

**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

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.