

Item 83
The Old Chancel

Background

The Old Chancel is a Grade II listed structure opposite St Augustines Church. It sits within pleasant green space which has been deconsecrated. There is a board of trustees which oversees the future of this site on which Cllr Lyons and the Town Clerk sit.

The site is adjacent to the Trent and Mersey Canal where 48-hour moorings are available allowing canal visitors to access the shops in Rugeley for provisions. The site is adjacent to The Chancel primary school, opposite St Augustines Church and 5 minutes' walk to Rugeley Town centre.

The Trustees of the Old Chancel have been looking at various opportunities to bring this building back into public use. They have considered the creation of meeting rooms, a visitor centre, a museum, interpretation centre etc.

Given the provision of space already in Rugeley, the trustees are looking for a use that does not compete with other local providers but adds to the visitor experience, educational development, and historical narrative. Historic England are keen to see a reimagining of the space that looks to the future as well as acknowledging the history. Having spoken with the Diocese, they are happy for the Old Chancel to be developed but would like to see some telling of the religious history of Rugeley in the final use.

What do we do next?

Meetings have taken place with Historic England, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Arups Consulting Engineers, Glancy Nicholls Architects and The Chancel School to consider possible future uses and development opportunities. Funding for a detailed feasibility study to inform and direct any future development of the site is now required and an expression of interest form is to be submitted to National Lottery Heritage Fund to secure this.

The developments currently under consideration lean to the creation of modular structures to house kitchens / tea rooms / toilets etc away from the chancel – possibly in a lychgate location. This would allow visitors to look at the Chancel and free up this space for interpretation etc. The central core of the Chancel – of which only the arches remain – could become a functional space with a floating staging area on which events, shows, weddings etc could all take place in the open air or under canvas. The tower could become a beacon / look out point from which to survey the town and its surrounds.

Proposal

Councillors are being asked to support the application for funding being submitted as it is possible that the Town Council may be asked to take on a developmental role in this project. At this moment in time, it is not envisioned that the Town Council will put money into the project but will need to put in time from the Town Clerk.

Item ~~83~~ 84
Elmore Park

Background

Elmore Park has recently been awarded the Green Flag Award by Keep Britain Tidy. Despite the award, there continues to be complaints about the excessive number of Canadian Geese on the site.

Photographs on local social media sites show the geese crossing Elmore Lane approx. 2 – 3 times a day causing a hazard to local traffic. In addition, the amount of goose mess found on the paths and grass of Elmore Park are in such large quantities that the grass cannot be used by families for picnics or games. There is increasing evidence that the geese are also using other open areas around town to mass, including the Rose Theatre car park.

For Consideration

Cllrs are asked to consider actions which can be done to encourage CCDC to move on with the culling of the geese and making the island and lake less desirable to future brooding geese.

Item 86 ⁸⁵
Floral Display Around the War Memorial

Background

The cenotaph for Rugeley is sited in front of the Library on Anson Street. It lies within the pedestrianised area of the Town Centre and falls within the Rugeley Town Centre Conservation Area.

The memorial stands on a plinth which is approx. 2 steps high and is surrounded by low metal railings.

The memorial is the focal point for the community on Remembrance Sunday when the wreaths are laid to commemorate the fallen and those who fought in past and present wars.

For Consideration

Given the success of the planting features in the Mindfulness Garden - Brook Square, Cllrs are asked to consider the creation of planting areas around Anson Street and the War Memorial to enhance the opportunity for reflection and quiet thought.

Item 86
Hagley Field

Background

Earlier this year, Cllrs considered putting a request in to Staffordshire County Council for a planting scheme to enhance the development of the Hagley Field and increase its biodiversity. This comment was sent to SCC in March this year.

The Town Council have been approached by Paul Sparkes and Martin De Ridder about the future opportunities which could be delivered on Hagley Field through an independent association working with partners such as the Town Council.

Providing that care is taken with the placement of the pitches, the site would not only work as sports pitches but also creates a natural amphitheatre offering a unique opportunity to host outdoor events unlike anything previously held on the site. The banking gives the opportunity for elevated viewing of activities on the fields which could range from firework displays, performances on temporary floating stages, school events etc.

There are also opportunities to work with Friends of Hagley to look at the future opportunities afforded by the Heritage Trail.

For Consideration

Cllrs are asked to note the contents of this report and the actions taking place in the town surrounding the future of the field.

Item 87
Traffic in Rugeley Town Centre

Background

At the July Full Council meeting, officers and Cllrs from Staffordshire County Council were in attendance to discuss the state of paving in the town centre and the problems associated with delivery vehicles accessing the town.

The current arrangements meant that there was little opportunity to prosecute those drivers who continued to drive through the town and deliver to retail units despite there being rear access to almost all of the shops in Rugeley.

Consideration

Cllrs to feedback on information that has come to light since the last meeting and inform the meeting.

Item 89
Hearing Loop in Council Chamber

Background

Both the Building Regulations 2010(12) and the Equalities Act (2010) state that service providers are required to make changes, where needed, to improve service for disabled customers or potential customers. There is a legal requirement to make reasonable changes to the way things are done to the built environment and to provide auxiliary aids and services (such as providing information in an accessible format, an induction loop for customers with hearing aids). To obtain the full benefit of attending public performance or taking part in discussions, a person with impaired hearing needs to receive a signal that is amplified in both volume and signal to noise ratio.

The Council Chamber currently has no system in for voice amplification and therefore restricts those with impaired hearing from fully engaging with Council discussions.

Discussions have taken place with a couple of companies to consider how to install an induction loop system in the Chamber along with microphones to help with voice amplification. This will not only help those attending Council meetings in person but will also assist with clarity of sound when live streaming onto the Councils Facebook page.

For Consideration

Cllrs are asked to note the contents of this report and allocate a budget for the installation of such system in the Chamber. It is estimated that the installation of a new system will cost no more than £4,000 but quotes are still awaited.