

NAME:	Cllr V Blake, Cllr C Elliott
TOPIC:	BUSINESS AND TOURISM REPORT 7 JANUARY 2025
DATE:	December 2024
UPDATE SINCE LAST REPORT:	<p>Cllr Elliott has continued to promote and co-host the “Alcester Business Club” networking group at Minerva Mill, with the group meeting every 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday monthly from 09:15-10:45. There has been a steady increase in numbers. We now have an average of more than 20 attendees with a mix of repeat and new people.</p> <p>Cllr Elliot also promoted and co-hosted another ABC Business Development Day in October. This comprised of networking, a small exhibition and expert speakers delivering short presentations on a variety of subjects.</p> <p>The Town events guide for 2025 has now been produced and 5,000 copies printed, 2,800 of which went out with the December Council newsletter. The balance will be distributed throughout December by drops in Kinwarton, Great Alne, Stratford Information Centre and generally at venues around the area.</p> <p>Cllr Blake and the Town Clerk continue to attend Warwickshire Towns Networking Group. Stemming from the November meeting Alcester Town Council is now registered on the ‘Our Warwickshire’ portal where organisations can upload details of forthcoming events.</p> <p>We continue to monitor the installation of a ‘Banking Hub’ in Alcester. It has been confirmed that the Town will definitely get one to coincide with the closure of Lloyds Bank on 25 June 2025. The location is still not settled, but if a permanent home is not found in time for 25 June 2025 the Hub will be located in temporary accommodation.</p> <p>The Events Forum – Cllr Blake and the Town Clerk met with SDC and its leader Cllr Juned to discuss concerns regarding SDC’s involvement in event planning. SDC are to draw up a template for event organisers to ensure that necessary steps are taken relating to safety and licencing matters. We volunteered Alcester to be a guinea pig to trial the template and it is hope that this will be available shortly.</p>

	<p>A further Events Forum is planned for January, but following this it is intended to work with organisations on an individual basis as each event has its own challenges.</p>
<p>FUTURE PLANS:</p>	<p>We will continue to promote, co-host and attend Alcester Business Club at Minerva Mill on a monthly basis and join Lottie Newitt from the Chamber of Commerce for drop-ins at Minerva Mill.</p> <p>Cllrs Elliot and Blake have been invited to attend the Alcester Academy careers day Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January, whereby we will be meeting exhibitors including 22 national and local employers, and academy students.</p> <p>We will continue to work with Cash Access UK to ensure that the new Banking Hub is up and running by June 2025.</p> <p>Accessibility to Town premises is an ongoing concern for those less abled, this is a difficult area and solutions can be hard to find. It is hoped that we can work with WTN in 2025 to build on the Town review undertaken previously.</p> <p>We intend to encourage organisations to register with the 'Our Warwickshire' portal to promote their events.</p> <p>Work will continue with the 'Kevin the Kiosk' project. It is hoped that he will be removed shortly to be refurbished. The project has been thwarted by problems locating the electrical supply.</p> <p>The 'Travel Tale' initiative continues. This is a heritage type trail around the Town using QR codes to provide information. The Town Clerk and a representative from the History Society met with the firm concerned and hopefully we will work with them when funding becomes available.</p>
<p>FOR CONSIDERATION/ DISCUSSION AT FULL COUNCIL</p>	<p>NONE</p>