

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Council		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	3rd October 2024 7 pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Chief Officer		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	13.1 Congleton Neighbourhood Plan Document for Consultation		
BACKGROUND INFORMATION	<p>Earlier this year, Congleton Town Council engaged the support of planning specialists Urban Imprint to support the development of the draft Congleton Neighbourhood Plan through to referendum.</p> <p>The policies for the draft Congleton Neighbourhood Plan have been developed with the support of the Neighbourhood Plan Development Working Group. CTC's Planning Committee approved these policies at its meeting on 12 September. A graphic designer sets the policies with pictures and maps to make a more appealing-looking document. This document can be seen in Appendix 1 and is the subject of this paper. The Council is being asked to consider this document and make a decision on whether</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) The document can be approved with minimal changes. If this is the case it will be possible to prepare the document to start consultation on 14 October. B) The document can be approved with substantial changes. This may mean the timetable may need to slip, depending on the nature of the changes. C) The Council does not want to take the document forward for consultation or do any further work on the Neighbourhood Plan. <p>If approved for consultation, the next paper has more considerations about the consultation exercise. Legally we must consult for at least six weeks.</p> <p>Please view the Draft Congleton Neighbourhood Plan Document by clicking this link. (Note 78 page document)</p> <p>Other actions that are taking place in parallel with the development of the document for consultation are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) We have applied to the Cheshire East Planning Department to change the Designation Map for the Congleton Neighbourhood Plan so that it matches the Congleton Parish Boundary as approved in the recent Boundary Commission Review. This means the area in the Neighbourhood Plan will reflect the administrative area of Congleton Town Council. The advice is that this change is likely to be approved ahead of the consultation and 		

	<p>that the consultation does not need to be delayed as long as this is sorted ahead of Regulation 15.</p> <p>B) Cheshire East Council is consulting on a Statutory Environmental Assessment which will run alongside the Draft Neighbourhood Plan. Again the advice is that the consultation can start without the approved SEA, but it would be better to extend the length of time of the consultation so that there is also time for people to consider the approved SEA.</p> <p>If Councillors approve the document for Regulation 14 consultation, they are consenting to put the document out for scrutiny by the Congleton residents, businesses, groups and organisations.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan Working Development Group, with professional support from Urban Imprint, will then consider all the comments received and agree what actions to take with the comments – whether to accept in full and alter the plan, accept in part or reject and give reasons.</p> <p>When this stage is complete the Draft Plan and supporting documents will be sent to CEC for further checking and consultation including with an independent planning inspector. Once through this scrutiny, a referendum will be held on the emerging plan, with all those registered to vote in Congleton given a binary choice of accepting or rejecting the plan.</p> <p>If accepted, the Congleton Neighbourhood Plan will become a planning document that must be considered along with national and regional policies when submitting a planning application for Congleton.</p>
THIS PROPOSAL	To approve Appendix One Draft Neighbourhood Plan Strategy to be used for the Regulation 14 Consultation Document
Environment	This document has been written with the intention of strengthening environmental protection for Congleton.
Equality Considerations	This document contains policies aimed at making Congleton more accessible and inclusive
Financial Considerations	<p>The cost to Congleton Town Council of taking the Congleton Neighbourhood Plan through to referendum is estimated at £13,000 - £14,000. The carried forward Neighbourhood Plan EMR Reserve has been spent and costs are being paid directly from the Legal Fees EMR (as approved by Council CTC/15/2425)</p> <p>In order to have a clear audit trail of expenditure and to ensure budgets are kept to, it is recommended that £15,000 is vired from the Legal EMR (340) to the NDP EMR (344). This allows for some contingency as it is unclear what the level of response and change will be required following the Regulation 14 consultation.</p>
PROPOSAL	<p>For Council to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accept Appendix One as the main document for Regulation 14 consultation of the Draft Congleton Neighbourhood Plan.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. To approve the virement of £15,000 from Legal EMR(340) to NDP EMR(344)3. To approve expenditure direct from the NDP EMR(344) to pay for the NDP Plan.
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