CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Council		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	**12 October 20223** **7.00 pm**	**LOCATION**	**Town Hall, Bridestones**
REPORT FROM	Jackie MacArthur, Communities and Marketing Manager & DCO on behalf of the Task and Finish Group into Congleton Website V4		
AGENDA ITEM **REPORT TITLE**	**17. Selecting a company to create V4 of www.congleton-tc.gov.uk**		
Background	Congleton Town Council's website www.congleton-tc.gov.uk was created in 2016 and has grown organically since, to the extent that it is now becoming more difficult to navigate, is not making the best use of technology or designed to be 'mobile first'. 86% of site users access via a mobile phone. An earmarked reserve for creating a new website/carrying out a significant update of the current website was created in 2021, but due to other work commitments, this project was not taken forward in 2022. In June 2023 the Community Committee approved that a small working group consisting of officers and Councillors David Brown, Mark Edwardson and Kay Wesley would create a task and finish group to review the current site, make recommendations for a new site, and develop a brief to create a site that will be good for the next 5 or so years. The Working Group has created a 'Request for Proposal' and is seeking permission from the Council to go out to the market to seek quotes for creating a new or updated website.		
Updates	A copy of the draft Request for Proposal can be seen by **clicking the link here.** If approved this will be the document that will be sent out to those who may be interested in tendering for this work. A list of potential companies has been created to invite to tender for the work – but the opportunity will also be advertised and open to others to bid for the work. The companies that we will send out the proposal document to include those potentially selected for the new Congleton Museum website, as well as local design agencies and design agencies who have built website that are working well for other town councils.		

Item 13

What we are looking to achieve	**New Website – Overview** Our vision is that the new Congleton Town Council website will be a 'one-stop-shop' or 'hub' of information and services for all our Congleton stakeholders – residents, businesses and visitors. We will not need to house all the information on our current website, but should be able to signpost people to 'all things Congleton' that they may need or want. This is laid out in our objectives. The website must cover all the mandatory information that a town/parish council must provide and must meet all the relevant usability and accessibility criteria laid down by NALC and other bodies for a public-service website. Beyond this, we want our website to engage, entertain, surprise and support people, and be part of the reason they want to be in Congleton, to live, to work, for pleasure, or all three. Our website should reflect our position as *'The Little Town with the Big Heart'*. **Our Website Business Objectives** 1. Increase **engagement** with Congleton Town Council. 2. Increase **understanding** of CTC's responsibilities and work. 3. Provide **value** to residents, visitors, businesses. 4. Meet our **statutory requirements** – information provided and accessibility. 5. Be the "go-to place" to signpost people (a '**Beacon**' or '**Hub**' of Congleton info) 6. Increase **bookings** for the Town Hall and Paddling Pool. 7. Sell our **shop products and tickets** to local events (via the information centre). 8. **Sell Congleton** itself to residents, visitors and businesses. **Our Website User's Objectives** 9. Be a **Trusted source** of information on Congleton. 10. Use **Congleton Information Centre** outside of hours, including to book tickets. 11. Contact and find out about the **Council**. 12. Find **interesting information** about Congleton and things to do here. 13. Book the **Town Hall**. 14. Book the **Paddling Pool.**
Timetable	**Suggested Timetable:** **Task** **Date** • Last day to register an interest 30 October • Last day to ask questions 10 November • Last day for CTC to answer questions 17 November • Last day for submissions 27 November • CTC to approve preferred supplier December A reasonable build and development time will be negotiated with the chosen web partner.

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. We want to ensure the best value from potential partners so want them to tell us how much they would need to create the site, rather than offering a price up front.
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 enable this project to progress we are asking for 1. Council to approve the Request for Proposal document so that it can be sent out to companies to give them the information that they need to bid for the work of creating an updated website for the Town Council 2. Approve the Website Business Objectives and Website User Objectives as listed in the Request for Proposal and highlighted in this paper. 3. Council to approve the timetable as outlined in the document to get to the stage of appointing a company.