



Congleton Town Council

Title	Council
Date of Meeting Time	11 th December 2025 7 pm
Status	Final Minutes
Reference Documents	Agenda Papers for the Council – 11th December 2025

Attendance

Committee Members	Cllr Robert Brittain – Town Mayor (Chair) Cllr Suzy Firkin – Deputy Mayor (Vice Chair) Cllr Dawn Allen Cllr Charles Booth Cllr David Brown Cllr Russell Chadwick Arrived at 20.15 Cllr Robert Douglas Cllr Mark Edwardson Cllr Amanda Martin Cllr Susan Mead Cllr Rob Moreton Cllr Shaun Radcliffe Cllr Heather Seddon Cllr Liz Wardlaw Cllr Kay Wesley Cllr Glen Williams
Officers	David McGifford (Chief Officer)
Members of the Press	0
Members of the Public	1

1. Apologies for Absence

Were received from Cllr Suzie Akers Smith Cllr Emma Hall Cllr Arabella Holland Cllr Sally Ann Holland Cllr Heather Pearce Cllr Richard Walton

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

CTC/39/2526 resolved to approve and sign the Council minutes held on the 23rd October 2025

3. Declaration of Interest

Declarations were received by Cllr Heather Seddon - CEC, Cllr Rob Moreton CEC, Cllr David Brown CEC, Elizabeth Wardlaw CEC, Cllr Glen Williams item 12 Cllr Suzy Firkin item 12 Councillor Kay Wesley items 7.1 & 12

4. Questions from Members of the Public

There was one question from Jonathan Dakin – Appendix 1

5. Urgent Items

An urgent item was raised by Cllr Mead requesting we widely promote current Health Care facilities

6. Town Mayor Announcements and Engagements – Appendix 2

CTC/40/2526 resolved to receive the Town Mayors Announcements and Engagements

7. Minutes of the Planning Committee

CTC/41/2526 resolved To approve and sign the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 16th October 2025.

7.1 CEC Environment & Communities Meeting Call for Sites

CTC/42/2526 resolved unanimously to approve the statement (Appendix 3) read out by Cllr Douglas and for the Chief Officer to send a letter containing the statement to our MP Sarah Russell

8. Minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee

CTC/43/2526 resolved to approve and sign the minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 25th September 2025.

8.1 Policy Review Report (Enclosed)

CTC/44/2526 resolved to approve updates to the policies 8.11 – 8.14

8.11 Compliments, Suggestions and Complaints Policy

8.12 Flag Flying Policy

8.13 ICT and Cyber Security Policy

8.14 SAR Complaints Policy

8.2 Salary Virement Report

CTC/45/2526 resolved to approve the virement of salary budgets.

9. Minutes of the Environment Committee

CTC/46/2526 resolved to approve and sign the minutes of the Environment Committee held on the 2nd October 2025

9.1 Weed Spraying Quad Bike

CTC/47/2526 resolved To approve the procurement of the proposed quad bike for weed spraying

9.2 Vehicle Lease Extension

CTC/48/2526 resolved to approve the 12-month extension to a vehicle lease and approve the use of EMR 320 Capital Contingency to allow for the Health & Safety updates for the vehicles.

9.3 Livery To Streetscape Vans

CTC/49/2526 resolved to approve adding the livery to Streetscape Vans which would only include the Town Council Crest and the name Congleton Town Council.

10. Minutes of the Community Committee

CTC/50/2526 resolved approve and sign the minutes of the Community Committee held on 18th September 2025.

11. Minutes of the Town Hall Assets and Services Committee

CTC/51/2526 resolved approve and sign the minutes of the Town Hall Assets and Services Committee held on 11th September 2025

11.1 Grand Hall Interactive Screen

CTC/52/2526 resolved To approve the procurement of an Interactive Screen for the Grand Hall funded by a grant if available or if unsuccessful in its grant application via Capital

Contingency Earmarked Reserve or via a set budget in 2026-2027, depending on when Congleton Town Council is notified of its failure to obtain a grant.

12. Appointment of Representative for Congleton Partnership

CTC/53/2526 resolved to approve councillor Kay Wesley being one of the two council representatives on the Congleton Partnership Oversight Committee.

At 8.55 pm CTC/54/2526 Councillors resolved to approve continuing the meeting beyond 9.00pm

13. Resolution to Exclude the Public and Press from Item 14

To consider passing a resolution in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that public and press be excluded from the meeting due to Commercial sensitivities.

CTC/55/2526 resolved to approve passing the resolution to exclude members of the press and public from agenda item 14

14. Congleton Museum

CTC/56/2526 noted the update provided Cllrs S Firkin K Wesley and Chief Officer David McGifford

Appendix 1 Jonathan Dakin Question

My name is Jonathan Dakin and I am a White Ribbon Ambassador. The town and council should feel proud of our White Ribbon activity and the council accreditation gained. As I note that vehicle livery is on the agenda, there is an opportunity to highlight and recognise this achievement through some signage on council vehicles. This should result in raising awareness further and help our efforts to prevent abuse and violence

Appendix 2 TOWN MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS 2025/26

20 Engagements since 15.10.25 - Town Mayor, Cllr Robert Britain

19.10 Mayor of Leek's Civic Service
25.10 Congleton Poppy appeal Launch
29.10 Witchy Wednesday
1.11 Rotary Bonfire & Fireworks Display
8.11 Autumn Kids Tubs Plant-Up
9.11 Remembrance Sunday
11.11 Armistice Service
13.11 In Bloom Presentation Evening
14.11 Taste for Life Café Launch
15.11 Lantern Making Workshop
15.11 Refugees Welcome 10 Years Event
16.11 CAYT Elf the Musical
22.11 Visit to White Ribbon Stall
24.11 Congleton Rotary's 78th Charter Dinner
28.11 Congleton Christmas Switch-On
29.11 Congleton Lions Santa Launch
29.11 Rotary Tree of Light Switch On Event
30.11 Sunday Service at New Life Church
2.12 Astbury Mere Xmas Switch on
4.12 Congleton Town Mayor's "Festive Feast Fundraiser"

6 Engagements – Deputy Town Mayor, Cllr Suzy Firkin

19.10 Mayor of Nantwich, Civic Service
22.10 Visyon AGM
24.10 Little Shop of Horrors
15.11 Congleton Choral Society - Autumn Concert
1.12 St. John Ambulance Presentation Evening
5.12 Park Lane Care Home Christmas Switch-On

Appendix 3 Cllr Robert Douglas

CONGLETON COUNCIL - CHESHIRE EAST NEW LOCAL PLAN **11th DECEMBER 2025**

Cheshire East Council is progressing its new Local Plan. As part of this process, Cheshire East had a Call for Sites, where landowners put forward sites for development, which will be assessed by Cheshire East Council's officers. Developers prefer to build on Green Belt and on open countryside rather than on brown field sites as it is easier and cheaper given it avoids problems like ground contamination. To make matters worse, the Government is redefining some of our Green Belt as Grey Belt.

The Local Plan should ensure that development is coordinated and supported by the right infrastructure, but that is not happening, as we can all see – insufficient additional schools, doctors and dentists. In 2019, the waiting list for our N.H.S. dentist was six months, now it is four years. In that list, there are ten sites relating to Congleton covering an area of 75 acres, which equates to 47 football pitches. Three sites in Somerford Parish totalling 146 acres equating to 91 football pitches and four sites in Brereton Parish totalling 191 acres equating to 120 football pitches. The Government recently increased the annual housing requirement for Cheshire East to 2,603 houses (including 5% buffer) from 977 homes, so Cheshire East Council no longer has a five year land supply. David Malcolm, the Chief Planning Officer, recently advised it had dropped to just 3.8 years. This has very serious implications because with less than a five year supply of land, the balance in planning decisions has been tilted in favour of the developers.

The consequences of this were brilliantly stated by Councillor Goldsmith, an Independent Councillor, who holds the position of Chair of Cheshire East's Highways and Transport Committee. Councillor Goldsmith rightly stated that the Government is forcing Cheshire East Council to either determine which parts of the Green Belt are dug up, which hedgerows are ripped out and which trees are cut down, or instead, allow developers to make that decision to achieve the Government's targeted rush to concrete over our countryside.

Councillor Goldsmith also told us not to complain to the Cheshire East Councillors, who are being obliged to carry out the Government's "dirty work", but to complain to our local M.P.

I followed Councillor Goldsmith's advice and wrote to Sarah Russell. I was greatly heartened by Sarah Russell's response. Not only did Sarah Russell fully share all my concerns, but she has also actively raised these concerns with Government ministers.

There is, in my opinion, a simple solution to resolve this issue and ensure that Cheshire East Council has a five year land supply, thereby preventing opportunistic and inappropriate planning applications.

Prior to yesterday's Cheshire East full Council meeting, I put forward my suggestion to Nick Mannion, the Leader of Cheshire East Council, that the Government should require Councils to generate their own list of brown field sites suitable for development, which if appropriate, the Government compulsorily purchases from unwilling sellers just as it did for the HS2 Project.

Nick Mannion's response was, "you have hit the nail on the head". Nick Mannion advised me that Cheshire East already has the list of brown field sites. Nick Mannion's final response was, "give us the tools to do the job."

I, therefore, wish to make the following proposal:

That the Chief Officer and the Mayor urgently write a joint letter on behalf of Congleton Town Council to Sarah Russell with copies to the Leader and Deputy Leader of Cheshire East Council calling on the Government to require Cheshire East Council to provide a detailed list of brown field sites for the Government to consider which, if the owners are unwilling to allow these brown field sites to be built on, should be compulsorily purchased and then added to Cheshire East Council's land supply. The purpose of this is to ensure that Cheshire East Council then has a five year land supply, prioritising development on brown field sites and protecting our open countryside for the benefit of our communities and in the words of Sarah Russell, "not allowing developers to boost their profits through unplanned growth in unsuitable locations."

Councillor Robert Douglas