Report to Town Council

Subject:	Proposal for a refreshed Town Council Website for enhanced project communication
From:	DG
Date:	12/10/2023

I am proposing a comprehensive overhaul of the Town Council's existing website to enhance the communication of the rich set of projects and initiatives undertaken by the council. This refresh will involve creating an intuitive and informative platform that utilises infographics, clear layouts, a new community map, 'The Town in Numbers,' and live environment data. Our primary objective is to improve accessibility and provide a seamless experience for all residents while retaining the same backend tools (WordPress).

Our current website, although informative, needs a modern and user-friendly makeover to better serve the community. With the proposed changes, we aim to revamp the presentation of existing content, adhere to the 2018 accessibility regulations, and leverage the flexibility of the WordPress platform to deliver a more engaging and accessible experience for all users.

The new website will include several key features:

Infographics and Clear Layouts:
The content will be redesigned with a focus on user-friendly infographics and clear layouts. Visual representation of data and project information will make it easier for residents to understand the council's initiatives.

Community Map:
We will introduce a dynamic community map that allows users to explore the town's resources, services, and ongoing projects.

The Town in Numbers:
A dedicated section, "The Town in Numbers," will provide statistical data, charts, and graphs that summarise the council's achievements, milestones, and vital statistics. This data will be regularly updated to keep residents informed.

Live Environment Data:
To promote transparency and environmental consciousness, the website will integrate live environmental data. Residents can access real-time information on air quality, weather, recycling programs, and more.

Retaining WordPress Backend:

To maintain the council's existing workflow and ease of content management, we will continue using WordPress as the backend platform. We will update the website's theme and functionality while keeping it easy for staff to update and maintain.

Accessibility Compliance:

We understand the importance of making the website accessible to everyone. Our design and development will fully comply with the 2018 accessibility regulations to ensure that all residents, regardless of their abilities, can access the content seamlessly.

An updated website has the potential to significantly enhance community engagement by offering a more user-friendly, visually appealing, and accessible platform for residents. Through clear infographics, comprehensive project information, live environmental data, and a dynamic community map, the website will foster a better understanding of the council's role and initiatives. This, in turn, will increase overall awareness, making it easier for residents to stay informed about the council's projects and accomplishments, ultimately encouraging more active participation and a stronger sense of community involvement.

Summary of decisions or actions requested (including timing):

Agreement from the TC that this is required.

If agreed, we propose the following timeline for this project:

Month 1-2: Website design and development including moving over pre-existing content.
Month 2: Accessibility testing and improvements.
Month 3: Integration of live environmental data.
Month 3: Launch and public announcement.

Financial implications: None. Potential to utilise a new town map in a digital format (not included in this proposal).

Communications: