Cyngor Tref Trallwng Welshpool Town Council

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Title	Visit Welshpool Programme - Sept 26
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OFFICERS RECOMMENDATION

1. **To note the progress made across the four strands of the Visit Welshpool programme.**
2. **To approve the launch of the Visit Welshpool mobile application and website.**
3. **To approve the Visit Welshpool branding guidelines and authorise officers to produce branded content and progress the Town Guide within the approved budget.**
4. **To note that the first Business Forum will be held at the Royal Oak at the end of September 2026 and that invitations will be issued to local businesses.**
5. **To note the progress of the Voucher Scheme design competition and that the Mayor will judge the entries.**

1. Purpose

1. To provide Members with an update on the Visit Welshpool tourism branding programme and to seek approval to launch the Visit Welshpool mobile application and website, adopt the branding guidelines and proceed with the production of branded content.

2. Background

1. The Visit Welshpool tourism branding project was approved on 26 November and comprises four strands: Business Forums; Mobile App and Website; Branding and Town Guide; and a Voucher Scheme.
2. The Visit Welshpool name and bilingual logo were approved in March 2026, providing a single identity through which the Council can promote the town, its attractions, businesses, facilities and events.
3. The Voucher Scheme was approved in July 2026. A design competition was launched during August 2026, with the Mayor to judge the entries. The approved design will inform the presentation of the scheme.

4. The first Business Forum is being arranged for the end of September 2026 at the Royal Oak. Invitations will be issued to local businesses. The forum will provide an opportunity to introduce the Visit Welshpool programme, encourage business participation and obtain feedback on future tourism activity.

5. The Visit Welshpool mobile application and associated website are ready to launch, subject to approval. The application has been developed in-house using existing officer resources and is available for Android and Apple mobile devices. The Council retains ownership of the software, content and associated intellectual property and avoids the recurring licensing costs of a commercial tourism application.

6. The application is intended to become the Council's principal digital visitor information platform. Its features include an interactive town map; information on attractions and places to visit; GPS-supported walking trails; a live events directory; transport and parking information; real-time information for bus stops; and information relating to the Town Bus service.

7. Event information will be managed centrally, with staff at the Information Centre and other Council officers adding events and reviewing submissions received from the public. The platform has been designed so that further attractions, trails and services can be added as required.

8. Draft branding guidelines have been prepared to ensure that the Visit Welshpool identity is applied consistently across the mobile application, website, Town Guide and promotional materials. Subject to approval of the guidelines, branded content will be produced for the programme.

3. Advice

1. The four strands are intended to operate as a coordinated programme. The website and mobile application will provide the main digital information channels, the branding and Town Guide will provide a consistent public identity, the Voucher Scheme will encourage local spending and repeat visits, and the Business Forum will provide a means of involving businesses in town matters.

2. Officers consider that the mobile application and website are sufficiently developed to proceed to launch. The application has been tested by Cllr Jackson Quarrell who has provided updates and improvements. The principal benefit of the application is that locally relevant visitor, event and transport information can be presented through a single platform and updated directly by the Council.

3. Approval of the branding guidelines at this stage will provide a consistent standard for future content and reduce the risk of the logo, colours and bilingual identity being applied inconsistently.

4. The first Business Forum should be used to demonstrate the digital platforms, explain how businesses can become involved with the Voucher Scheme and seek views on the future development of the programme.

4. 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 with tourism operators in town, e.g. Powis Castle and WLLR, to co-construct.

2. TIC2 - Update offering and explore digital resourcing.

5. Resource & Legal Implications

1. **Resource implications** - The approved 2026/27 budget includes £3,000 under VW1 – Tourism Brand and £1,500 under VW2 – Promotion Tourism. Production of branded content will remain within the approved budget and comply with the Council's financial and procurement

arrangements. Continuing officer time will be required to maintain the website and application, moderate event submissions and keep visitor information current which is included within the job description of the Council's Communications & Community Engagement Officer.

2. **Legal implications** - The Council has powers under Section 144 of the Local Government Act 1972 to promote tourism.

6. Specific Implications

1. **Crime and Disorder** - There are no significant direct crime and disorder implications. Accurate mapping and visitor information may assist people in navigating the town and identifying public facilities.

2. **Biodiversity** - Digital visitor information may reduce reliance on printed materials and can promote walking, cycling and responsible enjoyment of the town’s green spaces.

3. **Well-being** - The programme may support the local economy by promoting businesses, attractions and events and encouraging visitors to spend time in the town. Walking trails and sustainable travel information may support healthier travel choices, while bilingual branding and future Welsh-language content can help promote Welsh language and culture. The provision of both digital and printed information will remain important to avoid excluding people who do not use smartphones.

4. **Risk Management** - The principal risks are delays in delivery, inaccurate or outdated public information, insufficient staff capacity, data protection breaches, cyber failure and reputational damage if the platforms do not operate as expected. These relate to the Risk Register entries concerning failure to deliver, staff capacity, computer records and websites, IT and cyber failure, and protection of third parties from data breaches. The risks should be managed through pre-launch testing, appropriate privacy and security controls, regular backups, clear responsibility for content, routine reviews and realistic delivery timescales. The application should be launched without any Voucher Scheme functions for which the detailed terms and controls have not been completed.

7. Recommendation

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2. To approve the launch of the Visit Welshpool mobile application and website.

3. To approve the Visit Welshpool branding guidelines and authorise officers to produce branded content and progress the Town Guide within the approved budget.

4. To note that the first Business Forum will be held at the Royal Oak at the end of September 2026 and that invitations will be issued to local businesses.

5. To note the progress of the Voucher Scheme design competition and that the Mayor will judge the entries.

8. Decision

1. To resolve to approve the recommendations set out above.