

Welshpool Town Council, The Vicarage Gardens, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7DD
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Title	Visit Welshpool - Voucher Update July 26
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OFFICERS RECOMMENDATION

- 1. The implementation of the Welshpool Voucher Scheme be approved.**

1. Purpose

1. To provide Members with the results of the initial business consultation regarding the proposed Welshpool Town Voucher Scheme and to seek approval to proceed with the development and implementation of the scheme.

2. Background

1. At a previous meeting, the Committee considered a proposal to introduce a Welshpool Town Voucher Scheme designed to encourage local spending and support businesses within the town.
2. The Committee resolved to "To agree in principle on the voucher scheme. To determine the demand and confirm the serial number structure, and then return to the Committee."
3. An expression of interest exercise was subsequently undertaken with local businesses to gauge support for the proposal and identify any concerns or suggestions that should be considered before implementation.
4. The proposed scheme would allow residents, visitors, organisations and employers to purchase Welshpool vouchers that could be redeemed at participating local businesses. Similar schemes have operated successfully in other towns and have been used to support local economies, encourage spending within town centres and promote independent businesses.

3. Consultation Results

1. Six responses were received from businesses and organisations representing a range of sectors including retail, services and events.
2. Of the six responses received:

1. Four expressed support for the scheme
 2. Two indicated that they would be unlikely to participate.
 3. No respondent objected to the principle of the scheme itself.
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3. Respondents identified several potential benefits, including encouraging local spending, supporting independent businesses and providing a flexible gifting option that could be used across multiple participating businesses.
 4. One respondent suggested that the scheme could help encourage visitors to explore areas beyond Broad Street, including Puzzle Square, Severn Street and Berriew Street, whilst another organisation indicated that vouchers could be purchased as prizes for community events and fundraising activities.
 5. A number of respondents highlighted the importance of ensuring that any scheme is easy for businesses to participate in and is supported by effective marketing and promotion.

4. Advice

1. The consultation demonstrates a positive level of support amongst respondents and provides evidence that there is sufficient interest to continue developing the proposal.
2. The Welshpool Town Voucher Scheme would support the Council's objectives of encouraging local spending, supporting businesses and strengthening Welshpool's position as a destination for residents and visitors alike.
3. Subject to approval, officers would continue to engage with local businesses and develop the operational arrangements necessary to implement the scheme.

5. Links to Strategic Objectives and Interim Strategic Plan

1. VW1 – Develop a tourism brand to include website, mobile app and other digital channels and work collaboratively with tourism operators.

6. Resource & Legal Implications

1. The costs associated with developing and promoting the scheme can be met from existing budgets.
2. The Communications & Community Engagement Officer would support business engagement, promotion and ongoing administration of the scheme, under the direction of the Events & Markets Manager.
3. The Council has powers under Section 144 of the Local Government Act 1972 to encourage tourism and may support local economic activity through its wider community wellbeing objectives.

7. Specific Implications

1. N/A

8. Recommendation

1. The implementation of the Welshpool Voucher Scheme be approved.

9. Decision

1. To resolve to adopt the recommendations as above.