



Congleton Town Council

Historic market town

Chief Officer: David McGifford

10th April 2025

Dear Councillor,

Community Committee – Thursday 17th April 2025

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the Communities Committee to be held at Congleton Town Hall on **Thursday 17th April 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 in 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

Congleton
beartown
where friends are made

Congleton Town Council, Town Hall, High Street, Congleton, Cheshire CW12 1BN

Tel: 01260 270350

Email: info@congleton-tc.gov.uk www.congleton-tc.gov.uk

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 Committee held on 30th January 2025](#) as a correct record.

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 before 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. Cheshire Police (verbal update)

To receive and consider a verbal report from Cheshire Police on Policing matters affecting Congleton.

7. Active Listening with B.E.C.K (Presentation Frances Bromley)

To receive a presentation aimed at empowering communities to realise the value of Active Listening as a life skill, with a focus on reducing self-harm, harm to others and suicide.

8. Committee updates (Enclosed)

To update progress on actions from items discussed at the previous Community Committee meeting.

9. White Ribbon Working Group Minutes (Enclosed)

To receive the minutes of the White Ribbon Working Group on 11th March 2025 and any general updates from the Chair.

9.1 Anti-Spiking Campaign Update

10. Community Safety Working Group (Enclosed)

To receive the notes of the Community Safety Working Group meetings held on the 6th February and 27th March 2025 and receive a short update from the Chair.

11. Health and Wellbeing Working Group (Enclosed)

To receive the minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Working Group held on the 20th February 2025 and to receive a short update from the Chair.

12. Equal Access Advisory Group (Enclosed)

To receive the minutes of the Equal Access Advisory Group meetings on the 24th January and the 8th April 2025.

12.1 Disability Welcome Scheme (Enclosed)

12.2 Terms of reference – Equal Access Advisory Group (Enclosed)

13. Communications Update (Enclosed)

To receive and note a report from the Town Council's Communications and Marketing Officer, Debbie Coxon, highlighting the Town Council's Communications activities from 9th January to 8th April 2025.

14. Congleton Community Projects Service Level Agreement (Enclosed)

To approve the Congleton Community Projects Service Level Agreement.

15. Town Centre updates (Enclosed)

To review the Town Centre Code of Conduct and Community Infrastructure Levy Contributions (CIL'S).

16. Consultation response to CEC Vision For Transport (Enclosed)

To approve the proposed response to the CEC Vision for Transport Consultation.

17. Congleton Partnership Updates (Enclosed)

To receive a report from Congleton Partnership on main events for 2025.

To: Members of the Community Committee

Cllrs: Richard Walton (Chair), Glen Williams (Vice Chair)
Dawn Allen, David Brown, Mark Edwardson, Suzy Firkin, Emma Hall, Sally Holland, Susan Mead, Shaun Radcliffe.

Ex Officio: Cllr Kay Wesley (Mayor), Cllr Rob Brittain (Deputy Mayor)

Other members of the Council for Information, Police, Honorary Burgess (5), Press (3), Congleton Library, Congleton Information Centre.

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY COMMITTEE HELD ON
30.01.25**

**Please Note – These are draft minutes and will not be ratified until the next meeting of this
Committee**

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

For the papers discussed at the meeting, please see the [Agenda and Papers of the Community Committee on 30 January 2025](#)

PRESENT: Committee members:

- Cllr Richard Walton (Chair)
- Cllr Glen Williams (Vice Chair)
- Cllr Dave Brown
- Cllr Suzy Firkin
- Cllr Emma Hall
- Cllr Sally Ann Holland
- Cllr Susan Mead
- Cllr Shaun Radcliffe

Ex Officio: Cllr Kay Wesley (Mayor),

Non-Committee Members: Cllr Robert Douglas

Officers: David McGifford, Chief Officer

Members of Press 0

Members of Public 2

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Cllr Mark Edwardson

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

CO/32/2425 resolved to approve and sign the [Community Committee minutes](#) held on 11 November 2024 as a correct record.

3. Declaration of Interest

Declarations were received by Cllrs Emma Hall and Sally Ann Holland on matters relating to Cheshire East Council, Glen Williams on item 14 and Richard Walton 13.2 Pride Flag proposal

4. Questions from Members of the Public

There was a question and a statement read out by a member of the public, see Appx 1

5. Urgent Items

Cllr Mead raised an urgent item relating to the fatalities at Congleton railway station

6. Cheshire Police

Sergeant James Bell provided explanations for councillors against the statistics provided within the meeting. Discussions took place with regard to -

- A more proactive approach to reduce the use of drugs including the use of drug sniffer dogs
- An overall increase in police presence
- Shoplifting
- Impact in the loss of funding for My CWA
- PCSO's not being replaced when they leave (not currently impacting on Congleton)

7. White Ribbon Working Group

CO/33/2425 resolved to receive the notes of the White Ribbon Working Group meeting held on 15th January 2025 and note the report about White Ribbon Day 2024.

7.1 Drink Spiking Test Kits

CO/34/2425 resolved to note the report and that comments were made about the very quick impact spiking can have on an individual.

Also commented that publican awareness training of spiking should become mandatory and a requirement when being granted their Licence.

Actions

- Further investigation is required into making spiking training mandatory.

8. Committee updates

CO/35/2425 resolved to note the community updates which also included a verbal update on the legalities required for Pedlars to sell merchandise at events.

9. Community Safety Working Group

CO/36/2425 resolved to receive the notes of the Community Safety Working Group meetings held on 5th December 2024 and note the report from the Chair.

10. Communications Update

CO/37/2425 resolved to receive the report from the Town Council's Communications and Marketing Officer, Debbie Coxon, highlighting the Town Council's Communications activities for the last 90 days (25 Oct-22 Jan).

11. Congleton Community Projects

A verbal update was provided by the Chief Officer outlining that the Food and Drink Festival will be managed by the Town Council, Congleton Community Projects will support the transition of this event for 2025. The Service Level Agreement will be drafted to reflect this change as well as the support still required from Congleton Community Projects.

12. VE Day 80th Anniversary Event

CO/38/2425 resolved to receive an update on the plans for VE Day 80th Anniversary Event.

Actions

- To see if there are any veterans interested in attending the event – enquire via the Royal British Legion.
- The need to acknowledge VJ Day on August 15th and to generate a schedule of memorial dates over the next few years.
- Clarity is required as to where memorial flags are hung i.e. Cenotaph or Town Hall.

13. Town Centre

13.1 Town Centre Safety CO/39/2425 resolved to progress the measures outlined within the report

Actions

1. To generate an indicative cost and attend the Community Safety Working Group to discuss.
2. Investigate the use of CCTV to identify cars that are ignoring the highway restrictions for Bridge Street

20.55 hrs Request to extend the meeting the meeting beyond 21.00hrs for items 13.2 and 14

CO/40/2425 resolved to approve the extension of the meeting beyond 21.00 hrs

13.2 Town Centre Flag Proposal CO/41/2425 resolved to approve the progression of this project and present updates at future committee meetings.

14. Congleton Partnership Updates

CO/42/2425 resolved to receive a report from Congleton Partnership on activities for 2025.

Cllr Richard Walton
Chair of Community Committee
Meeting finished 21.15

Appendix 1

Question From Val Scaresbrook – Community Meeting 30.1. 2025

Appendix 1

Question

Could this committee consider promoting the role of the town council to schoolchildren? As civics is not taught per se in schools, the result is that many residents are unaware of how local government works. This leads to a lot of frustration and perception of lack of voice, resulting in lack of engagement. Instead there is misinformed and toxic exchanges on social media. Could the council work with schools, perhaps with 8 year olds and upwards, to engage and inform them? Perhaps school visits to the town hall, mini council-style meetings, informing how decisions are made, who makes them and who implements them, how the council is governed and what dictates this.

Response

Currently we are offering Town Hall Tours which are designed to get more people especially young people into our Town Hall and educated about the work of the Town Council. We have been trying them out with Cubs/Scouts and Brownies/Guides as well as an American wedding party. The format of that we are currently following is

- The Group is greeted by the Town Mayor and Town Crier.
- The story of Congleton Town and the Charter, plus 'Beartown' explanation and a couple of prominent Congleton historic figures (Elizabeth Wolstenholme Elmy and John Bradshaw), in the Bridestones Suite, with a team quiz.
- Description of the Town Council today, who is on it and what it is for, again in quiz format.
- Close-up look at the Town Treasures including the Congleton Royal Mace, the Town Charter and the Regalia, with video.
- Short Tour of the Town Hall, learn about the secret tunnels, the display cabinet and the Great Hall balcony
- Downstairs to the Great Hall for refreshments, photos 'in the Mayor's robes' and have a go at ringing the Town Crier's bell!

The intention was always to invite both Primary and High Schools which at times has proven difficult so part of our considerations is to actually present the workings and the history of the Town Council at both of the high schools so they do have the greater awareness for when they leave school as you alluded to within your question

Statement from Congleton Sustainable Travel / Congleton Climate Action Group

Congleton Sustainable Travel, Congleton Climate Action Group, is pleased to give an update regarding barriers to people with disabilities on the Biddulph Valley Way. We've been told by Cheshire East Council's Green Infrastructure Team that those on the level section will be removed by spring 2025. Unfortunately the

problematic Bromley Rd access point cannot be improved until funding is obtained for a new design and its implementation.

We'd like to thank councillors and officers for their support in this.

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Community Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	17th April 2025 7.00 pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	David McGifford, Chief Officer		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	8 Updates Paper		
Background	This paper has been written to update members on progress on actions from items discussed at the previous Community Committee. These items do not need a full paper and are either ongoing issues or confirmation of completion or resolution.		
Updates	<p>CO/17 Speed Indication Devices (SIDS) – Research into SIDS to enable Cllrs to make a decision on future use and establish if Congleton Repair Café can repair current damaged SID</p> <p>CO/39/2425 Town Centre Safety</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To generate indicative cost and attend the Community Safety Working Group to discuss 2. Investigate the Use of CCTV to identify cars that are ignoring the highway restrictions for Bridge Street 		
PROPOSALS	To Note this Report		

White Ribbon Group


Minutes 11/03/25

- **Attendance:** Kay Wesley, Mike Wesley, Rachel McCarthy, Richard Walton, Peter Munroe, Jonathan Dakin
- **Apologies:** Robert Douglas and Mark Edwardson, David McGifford
- **Minutes of Last Meeting:** Agreed
- **Review of action plan:**

Plaque in the park can't be completed as this year it is VE Day, although the fire station roundabout may be an option. Town entry points change of signage, **DMc?** The active Bystander link send out to everyone and send the action plan link out. **KW** to send me an email to send out to schools, and follow up with the Women's institutes. 22nd May Jonathan/Mike to present at Eaton Bank School. Take White Ribbons to Congleton High School **JD**. Congleton Golf Club could be interested in a presentation. Rob Brittain could be interested in joining the group **RW** to ask. Pub crawl date 23rd April next meeting starting at Church House Pub. Order 1000 new beer mats for the next financial year for the pub crawl **RMc**.
- **Spiking Kits:** these have arrived and are looking great, we need to add the WR logo onto the leaflet that goes into the kits, the leaflet is being drafted with Cheshire Police to go with the kits so that victims can know the next steps.
- **School Presentations:** Eaton Bank JD and MW are visiting on the 22nd of May. Kay to draft an email to Rachel to send out to primary schools.
- **AOB:**

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1tXs_Cq9O1mEV6h2ot_IkJBQXvHYypvxSN5hZWVv8L10/edit?usp=sharing
- **Date of Next Meeting:**

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Community Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	17 April 2025 7.00 pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	David McGifford Chief Officer		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	9.1 Update on the Anti-Spiking Campaign		
	<p>The Town Council, in collaboration with Congleton Police and funding from the Cheshire Police & Crime Commissioner's Safety, Working Together, Action and Prevention (SWAP) fund, has introduced drug testing kits in local venues to support potential spiking victims. The recently launched initiative was developed with input from the town council's White Ribbon group and the Community Safety group.</p> <p>Hospitality venues across Congleton now have drug testing kits behind the bar for individuals who suspect they or someone they know has been spiked. Costa Coffee locations across the town, also offer these kits, as they open earlier than most venues.</p> <p>Unlike hospitals, which typically test for only two substances, these kits detect 13 common drugs. Victims can provide a urine sample, check the results within 60 minutes, and report incidents to the police. Spiking is a serious offence, carrying up to 10 years imprisonment, and victims are encouraged to seek support and report crimes</p>		
Financial Implications	This project has not required finance from the Town Council, it is hoped that future external funding will be available to continue this initiative.		
Environmental Implications	It is hoped that this initiative will contribute to a safer environment within the hospitality venues within the town.		
Inclusivity Diversity Impact	Spiking of drinks can impact any member of our community, this scheme is there to protect all.		
Decision Required	That Councillors note this report.		

Minutes of Meeting
Community Safety Working Group
Thursday 6th February 2025 3 pm – 4.30 pm

Present: Cllr Kay Wesley (Chair), Cllr Shaun Radcliffe, Cllr Glen Williams, Rachel McCarthy,
Sgt James Bell, Linda Webber, Cllr Robert Brittain, Guy Brittain, Sally Holland

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Julia Pestell Hassall, Laura Woodrow-Hirst, Cllr Richard Walton
2. **Notes of the meeting** of December 2024 were accepted as correct
3. **Draft Agenda for today was approved**
4. **Action Log**
 - a) Code of Conduct policy in the town centre. Sound is the issue with the preachers, they preach in one place, very loud, it's a breach of the peace, they could receive a warning but its not really enforceable, maybe a public space order? Vagrancy Act, put this on the beggars section, encourage food not money to professional beggars. Promote on socials and Bear Necessities leaflet for April. James seems happy with the policy but will review first to make sure he's happy with it. **RMc to send to JB**
 - b) Shaun traffic action in the town centre pedestrian area, Cheshire East, what is the situation regarding cutting through/parking **RMC Action - Richard Hibbert email** A gate could work temporarily, but ideally ANPR for continuous monitoring. Letters to offenders, possibly police letter headed, very much like the Operation Park Safe with a warning. Better signage required as a start, notify taxi firms that driving through isn't allowed, as they are repeat offenders.
 - c) Anti spiking campaign and funding – funding applied for to the PCC to obtain kits, check dates and substances on the tests, leaflet needed to go in with the kits, a QR code would work well too i.e. go to hospital, blood test etc we want this all over socials, kits in all hospitality venues, Costa Coffee and our information centre. Once these are rolled out, schools would benefit from a presentation, knowledge regarding it's an offence, and what to do if they suspect a friend/family or themselves has been spiked, show them the kit.
5. **Police update on Crime (Sergeant James Bell)**
 - 5.a Shoplifting** – 12 in October, 9 in November, 20 in December, 8 January.
 - 5.b Drug & Alcohol Abuse** – in 20 October, 20 November, 30 December, 14 January
 - 5.c Anti-social Behaviour** – market area a few reports, nothing major.
 - 5.d Domestic Violence – sexual offences** - 1 September, 1 October, 2 November
 - Violence against girls – 47 October, 52 November, 38 December, 53 January

5.e Hate Crime - 2 in October, 3 in November, 3 December, 4 January

5.f Speeding/Traffic - ****

5.g Road Safety concerns about vehicles using the pedestrian area as a cut-through mainly between 4 pm and 10 am when the barriers are not in place. This is a safety problem.

5.h Assaults & Public Order 55 October, 55 November, 1 December

5.i Residential Burglaries 7 October, 3 November

6. Police Priorities – Christmas, road safety Mondays, stopping cars, operation Jingles 20th/21st 2 am shifts into the town centre, 6 officers. Drug dogs into the premises again. David Levins new Chief Inspector for Congleton.

Total crimes – all crimes

23% positive outcomes

Burglaries

December – up

January – up

Stabbings

2 stabbings – 1 Bromley

1 Teenager

March – National day in schools to educate

Operation Street Safe – one town per weekend

7. Cheshire East Council ASB team - not able to make the meeting

8. Street Pastors Update – updates emailed over. assisted 63 in one year, the lighting at Wetherspoons is much better outside and better for ASB. They will be doing 9 Saturdays from March to May. Report below;

Congleton Street Pastor Update

Key points Annual Review 2024

Defused 9 separate situations in group sizes varying from 12 to 2.

Assisted or observed to safety 63, supported 19 with ill effects from drinking.

Emotional support/Loneliness/Bereavement/Family concerns etc. 77

Homeless 5

Removed 81 bottles/cans

Returned 30 glasses and swept up 22 lots of broken glass.

First Aid to 7

Supported door staff 23

Handed out 19 pairs flip flops, 20 bottles of water/wipes, 3 foil blankets and returned 6 supermarket trolleys. Directions given to 17

Good News

Improved lighting Wetherspoons Car Park - no-one loitering suspiciously or cannabis aroma.

Concerns

Increased number of vehicles cutting through pedestrian area. During one evening we stood in front of a Stoke Uber driver, a Stoke Taxi and a young lad in a black mini reminding them of the loading and unloading only sign. An A-Stars taxi was also about to cut through to return to taxi rank after dropping off at Swan Bank but our presence dissuaded him. Noticed 5 Stoke taxis that evening which was unusual and may be taking business away from Congleton taxi rank when hailed after dropping off.

Also inconsiderate parking on Swan Bank – After restocking at Costa, the driver in his large lorry rightly removed and replaced bollard but then couldn't turn out onto Swan Bank due to a car partly across his exit and had to reverse the entire length of the pedestrian area. On another occasion, seeing the bollard, one taxi cut up Little Street instead. Two weeks ago, we tried to put the removable bollard back in place as it does act as a deterrent, but the metal lid couldn't be lifted. *Mentioned elsewhere in the meeting that this is broken.*

Street and Prayer Pastors

Unfortunately, due to low numbers for Street and Prayer Pastors we are not yet up to pre-covid patrols every Saturday but are hopeful of covering 9 Saturdays March - May 2025.

9. CCTV Update - we are going to book a visit for the new year, Stuart not present.

10 Shop Watch Update - Rachel reported that Shop Watch was a bit quieter at the moment, fake notes are circulating.

11. Stuart's report attached above regarding CCTV

AOB: - no

Date of Next Meeting - Thursday 13th February, 3 pm – 4.30 pm

Minutes of Meeting
Community Safety Working Group
Thursday 27th March 2025 3 pm – 4.30 pm

Present: Cllr Kay Wesley (Chair), Cllr Shaun Radcliffe, Cllr Glen Williams, Rachel McCarthy,
Linda Webber, Cllr Richard Walton

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Julia Pestell Hassall, Laura Woodrow-Hirst, Sgt James Bell, Cllr Robert Brittain
2. **Notes of the meeting** of 5th December 2025 were accepted as correct
3. **Draft Agenda for today was approved**
4. **Action Log**
 - a) Code of Conduct policy in the town centre - Take to Community Committee meeting for discussion, remove Furry Friends from the text. **RMC**
 - b) Send an email to enforcement officers to ticket vans in the pedestrian area and repaint Lawton Street/High Street. **RMC** North Street has a huge problem: parking on the corner of the road, which bin wagons can't access. Nelson and Swan Street are the same. Ideally, lines need painting to stop parking during the day. These are not residents who are parking here.
 - c) Anti-spiking campaign – add to the leaflet, 'don't worry if you have taken recreational drugs, we are looking for criminal activity' etc put logo on the leaflet for the PCC . **RMC** make the spiking a separate agenda item on the community committee. Update posters for the town regarding spiking.
 - d) Bromley Woods – BMX track, litter, drugs etc. we can see if Streetscape can take a look at this area and from time to time. **RB**
 - e) Suicide at Congleton train station – Suzy has spoken to Northern Rail regarding the increase in suicides.
5. **Police update on Crime (Sergeant James Bell)**
James could not attend today – report not available.
6. **Police Priorities –**

Report not available
7. **Cheshire East Council ASB team** - not able to make the meeting
8. **Street Pastors Update** – update email attached below.



Update - Congleton
Street Pastors CSWG

9. Shop Watch Updates – very quiet at the moment so generally good

10. AOB – Supermarket concerns on the corner of Brook Street and Herbert Street, allegations of a sexual

Whole housing approach regarding domestic abuse within Cheshire East, we need more housing for victims as there isn't enough refuge housing available, ideally there should be training for practitioners so that they can spot abuse, frequently families are removed, rather than the abuser who should be removed.

Date of Next Meeting - Thursday 29th May, 3pm – 4.30pm

.

Equal Access Advisory Group

Meeting Notes – 24 January 2025 – Virtual

(Due to weather conditions the meeting was moved to virtual only)

Meeting Theme – Public Awareness and Changing Attitudes

Attendees – Dr Deborah Lawson (Chair), Cllr Kay Wesley, Denis Murphy, Alec Scaresbrook, Cathy Dean.

Apologies - Angela Ward, Diane Ritherdon, Pam Carey Tom Stephans, and Theresa Graystone.

1. Welcome from the chair.

2. Notes of the meeting of 12 December accepted as a correct record.

3. Actions from previous minutes

- **Action** - Kay and Theresa to check out routes from Able World to Readsmore Surgery – **carry forward**
- **Action** – Dropped kerbs – Denis continuing to review dropped kerbs around the town centre. Footpath Morrisons no dropped kerb - Kay added to the action plan. Deborah to look at the route from an area where there is a high population of disabled residents into town/Tesco when the weather improves.
- **Action** - Cathy & Kay are working on an accessibility leaflet for shops with Deborah's input – **update below**
- **Action** - Ruth Burgess CTC looking at the gaps for benches
<https://openbenches.org/#53.16171/-2.211541/17> - We are looking at plotting the benches then we can see where the gaps are.
- **Action** - list of articles for the Chronicle – Kay has written to the Chronicle and suggested a regular feature (Accessibility Corner). Kay to write a report summary from each meeting to send in, which can go on the news/blog section of the CTC website etc.
- **Action** – Shop Motability – what has happened to that? Can we include it in the Bridestones Shopping Centre? – Cathy contacted Shop Motability; they don't provide any equipment; it's more of a membership/recognition scheme. Don't have details of the previous service, the one in Chester is due to close soon. Kay / David will talk to the owners of the Bridestones area to see if it's something we could set up. Would need to be run by volunteers.
- **Action** – Cathy/Kay/Deborah to draw up terms of reference so members and potential new members understand and align with the purpose of the group. – **update below**

- **Action** – Engage with town organisations to understand their challenges. Kay to explore council involvement. While the group includes representation from the hard-of-hearing community, it does not currently have representation from the deaf community. Kay is in contact with Adam, and pending agreement on terms of reference we will invite him to the meeting.

4. Public Awareness

Deborah drafted ideas before the meeting which formed a basis for the discussion:

Council's Social Media

- Share facts, myths, and statistics about disability.
- “Be Kind” or “Accessibility Benefits Everyone” campaign (or similar), featuring monthly tips on how the public can help and be more inclusive. Before events like the light switch on, these could be targeted around how to support disabled people in a crowd etc.
- **Action** – Cathy/Debbie design a social media campaign, and highlight before big events.

Chronicle

- Publish regular articles highlighting success stories, challenges, council and Equal Access Group initiatives, and ways the public can help.
- Feature businesses that are accessible and welcoming (or do this on the council's social media platforms?).
- **Action** - Publish regular articles, a win-win for local businesses (Kay).

Mayor's Awards

- Use awards to recognise businesses, schools, or individuals who go that extra mile with accessibility and inclusivity.
- Highlight nominees/finalists/winners on council platforms to encourage positive competition and set examples. Winners could also feature in the Chronicle.

- Kay provided an update – a deliberate decision not to separate inclusivity or diversity as it should be baked into everything we do, so for all awards it will form the foundation.

Councillors

- Arrange for councillors to navigate the town in wheelchairs and visit inaccessible shops to understand the barriers faced by local disabled people.

Proposal: The council to lead by example by scheduling a mobility exercise for councillors to navigate the town with a disability and complete set tasks. Val and Alec to design the activity, ideally an afternoon before a July council meeting (pending confirmation of next year's meeting dates).

Schools

- Encourage all local schools to engage in disability awareness activities, especially around Disability History Month, Disability Pride, and International Day of Persons with Disabilities.
 - Deborah is publishing a children's book for KS1 this year focused on kindness, friendship, and inclusion (with free learning resources, colouring pages, and a school lesson plan). A council colouring competition, where children draw themselves in the forest (downloadable resource) and write a sentence next to themselves about what they can do to be kind to others, could be run during Disability Pride or History Month to encourage schools and children to discuss/think about inclusion and kindness.
 - Councils running a colouring competition from a children's book by a local author have been successfully implemented in other areas.
- In the past it's been difficult to engage with schools, they tend to be overwhelmed. They have engaged with white ribbon, Kay will mention to the high school. Deborah will be engaging with Primary schools. Potential to include some of Deborah's resources for young children during the council summer holiday activities.

Businesses

- Provide training resources to help businesses support disabled customers better.
- Promote the Disability Welcome scheme, which is about to be implemented by the council.
- Could produce flyers or small posters for shops to display with messages like "Be Kind" or "Accessibility Benefits Everyone," with ideas for the public on how to help.

- **Action** – ask Celeste to design business posters (use disability welcome logo) be kind/accessibility welcome. Deborah to send over a document – which includes good visuals for shops to use.
- **Action** – Cathy to research the best e-learnings and disability-positive training for staff and councillors.

Council Initiatives

- Use town noticeboards, the website, and newsletters to promote positive messages about disability and lead by example.
 - Feature regular stories about accessibility and disabled individuals on the council website/social media, ensuring respectful terminology in all features and use inclusive stock photography on their new website.
 - Continue improving event accessibility.
 - Produce the planned disability guide.
 - Add more seating/benches in Congleton, install a ramp at the back of the town hall etc.
- **Action** – Cathy to follow up with Mark (Town Hall Manager) regarding the ramp and accessible toilet sign.

Media Video – video is so powerful in telling stories and making people connect, videos have a bigger impact, would group members be willing to tell their story?

5. Leaflet

The group got the chance to review the leaflet before the meeting. The group agreed upon Deborah's list of amendments. The group also suggested a couple more amendments. The amendments in full:

- A web address/link with the QR code for people who don't use a smartphone
- Change the green boxes to black for better contrast
- Enlarge the tick boxes slightly (for those with limited dexterity)
- Offer the leaflet in large print if requested - maybe in just text format (then, if anyone's screen reader isn't compatible, they can also access it that way)
- Check the front-page text is large enough (12pt) & Reduce size of BRP text (Kay to summarise)
- Maybe change the pink on page 2 to softer/paler pink or mint green to make it easier to read

- Where it says “Lower counter,” – you might not need to add “(for people of short stature and wheelchair users)” as well
- The Silhouette image does not represent older people.
- White box – should be lined with placeholder information business name etc
- Adding in "Accessibility benefits everyone!" somewhere might be beneficial
- Call in action – hand in at / email info@

Action - Where does the QR code go? – Create a web page for business information to expand on the leaflet. Signpost to training, equipment such as ramps/handles etc Grant/Funding information. (Cathy)

6. Terms of Reference

Kay and Deborah have created terms of reference, and members must be willing to accept other viewpoints and conflicting needs. Because minutes are shared, member's input is not confidential.

Action – Cathy to combine the documents and send them to Kay/Deborah for review

7. AOB

Careers Fayre

The Cheshire and Warrington Pledge Partnership, Cheshire and Warrington Careers Hub, and Cheshire East Council are organising a Your Futures event for young people, specifically with disabilities/ Special Needs in Cheshire East.

Hosted at Congleton Leisure Centre, Worrall St, Congleton CW12 1DT on Wednesday 26th February 25, the fair will be organised similarly to standard careers fairs with all schools being invited to attend slots.

[Cheshire East 'Your Futures' Fair Tickets, Wed, Feb 26, 2025 at 8:30 AM | Eventbrite](#)

Action – CTC should attend – Cathy/Kay to sort

CEC Equality Policy

Alec & Val have been following up on the CEC Equality draft Policy 2025-2029, which is currently 80 pages long. No timeline has been decided to date.

Governments SEND Crisis

Between meetings, some group members discussed the government's current inquiry, which

focuses on achieving short-term stability and long-term sustainability for the SEND system to improve experiences and outcomes for children and young people. [Deborah submitted evidence](#), which was published on the government's website.

Alec also shared that barriers on Biddulph Valley Way have been removed.

Future Meetings – Fridays aren't the best day so the proposed new dates are:

Tuesdays 11 am - 8th April / 17th June / 9th September / 18th November

Cathy to send calendar invites.

Equal Access Advisory Group

Meeting Minutes – In-person and Virtual 8th April 2025

Meeting Theme – Disability Benefit Changes

Attendees – Dr Deborah Lawson (via Zoom), Cllr Kay Wesley (Chair), Theresa Graystone, Alec Scaresbrook, Cathy Dean, Tom Stephans, Diane Ritherdon.

Apologies - Denis Murphy and Angela Ward.

1. **Welcome from the chair.** – Kay chaired the meeting as Deborah attended via Zoom due to illness.

Ruby's wants to remain on the distribution list but can't attend meetings or play an active part in the focus group.

2. **Notes** of the meeting of 23rd January accepted as a correct record.

3. **Actions from previous minutes**

- **Action** - Kay and Theresa to check out routes from Able World to Readsmore Surgery – **carry forward**
- **Action** – Dropped kerbs – Denis continuing to review dropped kerbs around the town centre. Footpath Morrisons no dropped kerb - Kay added to the action plan. Deborah to look at the route from an area where there is a high population of disabled residents into town/Tesco when the weather improves. **(Ongoing)**
- **Action** - Cathy & Kay are working on an accessibility leaflet for shops with Deborah's input – **Update below**
- **Action** - list of articles for the Chronicle – Kay has written to the Chronicle and suggested a regular feature (Accessibility Corner). The Chronicle has agreed to a regular feature, Kay will continue to send in articles.
- **Action** – Cathy/Debbie design a social media campaign on improving attitudes to disabilities, and highlight it before big events. "Be Kind" or "Accessibility Benefits Everyone" campaign. **(Ongoing)**
- **Action** – ask Celeste to design business posters (use disability welcome logo) be kind/accessibility welcome. Deborah to send over a document – which includes good visuals for shops to use.
- **Action** – Cathy to follow up with Mark (Town Hall Manager) regarding the ramp and accessible toilet sign.
 - **Update** - Maximum slope should be 1:12 gradient to be ADA compliant. E.g. If the drop between the 2 levels was a maximum of 30 inches, the slope would need to be 30 feet long. We have a drop of 26 inches but only 19 feet before the

end of the building where Chris Hamriding parks their vehicles. This means the slope would be greater than 1:12. To negate the slope we could add a landing and turn to the slope, however, as each slope needs to be 36 inches wide, we would completely take over the pavement next to the loading bay. I'll contact someone to measure up and provide a quote as there may be another option.

- **Action** – Email highways to reinstate the accessible parking space which should be the first space next to keep the clear area at the back of the TH but it's faded, should be blue badge holders only but anyone is parking in the space.
- **Action** – Cathy to research the best e-learning and disability-positive training for staff and councillors. **(Carry forward)**
- **Action** - Create a web page for business information to expand on the leaflet. Signpost to training, equipment such as ramps/handles etc Grant/Funding information. **(Completed)** Cathy & Kay completed the business information to start the page.
- **Action** – Cathy/Kay/Deborah to draw up terms of reference so members and potential new members understand and align with the purpose of the group. – **(Completed)** The updated terms of reference document was completed and sent to the group on the 12th of February. No further feedback was received. All agreed to vote on accepting the Terms of Reference for the group.

[View the Terms of Reference 08.04.25](#)

- **Action** – CTC should attend Your Futures event for young people, specifically those with disabilities/ Special Needs in Cheshire East (26th February). The Careers Fair at the Town Hall was held on the 2nd of April. **(Completed)** Kay attended the Your Futures Event and CTC had a stand at the Careers Fair on the 2nd of April. Kay commented that both events were well attended, very inspiring and great to see so many committed businesses.

4. Changes to Disability Benefits

In the spring statement, the government announced changes to disability benefits, this is causing a lot of concern, some members of the group are unclear on how the proposed changes will affect them which suggests the government hasn't gone far enough in communicating the changes. Changes detailed in the following article:

[Spring Statement 2025 health and disability benefit reforms – Impacts](#)

It's extremely disappointing to see the media pushing such a negative narrative, PIP is for both working and non-working people with disabilities. Just because an individual isn't in paid work doesn't mean they are not contributing to society. (Volunteering, Caregiving, Parenting etc).

Deborah knows some people who are feeling suicidal by all the uncertainty, disabled people feel let down by broken promises from the government.

Locally you can see deteriorating attitudes towards disabled people in the comments in Facebook groups.

There are various other barriers to people getting back into work, the government (and we as a town) need to dismantle these barriers. The government has pledged 4 million pounds; at the moment most people are waiting to see how the changes will affect them personally.

It's disappointing that the media is not focusing on the positive aspects of employing people with disabilities, which was the overall message from the careers fair held in April.

Action – Kay to write an article for 'Disability Corner' in the Chronicle on negative attitudes and the positive messaging from the careers fair.

Action – Contact CAB to see if they will come to Congleton so people can have face-to-face contact.

5. Disability Welcome Scheme

Disability Welcome leaflets were delivered to Town Centre businesses (apart from Mill Street/Swan Bank) and West Heath shopping areas.

The positive response from businesses with 9 leaflets returned so far. Press releases and articles in Bear Necessities will further promote the scheme.

The leaflet can be downloaded from the website: <https://www.congleton-tc.gov.uk/business-support-development/disability-welcome-congleton>

Silk Radio picked up the press release – [Congleton Town Council Disability Welcome Scheme Launched.](#)

Action – Cathy/Kay to go through the leaflets that have been returned and make the awards for Gold and Silver.

6. Vision for Transport: live consultation (Cheshire East)

Work is underway to update the Cheshire East Local Transport Plan(LTP). (Between Monday 24 February and Monday 21 April 2025).

The LTP will set the context for future investment plans and prioritise within budget constraints. Once the vision, aims and priorities have been defined, the next stage of work is to develop the LTP strategy later in 2025.

View the document - [Cheshire East's Vision for Transport Consultation brochure.](#)

Kay attended the Integrated Transport Working Group earlier in the day, they pointed out that it does not mention the Highway Code Hierarchy of road users, the group agreed most vulnerable road users should be considered first.

20 mph speed limit is not mentioned

The word 'accessible' doesn't seem to appear often.

All Cheshire East departments need to have joined up thinking around transport i.e. highways, planning, social care etc

Cheshire East Contracts should follow the principles in the Equality Act 2010, for example awarding bus contracts. Wheelchair-accessible taxis are lacking in Congleton, is this something that can be enforced through licensing or incentivised through the council?

Deborah commented that the vision didn't go far enough to recognise the needs of the individual. Semi-rural towns have problems with pavements, camber, uneven road services etc Wheelchair users 'can't just get on with it'. There is a whole raft of people in our community who can't get where they want to go because of physical barriers.

There is a lack of understanding of the challenges faced by disabled people, they must consult with more disabled people to develop an inclusive plan for all.

No vision for the reduction in traffic.

Action – Feedback comments to CTC so they can be included in the official response.

AOB.

Barriers are now removed on Biddulph Valley Way, congratulations to the sustainable travel group.

The meeting ended at 12:30 pm

Future Meeting Dates:

Tuesdays 11 am - 17th June / 9th September / 18th November

Calendar invites sent.

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Community Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	17 April 2025 7.00 pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Cathy Dean, Communities and Admin Officer		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	12.1 Disability Welcome Scheme		
Background	<p>Congleton Town Council is working with residents to make its activities and the town more accessible. The Equal Access in Congleton group, led by disability advocate Deborah Lawson and Congleton people with a wide range of disabilities, is advising the Council on improving life for disabled people. While some issues lie outside the Council's control, understanding them helps to improve accessibility for all.</p>		
Details	<p>26% of Congleton residents – about 7,500 people – have a disability (DWP). Many want to shop locally, but according to a Town Council survey, 87% face accessibility issues. We're working to improve access for both shoppers and businesses.</p> <p>Part of the work was to launch the Disability Welcome Scheme, the Disability Welcome Scheme uses helpful checklists to raise awareness and encourage simple, practical changes in areas like premises access, communication, staff awareness, and the internal environment.</p> <p>The group made up of local people with lived experience, helped create a checklist of simple measures businesses can take, such as large-print pricing, clear aisles, temporary ramps, and staff training.</p> <p>Businesses meeting the checklist requirements will receive a 'Disability Welcome' window sticker, certificate, and inclusion in a planned Disability Guide to Congleton.</p> <p>All businesses with a shop front are encouraged to apply. The leaflet is available from the Congleton Information Centre and the town council's website.</p> <p>https://www.congleton-tc.gov.uk/business-support-development/disability-welcome-congleton/</p> <p>Disability Welcome leaflets were delivered to Town Centre businesses (apart from Mill Street/Swan Bank) and West Heath shopping areas.</p> <p>The positive response from businesses with 9 leaflets returned so far (10th April 2025). Press releases and articles in Bear Necessities will further promote the scheme.</p> <p>We plan to deliver more leaflets to other shopping areas such as High Town, Market Quarter etc.</p>		

Window Stickers



Appendix 11.2 – Terms of Reference

The group has created 'Terms of Reference' for the Equal Access Group, which will help any new members who join to understand the aims and purpose of the group.

Financial Implications	Community Committee agreed on a budget for the Equal Access Group on 29.08.24 CO/10/2425 – 1) Support to the group in implementing a promotional Campaign for the Public (including social media and high-quality video) £1000. Disability Guide to Congleton £1000 Business (Shop/Pub) 'Disability Welcome' Scheme (certificates & stickers) £250.
Environmental Implications	Considered as part of each piece of work.
Inclusivity Diversity Impact	Equality and diversity are at the very heart of this campaign. We want to make Congleton as accessible as possible and communicate the town's offer so that disabled people can plan visits to Congleton with confidence.
Decision Required	That Councillors note this report and accept the Terms of Reference.

Terms of Reference for the Equal Access Advisory Group of Congleton Town Council

1. Purpose

The Equal Access Advisory Group is established to advise Congleton Town Council on enhancing accessibility and inclusivity within the town. The group aims to identify and address barriers faced by individuals with disabilities, ensuring Congleton becomes a more welcoming and accommodating community for all residents and visitors.

2. Objectives

- **Assessment and Recommendations:** Evaluate the current state of accessibility in Congleton and provide actionable recommendations to the Town Council for improvements.
- **Community Engagement:** Serve as a liaison between the Town Council and the community, gathering input from individuals with disabilities and related organisations to inform decision-making.
- **Awareness and Education:** Promote disability awareness and advocate for inclusive practices within the town, including organising educational initiatives and resources.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Regularly review the progress of implemented accessibility measures and suggest further enhancements as needed.
- **Systemic Advocacy:** Advocate for systemic changes that benefit people with all disabilities, ensuring equality, dignity, and participation for everyone.

3. Group Aims

- Improve accessibility and inclusion by identifying barriers and developing constructive, community-wide solutions.
- Create an open, respectful environment where advocates and organisations can collaborate effectively.
- Focus on collective challenges and opportunities for broad improvements rather than individual complaints or grievances.

4. Membership

The Advisory Group comprises local residents with diverse disabilities, ensuring a broad representation of experiences and perspectives. While members bring lived experiences, discussions will encompass the needs of all disabilities. Where conflicting needs arise, members will work collaboratively to prioritise accessibility actions.

5. Meetings

Frequency: Meetings are held every 6-8 weeks in the Town Hall, with remote access available as needed.

Structure and Participation: The chair will ensure meetings remain structured and focused, moving discussions forward to cover all agenda items.

- Members should aim to attend regularly. If unable to attend, apologies should be sent in advance.
- Contributions should be concise to allow all voices to be heard.
- Constructive and respectful dialogue is essential. Expressions of frustration are valid but must remain solution-focused.
- To ensure that meetings run smoothly and effectively, we ask that any suggestions, including items for Any Other Business (AOB) and membership suggestions, be submitted in advance, to the chair and secretary for consideration before being brought to the group.

Minutes: Meeting minutes will be documented and made publicly available to maintain transparency and inform the community of ongoing efforts.

6. Guidelines for Collaboration

- **Positive, Solution-Focused Approach:** The group works together to identify challenges and propose solutions that improve the lives of disabled people.
- **Inclusivity and Respect:** All disabilities, challenges, and lived experiences are valued equally. Members must consider every disability, not just their own.
- **Teamwork and Respectful Communication:** Members should engage constructively, offering ideas and feedback that align with the group's mission.

- **Membership Commitment:** Members who have not attended for 12 months will be removed and contact details added to the interest group but are welcome to reapply in the future.

7. Reporting

The Advisory Group reports to the Community Committee of Congleton Town Council, providing updates, findings, and recommendations for consideration and action.

8. Scope of Work

While the Advisory Group focuses on areas within the Town Council's jurisdiction, it also identifies and highlights issues that fall under the remit of other organisations or authorities, advocating for necessary changes to improve accessibility throughout Congleton.

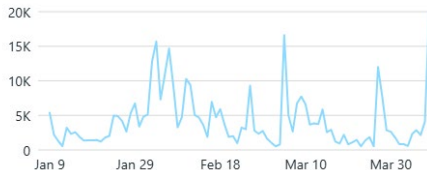
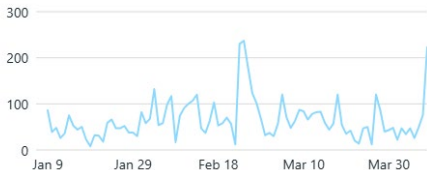

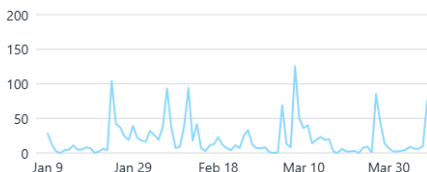
9. Inclusivity Statement

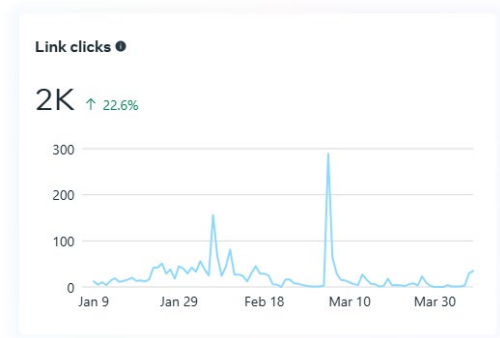
The group is committed to the principles of the social model of disability, which focuses on removing societal barriers to inclusion and participation. By working together, the group aims to foster a more accessible and equitable environment for all. If you require additional support, please contact us in advance so we can explore potential solutions. While we will always make every effort to accommodate reasonable adjustments, as a group made up primarily of volunteers, our capacity may be limited by available resources.

10. Review

These Terms of Reference are subject to periodic review to ensure they remain relevant and effective in guiding the Advisory Group's work in promoting equal access within Congleton.

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Community Committee														
MEETING DATE AND TIME	17 April 2025 7.00 pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall												
REPORT FROM	Debbie Coxon, Marketing and Communications Officer														
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	13 Communications Update														
Background	This paper has been prepared to give committee members an update on the communications activities that took place over the last 90 days (9 Jan-8 April)														
Details	Social Media Overview Facebook Followers: 5.7K Instagram Followers: 1.2K Twitter: 3.5K														
	Facebook Performance Overview														
	<table><tr><th>Views</th><th>Visits</th><th>Reach</th><th>Interactions</th><th>Follows</th><th>Clicks</th></tr><tr><td>380K</td><td>5.9K</td><td>53K</td><td>1.8K</td><td>132</td><td>2K</td></tr></table>			Views	Visits	Reach	Interactions	Follows	Clicks	380K	5.9K	53K	1.8K	132	2K
	Views	Visits	Reach	Interactions	Follows	Clicks									
	380K	5.9K	53K	1.8K	132	2K									
	<div><div><div><div>Views ●</div><div>379.7K ↓ 34.6%</div></div><div><div>Visits ●</div><div>5.9K ↓ 42.9%</div></div></div></div>														
	<div><div><div><div>Reach ●</div><div>52.9K ↓ 13%</div></div><div><div>Content interactions ●</div><div>1.8K ↓ 56.8%</div></div></div></div>														



Social media posts issued: 230 (excluding shared posts). Avg. 3 per day

Top 5 FB Posts:

1. Town Centre Review Survey
2. Park Lane Road Works
3. Town Mayor's Civic Awards
4. International Women's Day
5. NHS Living Well Bus



Tell us what you think Congleton's...
Wed Mar 5, 2:14am
25.6K 28
53 18



Cheshire East Council is carrying out...
Thu Feb 6, 7:40am
19.6K 45
58 17



Congleton is full of incredible people wh...
Thu Mar 27, 2:54am
14.2K 91
13 4



Today, on International Women's Day, we...
Sat Mar 8, 2:01am
12.8K 162
10 8



The NHS Living Well Bus is coming t...
Wed Feb 5, 2:36am
10.4K 30
3 6

CTC social posts are usually shared to:

Congleton Chat's Back	26.9K members
Congleton News & Views	13.2K members
Congleton Radio	1.1k followers

CTC Website:

- The new website is now entering into the content migration stage. Four CTC officers will receive initial training on the new website on 11 April. Content migration is expected to be completed by mid-May.

Key Statistics for the website:

Views: 17K, Active Users: 5.7K, Av engagement time: 1min 2 sec

Organic searches (**7.5K visits**) continue to generate the highest traffic, via search engines such as Google/Bing etc.

Top 10 pages (largest numbers of visits)

Page	Views	Users
TOTAL	16,746	5,738
Welcome to Congleton	1,940	794
Events What's-On	959	601
Congleton Unplugged	914	736
Committee Meetings	583	82
Shopping in Congleton	405	305
Meet the Councillors	294	183
Book the Town Hall	265	187
Weddings & Parties	259	190
Contact Us	244	203
Town Council approves Budget	199	182

Noticeboards

The six town noticeboards and the CIC What's on Window are updated weekly to promote town council events and activities organised by local organisations and community groups.

Key Events

- 25.2 Clairvoyance Evening
- 7.2 The Jam'd
- 11.3 Discover Volunteering evening
- 14.3 Town Mayor's Ball
- 18.3 Health and Wellbeing Fayre, Town Hall, 10 am-3 pm
- 25.3 Town Mayor's Civic Awards Launch
- 1.4 Disability Awareness Scheme Launch
- 8.4 Easter Treats

New publications

- New logo, branding, leaflets, poster for the Food & Drink Festival

Press Releases: 26

Radio Interviews: 4

	Other Editorial: Effective Directories, Jan-March (circl. 11k) Beartown Voice (circl. 12k), March edition, promoting Volunteer Action Day, Health & Wellbeing Fayre, CTC Diary Dates for 2025.
Proposal	For Councillors to note the report and for the officer team to take on board suggestions and recommendations from Councillors.
Financial Implications	Work is delivered within the annual budgets set by the Town Council
Environmental Implications	Considered as part of each piece of work. Carbon-neutral certificates are obtained for Bear Necessities and paper from sustainably managed sources used for other work.
Inclusivity Diversity Impact	The team uses different channels and communication tools to meet different audiences.
Decision Required	That Councillors note this report.

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Community Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	17th April 2025 7.00 pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	David McGifford, Chief Officer		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	14 Congleton Community Projects Service Level Agreement (SLA)		
Background	This paper has been written to invite councillors to allow councillors to comment on the proposed SLA for Congleton Community Projects (CCP). Appendix 1.		
Details	<p>This has been updated from the previous submission and is now more prescriptive as to the activity that is being delivered by CCP. The committee was previously made aware that the most significant project that CCP led was the Food and Drink Festival. CCP advised back in 2024 that it could no longer deliver this project but would support the Town Council in handing this major event over.</p> <p>The Food and Drink Festival is now being led by our Town Centre and Events Manager Rachel McCarthy and discussions have taken place with regard to the contribution the Town Council gives to Congleton Community Projects.</p> <p>Previously we contributed £16,000 to CCP and as advised at the last meeting this was being reduced to £10,000 and paid in stages.</p> <p>The attached SLA provided those details and the areas marked in blue are the updated ones provided by CCP</p> <p>This will be reviewed on an annual basis</p>		
Financial Implications	This will be the first time that the town council has led on this event and has allocated £6,000 to this project which is equivalent to the reduction in the SLA. This will be reviewed following the event to determine if £6,000 is sufficient.		
Environmental Implications	There is a negative environmental impact due to the volume of visitors to this event which also generates more waste. Future events should consider promoting bus connectivity whilst noting that there is very little bus connectivity on a Sunday.		
Inclusivity Diversity Impact	There has been more focus on Diversity and Inclusivity at our recent events which now include safe space and improved accessibility, blue badge parking zones. There is also an accessibility information guide on the website.		
Proposal	The Community Committee endorses the updated Service Level Agreement.		

Service Level Agreement with Congleton Community Projects and Congleton Town Council

1. Purpose and Objective

1.1 This Service Level Agreement (SLA) is between Congleton Town Council (CTC) and Congleton Community Projects (CCP). It sets out the expectations, roles and responsibilities between the two parties in connection with the £10,000 grant that Congleton Town Council will pay to Congleton Community Projects for the delivery of services during the financial year 2024-2025.

1.2 The two organisations should work closely together with mutual trust and understanding, sharing the common goal **of increasing community involvement in the town's activities. By engaging the community in these activities and creating a sense of ownership, local people develop an identity with and pride in, their town.**

2. Main Parties and Term of Contract

2.1 For the purposes of this SLA the key contact within Congleton Town Council will be the Chief Officer who will be responsible for delivering CTC side of the agreement.

2.2 For the purposes of this SLA the key contact for Congleton Community Projects will be Jo Money who will be responsible for delivering CCPs part of the agreement.

2.3 This SLA will run from the 1st April 2025 until the 31st March 2026. It will be renewed on an annual basis.

3. Role of CTC

3.1 CTC will transfer **£10,000** to Congleton Community Projects. This will be paid **quarterly** on the first Friday of the month by BACS. **£2,500 on 5 April, £2,500 on the first Fridays in July, October and January.** This does not prevent CCP from applying for a CTC grant towards specific projects during the year.

3.2 CTC will hold a meeting with CCP ahead of budget setting in October 2025 to discuss the SLA for the next year.

3.3 CTC will have one CTC representative on CCP's quarterly business meetings. This will be formalised at the Annual Town Council Meeting in May each year, for as long as the SLA is in place.

3.4 CTC will proactively help with the promotion and marketing of CCP and Partnership led events.

3.5 CTC will meet with CCP quarterly to review progress

4. Role of CCP within this SLA

CTC recognises that CCP is an autonomous body that performs a number of functions for the benefit of the town and has other funders as well as Congleton Town Council. For the purposes of this SLA it is only concerned with the projects connected with the SLA between CTC and CCP. These are:

4.3 CCP to collate and disseminate up-to-date information about local groups and organisations operating in Congleton and make this information publicly available (where permissions are given). This is with the aim of making Congleton better connected and helping to promote local groups and organisations.

4.4 CCP and CTC to deliver and manage a quality entertainment package as part of the Christmas Lights Switch on in November. For CCP **this includes organising at least 3 public lantern-making workshops prior to the event and an extra workshop for those who require access or have specific needs. Funds for this are raised by CCP.** The budget set for all other entertainment will be agreed within the Christmas Group Meeting.

4.5 **CCP to deliver a traditional lantern parade as part of the Christmas celebrations. CCP will raise the funds connected with this project and will provide all materials to ensure workshops are free and accessible to all.**

4.6 **CCP to ensure community engagement in the Jazz and Blues Festival by organising an annual Umbrella Parade for all to join in and as an opening for the event and work on the community programme for the Bath House and Physic Garden.**

4.7 **CCP to work with the Congleton Pride Committee on delivering the Pride Parade which opens the annual Pride Festival.**

4.8 **CCP to take responsibility for organising 3 annual Play Days in the Town Centre to encourage Congleton's youngest members to use the Town Centre, discover Congleton and engage in healthy outdoor activities, enjoy playing and encourage wellbeing.**

4.9 **CCP will offer support and advice where necessary to the Town Council regarding the delivery of the Food and Drink Festival and will donate all information, website, social media and email lists of all regular stall holder details**

4.10 *CCP to provide early advice and guidance to groups and individuals interested in organising a public event in Congleton.*

4.11 *CCP to offer fund-raising advice and signposting to funders for local groups and organisations wishing to put on an event or start up a project in Congleton.*

5. Health, Safety, Personnel, Equipment and Insurance

5.1 CCP will be responsible for its own health, safety, personnel, equipment and insurance unless CCP is working in conjunction with the Town Council on an event such as the Christmas Lights Switch-on where the Town Council is taking the lead.

6. Monitoring and Concerns

6.1 Updates will be given at quarterly meetings. Success will be via the events being well-attended, up-to-date listings of organisations in Congleton being made available and a continuation of arts and cultural activities for Congleton. This will be reported to the Community Committee.

6.2 If there are any concerns with Congleton Town Council's management of this SLA they should be reported to the Chief Officer.

6.3 If there are any concerns with the delivery of this SLA that cannot be addressed through the CCP Manager it should be directed to the Chair of Congleton Community Projects.

Signed

Name __David McGifford, Chief Officer

On behalf of Congleton Town Council

Signed _____

Name _____

On behalf of Congleton Community Projects

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Community Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	17th April 2025 7.00 pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	David McGifford, Chief Officer		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	15 Town Centre Updates		
Background	<p>15.1 Town Centre Code of Conduct (See appendix1)</p> <p>Within our Town Centre we have had a few issues that impact on both businesses and shoppers, these issues include aggressive preachers, professional beggars and general anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Through research, we found that Staffordshire Moorlands Council had similar issues and developed its Town Centre Code of Conduct.</p> <p>We have used this document and elaborated on this, adding a few items to it. Police and Crime Commissioner James Bell mentioned that this would actually help them, and although they can't actually enforce/arrest individuals they can ask them to leave the town centre as they can state that the Town Council have a code of conduct and that they are breaking that policy.</p>		
Financial Considerations	There is no cost to the council but could help footfall in the town centre if anti-social behaviour is gradually reduced in the town centre		
Environmental	The policy could generate a more pleasant environment for both shoppers and business		
Equality and Diversity	The policy could generate a more pleasant experience for all that choose to use the Town Centre		
PROPOSALS	<p>For the committee to agree to the Town Centre Code of Conduct including any amendments.</p> <p>Note as this is a Policy this would need to be approved by the Finance and Policy Committee or Council</p>		
Background	<p>15.2 Community Infrastructure Levy Contributions (CIL'S) £21,684</p> <p>Cil's contributions are generated through development with the developers being expected to contribute funds towards community facilities, these funds are paid to Cheshire East Council and then forwarded the funds to the relevant Town Council. We held a Strategy Working Group meeting to receive the thoughts of the councillors on where this could best be utilised.</p> <p>The areas relating to the Town Centre included the following :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributing towards a solution to traffic misuse of Bridge Street. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements/maintenance of town centre public realm ie bins, benches planters, signage • Public Toilet provision <p>Also discussed were the improvements to pathways leading into the town and safer routes for schools.</p>
Next steps	There is nothing for this committee to decide as the council needs to demonstrate public support for the projects. The options will be put before the attendees of the Annual Town Meeting on the 15 th May 2025.
Decision request	For the committee to note this report

Code of Conduct for Congleton Town Centre

Congleton Town Council welcomes people to our town who want to busk, speak, entertain or otherwise engage local people. It is important that we do all these things respectfully and do not cause a nuisance for, or endanger, other people. This Code of Conduct is designed to ensure everyone feels safe and is treated with respect in our town centre. *(add: Our local Police Beat Team will use this as guidance as to what is acceptable to the people of Congleton.??)*

SOUND

Temporary producers of sound such as buskers, speakers, protests etc are welcome, but loud noises can disturb other users. Please be aware that others may also want to use the same space.

- If using amplification, the sound should not be audible inside any nearby commercial or residential property
- Buskers – please keep your performance to 2 hours maximum.
- Speakers/Protesters – please do not speak or shout for more than 15 minutes at a time in any one area.
- Content of any speeches/music must be within the law and suitable for a family audience. In particular, we will not tolerate hate speech of any kind.

STREET FURNITURE – STATIC ITEMS

When putting items out on the street, please be aware that some users may be using wheelchairs or buggies, or may have limited mobility or vision. Certain items can easily cause injury if placed thoughtlessly. Please follow this guidance (also refer to the CEC 'Clear Way Forward' Policy):

- A-boards or other advertisements – no more than one per shop, and should be directly adjacent to premises, NOT obstructing pavements. They should measure no more than 800mm by 800mm, and stand no more than 1m above ground level.
- Tables/chairs and merchandise displays are permitted provided they are directly adjacent to the shop (unless specific permission has been granted), extend no more than 2.5 metres, and take up no more than one-third of the pavement.

VEHICLES IN PEDESTRIAN AREA

This area is not intended for vehicular traffic, in order to preserve the safety of pedestrians. We have had accidents and injuries in the past due to inconsiderate users. Some vehicles are permitted at certain times/under certain conditions, so please follow these rules:

- Deliveries are only permitted during the authorised hours (outside 10 am-4 pm, 7 days a week).

- No motor vehicles (vans, cars, lorries, motorcycles, scooters) may enter the area outside these times for any reason.
- No parking is allowed AT ANY TIME, day or night.
- Bicycles and mobility scooters should move AT WALKING PACE OR LESS, as a consideration to other users of this shared space.

POSTERS, STICKERS AND BANNERS

Let's keep our town centre looking smart.

- Fly-posting is a crime and the Town Council will remove any unauthorized posters or stickers at a minimum charge of £50 to the advertiser.
- Organisers of town-centre events may apply to the Town Council for permission to attach temporary signage to street furniture on the day of the event. No other signs may be attached to lampposts, railings or any other street furniture.

DOGS

Our furry friends are welcome and many people enjoy bringing their dog into town, but not everyone is comfortable around dogs, so it is important to consider others.

- Dogs should be on leads and under close control at all times in the town centre.
- Dog fouling is horrible for everyone (and a crime), so please pick up after your dog. You can put your poo bag in any general waste bin.

LITTER AND BINS

Please don't drop litter in our town centre – it makes the area unpleasant for everyone (and fly-tipping is a crime). We all have a role to play in keeping our town looking great.

- There are plenty of bins and recycling bins near the shops. Please use the right bin.
- Businesses must use their trade waste bins and not put rubbish into the public waste bins.
- Any stall-holders or event organisers must take their own rubbish away after the event and not place it in public waste bins.
- Wheelie bins and bin bags must not be left outside shops except on collection day.

Thank you for following this Code of Conduct. We hope you have a wonderful time in Congleton Town Centre!

Congleton Town Council.

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Community Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	17th April 2025 7.00 pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	David McGifford, Chief Officer		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	16 Consultation Response to Cheshire Easts Vision for Transport		
Background	Cheshire East Council announced a consultation for their Vision for Transport with responses required by the 21 st April 2025. This has been reviewed by both the Integrated Transport Working Group and the Equal Access Advisory Group.		
Proposed Response	<p>Below are the amalgamated comments from these groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vision should relate to the Highway Code Hierarchy of road users • 20 mph speed limit is not mentioned • Under growing the Economy it does not highlight transport options that do not rely on motor vehicles • Under growing the Economy it fails to mention improving accessibility for all the word • The word 'accessible' doesn't seem to appear often • All Cheshire East departments need to have joined up thinking around transport i.e. highways, planning, social care etc • Cheshire East Contracts should follow the principles in the Equality Act 2010, for example awarding bus contracts. Wheelchair-accessible taxis are lacking in Congleton, is this something that can be enforced through licensing or incentivised through the council? • The vision didn't go far enough to recognise the needs of the individual. • Semi-rural towns have problems with pavements, camber, uneven road services etc Wheelchair users 'can't just get on with it' • There is a whole raft of people in our community who can't get where they want to go because of physical barriers. • There is a lack of understanding of the challenges faced by disabled people, they must consult with more disabled people to develop an inclusive plan for all. • No vision for the reduction in traffic. • Under Environmental impacts CEC should be leading rather than supporting the transition by providing local infrastructure to encourage travelers to make more sustainable choices • Under Environmental impacts CEC second bullet point, it should be reduction in private vehicle emissions rather than transport related emissions • Under Improving Connections for all you could add by maximizing private developer contributions 		

Financial Implications	None to the Town Council
Environmental Implications	As suggested within the proposed response
Inclusivity Diversity Impact	As suggested within the proposed response
Proposal	To approve the proposed response to the CEC Vision for Transport

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Community Committee		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	17 April 2025 7.00 pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Cathy Dean, Communities and Admin Officer		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	17 Congleton Partnership Update		
Background	<p>This paper has been prepared to update committee members on the Congleton Partnership activities and direction following the new constitution voted in at the AGM on 10 September 2024.</p> <p>Founded in 2006, the Partnership originated from the Congleton Market Town Initiative, evolving significantly since its first constitution in January 2007. The Partnership continues to respond to the needs of the community and support the VCFSE (Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise) sector, leveraging local resources to enhance Congleton.</p>		
Details	<p><u>Events held –</u></p> <p>Discover Volunteering – held 11th March Congleton Town Hall with Congleton Volunteer Action, spotlight on volunteering organisations within the town.</p> <p>16 organisations showcased opportunities, and over 40 people attended. A good atmosphere in the room. How effective the event is will depend on the follow-up and new volunteers.</p> <p>Alison Wright leading on Congleton Volunteer Action will follow up with people.</p> <p>Costs £140.00 T&C's / £62.50 Room Hire / £46.35 Promotion = £248.85</p> <p>Health and Wellbeing Fayre – held 18th March Congleton Town Hall - A total of 166 attendees signed in—30 more than the previous year. Approximately 120 goody bags were distributed. As not all attendees signed in, it's estimated that over 200 people were present (excluding exhibitors).</p> <p>The event saw participation from 42 organisations and received positive feedback overall. This year, the event ran with a shorter schedule (10 am to 2 pm), which proved effective, maintaining a steady and positive flow throughout. No workshops or talks were held this time, following low engagement in previous years—and they weren't missed.</p> <p>Total event expenditure came to £624.94, covering room hire, refreshments, and marketing. The date for next year's event has been booked for 17th March 2026.</p> <p><u>Upcoming Events -</u></p> <p>VE Day Celebrations – 8th May – A shared moment of celebration.</p> <p>In partnership with CTC, plans are being made to celebrate the 80th celebration of VE Day. Confirmed lineup for the day:</p> <p>9 am – Proclamation & raising of the VE Day flag at the Cenotaph.</p>		

	<p>11 am – Public Service at the Cenotaph with the British Legion, Rev Ian Endicott & dignitaries.</p> <p>12-2 pm – Fish and Chip dinner at Congleton Town Hall (invite only) expected to have around 100 attendees. The Grand Hall will be decorated, 1940's singer booked. RBL will be selling poppies at the Town Hall.</p> <p>Mossley WI will bake 8 Ginger and Orange cakes.</p> <p>3 pm – Rev Ian Endicott conducting a service at St Peter's Church. (TBC)</p> <p>6:30 pm – Ringing of Church Bells</p> <p>9:30 pm – Light up the Town Hall, Red/White/Blue.</p> <p>Congleton Park In Bloom Floral Display</p> <p>Electric Picture House is refurbishing one of the Congleton Bears from Bearmania, as a WW2 Soldier Bear. The Bear will be stationed at the Town Hall for people to have pictures with.</p> <p>Congleton Lion's is sponsoring the event and contributing £300.</p> <p>Green Fayre – 27th September</p> <p>The 6th annual Green Fayre is a chance to explore green issues and local solutions. Around 30 stallholders take part on the day, a good mixture of local businesses, groups and organisations. As the Green Fayre coincides with the Markers Market it is always a busy day. The Makers Market is on the Bridge Street area and the Green Fayre is on the closed High Street and Town Hall.</p> <p><u>Other Projects:</u></p> <p>Margaret Williamson Memorial Fund – The Partnership administers the MWMF, applications closed on the 10th of March. The MWMF board met on March 28th to distribute £1700.</p> <p>Awards went to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOL Theatre School - £150 • Rode Hall Silver Band - £585 • The Congleton Youth Orchestra - £240 • Congleton Community Projects - £350 • Congleton Sustainability Group - 100 • Congleton Pride - £175 • Alderley Gate Residents Group - £100 <p>No Teir Snooker Society</p> <p>Dementia Friends/Senior Forum to sponsor a snooker table for the dementia group held at the snooker club on Royal Street. One table for 6 months to help the group get established (cost £408.00). No Teir Snooker Society supports those with Early-stage dementia, carers also come along to enjoy refreshments while their loved one places snooker. It's going from strength to strength.</p>
--	---

	<p>8th of June Dennis Taylor is visiting the club, tickets will be sold at £25.00 to raise funds.</p> <p>Pop-Up Sports Equipment Agreed to fund the purchase of sports equipment including football nets, basketball hoops/nets and backboards, plus portable stands. Agreed to part fund an outdoor table tennis table at Bromley Farm. In total Approx £3770</p> <p>Trees for Congleton The group have surpassed their ambitious goal of planting 30,000 trees—one for every resident—since launching in 2019. Formed after the town council declared a climate emergency, the volunteer group has worked tirelessly over six years despite COVID delays. A special event unveiling a plaque for the 30,000th tree at Hankinson’s field on 9 May at 4 pm to celebrate.</p>
Financial Implications	None. Work is delivered within the reserved funds for Congleton Partnership.
Environmental Implications	Considered as part of each piece of work.
Inclusivity Diversity Impact	The Congleton Partnership uses communication tools to meet different audiences and provides events/activities that try to reach isolated members of our community.
Decision Required	That Councillors note this report.