



Congleton Town Council

Historic market town

Chief Officer: **David McGifford**

5th July 2023

Dear Councillor,

Environment Committee – Thursday 13th July 2023

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Communities Committee to be held at Congleton Town Hall on **Thursday 13th July 2023 at 7.00 pm.**

- **The Public and Press are welcome to attend the meeting, please note** - There will be 15 minutes at each meeting to receive any questions from Members of the Public, either verbally or at the meeting, including those which have been received in writing 7 days prior to the meeting.
- There may be confidential items towards the end of the meeting which the law requires the Council to make a resolution to exclude the public and press in accordance with Section 100 (B) (2) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Yours sincerely,

David McGifford
CHIEF OFFICER

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

Members are reminded of the necessity to give apologies in advance of the meeting and to give reasons for absence.

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings (enclosed)

To approve and sign the [minutes of the Community and Environment Committee held on 16 February 2023](#) as a correct record. Note these have also been to the first Community Committee on the 29th June.

3. Declarations of Interest

Members are requested to declare both “pecuniary” and “non-pecuniary” interests as early in the meeting as they become known.

4. Questions from Members of the Public

There will be 15 minutes at each meeting to receive any questions from Members of the Public, either verbally at the meeting, including those which have been received in writing 7 days prior to the meeting.

5. Urgent Items

Members may raise urgent items related to this Committee, but no discussion or decisions may be taken at the meeting.

6. Terms of Reference from Working Groups feeding into this Committee (enclosed)

- a) Congleton In Bloom
- b) Green

To receive and consider for approval of Terms of Reference.

7. Weed Control (enclosed)

To receive the report relating to the Weed control regime within the Town Council remit.

8. Low Mow Town Update (enclosed)

To receive the report relating to Low Mow Town.

9. Streetscape Update (enclosed)

To receive the report relating to the Streetscape KPIs and general update information.

10. Decarbonisation of the Town Hall Update (enclosed)

To receive the report relating to Town Hall Decarbonisation Updates.

11. Green fayre (verbal update)

To receive update and information on the Green Fayre.

12. Hillfields Green Space (enclosed)

To receive the report relating to Community Allotment and the new Friends group.

13. Biodiversity – next steps (enclosed)

To receive the report relating to the biodiversity plan and the next steps.

14. Cheshire East Report (verbal update)

To receive a verbal update on items of interest from Cheshire East Environment and Communities Committee from Ward Councillor.

To: Members of the Community Committee
CLRs: Suzy Firkin (Chair), Heather Pearce (Vice Chair)

Heather Seddon, Susan Mead, Suzie Akers Smith, Glen Williams, David Brown,
Sally Ann Holland, Amanda Martin, Charles Booth

Ex Officio: Cllr Rob Moreton (Mayor)
Other members of the Council for Information, Police, Honorary Burgess (5),
Press (3), Congleton Library, Congleton Information Centre.

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.

Congleton In Bloom Working Group	
Members include councillors and co-opted members of the public	

Purpose

The Congleton In Bloom group works alongside many community and youth groups in Congleton, as well as businesses to help make Congleton an attractive, cleaner, and greener town to live, work and visit.

This is closely connected with CTC's initiative to reduce our carbon footprint and declaration of a Climate Emergency which will always be a key part of our In Bloom agenda.

Areas of work include but are not limited to:

- Support projects and initiatives that will enhance the town and the environment, health and well-being of people in Congleton.
- Encourage Conservation of the built & natural environment.
- Promote and support floral and planting initiatives.
- Ensure that Climate Change impact is considered in all activities and decisions.
- Encourage activities which reduce, reuse and recycle in order to reduce waste and promote responsible management of waste.

Delegation of Functions of the Working Group

- This working group takes on tasks assigned by the Environment Committee and conducts research and brainstorming to come up with potential projects and ideas to improve the town of Congleton through the use of nature-based solutions.
- Encourages new volunteer groups and Friends of Groups to take responsibility for an area, ensuring the site is kept clean and safe for all to play and enjoy, ensuring the ethos of sustainability and biodiversity is driven through to all new groups.
- It is chaired by a member of the Town Council and its membership is made up of interested town councillors plus local experts at the discretion of the group. It will meet as needed but at least four times a year. Separate task teams can also be called on for specific items.
- Minutes will be taken by Town Council staff and the intention is to circulate draft minutes to the chair and forward to the group within a week of the meeting. Minutes of the meeting will be published on the Town Council website and noted at Environment Committee.
- This is not a decision-making body; all solutions, ideas and funding requirements must be presented to a Council Committee and/or full Council, with relevant supporting evidence, to make a decision.
- All proposals taken from the Group to Committee must explain the impact on the financial, environmental and equality impact of the decision.

Membership, Voting and Roles

- Town Councillors, and co-opted or invited members of the public, such as In Your Neighbourhood Groups (IYN).
- Co-opted or invited members will sign a volunteer agreement and be in post for one year, after which their agreement can be renewed if desired.

Congleton In Bloom Working Group	
Members include councillors and co-opted members of the public	

- On an as-needed basis, others may be invited to meetings, for example biodiversity specialists. RHS judges/ officers
- The Chair (and Vice-Chair if wanted) will be elected by a vote of the Working Group Town Council members only.

Specific Activities of the Working Group may include but not be limited to:

- To make Congleton an attractive place to live, work, shop and visit.
- To provide opportunities for the community to become involved either individually or in groups.
- To make Congleton a clean, green town through anti-litter campaigns, organising litter picks, removing graffiti, fly posting, improving local grot spots and recycling campaigns.
- To support the retail sector and promote tourism by providing attractive floral displays and green spaces.
- To raise standards and promote the town by entering competitions such as North West in Bloom and the Cheshire Civic Pride Awards.
- To encourage Eco-Schools and gain green flag awards, encourage biodiversity, energy conservation and the growing of local food.
- To encourage and involve young people in taking an active role in Congleton in Bloom and related initiatives.
- Using strategic planting and nature-based solutions to make Congleton a more climate-resilient town and to mitigate climate change – for example, green walls, cool spaces, water collection etc.
- Work towards a Carbon Positive In Bloom approach which reduces our Carbon Footprint
- Show leadership in sustainable planting and creative rewilding to achieve In Bloom success.

Congleton Green Working Group	
Members include councillors and co-opted members of the public	

Purpose

Congleton Town Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and set up the Congleton Green Working Group to lead initiatives that will drive the council's goal to reduce the council's carbon footprint, become a carbon-neutral council by 2025 and work towards creating a more environmentally sustainable and biodiverse town.

The Working Group reports to the Environment Committee, where any significant policy or funding decisions are made. The group meet in private, but members of the public may be invited or co-opted to take part and the minutes of the meeting are made public.

This group works with environmental groups, community organisations and other partners to deliver action on climate change and environmental responsibility.

Areas of work include but are not limited to:

- Carbon Footprint Reduction
- Sustainability
- Biodiversity
- Air and Water Quality
- Protection and Creation of Green Spaces
- Improving awareness and education around climate change and environmental sustainability.

Delegation of the Functions of the Working Group

- This a Working Group of the Town Council that reports into the Congleton Town Council Environment Committee. It conducts research, good practice review and brainstorming and generates ideas that will help to achieve our sustainability objectives.
- It is chaired by a member of the Town Council and its membership is made up of interested town councillors plus local experts at the discretion of the group. It will meet as needed but at least four times a year. Separate task teams can also be called on for specific items.
- Minutes will be taken by Town Council staff and the intention is to circulate draft minutes to the chair and forward to the group within a week of the meeting. Minutes of the meeting will be published on the Town Council website and noted at Environment Committee.
- This is not a decision-making body; all solutions, ideas and funding requirements must be presented to a Council Committee and/or full Council, with relevant supporting evidence, to make a decision.
- All proposals taken from the Group to Committee must explain the impact on the financial, environmental and equality impact of the decision.

Membership, Voting and Rules

- Town Councillors and selected specialists or volunteers may be invited to attend meetings where appropriate.
- Invited or co-opted members will sign a volunteer agreement and be in post for one year, after which their agreement can be renewed if desired.
- The Group can elect its own Chair who must a Town Councillor.

Congleton Green Working Group	
Members include councillors and co-opted members of the public	

- The Group may elect a Vice Chair if they wish.
- On an as-needed basis, other specialists may be invited to attend individual meetings.

Congleton Green will work closely with:

- Cheshire East Council and other bodies focussed on the same objectives
- Other Town and Parish Councils
- Local Businesses and the Chamber of Commerce
- Congleton Sustainability Group (Congleton Partnership)
- Congleton Integrated Transport Group (Town Council)
- Plastic Free Congleton (Voluntary Group)
- Congleton Climate Action Group
- Trees for Congleton (Combination Task and Finish Group)

Specific Activities of the Group may include but are not limited to:

- Reduce the carbon footprint for the Town Council’s Assets and Streetscape service.
- Decarbonising the Town Hall with specific structural and operational changes.
- Through partnership working and engagement with the adjoining parishes plant and maintain 30,000 new trees by 2024
- Develop and support the Site-Specific Biodiversity Action Plan
- Develop and improve Streetscape Management systems to promote improved Biodiversity and Sustainability through Sustainable Planting and Eco-design.
- Review existing waste management and recycling facilities and develop new ones where necessary.
- Develop and deliver a campaign(s) promoting our green agenda and the need for action on climate change and sustainability.
- Create awareness of training opportunities for staff and residents to help us deliver a carbon-neutral council and town.
- Maximise opportunities for the retention and enhancement of Green Open Spaces
- To monitor air quality in Congleton and support initiatives to improve it
- To review and monitor water quality in local natural water sources.
- Understand the requirement for Offsetting and possible options to enable us to achieve Carbon Neutrality.

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE:	Environment Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	13 th July 2023 7pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Ruth Burgess Streetscape Development Manager		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	7 Weed Control		
Background	<p>30th July 2020 a report on the use of glyphosate was taken to the former community and environment committee.</p> <p>Glyphosate, which is commonly known by brands such as Roundup, is the most widely used herbicide in the world used to kill weeds and other “undesirable” plants.</p> <p>Glyphosate has been the subject of several debates about its safe use in public spaces.</p> <p>The International Agency for Research on Cancer (I.A.R.C.), which is part of the World Health Organisation, coordinates and conducts both epidemiological and laboratory research into the causes of human cancer.</p> <p>Back On 13th November 2019, David McGifford, the Chief Officer, Ruth Burgess, the Streetscape Manager and Councillor Robert Douglas had a meeting with Mrs Lisa Miller about her concerns regarding the use of glyphosate.</p> <p>On 23rd January 2020, all present at that meeting had a follow-up meeting at which Cheshire East Highways and Ansa Environmental Services Limited also attended.</p> <p>During those meetings, Congleton Town Council gave a verbal commitment that glyphosate would not be used in future in children’s play areas and the fencing areas which surround them.</p> <p>On 18th June 2020, Ruth Burgess advised the Town Councillors at the Town Hall and Assets Committee Meeting that the use of herbicides by Congleton Town Council has now been reduced by about 75%. Furthermore, the remaining 25% is sprayed with a product which does not contain Glyphosate and the main ingredient is vinegar.</p> <p>Outcomes of the use of the new product:</p> <p>Our new weed spray is effective however requires two treatments and in some areas three treatments to have the same effect as the glyphosate weed spray. Which increases the costs, the product is a very similar price.</p> <p>We are aware of 48 councils that are Pesticides and/or glyphosate bans or phase-out commitments around the UK –</p>		

	<p>Pesticide-Free Towns - success stories - Pesticide Action Network UK (pan-uk.org)</p> <p>Ansa Environmental Services are also using the new product (New Way Spray) and have been for the last two years on all their areas which they are responsible for within Cheshire East.</p> <p>Cheshire easy highways use glyphosate-contained weed spray “We use Glyphosate to treat most weeds and we trim around street furniture. Glyphosate is safe if used under manufacturer’s instructions and by trained personnel.”</p>
Next Steps	<p>To recognise the Town Council has already reduced its use of the herbicide by 75% in the past few years, and also now stopped purchasing weed spray which contains glyphosate.</p> <p>To work towards eliminating the use of pesticides/herbicides in the near future.</p>
Environmental impact	<p>Glyphosate has been considered a relatively safe compound in the environment because of its rapid inactivation in soil by adsorption and degradation. However, owing to its extensive use, concerns and studies on the behaviour of glyphosate in plants and the environment are growing.</p>
Financial Impact	<p>Without the use of pesticides/ herbicides, more staff hours will be required to keep the same standards.</p>
Equality Impact	<p>Children playing may be particularly affected by glyphosate in parks and play areas, so will benefit the most from its removal.</p>
Proposal	<p>To recognise the Town Council has already reduced its use of the herbicide by 75% in the past few years, and also now stopped purchasing weed spray which contains glyphosate.</p> <p>To work towards eliminating the use of pesticides/herbicides in the near future.</p>

**CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES**

COMMITTEE:	Environment Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	13th July 2023 7.00pm	LOCATION	Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Ruth Burgess, Streetscape Development Manager		
AGENDA ITEM	8		
REPORT TITLE	Low Mow Town		
Summary	<p>At Town Hall and Assets Committee on January 12 the Town Council agreed to a Low Mow approach to grass cutting for this season, with more swathes of grass left for the full growing season. The minute stated:</p> <p><i>THAS /35/2223 Resolved to accept the report regarding change of mowing regimes across Congleton Town Council maintained open spaces. Action Officers to develop a marketing campaign to clarify and to actively promote the changes in the grounds maintenance programme</i></p> <p>This paper is to update members of the new Environment Committee on the approach undertaken in 2023 and its justifications and is for noting.</p>		
Background	<p>Congleton Town Council’s Streetscape services provide the grounds and street cleansing services for the Congleton area. This is under contract with Cheshire East to provide a minimum service and enhanced by the Town Council.</p> <p>The Town Council Streetscape team is responsible for 728,780m² of ground areas – including bedding, wooded areas and grassed areas. With current equipment and staff, it would take around three weeks to cut the grass in all areas.</p> <p>Council officers have assessed each area that the Town Council is responsible for and has decided how that area will be cared for. The mowing schedule varies from area to area depending on the location, highway sightlines, safety, visibility and what’s practical. For instance, verges, where lots of people walk, will be cut more often than wilder areas. Congleton Town Council is not responsible for all the public grass-cutting. Some areas are cut by Cheshire East Highways, by Plus Dane or by other contractors.</p> <p>Each area will be considered individually, but overall, in 2023 mowing on areas maintained by Congleton Town Council will be reduced. CTC Grounds Maintenance schedule for 2023 is included on the Town Council website and identifies many areas where the grass will now be cut twice a year rather than 15 times. In total 266,000m² of Town Council-maintained grassland will be cut regularly (15 cuts) and 47,637m² will now be left wild for the growing season and cut in the winter to encourage regrowth.</p> <p>Some of the areas that CTC maintains are large sports fields which require cutting while residents will notice that some parks and gardens will have larger areas which</p>		

	<p>are left for nature. Signs will be put up in these areas to indicate that the areas are purposely being left to improve biodiversity.</p> <p>The Town Council is mindful of its Climate Change Emergency Commitment and the Nature Emergency Crisis and the need to moderate behaviour to give nature a better chance. Urbanisation, agriculture, and climate change have caused a long-term decline in much of the UK's wildlife-rich habitat and "common" species. As a result, since the 1950s, the number of hedgehogs has fallen by 95%, turtle doves by 98% and the common toad by 68%. The Town Council has agreed to adopt a 'low mow' all-year approach, cutting grass according to needs and leaving specific areas as wildlife areas throughout the growing season rather than just during May. Less frequent cutting, but still within the capacity of the machinery should prevent some of the issues faced in 2022 when the machinery struggled to cut the extra-long, thick grass and operators struggled to remove the wildlife living in the longer grass ahead of cutting.</p> <p>Residents will be aware of more areas of taller grass left for bees, hoverflies, butterflies, beetles, grasshoppers and moths etc. These insects pollinate 80% of all plant species in Europe, including food crops like tomatoes, rapeseed and strawberries. The longer grassed areas will usually be on banks, around the edges of open spaces and in clearly marked areas where people do not need to walk. These areas will still be checked by streetscape for litter, but will be left to grow for the season and cut back at the end of the growing season to allow the goodness to go back into the soil.</p> <p>The Streetscape manager has been in contact with Ansa Environmental Services who are responsible for grass cutting in public or large spaces in Congleton to seek support for leaving more areas for nature and areas that are to be cut to cut less frequently, adopting the 'low mow' approach. This was met with support and they are also carrying out the same within their areas.</p> <p>It's noted that an increasing number of councils across the UK adopt a similar 'relaxed' approach to their grass-cutting schedules.</p>
Recommendations	That the committee note this report
Financial Implications	Low Mow approach to grass cutting is not a money-saving exercise as the staff that would be cutting are switched to other duties, for example, the manual weeding of playgrounds where chemical weedkillers are no longer used.
Environmental Implications	The change to 'low mow' is part of working changes to support the Climate Change Emergency and Nature Emergency and encourage greater biodiversity in the areas left uncut.
Equality and Diversity Impact	This cutting regime will be applied across the town without prejudice. The effects of climate change and biodiversity loss have an impact on everyone, but those on low incomes are most adversely affected.
PROPOSALS	That the committee notes this report.

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Environment Committee																																																																																																									
MEETING DATE AND TIME	13 th July 2023 7.00pm	LOCATION	Town Hall																																																																																																							
REPORT FROM	Streetscape Development Manager – Ruth Burgess																																																																																																									
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	9 Streetscape Services - Update																																																																																																									
Update	<p>Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Update:</p> <p><u>Fly Tipping</u></p> <p>We are now working on the cost for each specific fly tip; please see below for the number of fly tips we have dealt with over the last months, plus the total year:</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th></th><th>2019</th><th>2020</th><th>2021</th><th>2022</th><th>2023</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>January</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>16</td><td>30</td></tr><tr><td>February</td><td>10</td><td>2</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>25</td></tr><tr><td>March</td><td>4</td><td>0</td><td>32</td><td>24</td><td>14</td></tr><tr><td>April</td><td>10</td><td>12</td><td>19</td><td>10</td><td>18</td></tr><tr><td>May</td><td>5</td><td>40</td><td>22</td><td>11</td><td>11</td></tr><tr><td>June</td><td>4</td><td>22</td><td>2</td><td>8</td><td>26</td></tr><tr><td>July</td><td>8</td><td>21</td><td>0</td><td>13</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>August</td><td>5</td><td>18</td><td>10</td><td>26</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>September</td><td>6</td><td>6</td><td>14</td><td>23</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>October</td><td>5</td><td>3</td><td>10</td><td>8</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>November</td><td>4</td><td>4</td><td>17</td><td>25</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>December</td><td>5</td><td>4</td><td>10</td><td>30</td><td></td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>70</td><td>136</td><td>150</td><td>205</td><td>124</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Total Cost</td><td>£2324.16</td><td>£5380.52</td><td>£2481.45</td><td>£12,300.87</td><td>£ 9,706.14</td></tr></tbody></table> <p><u>Vehicle Usage</u></p> <p>Showing Mileage and Carbon Emissions See Appendix 1.</p> <p><u>St Peter’s Church Closed Churchyard</u></p> <p>St Peters Church yard has now had its full second cut of the year, this has been done by the streetscape team we have agreement set by the Church and the Diocese of Chester, which is passed down to the Town Council via our streetscape contract soon as section within a grave yard has been closed (no more burials or interments) that grounds maintenance becomes the responsibility of the unitary council, the agreement is for strimming 3 x year with some areas left for wild.</p>					2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	January	4	4	4	16	30	February	10	2	10	11	25	March	4	0	32	24	14	April	10	12	19	10	18	May	5	40	22	11	11	June	4	22	2	8	26	July	8	21	0	13		August	5	18	10	26		September	6	6	14	23		October	5	3	10	8		November	4	4	17	25		December	5	4	10	30								Total	70	136	150	205	124							Total Cost	£2324.16	£5380.52	£2481.45	£12,300.87	£ 9,706.14
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Private Works

The Streetscape team now have many contracts for Private works across the local area, Streetscape Services provides professional gardening and trade services including: garden maintenance, landscaping, hedge cutting, painting, restoration works and much more.

The team are a reliable team, which takes pride in what they do and what they achieve. This is shown through the many awards and compliments we have received. They also pride themselves on providing a high-quality job and excellent customer service.

All Our customers appreciate the attractive, clean and blossoming town we currently have and now we are spreading our services further into other communities. We are currently working with the following companies:

- Holmes Chapel PC
- Church Lawton PC
- Hassall PC
- Prestbury PC
- Somerford PC
- Cranage PC
- Astbury PC
- Congleton Cricket Club
- Congleton Football Club
- Stocks Pavilion
- Premier Estates

Furthermore we are constantly looking at grants and funding for the In Bloom working group:

Streetscape: (To end of May)
Cheshire East to date £114,909
External: £1343
Miscellaneous: £125 (Stocks)

We are budgeted to bring in a total of £15,000 each financial year

In Bloom
Donations £750 (Dutch Wall)
Sponsorship £117
Miscellaneous: £3537

Staffing

We currently have all members of Streetscape staff in work.

Training –

Streetscape Development Manager :
- Carbon Literacy for Local Authorities

Streetscape Operatives

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environmental Awareness Training <p>Upcoming Training For Streetscape and Management :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climate Action for Smaller Councils - Biodiversity with in a local council - Sustainable Planting schemes <p>Ove the winter period there will be a programme of training for all staff to ensure we are trained on the latest climate change and biodiversity information as possible.</p>
Financial Considerations	None currently.
Environmental Considerations	Our KPIs are set to ensure that we are following the latest environmental concerns to see where we can improve and help sustain the environment for both the public and local wildlife.
Equality Considerations	
Decision Requested	To receive the updated report.

Appendix 1

March 2023



Vehicle	Mileage this month	CO2 emissions (kg)	Estimated closing mileage
JY18 XXC, Ford Transit - Rob Simon	249.6 miles	121.7	16341.2 miles
MA18 EEP, Peugeot Partner	416.0 miles	202.6	18014.3 miles
YJ18 XWB, Ford Transit Dave and Jim	226.1 miles	110.1	14659.4 miles
YJ18 XZV, Ford Transit Noel	719.3 miles	350.5	35842.8 miles
YJ18 YBC, Ford Transit Andy	0.0 miles	0.0	28622.7 miles
YJ18 YCZ, Ford Transit Mick	303.1 miles	147.7	8953.4 miles
YJ18 YFA, Ford Transit Chris	0.0 miles	0.0	34297.1 miles

April 2023




**Monthly mileage for Congleton
TC. Month ending 30 April 2023**


30 days in the month, 20 week days

Vehicle	Mileage this month	CO2 emissions (kg)	Estimated closing mileage
JY18 XXC, Ford Transit - Rob Simon	248.0 miles	120.9	16589.2 miles
MA18 EEP, Peugeot Partner	309.2 miles	150.6	18323.8 miles
YJ18 XWB, Ford Transit Dave and Jim	180.7 miles	88.2	14840.3 miles
YJ18 XZF, Ford Transit Terry	1.0 miles	0.5	13522.7 miles
YJ18 XZV, Ford Transit Noel	679.0 miles	331.0	36522.1 miles
YJ18 YBC, Ford Transit Andy	0.0 miles	0.0	28622.7 miles
YJ18 YCZ, Ford Transit Mick	193.4 miles	94.3	9146.7 miles
YJ18 YFA, Ford Transit Chris	0.0 miles	0.0	34297.1 miles

May 2023

June 2023

			
Monthly mileage for Congleton TC. Month ending 31 May 2023			
31 days in the month, 23 week days			
Vehicle	Mileage this month	CO2 emissions (kg)	Estimated closing mileage
JY18 XXC, Ford Transit - Rob Simon	312.2 miles	152.2	16901.2 miles
MA18 EEP, Peugeot Partner	319.4 miles	155.7	18642.6 miles
YJ18 XWB, Ford Transit Dave and Jim	240.5 miles	117.1	15080.8 miles
YJ18 XZF, Ford Transit Terry	0.0 miles	0.0	13523.3 miles
YJ18 XZV, Ford Transit Noel	557.1 miles	271.5	37078.9 miles
YJ18 YBC, Ford Transit Andy	0.0 miles	0.0	28622.7 miles
YJ18 YCZ, Ford Transit Mick	172.4 miles	83.9	9318.8 miles
YJ18 YFA, Ford Transit Chris	0.0 miles	0.0	34297.1 miles

			
Vehicle	Mileage this month	CO2 emissions (kg)	Estimated closing mileage
JY18 XXC, Ford Transit - Rob Simon	386.6 miles	0.0	17287.8 miles
MA18 EEP, Peugeot Partner	288.3 miles	0.0	18931.0 miles
YJ18 XWB, Ford Transit Dave and Jim	275.5 miles	0.0	15356.1 miles
YJ18 XZF, Ford Transit Terry	0.0 miles	0.0	13523.3 miles
YJ18 XZV, Ford Transit Noel	724.8 miles	0.0	37804.2 miles
YJ18 YBC, Ford Transit Andy	0.0 miles	0.0	28622.7 miles
YJ18 YCZ, Ford Transit Mick	215.6 miles	0.0	9534.5 miles
YJ18 YFA, Ford Transit Chris	0.0 miles	0.0	34297.1 miles

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Environment Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	13th July 2023	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Town Hall Manager – Mark Worthington		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	10 Town Hall Decarbonisation Report		
Background	<p>This paper was taken to the Town Hall Assets and Services Committee on 6th July 2023</p> <p>As part of the initiative to reduce the carbon footprint and overall energy usage at the Town Hall, Officers worked with Tomson Consulting in 2022 to create a Town Hall Decarbonisation Report to highlight areas for improvement and options to investigate. A site visit of the Town Hall was completed by Tomson Consulting in May 2022. The purpose of the site visit was to assess the existing type and condition of building fabrics, space and domestic hot water heating systems, lighting, and lighting controls. Observations and measurements were used to identify and start to quantify potential opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Following the site visit a summary progress update was provided which detailed initial findings and identified opportunities to reduce carbon emissions around the Town Hall.</p> <p>The aims of the project were to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify practical and potentially cost-effective opportunities to reduce carbon emissions associated with electricity and heating fuel consumption at the Town Hall• Appraise potential opportunities against site-specific requirements, the listed status and unique appearance of the Town Hall, potential energy and carbon savings and the estimated cost-benefit of improvements• Identify at a high level the potential costs, financial and environmental benefits of carbon reduction measures• Understand what, if any, measures could be applicable for financial support through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund (PSDCF) or similar <p>The Town Hall Decarbonisation Report provided by Tomson Consulting highlighted areas where a number of improvements could be implemented within the Town Hall to reduce the carbon emissions of the building and also help to reduce costs. Officers identified the low cost/easy to implement recommendations and have put these into place while researching the more technical recommendations within the report.</p>		

Update	<p>Improvements recommended in the Tomson Consulting Town Hall Decarbonisation Report are being researched and implemented where possible and we are also working alongside a local independent decarbonisation expert who has kindly offered their time and expertise on a voluntary basis.</p> <p>Work implemented since receiving the report are below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve understanding and use of the space heating control system. Currently the Grand Hall acts as the temperature control for the entire building• relocation of the space temperature sensor in the main hall. This was providing the heating system with an inaccurate gauge of the Grand Hall temperature• insulating heating and hot water pipework around the Town Hall, facilitated by the inhouse teams• Timers installed to the water heaters which provide hot water for the Commercial kitchen and main hall toilets. The new timers enable improved control of the water heating to match the demands of the users, significantly reducing the electricity consumption as previously, the water heaters operated 24 hours per day• Installation of LED lighting as this need to be replaced <p>Research into other possibilities to reduce the carbon footprint is ongoing and include the projects below:</p> <p>Central heating re-configuration</p> <p>The gas fired central heating system is currently run in a 100% manual mode with no effective control in different locations around the Town Hall building; resulting in some areas being overheated (the Offices) and other areas feeling cool (the Main Hall) as well as impacting significantly the purchase of gas. The space temperature sensor in the Main Hall has now been moved to a correct location and is providing a more accurate reading for the entire space. The building services contractor has visited site and has confirmed that the 3-way control valve and isolating valves are functioning, and hence the heating system can be reconfigured to better serve the whole building. It is proposed to add an additional space temperature sensor in the offices in a location to be decided to enable dual heating zone control, reducing operating costs and improving comfort. The price estimate to reconfigure and re-commission the heating control software is £3,700.00 plus vat. The installation of a second temperature sensor is awaited.</p> <p>Congleton Museum Solar power</p> <p>A quotation has been received to install Solar Panels on the roof of the Museum with a view to powering the existing air conditioning units. This is a practical solution to reduce electricity consumption particularly in the summer months when cooling is a requirement.</p> <p>Due to the use of slate roofing tiles on the roof, an additional quotation is being sought for a roofing contractor to provide scaffolding and to remove the existing tiles and</p>
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	<p>replace after the installation of the panels. The quotation for the solar panels install and commission is £12,000 plus VAT. The quotation for scaffolding and tile removal / replacement is awaited.</p> <p>Paddling Pool solar power</p> <p>There is an opportunity to provide solar power to the paddling pool pump house, either by mounting on the small paddling pool building itself, or by taking a feed from a potential new installation on the roof of the Visyon building owned by Cheshire East. This opportunity is in early days discussions with Visyon / Cheshire East.</p> <p>Replacement heating system for the Town Hall</p> <p>Whilst it is accepted that this project would be a longer-term activity due to the commercial scale to install an Air Source Heat pump or similar system, the drive towards nett zero means that current Government guidelines indicate that domestic gas boilers for new build houses will be phased out from 2025, and banned from 2035, with the same timeline being applied to commercial locations should suitable alternatives be available. This may make future repairs more difficult, and certainly, any plan to replace with new boilers in the medium term is more challenging.</p> <p>Secondary glazing to the front elevation windows</p> <p>The eight windows to the front elevation of the town are known to be draughty and cold, resulting in significant heat loss. Three companies have been approached who have experience in secondary internal glazing to listed buildings, quotation estimates in the region of £25,000 to £30,000 plus vat have been received, and a confirmed quotation of £26,000 plus vat has been received following a site survey and measurement. Due to the need for a frame to be installed to hold the secondary glazing, the existing wooden window sills will need to be skimmed to lower them by approximately 10mm to enable the existing external windows to be opened when the secondary glazing is opened. An additional feasibility quotation is being sought from a local provider to complete the skimming work. An approach will also need to be made to establish if listed building consent is required prior to the works being commenced.</p>
<p>Decision Request</p>	<p>To receive the report relating to Town Hall Decarbonisation.</p>

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Environment Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	13 th July 2023 7.00pm	LOCATION	Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Streetscape Development Manager – Ruth Burgess		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	12 Hillfields Green Space		
Background	<p><u>Community Allotments</u></p> <p>In March 2023 a presentation went to the previous Town Hall Assets and Services committee To transform the site at the top of Congleton Park Town Wood from an under-used open Green Space into a community garden through the involvement of local businesses, volunteers and community groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We were proposing that over a 3-year period, we would transform the site into a community Allotment / Garden in which a variety of horticulture programmes and events can be delivered.• These programmes would have provided meaningful opportunities and a sense of purpose to those who joined us and used the service.• Furthermore, there would have been many environmental projects and schedule put in place to deliver a range of food growing and cooking initiatives to help with the current climate and financial crisis. <p>This was met with praise from the committee, with the next step to carry out a consultation with the users and residents nearby. The consultation was met with a lot of public views and concerns and from this the residents asked for a meeting at the Town Hall. Within the meeting it was agreed that plans would stop and a Friends of Hillfields would be created, the friend’s group have now met twice.</p> <p>From the meeting, the following has been discussed:</p>		
Update	<p>12 residents attended. The group reiterated that they don't want much to happen with the space but would like to see additional footpaths (extensions of the ones recently done in the woods). The top entrance by the gates requires a footpath to join the first slope entering the woods. another one is needed from this along the top hedge past the trees.</p> <p>They want to promote the wildlife to attract insects/butterflies etc and welcomed the areas which the Council had left to grow wild. A resident said we should look at some sort of water feature to help wildlife but I'm not sure how we could do that.</p> <p>There was some discussion about enhanced fencing and lots of discussion about drainage because the top part near the gate gets very boggy. However, they are worried about upsetting the existing water table/ system which feeds the trees.</p> <p>They would like to set up a constituted Friends Group to help with decision-making, receipt of financial support, grant applications etc.</p>		

	The group are now going to create a plan after discussions with Ruth which Streetscape will be able to support.
Financial Considerations	None currently.
Environmental Considerations	Creating of new biodiversity site for local wildlife
Equality Considerations	
Decision Requested	To receive the updated report.

**CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES**

COMMITTEE:	Environment Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	13th July 2023 7.00pm	LOCATION	Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Ruth Burgess – Streetscape Development Manager		
AGENDA ITEM	13		
REPORT TITLE	Biodiversity		
Background	<p>At the January Community and Environment Committee, the committee agreed to move forward with appointing a consultant to help create Site-Specific Biodiversity Plans for 30 sites across Congleton. This paper is to update members on the plans for the Site-Specific work and for the Town Council plans for No Mow May, which is a campaign aimed at helping wildlife and biodiversity.</p> <p>30 Biodiversity Sites</p> <p>An initial meeting was held on the 10th of March attended by Ruth Benson, the consultant expert on the subject, along with Cllr Margaret Gartside, Cllr Suzy Firkin and Streetscape Development Manager - Ruth Burgess. At that meeting, the following sites were approved for more work: (also see map in Appendix)</p> <p><u>West Heath</u></p> <p>1 Padgbury Lane/Langdale Close/Rydal Close (CTC rewilding site) 2 Thirlmere Close 3 Newcastle Road linear green space</p> <p>4 Quinta Park Play Area</p> <p>5 Sycamore Avenue-Chestnut Drive 6 Longdown Road-Chestnut Ave (CTC rewilding site) 7 Bowness Court 8 Newcastle Road-Solly Crescent</p> <p>9 Back Lane/Hawthorne Close group of small green spaces</p> <p><u>Central</u></p> <p>10 Hankinson’s Field (CTC rewilding site) 11 Banky Fields (CTC rewilding site) 12 Thames Close-Townsend Road? 13 Quayside-Goldfinch Road 14 West Road (former Danesford frontage) 15 Stirling Close (CTC rewilding site)</p> <p><u>Lower Heath</u></p> <p>16 Land off Hillfields Close (CTC rewilding site) 17 Lower Heath Play Area 18 Hertford Close-Riverdane Road 19 Lady Warburton’s Walk. Ownership unclear (CTC rewilding site)</p>		

Buglawton

20 Mardale Close

21 Havannah Lane/St John's Road

22 St John's Recreation Ground, Play Area and River Dane floodplain

23 Redfern Avenue-Buxton Road (CTC rewilding site)

Bromley Farm

24 Bromley Woods (has an old management plan)

25 Bromley Farm Play Area

26 Windsor Place

Mossley, Astbury Lane Ends, upper Canal St

27 Derwent Drive (CTC rewilding site)

28 Isis Close-Tamar Close (CTC rewilding site)

29 Bridgewater Close (CTC rewilding site)

30 Blackshaw Close? Marshall Grove is larger but not owned by CEC.

Please note the sites in bold are the priority sites.

Other alternative sites suggested:

A River Dane walkway (extent of CEC ownership to be determined)

B Area off Howarth Avenue

C Area off Pirie Road

D Congleton Cemetery (part-owned by CEC)

E Area off Camborne Close

F Area off Lamberts Lane, including bridleway

G Marshall Grove Play Area (managed but now owned by CEC)

NOTES

Not included:

- Schools
- CEC Highways land
- Biddulph Valley Way
- Astbury Mere Country Park
- Very small sites unless as part of a group
- Sites still owned by the developer and managed by a management company (as far as is known).
- Plus Dane sites

Congleton Park together with Town Wood - as a Historic England Grade 2 registered park with Local Wildlife Site this area should have its own management plan or plans.

Our parks and open spaces are valued in Congleton and used by hundreds of people. The current climate emergency presents the Council and the community with challenges that we cannot ignore. Our parks and open spaces are essential to helping us address the impact of global warming and take actions to take to tackle climate change head-on. Cheshire East and the Town Council need to make sure

	<p>that our parks and open spaces are managed and maintained sustainably, and the Town Council intends to lead by example to influence positive change.</p> <p><i>Congleton Town Council have been working with Cheshire East to adopt more sustainable methods of managing our open spaces.</i> We are committed to making our approaches to the management and maintenance of the park and other areas more sustainable. This year we have been leaving some areas of the parks and open spaces unmown. This is a simple way to provide a more diverse landscape for wildlife such as birds, small mammals, and pollinating insects</p> <p>We held our Launch event back in April which we found was very helpful and successful, and encouraged the team to move forward with our next set of plans for many sites in Congleton, in Autumn we will start putting place the site-specific plans on many of our 30 sites.</p>
Proposal	For the Environment Committee to note the work on the site-specific biodiversity plan and to support Streetscape and volunteers with their site-specific plan
Environmental	This paper is fundamentally about the Town Council's response to the Climate and Nature emergency and actions to encourage greater Biodiversity in Congleton.
Equality	Tackling environmental issues is to the benefit of everyone.
Financial	Taking part in these site-specific biodiversity plans will positively impact the Town's carbon footprint and reduce fuel costs used for mowing.
Decision Requested	For the Environment Committee to note the 30 areas where site-specific Biodiversity Plans are being developed and support Streetscape and the volunteers in adopting the new approach.