the town council, give a voice to young people, and provide young people insight into local government and its working.</p> <p>Cllr Arabella Holland was the last serving Chair of the Youth Committee.</p> <p>The Youth Committee enabled the Town Council and young people to have closer links but there may be better ways of ensuring wider engagement. With the new Council administration in place, restrictions relating to COVID-19 removed, a new school year beginning in September now is a good time for the Town Council to reconsider if and how it wishes to engage with young people.</p> <p>Town Hall staff are happy to support and help work with any such group or activities if councilors wish to see it happen.</p> <p>Cllr Arabella Holland has started researching ideas for closer links and has met with the Acting Head of Congleton High School and exchanged emails with the Head of Eaton Bank. Both are keen to forge closer links between young people and the town council and to give young people a voice on town issues. They have invited a councilor to attend the first school council meeting at each school in September to explore with the school representatives how best to work with the young people in the most productive way.</p> <p>Early suggestions are around organising a Youth Assembly or Youth conference to bring together a wide range of young people to discuss key subjects. Another was around forming specialist youth topic groups to focus on specific issues. There is already an emerging Green Youth Forum group. And discussions on mentoring projects.</p>		
<b>Suggestion</b>	To agree in principle whether or not the committee would like to establish a more formal channel for youth engagement. If this is positive then more work will be		

	<p>carried out with schools in September with the aim of bringing proposals to the committee in October.</p> <p>The main ambition would be to create a mechanism where young people can feed their ideas, priorities and thoughts on key issues to the council for consideration.</p>
<b>Financial Implications</b>	<p>Consideration will need to be given to creating a budget heading within the 2024/25 budget to service a youth group and some seed funding to enable any such group to deliver mutually beneficial projects.</p>
<b>Environmental Implications</b>	<p>All efforts will be made to ensure that activities developed as a result of this decision will have a neutral or positive impact on the environment.</p>
<b>Inclusivity Implications</b>	<p>This is about creating a means to increase inclusivity by capturing the views of young people who often feel that they don't have a voice in the policy making of the council.</p>
<b>Recommendation</b>	<p>That a paper comes to the next Community Committee, developed in consultation with young people, with proposals for how Congleton Town Council will engage with young people over the next four years.</p>