**Council Meeting**

**20 April 2023**

**APPENDIX CO151**



**The Messenger Working Group**

**NOTES**

**Thursday 30th March 2023, 12.00pm at the Town Hall**

Present: Cllrs Chapman, Manton & Sanderson

Sue Thomas, Town Clerk

1. To appoint a Chairperson

Councillor Manton was appointed as Chairperson.

1. To agree the terms of reference.

The terms of reference were agreed with the following inclusion:

* To consider the validity of the future of The Messenger

1. To look at the production of the Messenger

Details of the production costs for the last edition of the Messenger and the costs for the April 2023 edition were tabled.

The group discussed the information; changing the size of the Messenger from A4 to A5 has slightly reduced the printing costs but this has been offset by a reduction in advertising fees generated which has resulted in the A5 edition not covering its production costs. Members agreed that producing the newsletter in A5 is not viable based on the information provided.

Discussions took place regarding the aim of the Messenger which is to promote the Town Council, local community groups and the Town and whether this is being achieved. The community groups and community articles are printed free of charge, when considering possible other options for promoting the Town Council the effect on the community groups should be considered. Concern was raised that not all residents receive a copy of the newsletter.

The group agreed that in order to make a recommendation to Council regarding the future of the magazine, public opinion should be sought as to what they think of the magazine, what information would they like to see in it and if they receive a copy through the post.

It was agreed that a two-stage approach should be taken:

**Stage One**

* To circulate a questionnaire asking residents their views on The Messenger. The questionnaire to be put on the Town Council’s Facebook page and website and circulated to the surrounding parish councils.
* To have a stall, either on Cheshire Street or outside the Town Hall, at which Councillors can talk to residents about The Messenger and complete the questionnaire.

**Stage Two**

To understand the work involved in producing the newsletter the following information should be requested:

* A breakdown of the income for adverts
* A copy of the invoices for printing
* A breakdown of the administration required, rates and how many hours are spent on administration each edition.
* A breakdown of the production work required, rates and how many hours are spent on production work each edition.
* Royal Mail to provide details of how the newsletter are delivered; do they only get delivered to properties that are having mail on that day or should they be delivered to all addresses.

The above information to be obtained ready for the next meeting.

**For consideration by Council**

The working group recommend Stage One is implemented as soon as possible. A copy of the draft questionnaire is attached for approval.