

Congleton Regeneration and Town Centre Working Group

Members include councillors and co-opted members

1. Purpose

To monitor, address and work with partner organisations to improve and regenerate Congleton Town Centre in line with Council policies. The group will research and make suggestions on short, medium and long-term initiatives to help future-proof the town centre and ensure that it can continue to service the needs of our growing town. This Working Group reports to the Finance and Policy Committee, where any significant policy or funding decisions are made. This group meets in private, but members of the public may be invited or co-opted to take part, and minutes of the group are made public on the Town Council website.

This group may work with the Chamber of Commerce, other business networking groups, developers, landlords and businesses who are keen to improve the offer, function or appearance of the town.

2. Delegation of Functions of the Working Group

- a) This working group takes on tasks assigned by the Finance and Policy Committee and conducts research, analysis and brainstorming to come up with potential solutions and ideas to improve the Town Centre and to make the committee aware of such opportunities to improve the appearance, footfall, vitality and offer of Congleton Town Centre.
- b) The Committee may delegate the responsibility for working with partner organisations on campaigns or initiatives which improve the Town Centre to this group.
- c) This is not a decision-making body; all solutions, ideas and funding requirements must be presented as proposals to Council Committee (usually the Finance and Policy Committee), together with all relevant analyses, for the Committee to make a decision.
- d) All proposals taken from this Group to Committee must explain the impact on the financial, environmental and equality impact of the decision.

3. Membership, Voting and Roles

- a) Town Councillors will be appointed on to the group at the Annual Town Council meeting. The Working Group may choose to co-opt members from outside groups or invite representatives to attend all or part of a meeting as and when appropriate.
- b) Co-opted members will sign a volunteer agreement and be in post for one year, after which their agreement can be renewed if desired.
- c) On an as-needed basis, others may be invited to meetings, eg developers, landlords, and representatives of business groups.

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- d) The secretariat for the meeting will be a member of CTC staff.

4. Activities of Working Group

Short-term

- a) Promoting the overall business offer of the town using the CTC website and other channels.
- b) Managing the CTC first-floor improvement business grant offer
- c) Providing KPI for the town centre – vacancy rates, car parking statistics, own footfall counts, business confidence survey.

Medium

- d) Consideration of further activity to improve the Town Centre’s physical appearance, namely shop fronts
- e) Lobby for investment to enable an increase in new start-up business activity and ongoing business support funding within the Town to improve business confidence.
- f) To assist those wishing to invest and increase the offer in our town through supporting their applications with Cheshire East and offering any support that we are able to offer.
- g) To create a forum for local landlords to support each other and the future development for the town.
- h) Create more activities, offers and promotions within the Town Centre.

Long-term

- i) Development of the Congleton Town Centre to include an integrated approach to residential and commercial activity, to enable Congleton residents to enjoy leisure activities in conjunction with local business goals.
- j) Reduce the number of empty units within the Town Centre area by working with landlords and owners in line with the Town Vitality Plan
- k) Work with Cheshire East Council and others on bringing forward key priorities in the Congleton Town Centre Vitality Plan.

5. Reporting to Committee

- a) Working Group minutes will be approved by the Finance and Policy Committee and published on the Town Council Website.
- b) Any decisions will be referred to the Finance and Policy Committee, or another Council Committee as required.