

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF LIBRARY AND PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GROVE HOUSE, HIGH STREET NORTH, DUNSTABLE

ON MONDAY 9TH-JULY 2007

Present: Councillor Mrs B M Boatwright (Town Mayor); Councillor A E Green (Deputy Town Mayor); Councillors J Freeman (Vice Chairman), Mrs C Gresham, J Harnett, Mrs S B Littlechild and C E Meakins-Jell with Mr D Ashlee (Town Clerk), Ms M Alexander (Head of Events and Town Centre Services), Mrs H Walker-Sygrove (Priory House Manager) and Mr S Simpson (Promotions Officer).

Apologies for Absence: Councillors T A Stock (Chairman), Mrs J K Fairbairn, R R Anklesaria and B F Ralley; Mr J Sutton (National Trust) and Mrs R Lambert (Dunstable Library)

197 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 14th May and 21st May 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

198 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Members declared their interest in the items indicated:

Cllr A E Green	Dunstable Downs Priory House	Personal Interest (Member of National Trust) Personal Interest (Member of English Heritage)
----------------	---------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

199 DUNSTABLE LIBRARY

The Committee received a report of the Library Manager on recent activities and events taking place within the Library since the last meeting of the Committee. Councillor Green expressed disappointment in what appeared to be a decrease in borrowing, however, the Town Mayor spoke in favour of the ancillary services the Library is now providing, including the recent question and answer session in 'The Corner' between local Police Officers and young people, as well as the extension of the Virtual Library. The Committee requested that the Library Manager be asked to provide figures on the 'Virtual Library' usage to the next meeting of this Committee.

(Action: Head of Events and Town Centre Services)

200 DUNSTABLE DOWNS

The National Trust's Property Manager for Dunstable Downs submitted a detailed report on recent activities including the official launch of the new centre on 23rd May. Car park charging was due to start in the very near future and the machines were due to be installed in early July. Some building works were still outstanding, including the completion of the landscaping works which would enable the removal of the temporary fencing around the centre. The old visitors centre was still due for demolition which was still subject to planning approval.

An additional part-time warden had been employed, working 4 days Friday to Monday and a part-time administrator would also join the staff team on 10th July. The EEDA funded Interpretation was due for final installation in mid December, the content of which would be largely informed by the centre visitors.

The sheep grazing had had to be stopped as a dog walker has been propping gates open and consequently several incidents occurred when sheep strayed onto the B4540 (Bison Hill).

The Dunstable Kite Festival was due to take place on Sunday 29th July 2007 and other events during August and September included a Family Environment Activity Day, an open air production by The Quantum Theatre of Treasure Island and a guided walk to discover the History of the Downs.

201 PROMOTIONS

The Committee received the report of the Promotions Officer detailing arrangements for forthcoming events, including the forthcoming Town Centre Summer Entertainment, Kite making workshop at the Dunstable Kite Festival and a Children's themed party in Grove House Gardens. Members commented on the lack of advertising for the Tudor Day event which had taken place on Saturday 23rd June and it was suggested that the option of using the yellow AA boarding be investigated.

(Action: Promotions Officer)

202 TRANSFER OF DUNSTABLE CARNIVAL FROM DUNSTABLE CARNIVAL ASSOCIATION TO DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

At the request of Dunstable Carnival Association, the Committee considered proposals for the transfer of the running of the annual Dunstable Carnival to Dunstable Town Council, for inclusion in its annual events programme.

RESOLVED: i) that the transfer of Dunstable Carnival from Dunstable Carnival Association to Dunstable Town Council be supported in principle, subject to final consideration by the Carnival Association

ii) that the transfer include all financial and material assets from the Carnival Association

iii) that, subject to the above, the transfer be completed by early autumn 2007.

(Action: Head of Events and Town Centre Services)

203 PRIORY HOUSE

Members were pleased to receive the report of the Priory House Manager and learn that public enquiries within the Tourist Information Centre, in person, by telephone and email were continuing to increase, as were sales of First Capital Connect tickets. The new stocks of locally sourced wooden crafted items were now on sale, as well as a new gift range for special occasions.

The Tudor Day event had proved extremely successful, with good café and shop takings for the day. Enquiries from various groups to use the temporary exhibition area were also on the increase, including one from the Dunstable Grammar School Old Boys Association.

Ideas for education interpretation which would appeal to both children and adults were also being considered.

Members were pleased to note that the new catering arrangement was working well and the new contractor, Karen Graham Catering Ltd was looking forward to working closely with the Priory House Manager to develop a programme of themed events in Priory House.

204 MEETING ROOM FLOORING – PRIORY HOUSE

The Committee considered the report of the Priory House Manager regarding the necessity to improve the flooring in the meeting room.

RESOLVED: that, subject to approval by English Heritage, carpeting be fitted to the meeting room floor, the cost of which be met from the Priory House contingency fund to a maximum of £1,400.

(Action: Head of Events and Town Centre Services)

205 FUNCTION PRICING – PRIORY HOUSE

The Priory House Manager submitted proposals for a pricing structure for catering functions at Priory House. These were agreed with the request that the prices be kept under review and a report be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee on the level of bookings and income generated.

(Action: Priory House Manager)