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DUNSTABLE
TOWN COUNCIL

David Ashlee Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Our Ref: DA/

Date: 1 March 2019

Dear Councillor

Could you please note that a meeting of the Community Services Committee will be held in the Council Chamber, Grove House, High Street North, Dunstable on **Monday 11 March 2019 at 7.00 pm** when the following business will be transacted.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. Minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 7 January 2019 (copies previously circulated).
3. Specific Declarations of Interest.
4. Events and Marketing– information report (see page 1).
5. Older People's Day Care Service – information report (see page 5).
6. Grove Corner and Community Engagement – information report (see page 7).
7. Priory House – information report (see page 10).
8. Dunstable Town Centre Services - information report (see page 12).
9. Police and Crime Commissioner request for funding (see page 15).

Cont'd ...

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DA/BW
1 March 2019

10. Reports from outside bodies:

South Bedfordshire Dial-a-Ride – Cllr Hollick
Dunstable Town Band – Cllr Sparrow

Yours faithfully

David Ashlee
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

To: All Members of the Community Services Committee
John Kane (Town Mayor), Nigel Warren (Deputy Town Mayor), Pat Staples (Chairman),
Eugene Ghent (Vice-Chairman), Lisa Bird, John Chatterley, Terry Colbourne, Jeannette
Freeman, Claire Meakins, Mike Mullany, Patricia Russell, Emma Simmons, Johnson
Tamara, Jessica Woodward and other Members of the Council for information.

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 11 MARCH 2019

EVENTS AND MARKETING

Purpose of Report: For information only

1. FUTURE EVENTS – Planning and Development

1.1 St George's Day

The 2019 event will take place in Priory Gardens on 27 April 2018 between 11.00 am and 4.00 pm. Activities this year include:

- Archery
- Punch and Judy
- Arts and crafts
- Bouncy Castle
- Fighting Knight display
- Knight School
- Caving
- Climbing Wall
- Meet Dexter the Dragon
- Dragon Town Trail
- Face painting
- Climbing Wall
- Dunstable Town Band

The activities and entertainment will be laid out from the croquet lawn up to the meadow area where the archery, caving and bouncy castle will be held. Marketing will take place via a press release, distribution of flyers to all primary and lower schools, Facebook advertising, posters and leaflets to Dunstable shops and businesses, an advertisement in Talk of the Town and flyers and posters in the town noticeboard sites.

1.2 Around The World

Plans are coming together well for Around the World. Activities currently confirmed for this event are:

- Litter of piglets to represent Chinese New year of the pig.
- Yodelling
- Bhangra dancing
- Bollywood Punch and Judy
- Stilt walkers
- Spanish guitarist

The Events and Marketing Officer is trying to engage with local groups and clubs who may want to get involved with the event, so it is possible that this line up will grow over the coming weeks.

1.3 Sunday Band Concerts

The 2019 programme has been suggested below along with an explanation of the selection process. Concerts will take place from 2.15 pm until 4.15 pm on the Grove House Gardens performance area. This year, officers have invited charities to apply for the seven week tea and coffee concession. The application is available via the Town Council website or can be e-mailed/sent out on requests. Members will be updated via member updates on how this new process is going.

Sun 24 June	Dunstable Town Band
Sun 7 July	Dunstable Salvation Army
Sun 14 July	Toddington Town Band
Sun 28 July	St Albans Brass Band
Sun 4 August	The Woburn Sands Band
Sun 11 August	Welwyn Garden City
Sun 18 August	Milton Keynes Brass Band

1.4

Dunstable Live

The tribute line-up for the 'Soft Rock' theme is shaping up as follows:

- Bryan Adams
- Meat Loaf
- Bon Jovi
- Queen

This line up was selected by the public via an online poll on Facebook. There were a total of 1,543 votes, which is significantly up from last year's poll which had 347 votes.

1.5 Party in the Park

Plans are in the early stages of development for this event. However, confirmed so far are the headline act and tribute act, a local band performance, kids soft play area, and the funfair. Officers are currently contacting local groups to try to increase community involvement in the event.

1.6 Priory Pictures

The large outdoor screens have been booked for the two film events and 140 deckchairs have been hired.

There was a poll on Facebook to decide the films, and in total over 3,200 votes were cast.

The six top films were chosen (ones that have been played before were not included).

The top six are:

- A Star is Born
- Bohemian Rhapsody
- Aqua Man
- Mary Poppins Returns
- Crimes of Grindlewald
- Christopher Robin

A Star is Born and Bohemian Rhapsody have already been granted a licence and these will be advertised in the March edition of Talk of the Town.

1.6.1 A new addition for the 2019 event is a relaxed screening for an autism and hearing impairment friendly film at Priory Pictures. One of the selected films will be shown at an earlier time slot. The screening will benefit from:

- Lower sound volume
- Subtitles
- 140 deckchairs
- Enclosed quiet space available
- A viewing area for wheel chair users
- Designated smoking area
- Minibus drop off point
- Easy access toilets

The same film will then be played again with full volume and no subtitles later in the day.

The Events and Marketing Officer has been in talks with multiple agencies and community organisations with specialist knowledge regarding those with such additional needs to ensure that the relaxed screening works and best fits the needs of the users.

1.7 Priory Proms in the Park

The set up will be very similar to last year. The screen and PA have been booked and there will be several site meetings later in the year to discuss and plan the details of the event.

2. TOWN CENTRE PUBLICITY

The Events and Marketing Officer is currently working with the Town Centre Services Officer and Head of Service to look at a possible one off edition of a magazine to promote Dunstable town centre as a destination to neighbouring villages; promoting town council facilities, events and businesses. Members will be kept updated on this through the Councillor updates.

3. WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

3.1 Facebook likes

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
DTC	1,666	2,258	3,955	5,477
CPCFC	119	200	306	394
Grove Corner	191	336	418	441
Town Ranger	-	-	486	748

Twitter followers

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
DTC	1,154	1,507	1,816	2,106
Town Centre	1,138	1,483	1,776	1,976
Priory House	281	322	364	433
Events	1,317	1,568	1,795	1,952
CPCFC	457	514	570	653

These figures show a positive increase in those choosing to like/follow the Town Council on social media. As a result the Town Council's social media activity is reaching more people than ever before, and continues to grow.

4. TALK OF THE TOWN

4.1 2019 Delivery Dates

Below are the copy dates that the remaining editions of Talk of The Town for 2019/20 and when the editions will be delivered. Currently 16,000 copies are delivered; enough to cover all the housing in Dunstable. This also includes flats above shops in the town centre if they are easily accessible.

Copy Deadline: 20 May	Delivery: 5 July
Copy Deadline: 5 September	Delivery: 18 October
Copy Deadline: 5 December	Delivery: 17 January 2020

5. AUTHOR

5.1 Lisa Vincent – Events and Marketing Officer

Email – lisa.vincent@dunstable.gov.uk

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 11 MARCH 2019****OLDER PEOPLE'S DAY CARE SERVICES**

Purpose of report: For information only.

1. PROJECT MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

- 1.1 The Good Companions Club (GCC) has 22 members. A notice will go out in the next Talk of the Town to recruit new members.

2. GENERAL UPDATE – Good Companions Club**2.1 Improved Quality of Life**

The group have had a number of visiting speakers over the past month, one from RAF Veterans. This brought back memories for one particular member who served in the RAF and who has since remained in contact with the veterans group.

2.2 Dignity & Respect

We have ensured that those members wishing to take part in the Big Lunch this year can do so by ensuring that those with mobility issues can be dropped off in the park.

2.3 Health & Emotional Wellbeing

Students from Weatherfield Academy, undertaking a course in Health & Social Care, are now visiting the club on a regular basis. This has had a very positive affect on both students and members who are all getting a lot out of the visits.

2.4 Making a Positive Contribution

Keech Hospice gave a presentation to club members and they donated over £35 to this good cause.

3. CREASEY PARK COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CENTRE OVER 55s LUNCH CLUB

- 3.1 Creasey Park Community Football Centre Lunch Club now has 36 members with an average of 30 members attending each week. A short waiting list remains in place.

3.2 Improved Quality of Life

A recently joined couple have said what a difference the lunch club has made to their lives. Both in their 80's they commented on how their old friends had all died and how isolated they had become. They have settled in well and made new friends and look forward to Thursday's.

3.3 **Dignity & Respect**

Members have asked for a special remembrance lunch to be arranged so they can both remember and celebrate the lives of passed members and the friendship they shared.

3.4 **Health & Emotional Wellbeing**

Places have been offered to 4 people on the waiting list. All have underlying health issues and have become quite isolated. Existing members are keen to offer them a warm welcome.

4. **STAFFING**

4.1 Unfortunately the Older People's Support Services Officer remains on long term sick. Both clubs have been able to run successfully throughout this period due to the additional support of the Older Peoples Assistant, the other members of the Community & Young Peoples Services team and the wonderful volunteers.

5. **COFFEE MORNINGS**

5.1 The last coffee morning held at the United Services Club was a great success with 16 in attendance. Age UK were in attendance and gave out both general and specific information to the group and individuals. The next coffee morning will take place on 12 March in Grove Corner. Officers have arranged six more in the new financial year.

6. **BIG LUNCH**

6.1 This year's Big Lunch will take place on Tuesday 11 June in Grove House Gardens. This has been advertised via social media, Downside magazine and the March edition of Talk of the Town. Enquiries have started to come in for this popular event.

7. **AUTHORS**

Sandy Coyle, Community and Young People's Services Manager
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Jack Adams-Rimmer, Neighbourhood Development Officer
Email - jack.adams-rimmer@dunstable.gov.uk

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCILCOMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEEMONDAY 11 MARCH 2019GROVE CORNER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Purpose of Report:	For information only.
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1. GROVE CORNER FIGURES

- 1.1 Grove Corner has received 103 visits from young people with 9 new sign ups since the last report up to and including Friday 22 February 2019. Numbers are recorded through a head count by officers and staff.
- 1.2 Junior youth club still remains popular with an average of 18 attending the Friday evening sessions.
- 1.3 Due to a vacant post and lack of numbers attending the senior drop-ins, Monday and Wednesday evening sessions ceased from the end of January.
- 1.4 There have been 8 drop-in sessions since the last report to this Committee.
- 1.5 Grove Corner now has 447 Facebook 'Likes' and Grove Corner's Instagram now has 154 followers. Both remain an excellent tool for communicating with young people.
- 1.6 The Pokémon Club continues to be a popular activity and currently there are no issues with lack of volunteers.
- 1.7 SORTED Counselling Services
Please see below for figures from 14 December to 26 February:
- Hours Offered - 169
Hours Cancelled/DNA - 68
Hours Attended - 101
- New clients - 14
Clients started counselling before above date - 19
Totalling 33 clients seen
- Officers met with SORTED to discuss their new Service Level Agreement, following the Council's decision to provide free use of Grove Corner. As a result of this there is now a possibility for officers to seek interest in the Counselling rooms during hours when they will not be used by SORTED.
- 1.8 The day time hire of Grove Corner has again increased. Sight Concern social club meet every Tuesday, NOAH Community Café meet every Wednesday and

Minds2gether are now based in the centre every Friday. Currently the NHS are providing training to their clients every Thursday up to the middle of March.

- 1.9 Officer have meet with Groundwork to agree arrangements for the delivery of youth provision from April 2019 to March 2020. These meetings have proved very positive and are providing the Council with an opportunity to review its youth provision during the next 12 months, whilst delivering a variety of different youth work activities and projects. There will continue to be 12 hours of face to face delivery, but this will not only be during evenings from Grove Corner. Instead, and based on feedback from young people, youth work may take place at other DTC owned locations, such as outreach in our open spaces, and at varying times of day/days of the week.

Members of the committee will be updated through the Community Services fortnightly update and a full progress report will be presented to the June meeting of Community Services.

2. PARTNERSHIP WORKING

- 2.1 Central Bedfordshire College visited Grove Corner with their Pathways group in January. Although the group enjoyed their visit and meeting the staff most come from Luton so would not access Grove Corner in the evenings. However it is hoped that this group will take part in Dunstable in Bloom Wheelie Fantastic project.
- 2.2 The Neighbourhood Development Officer, accompanied by our casual sessional staff, held four stall/workshop in the college foyer. Again it became evident that the majority of young people attending the college and who engaged, come from outside the area.

3. HALF TERM FAMILY FUN

- 3.1 A free family fun event took place on 12 February during half term 41 children and adults attended.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1 Team members have been busy planning for upcoming events and activities. Meetings have taken place with partners and service providers to ensure that the needs of communities will be met for Love Parks Week 12 to 19 July and the Summer Activities programme.

4.2 Beecroft Residents Association (BRA)

The Neighbourhood Development Worker continues to support this group and they are growing in confidence. They are considering a number of actions, activities and events for 2019 and building up partnerships with other local groups.

4.3 Downside Residents Association

The group has had a change of committee and has a new chairperson and vice chair. The group have changed their constitution and are planning a number of community activities. They are looking to expand the group and will set up a

Facebook page. The Neighbourhood Development Officer will continue to support this group.

4.4 Dunstable Men in Sheds

Dunstable Men in Sheds have had another busy year and have a number of projects planned for 2019. They are now opening five mornings a week to keep up with both membership and project demands.

4.5 St. Augustine's Junior Wardens

Junior Wardens group will be taking part in the Great British Spring Clean and Wheelie Fantastic project over the upcoming months.

4.6 Friends of Dunstable Cemetery

The Friends group organised with support from officers a tidy up day on Tuesday 29 January. Weatherfield Academy supported the event and brought along a group of students. They will be attending the next event and hope to make it a regular commitment.

The group will be planning another Headlines behind the Headstones event based on WW11 graves and take part in the Great British Spring Clean in April. The group continues to grow with people expressing interest regularly.

4.7 Partnership working

The Downside community coffee mornings have recently been reviewed and changed. Downside Neighbourhood Centre no longer hold any coffee mornings due to limited capacity. The coffee mornings are now every Friday alternating between St Augustines Church and Downside Community Centre. The project will be reviewed again in March.

5. AUTHORS

Jack Adams-Rimmer – Neighbourhood Development Officer
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Sandy Coyle – Community and Young Peoples Service Manager
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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 11 MARCH 2019

PRIORY HOUSE

Purpose of Report: For Information only.

1. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 1.1 The 16 hour post for the Tea Rooms has been advertised and shortlisted with the interviews taking place 28 Feb and 1 March.
- 1.2 Adverts have also been placed for Casual roles in the Tea Rooms. There has been interest in this and shortlisting and interviews are to take place. It is also anticipated that some cover may be forthcoming from the interviewees for the substantive post.
- 1.3 The 22 hours a week Duty Manger has resigned, this will leave Priory House short staffed in from April until this position is filled. Whilst the team will do what they can to reduce the impact this has on operations, it should be noted that there may be occasions when Priory House is unable to carry out a full service.

2. TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE AND RETAIL OUTLET

- 2.1 The January sale went well and boosted the income in the traditionally quiet months of January and February.
- 2.2 Facebook advertising is proving to be a good way to promote sales in the gift shop.
- 2.3 Showcase shelving has been full for February, which is unusual, and is also full for March.

3. THE JACOBAN ROOM

- 3.1 Work on the design for a Wedding Folder is now complete and staff have asked local print companies to quote for the production.
- 3.2 There are now two confirmed bookings for weddings, one of which will be having Afternoon Tea and the other will be having a Cream Tea.
- 3.3 The new equipment is proving to be very effective for meetings and training sessions. This is an area staff will look to expand upon, whilst remaining mindful of opportunities for weddings which would have greater revenue potential.

4. EVENTS

- 4.1 Two Afternoon Tea events will be taking place during Ascot Races week and one for the Ladies Wimbledon Final. Afternoon Tea will be served as the events are screened live on the new screen in the Jacobean room.

5. PRIORY HOUSE TEA ROOMS

- 5.1 Facebook advertising is proving very successful for the Tea Rooms, and is one of the services main methods of marketing itself.
- 5.2 A new initiative, Tea & Tots, aimed at parents/carers with young babies and toddlers launches on 4 March in dedicated space in the Undercroft. The sessions will be from 10.00 am to 12.00 noon with special offers and the Catering Manager will be providing a range of weaning foods and age appropriate snacks.
- 5.3 Mother's Day Afternoon Teas have been advertised and bookings are coming in. The Tea Rooms will be open for one sitting on Mothering Sunday.

6. FINANCE

- 6.1 The increase in income in the Tea Rooms for the period, accounts for much of this positive variance.
- 6.2 This has been partially offset by higher than normal expenditure, especially within the salary budget for the Tea Rooms. This has been higher due to additional staff being required at very busy times and some additional cover for sickness and training for new staff.
- 6.3 Priory House Profiled Income and Expenditure Report as at end of January 2019.

	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	December	January
Budgeted Expenditure	£50,185	£27,785	£29,434	£29,185	£28,685	£30,934	£28,985	£29,086	£30,184	£28,685
Actual Expenditure	£43,241	£29,587	£30,774	£34,125	£29,403	£29,665	£28,580	£26,952	£29,905	£30,660
Variance	£6,944	-£1,802	-£1,340	-£4,940	-£718	£1,269	£405	£2,134	£279	-£1,975
Budgeted Income	£11,300	£11,300	£12,839	£13,300	£13,400	£15,038	£11,500	£15,000	£16,537	£9,300
Actual Income	£13,033	£16,176	£17,594	£12,730	£15,969	£13,618	£11,355	£12,930	£17,013	£11,544
Variance	£1,733	£4,876	£4,755	-£570	£2,569	-£1,420	-£145	-£2,070	£476	£2,244
Total Variance	£8,677	£3,074	£3,415	-£5,510	£1,851	-£151	£260	£64	£755	£269
Overall Variance	£12,704									

7. AUTHOR

- 7.1 **Helen Walker-Sygrove, Priory House Manager**
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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
MONDAY 11 MARCH 2019
DUNSTABLE TOWN CENTRE SERVICES

Purpose of Report:	For information only.
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1. MARKETS

- 1.1 Both the theme markets and farmer and craft markets will start again in April. Posters and leaflets are in the town notice boards as well as in the shops. Social media and free websites have been used to promote these markets. The initial bookings are looking promising for both markets.

2. ASHTON SQUARE TOILETS

- 2.1 Works will start soon on the toilets with the Town Centre Services Officer working closely with the team from CBC during the refurbishment.
- 2.2 The loo of the year awards will take place again this year, this award will take place between June and September with an unannounced visit. It is hoped that some of the improvements CBC will make will address some of the areas for improvement the judges raised last year.

3. TOWN CENTRE VACENCY RATES

- 3.1 The vacancy rates to the end of January 2019 are provided below. The count will be undertaken again at the start April 2019.
- 3.2 The town centre area used for the survey includes properties in High Street North up to Regent Street, High Street South to Friars Walk (excluding Thames Industrial Estate), Church Street up to and including Aldi and West Street up to the Police Station/St Mary's Gate.

Eleanor's Cross, Ashton Square, Albion Street, The Quadrant and Grove Park (including ASDA) have been included but rates can be calculated with or without these properties.

These figures have been shared with Central Bedfordshire Council officers.

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
253	30 vacant	11.80%	11.80% from end of Oct 18.

The following figures relate to the High Street (including Grove Park, Albion Street, Eleanor's Cross and Ashton Square, but excluding the Quadrant Shopping Centre).

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
210	23 vacant	10.95%	10.95% last count end of Oct 18.

The following figures relate to the Quadrant Shopping Centre only.

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
43	7	16.27%	16.27 % Count from Oct18

4. TOWN CENTRE EVENTS

- 4.1 The Town Centre Services Officer has been planning and developing a number of new events to take place on The Square in 2019. These include:
- Maypole dancing and crafts 25 May – A Maypole in The Square for the public to have a go with the help of the Jester. Free crafts are on offer during the day.
 - Table football tournament 13 July – Knock out competitions and free play on eight tables in The Square, flags, prizes and a referee.
 - Beach snow globe 17 August – Same as last Christmas but the snow globe will transform into a beach setting with the helpers in beach wear.
- 4.2 All are free events for the families of Dunstable, which will enhance The Square and bring a community feel to the Town.
- 4.3 Officers have also been working on an Awards For All bid for a town centre cultural weekend event, to take place on the last weekend/first weekend of August/September. If the bid is successful it will increase The Squares profile as a community space and hopefully encourage others to use it.
- 4.4 Joint Committee funded Invisible Rain Art project - Officers have met with the artists to view the artwork and the locations. Highways have been informed and are happy with the art work. A test was carried out of the solution, this worked well but the stencil needed to be flatter to the pavement. Maps of the trail have been approved; these will be available on our website, noticeboards and in the Workhouse, Ashton Square.

5. TOWN CENTRE

- 5.1 Businesses within the town have been visited to try to get them to improve the appearance of the buildings. Some have been simple litter picking and cleaning. Finding landlords has been an issue for the clearing of guttering's. Officers will be encouraging independent business to apply for match funding from CBC to help with the maintenance of their buildings. CBC officers will also be looking at the issues raised from the visits and looking at Section 215 for some buildings.
- 5.2 Initial meetings with CBC, Police and the Quadrant to work in partnership to start a shop watch in Dunstable have taken place this week. The aim is to hold an interest meeting at Priory House for the local businesses, fronted by the police.
- 5.3 The annual footfall survey will take place across the town centre on 8 and 9 March.

6. AUTHOR

- 6.1 Annette Clynes - Town Centre Services Officer
E mail - Annette.clynes@dunstable.gov.uk

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 11 MARCH 2019****POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER REQUEST FOR FUNDING**

Purpose of Report: To present to members a letter received from the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) requesting funding for additional Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) in Dunstable and for members to determine their response to the request.

1. ACTION RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 That members determine the Council's response to the PCC's request for funding of additional PCSO support in Dunstable. If members wish to support the request then further authorisation from Finance and General Purposes Committee will be required to release any identified funding.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Attached at appendix 1 of this report is a letter received from the Bedfordshire PCC. The letter requests that parish council's in Bedfordshire consider funding a PCSO for their local area at a cost of £31,200 per year. The PCC has apparently been informed by Councillors from the three Bedfordshire unitary authorities that parish councils hold substantial reserves (there are no parish council's in the Luton unitary area).
- 2.2 For members to consider this request they must take into account the following:
- Funding a PCSO would be an ongoing commitment so would need to be funded from revenue. The use of reserves would therefore not be possible.
 - The Council has agreed its revenue budget for 2019/20 and as a result, it is not clear where any funding could be identified.
 - It is unlikely that an additional single PCSO in Dunstable would have much impact on local crime and anti-social behaviour. For such a scheme to have an impact would require a number of additional PCSO's.
 - It would take some time to develop an agreement that would result in the successful deployment of additional PCSO's in Dunstable.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There would be significant financial implications for the Council if members wished to progress this request. Full financial implications would be reported if any agreement were developed.

5. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Whilst it is anticipated that any additional PCSO provision would be fully managed by the police, there would still be additional DTC officer time required to monitor and report on the scheme.

6. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council's Corporate Plan priorities do not specify any support for such a scheme.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Council does have the legal power to support such a scheme

9. APPENDICES

- 9.1 Appendix 1 - Letter received on 30 January from the PCC

10. AUTHOR

- 10.1 David Ashlee – Town Clerk and Chief Executive
E-mail – david.ashlee@dunstable.gov.uk



(Sent via email)

Tuesday 22nd January, 2019

Dear Clerk to the Parish,

I am writing to you as Bedfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner to explain the current state of policing in the county and to ask for your assistance.

Every community in Bedfordshire, whatever its location, tells me that they wish to see more officers involved in local policing. Bedfordshire has just over 1100 officers to service a population of some 670,000 currently which is forecast to exceed 700,000 within three years and which here, as nationally, is experiencing unprecedented levels of demand with calls to service on some weekend evenings last summer at three times the level of a New Year's Eve.

Bedfordshire faces the third highest terror threat in the country, substantial Serious Organised Crime issues including Human Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery as a result of the airport and road and rail links together with the close proximity of the capital as well as drug and gun trade along so-called 'county lines' both to and from London and issues at the highest level ever in terms of gang and knife crime countywide.

In December, I won a unique emergency payment from Government of £4.571m from the Policing Special Grant to simply make good the cost of meeting the latter without which the Force was heading for an overspend. I am not permitted to overspend and must bring in policing within budget. Without the grant, recruitment would have had to stop dead.

Also in December, the Policing Minister, Nick Hurd, announced the Policing Settlement for 2019-20 for all forces. Bedfordshire Police received two grants of just £1.318m and £1.117m (the latter being designed to help with the national shortfall in police pensions and which still falls short of the amount needed by £115,000). Bedfordshire Police faces inflationary pressures including an anticipated police and staff pay award of 2% which will cost in excess of £900,000 and soaring insurance costs, including a tripling of vehicle insurance to £300,000 for this year. Your council will appreciate that, collectively, these inflationary pressures cancel out the prospect of growth in officer numbers as well as the benefit of this income.

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire

Woburn Road | Kempston | Bedford | MK43 9AX

Tel: 01234 842064 | Email: pcc@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk

Web: bedfordshire.pcc.police.uk | Twitter: [@BedsPCC](https://twitter.com/BedsPCC)



I have, however, been awarded the leeway to raise the police precept of council tax by a maximum of £2 per month for Band D homes, without holding a referendum. Such a referendum is not an option for me as the last one, held by my predecessor, not only cost in the region of £1m which Bedfordshire Police could ill afford, once legal costs and the time of the staff of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner were taken into account, but an appeal to raise council tax was rejected by in excess of 70% of those who voted.

I am insisting however, since all the elements of income above amount to an extra £12.5m – albeit as a one year arrangement only – that the Force must recruit 160 Police Constables this year to bolster local policing primarily.

I will be frank: this is not enough, especially to provide an uplift in the villages. I provided evidence to Government in October 2017 that Bedfordshire Police requires some 300 officers and 80 detectives to meet its crime demand in a way that is comparable with other forces facing similar challenges.

The Government had intended to address the funding of all 43 forces more fundamentally in December 2020, with a promise to put that of Bedfordshire Police on a more sustainable footing permanently. I am now learning that this is likely to be delayed by a further year, in all probability because of Brexit and the economic uncertainty that surrounds it.

The answer, in your local area, may lie in your hands. I am told by councillors from the three unitary authorities in Bedfordshire (who are also facing substantial reductions in funding) that the parishes hold some substantial reserves. A PCSO costs £31,200 to fund each year. If your council wishes to consider the funding of such an officer to be dedicated to policing in the local area, subject to agreement, I would be very grateful if you would contact me directly at Kathryn.Holloway@Bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk

I would be very appreciative if your parish would discuss this matter at the earliest possible opportunity and let me know the outcome as officers cannot be produced out of thin air and I am providing every last one that this Force can conceivably afford; having already made £34.7m of savings since austerity started and with £11m more to find over the next four years to enable me to balance the books as I must.

All very best regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathryn Holloway". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Kathryn Holloway

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