

Knutsford Town Council

Town Clerk: Adam Keppel-Green

Council Offices, Toft Road, Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 6TA

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Jack Steel
Pickmere Parish Council
1 Mereheath Close
Pickmere
Knutsford
WA16 0LP

14th September 2020

Dear Jack,

KNUTSFORD CITIZENS ADVICE SERVICE

Since 2016, Knutsford Town Council has funded the Citizens Advice service to ensure that our residents have access to a free at point of service advice, information and advocacy service which covers a huge range of issues from Consumer Law, Debt, Employment, Housing, Welfare, Family Law and everything else that would cause a person to seek help. Contrary to popular belief, the Citizens Advice is not a centrally funded service, nor does it receive enough funding from Cheshire East Council to be able to operate across the whole borough. The Cheshire East North CA is based in Macclesfield and in order to operate in other areas relies on funding from the local councils. They have outreach services in Wilmslow, Poynton and because of our funding, in Knutsford too. Without our funding, there would be no service in Knutsford.

The Town Council has committed to funding of £20,228 for the 2021/22 financial year to ensure the continuation of two morning sessions per week being delivered from the Council Offices in Knutsford. Obviously, at the moment the service is running remotely due to the impact of coronavirus but we are hoping to be able to restart the face to face sessions soon. Whilst it has been running remotely our residents have still had access to the same level of support.

As a key service centre, we know that services in Knutsford are used by a wider catchment than just our own residents. In fact, only 69% of the Knutsford Citizens Advice service users are our residents with the remaining 31% being residents from our neighbouring villages, such as yours.

Whilst the usage from your parish is low, we are asking our neighbouring councils to consider making a donation towards the funding we provide the Citizens Advice, to reduce the burden on our precept payers. This could be a one-off donation, or an agreement to provide a donation over the next three years, providing certainty on funding for both our councils. The Chief Officer from the Cheshire East North CA would be happy to come to a parish council meeting to discuss how Citizens Advice supports people and the huge advantage that having this service on the doorstep gives to residents.

As a funder, you would be welcome to promote the service locally and ensure your residents know the service is available to them.

The Town Council would be grateful if your council would consider this request and if you could let me know the decision reached.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Keppel'.

Adam Keppel-Green
Town Clerk