

**CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES**

<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	Council		
<b>MEETING DATE AND TIME</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> August 2023 7.00pm	<b>LOCATION</b>	Congleton Town Hall
<b>REPORT FROM</b>	Serena Van Schepdael – Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)		
<b>AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE</b>	<b>Agenda item 12 Policy Reviews</b>		
<b>Background</b>	Council Policies need to be reviewed on a regular basis, two Policies were presented to the Finance and Policy Committee on 20 <sup>th</sup> July 2023 for approval: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grant Criteria Policy</li><li>• ICT Policy</li></ul>		
<b>Details</b>	<p><b><u>The Grant Criteria Policy</u></b> was last reviewed on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2022. Current policy can be found here: <a href="#">CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL-GRANTS &amp; FUNDING POLICY</a></p> <p>Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3 sections to the Grant Scheme<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Individual Grants up to £150</li><li>○ Small Grants up to £250</li><li>○ Larger Grant £251 to £1,000</li></ul></li><li>• Maximum of £1,000 with Committee Discretion, no previous maximum limit</li><li>• Will fund up to a maximum of 50%, previously stated will normally only fund up to a maximum of 50%</li><li>• Removal of requirement to have Public Liability Insurance, as this is not a legal requirement.</li><li>• Added that applicants cannot use the grant to apply to pay for our own room hire fees.</li></ul> <p><b><u>The ICT Policy</u></b> was last reviewed in 2018. Current policy can be found here: <a href="#">CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL ICT POLICY</a></p> <p>Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Updated dates of the Acts noted in the report.</li><li>• Added information regarding Cyber Security: Section 1 and 2 and new Section 3.</li><li>• Added Passwords Section</li><li>• Updated Virus Controls Section</li></ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added information regarding Social Media accounts the Council run in Website section.</li> </ul> <p>The draft updates were presented to Finance and Policy on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grants Criteria Policy FAP/10/2324</li> <li>• ICT Policy FAP/11/2324</li> </ul> <p>Suggested next review date for both Policies: July 2024</p>
<p><b>Decisions Requested</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To approve the updated Grants Criteria Policy as recommended by Finance and Policy Committee and adopt it into the Constitution.</li> <li>2. To approve the updated ICT Policy as recommended by Finance and Policy and adopt it into the constitution.</li> </ol>

## CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

### GRANTS & FUNDING POLICY

There are 3 sections with regards to our Grant Scheme

Individuals: a maximum award of £150

Small Grants: A maximum award of £250

Large Grants: £251 to a maximum of £1,000 (With Committee discretion)

All grants are considered by the Finance and Policy Committee.

Requests for grant aid or sponsorship of an event will only be considered from the following categories of applicant:

- A Congleton Town based charity.
- A Congleton Town based Community group.
- A Congleton Town based Voluntary group.
- A Congleton Town Not for Profit community businesses
- Citizens of Congleton requesting grant aid with a project/event, which will be for the benefit of a wider group in Congleton.
- A Charity or Group based outside of Congleton Town as long as the project benefits resident of Congleton.

#### We will not fund/ consider:

- Incomplete applications
- General running costs: Utilities, Rent/Lease fees, staffing or salary costs.
- Applications from a National Body without a proven direct link to Congleton Town
- Applications over £1,000 (with discretion)
- Retrospective applications
- Applications from Schools funded by the Local Authority

#### INDIVIDUAL GRANTS

There is maximum grant of £150 for individual of Congleton Town, for an application to be accepted the applicant must prove that other fundraising to taking place to fund their project. We will only fund up to 50% of the project cost. The applicant must be part of an established Congleton Based Organisation which is supporting the project.

#### SMALL GRANTS UP TO £250

A financial breakdown of the project must be provided for this criteria and the applicant must prove that other fundraising is taking place to fund their project. We will only fund up to 50% of the project cost.

#### LARGE GRANTS £251 to £1,000

A financial breakdown of the project must be provided for this criteria and the applicant must prove that other fundraising is taking place to fund their project. We will require quotes for items over £251 details in the main criteria and financial statement or accounts of relevant bodies. We will only fund up to 50% of the project cost.

### **CRITERIA**

1. The maximum grant Congleton Town Council award is £1,000 with Committee discretion.
2. An award of a grant must give direct benefit to all or some of the inhabitants of the Town, and the size of grant should be commensurate with the benefit delivered.
3. Grant forms will be scrutinized to ensure they meet the criteria set out in the Grants and Funding Policy before being put forward for decision at the Finance and Policy Committee. Applications which do not meet the criteria will be rejected and returned.
4. The Town Council as a body does not affiliate to any political party and legally cannot provide grant or support to any party political activity.
5. The Town Council does not affiliate to any religious group; however, applications will be considered where there is a clear community wide benefit.
6. Applications will only be considered when made on a formal application form with all relevant sections completed.
7. Applicants will need to demonstrate how their activities or the particular project for which financial support is being sought, will benefit the residents of Congleton Town.
8. The Council will give priority to the projects/organisations which progress one or more of its corporate objectives.
9. The Council will normally require details of the structure and funding of the organisation, and will probably request copies of budget/accounts and business plans for applications over £250.
10. The Council will require details of any project which is the subject of the application, including standards to be attained, costs, timescales and how the remainder of the funding will be provided.
11. Council will only fund the up to a maximum of 50% of a project cost and priority will be given to requests for grants of £250 or less. Any request above £250 will require detailed justification for the project including matched funding as a prerequisite.
12. Sponsorships - When there is a request for sponsorship, it needs to be clearly demonstrated how the Town Councils' support will be recognised.

13. Grant requests for tangible products or services.

Quotes are required for grant applications as follows:

- Under £250            No quotes
- £251 - £500        One quote
- £501 - £1,000      Two quotes

14. Applicants will be required to state the amount of grant sought from the Council and provide details of other grants or awards applied for or gained, which must be disclosed in full.

15. Where projects cross financials years, the Council may “ring fence” an approved amount of grant. It will reserve the right to withdraw approval where a project does not look likely to go ahead within a 12-month period from the grant approval date.

16. Payment will not normally be made until a project has been completed. Payments will then only normally be made against a formal receipt or invoice. Stage payments may be approved for larger projects.

17. The Council will usually only consider requests for specific projects, not on-going or core costs. You are not able to use the Grant to pay for Room Hire for Congleton Town Council bookings, for Charities and Local Groups a Subsidised Grant exists and is dealt with separate to this Grant budget.

18. The Council may, where it appears to be a more cost effective or efficient use of resources, prefer to act in partnership with another organisation, or provide support “in kind”, rather than provide grant assistance.

19. An evaluation of the project must be provided once the project is complete to provide evidence that the benefits and outputs have been achieved. The Grant Monitoring form must be returned to the Council within 4 weeks of completion of the project. Future requests for grants may be rejected if this is not completed.

20. The Council will advertise its Grant and Financial Assistance Scheme widely to ensure an equitable distribution of resources.

21. For grants and sponsorship, the applicant will acknowledge the contribution made by the Council when arranging promotional activity or literature, including press releases relating to the application.

22. The applicant acknowledges and agrees that all decisions made by the Council for such a grant request are solely a matter for and at the discretion of the Council. The applicant will provide to the Council all such assistance as is reasonably necessary to enable the Council to comply with its requirements under the Freedom of Information Action.

23. Per Group/Charity there may be only two successful applications per financial year.
24. There is a 10 working days deadline prior to a meeting for all information to be submitted in order for an application to be presented.
25. Grants awarded by Congleton Town Council should only be used for the original project in the application.
26. Congleton Town Council actively encourages applicants to attend the meeting to support the application to enable any queries /presentation.
27. The applicant acknowledges and accepts when competing an application that supporting documentation may be included in the public agenda, documents will be redacted where necessary. Our Data Privacy Policy and Information and Data Policy can be found at: [Constitution - Congleton Town Council \(congleton-tc.gov.uk\)](https://congleton-tc.gov.uk)

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# CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

## I.C.T. POLICY Including Cyber Security

### **1. Introduction**

The Council uses its computer network, software packages and the internet, (including e-mails), to further the efficiency of its business and to provide the best service possible to its customers and partners. Any disruption to the use of these facilities will be detrimental to the Authority and may result in actual financial loss. This Policy sets out how the Council intends to regulate the use of those facilities.

The Council has a duty laid down in the Data Protection Act 2018, to ensure the proper security and privacy of its computer systems and data. All users have, to varying degrees, some responsibility for protecting these assets. Users also have a personal responsibility for ensuring that they and, where appropriate, the staff they supervise or have control over, comply fully with this policy – See also the Council’s Information and Data Protection Policy.

For the purposes of this document the terms “computer” (or “computer system”) and “computer data” are defined as follows:

- “Computer” (or “computer system”) means any device for automatic storing and processing of data and includes mainframe computer, minicomputer, microcomputer, personal computer(whether hand-held laptop, portable, standalone, network or attached to a mainframe computer), workstation, word processing system, desk top publishing system, office automation system, messaging system or any other similar device;
- “Computer data” means any information stored and processed by computer and includes programs, text, geographic, pictures, video, and sound.

Cyber security is how The Council can effectively aim to reduce the risk of a cyber-attack.

### **2. Procedures**

#### **2.1 General Operation**

All hardware, software, data, and associated documentation produced in connection with the work of the Council, are the legal property of the Council.

The Council will maintain an external support contract for the hardware, major items of software and provision of internet facilities.

The Council will not knowingly breach copyright of another person.

The Council will include an assessment of risks from its use of IT in its Business Risk assessment.

The Council will include an assessment of risks from Cyber Security in its Business Risk assessment.

The Council will routinely back up its essential data and organise contingency plans.

The Council will make a detailed inventory of its ICT equipment on its Asset Register.

The Council will consider the location of equipment and provide documentation to ensure optimum physical security.

The Council will maintain a record of training to each individual user.

The disposal of any ICT equipment, software, waste, or data must be authorised, undertaken safely and properly documented.

## **2.2 Compliance with Legislation**

The Council's policy in respect of the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 including General Data Protection Regulations is set out in its Information and Data Protection Policy.

Under the Computer Misuse Act 1990, the following are criminal offences, if undertaken intentionally.

- unauthorised access to a computer system or data;
- unauthorised access preparatory to another criminal action;
- unauthorised modification of a computer system or data;

All users should be made aware that deliberate unauthorised use, alteration, or interference with a computer system or its software or data, whether proprietary or written "in-house," will be regarded as a breach of the Council policy and may be treated as gross misconduct. In some circumstances such a breach may also be a criminal offence.

It is an offence under the Copyright, Design and Patent Act to copy licensed software without the consent of the copyright owner. All copying is forbidden by the Act unless it is in accordance with the terms and condition of the respective licence or contract.

## **2.3 Security**

Consideration must be given to the secure location of equipment and documentation to help safeguard the Council's ICT assets. Portable equipment must be locked away when not in use and must not be removed from the premises without permission.

Only persons authorised by the Chief Officer may use Council computer systems. The authority given to use a system must be sufficient but not excessive and users must be notified that the authority given to them must not be exceeded.

Operating procedures are required to control use of ICT equipment.

Security incidents relating to any aspect of this policy must be reported to the Chief Officer immediately.

Avoid using public wi-fi connections that are not secure.

## **2.4 Passwords**

Access to the Computers is subject to a password, which is periodically changed.



System led passwords will be stored in a secure manner and be available in a business continuity event.

Passwords must not be inserted into email messages or any other form of communication, or saved onto a shared computer.

Ideally separate passwords should be used for each account.

Additional Information:

The National Cyber Security Centre Website provides information on passwords.

## **2.5 Virus Controls**

Viruses are undesirable pieces of computer code that can corrupt systems, equipment, and data. They are a serious, increasing threat to the computer systems of the Council.

If a virus is suspected, the equipment should be switched off and isolated and the Council's support contractor should be contacted.

Viruses are easily transmitted via email and internet downloads. In particular, users must:

- not transmit by email any file attachment which they know to be infected with a virus.
- not download data or programs of any nature from unknown sources
- not forward virus warning
- contact the Councils IT providers of any scam emails that arrive.

All computer and servers will have loaded and operate the Council's standard virus detection software for scanning diskettes and fixed drives.

Diskettes of unknown origin should not be used in the Council's computers.

No software should be located onto the Council's equipment without the permission of the Chief Officer.

## **2.6 Misuse**

This Policy applies to the activities which constitute unacceptable use of the network operated by the Council. The policy applies equally to employees, councillors, clients, visitors, and others who may be allowed to use the facilities on a permanent or temporary basis.

All misuse of the facilities is prohibited including specifically but not exclusively the following:

1. The creation or transmission of any offensive, obscene, or indecent images, data or other material or any data capable of being resolved into obscene or indecent images or material.
2. The creation of material which is designed or likely to cause annoyance, inconvenience, or needless anxiety.
3. The creation or transmission of defamatory material.

4. The transmission of material in any way that infringes the copyright of another person.
5. The transmission of unsolicited commercial advertising material to networks belonging to other organisations.
6. Deliberate actions or activities with any of the following characteristics:
  - Wasting staff effort or networked resources
  - Corrupting or destroying another user's data
  - Violating the privacy of other users
  - Disrupting the work of other users
  - Other misuse of networked resources by the deliberate introduction of viruses
  - Playing games during working hours
  - Private use of the facilities without specific consent
  - Altering the set up or operating perimeters of any computer equipment without authority

## **2.7 World Wide Web (WWW) resources**

These facilities are provided for use to achieve Council objectives. Any use for unauthorised purposes will be regarded as gross misconduct. If you are unsure whether use would be authorised, you must seek advice from the Chief Officer in advance.

## **2.8 Health and Safety**

Computers are now a part of everyday life. If they are not used correctly, they can present hazards. Computers may be called Display Screen Equipment (DSE), Visual Display Units (VDU's) and the immediate environment where they are used i.e., desk/chair etc. is referred to as a workstation.

The Display Screen Equipment Regulations, 1992 regulate the use of computers at work and refer to the persons affected as "users".

"Users" are persons who "habitually use VDUs as a significant part of their normal work and regularly work on display screens for two/three hours each day or continuously for more than one hour spells." The Regulations also apply to employees working at home.

To meet the requirements of the Display Screen Equipment Regulations, the Council will provide a free eye test for all staff who use VDU equipment as a major part of their job role.

It is the Council's intention to optimise the use and application of display screen equipment within the Organisation, whilst safeguarding the health, welfare and job satisfaction or learning experience of those involved in using such equipment.

Staff "users" will have their name entered onto the list of "Designated Computer Users."

Risk assessments of all workstations are carried out to highlight any problems - this is done using the Workstation Assessment Questionnaire which is also a useful training tool.

If you are a "defined computer user": -

- Your workstation must be designed for computer use. There must be sufficient space to position your keyboard so that you can rest your wrists in front of it.
- The screen should be fully adjustable and must be positioned to avoid glare from lights, windows etc.
- Your chair must be of the fully adjustable type with five castors and must be adjusted to support your lower back. It must be set at the correct height for your desk. Your feet should rest on the floor, and you may need a footrest.
- Report eyestrain, headaches, or aching limbs to your manager.
- Ensure your computer has an adjustable keyboard.
- Ensure your working environment is comfortable. Problems with ventilation, temperature or lighting should be reported to your manager.
- Take a few minutes break every hour.

### **3 Cyber Security**

Implementing effective ICT security measures is a key part of safety controls and risk management of running the Council. Following the ICT Policy procedures will help to keep awareness of cyber security and protection.

- Compulsory training and awareness course should be made available to all Staff and Councillors.
- Current and up to date information should be shared with all Staff and Councillors.
- Cyber Security must be included as part of the Councils Risk Management Policy.

#### **Additional Information**

National Cyber Security Centre: Toolkit for Public Bodies:

- <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/information-for/public-sector>
- <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/board-toolkit/toolkits-toolbox>

#### **Appendix 1.**

#### **PROTOCOL FOR USING CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL'S WEBSITE (Feb 2013)**

#### **Background**

**The Councils website can be found at [www.congleton-tc.gov.uk](http://www.congleton-tc.gov.uk).**

## Updating the Site

The site will be updated by Town Council staff as required. It is important that the site remains fresh, relevant, and current. Should Councillors wish to have any content added or amended, please inform the Chief Officer.

Agendas will be uploaded onto the site at least 3 days prior to meeting dates; Minutes will be uploaded within 1 week of meeting dates.

Councillor details can be found on the 'Meet the Councillors' page of the site, personal contact details are listed with the permission of each Councillor. Also listed are any Appointments to Outside Bodies and any Declarations of Interests, if any changes need to be made the Chief Officer must be informed.

The Home page of the site has a 'twitter' feed which shows the 5 most recent 'tweets' sent from @Congleton Town, this can only be updated by the Town Centre & Marketing Manager and Town Council staff. Any 'tweets' sent out must be non-political, uncontroversial, and used to promote/highlight events in the Town.

The Council also have social media presence via Facebook, there are 2 accounts, Congleton Town Council and Congleton Information Centre. Any posts must be non-political, uncontroversial, and used to promote/highlight Town Council business (Such as meeting notices, grant schemes and events) and events in the Town.