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DUNSTABLE
TOWN COUNCIL

Date: 25 September 2020

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby summoned to attend a Meeting of Dunstable Town Council which will be held virtually in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 on **Monday 5 October 2020 at 7.00 pm** using Microsoft Teams.

Members of the public and press who wish to attend the remote meeting are welcome to do so and should notify their intention to attend by emailing Ian.Reed@dunstable.gov.uk by 5 p.m. on Friday 2 October 2020. Instructions on how to join will then be sent out in advance of the meeting.

A G E N D A

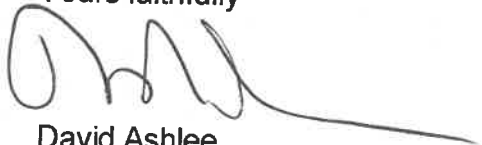
1. Apologies for Absence
2. To move that the Chairman sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 29 June 2020 (enclosed at page 3)
3. Specific Declarations of Interest
4. Chairman's Remarks
5. Public Question Time
6. To answer questions under Standing Order 16
7. Chairman's Remarks - (including Civic Events and Mayoral Activities as detailed in the report of the Democratic Services Manager enclosed at Agenda item 7 (Page 7))

8. To receive reports of the undermentioned Committees:

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Page</u>
Community Services	7 September 2020	9
Grounds and Environmental Services	14 September 2020	3
Finance and General Purposes	21 September 2020	19

9. Nomination to the Board of Trustees of the Dunstable Men in Sheds
To consider agenda item 9 (Page 23)

Yours faithfully



David Ashlee
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

To: All Members of Dunstable Town Council
Copies to: Central Bedfordshire Councillors for Dunstable for information

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

**HELD VIRTUALLY ON MICROSOFT TEAMS AS A RESULT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC
AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND POLICE AND CRIME PANELS
(CORONAVIRUS) (FLEXIBILITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITY AND POLICE AND CRIME PANEL
MEETINGS) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2020**

ON MONDAY 29 JUNE 2020

Present: Councillor Peter Hollick (Town Mayor); Councillor Gloria Martin (Deputy Town Mayor); Councillors, Sid Abbott, Lisa Bird, Matthew Brennan, Mark Cant, Alan Corkhill, Greg George, Pamela Ghent, John Gurney, Kenson Gurney, Liz Jones, Cameron Restall, Lee Roberts, Gladys Sanders and Johnson Tamara with David Ashlee (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), Lucy Salim (Head of Finance and Support Services), John Crawley (Head of Grounds and Environmental Services), James Slack (Acting Head of Community Services).

Members of the public x 2

Before the commencement of the meeting, Revd Rachel Phillips led the Council in prayer.

74 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Wendy Bater and Philip Crawley

75 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of the Council held 3 February 2020 and 18 May 2020 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

76 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS

There were no specific declarations of interest.

77 CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

The Town Mayor informed the Council of his recent visits to the town centre to support the re-opening of the Council's markets and local retailers. He had also visited Dunstable Laminates and Coppersmiths on Boscombe Road. Whilst the Covid-19 pandemic continued, thereby curtailing Mayoral activity, the Mayor would do all he can to support the local economy and community activity.

78 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions put to the meeting

79 TO ANSWER QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 16

There were no questions put to the meeting.

80 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT 2019/20 OUTTURN

The Head of Finance and Support Services presented the end of year outturn figures for the Council's revenue budget and allocated reserves for 2019/20. She was pleased to report that the revenue budget was underspent by nearly £100,000; the underspend being allocated to fully fund the Council's four-year revenue spend commitments for the High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) programme. She highlighted the main areas of underspend under each of the Council's departments, identifying that the bulk of the savings were achieved through temporary staff vacancies and exceeding income targets, especially at Dunstable Cemetery.

The Council noted the outturns for both the revenue budget and allocated reserves and comments were made that expressed satisfaction at how the finances were managed during 2019/20 and approval that the HSHAZ scheme was now fully funded.

RESOLVED: i) That members note the financial reports from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

ii) That members note the balance of the Council's allocated reserves as of 31 March 2020.

81 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

The Head of Finance and Support Services presented her report detailing the requirements for the submission of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2019/20. She was pleased to report that all requirements had been completed as well as reporting on the end of year balance for the General Reserve.

The AGAR comprised four sections, namely, the Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20; the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 (Section 1); the Accounting Statements 2019/20 (Section 2) and the External Auditor Report and Certificate (Section 3). The Head of Finance and Support Services gave an explanation on each of the four sections and the Council were pleased to note that the Annual Accounts would be made available for inspection as required.

RESOLVED: i) that the Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/2020 be noted

ii) that the Annual Governance Statement 2019/2020 at Section 1 of the Annual Return be completed in the affirmative and the Town Mayor and Town Clerk and Chief Executive be authorised to sign accordingly

iii) that the Accounting Statements 2019/2020 at Section 2 of the Annual Return be approved, and the Town Mayor be authorised to sign accordingly

iii) that the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2020 be approved for submission to the auditor.

Action: Head of Finance and Support Services

82 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

The Head of Finance and Support Services presented her report outlining an early assessment of the Council's revenue budget for 2020/21 and the balance of the allocated reserve as at the end of May 2020.

The very early assessment of the Council's revenue budget concluded that a slight surplus may be achieved by the end of this financial year. However, both the Responsible Financial Officer and the Town Clerk and Chief Executive urged a strong note of caution that the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic made it difficult at this stage to predict revenues and expenditure and the Council's financial position may look very different by the end of the financial year. Members were assured that finances would be very closely monitored throughout the year.

RESOLVED: That members note the current financial projections for the Council's revenue budget and the balance of the allocated reserve as at the 31 May 2020.

83 ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20 AND REVIEW OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive presented the Annual Report for 2019/2020 which would be published on the Council's website and made available at other usual public distribution outlets. The document provided an evidence source to residents as to the quality of services provided by the Council, as well as being an important planning tool for the organisation to ensure it could demonstrate continuous service improvement.

The format for the Annual Report was the same as agreed for last year's report and included a summary of the Council's activities and achievements over the last year, illustrated as "A Year in Dunstable". Section 4 set out how the Council is performing in relation to its stated aims contained within the Corporate Plan, the objectives for which are from the Corporate Plan adopted in February 2020. Also included was a report on the annual outturn for the Council's adopted performance indicators.

The Corporate Risk Log had been updated and Members noted that the main identified areas of strategic risk remained as income generation and property management. Income generation had been identified as high risk because of the current economic downturn caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic and property management arrangements had been identified as high risk due to the high cost of maintaining Council property which included listed buildings.

Members noted the reviewed Council's Health and Safety and the Environment and Sustainability Policies.

RESOLVED: i) that the Annual Report 2019/2020 be approved

ii) that the improvements to the Council's governance arrangements be noted

iii) that the Corporate Risk Log be noted

iv) that the Council's Health and Safety Policy be approved

v) that the Council's Environment and Sustainability Policy be approved.

Action: Town Clerk and Chief Executive

84 TOWN CLERK AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE USE OF DELEGATED POWERS AS A RESULT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC LOCK-DOWN PERIOD

At the 16 March 2020 Finance and General Purposes Committee, members delegated executive decision-making powers to the Town Clerk and Chief Executive in association with relevant Committee Chairmen for the duration of the Covid-19 Pandemic. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive presented his report that detailed the nature of a range of key decisions he had taken during this period. The decisions were as follows:

- The allocation of £100,000 of end of financial year revenue surpluses to a High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) reserve.
- The commissioning of essential environmental monitoring at Priory House.
- A 12-month extension to the Christmas lighting contract.
- The cancellation of most of the annual events programme.
- To submit an application for the furloughing of casual staff
- The implementation of maternity cover arrangements for the Head of Finance and Support Services

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive also reported current progress being made with the HSHAZ programme. Members welcomed the decision taken to try and furlough casual members of staff.

RESOLVED: That members note the schedule of key decisions taken by the Town Clerk and Chief Executive taken during the current Covid-19 Pandemic.

85 REFURBISHMENT OR THE MARKET CROSS CLOCK TOWER, GROVE HOUSE GARDENS PERFORMANCE AREA AND PRIORY GARDENS PERGOLA

The Head of Grounds and Environmental Services presented his report detailing a request for the release of up to £57,000 from Council reserves for the repair and restoration of a number of Council assets. The assets comprised:

- The Market Cross Clock Tower
- The Grove House gardens Performance Area
- The Priory Gardens Pergola

The report detailed the work required for each asset and a cost estimation for each project that totalled £57,000.

RESOLVED: That members approved the allocation of up to £57,000 from various Council reserves to fund the repair and restoration of the Market Cross Clock Tower, the Grove House Gardens Performance Area and the Priory Gardens Pergola.

AGENDA ITEM 7

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MONDAY 5 OCTOBER 2020

CIVIC EVENTS AND MAYORAL ACTIVITIES

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Purpose of Report: For Information

1.1 The Town Mayor has performed the following activities since the last Council meeting on 29 June 2020.

1.2 As Councillors will appreciate, with next to no invitations going out or coming into the Council, the Mayor has had to create his own diary. To this end he has been concentrating on continuing to build on relationships with the local shops and businesses and stallholders on the Town Markets.

1.3 He has written nine articles about local family businesses for the Gazette (8/7; 22/7; 5/8; 19/8; 2/9; 16/9 and 30/9) plus two articles about businesses he opened on 19 August.

1.4 He has also contributed to the 'Deadheading Team' organised by Dunstable in Bloom by looking after the planters outside Grove House.

04.07.20 Visited a number of businesses reopening after lockdown in the Town Centre and along Katherine Drive

09.07.20 Letter to Town Council staff thanking them for their work during the pandemic; also in the Gazette 01.07.20

11/7; 18/7; 08/8; 15/8; 29/8; 12/9; 19/9 - Visited Town Markets

17.07.20 Attended Dunstable Business Networking Group in the Old Palace Lodge Garden

21.07.20 Judged the Totternhoe Best Front Garden competition

05.08.20 Met Michelle Collings, newly appointed HSAZ Manager

11.08.20 Met Ian Reed, newly appointed Democratic Services Manager

15.08.20 Attended the War Memorial with the Mayoress to mark the two minutes silence on VJ Day

20.08.20 Opened the relocated and expanded Kasmicks Hot Rock Restaurant at 1 Broadwalk, Quadrant and the Sundon Model Shop at 41 Broadwalk, relocated and expanded from Luton

26.08.20 Mayor's article in the Gazette following receipt of a Certificate of Appreciation from HM Lord-Lieutenant and High Sheriff recognising the work of Council staff, councillors, volunteers and others responding to the pandemic

02.09.20 Additional article in the Gazette written by the Mayor following the opening of Kasmicks and the Sundon Model Shop

05.09.20 Attendance with the Mayoress at a 'Come and Grow' event at Dunstable Incredible Edible

07.09.20; 14.09.20; 21.09.20 Attendance at the three Town Council standing committees

15.09.20 Attendance at the War Memorial to commemorate the 80 Anniversary with members of the Luton and Dunstable Royal Air Force Association

23.09.20 Long Service Awards recognising 20 years with the Council for Ian Swinnerton, Dave Smith and Ian Bennell

23.09.20 Bedfordshire County Scout Council virtual AGM

25.09.20 Opened the refurbished Crown on Route 66, High Street North

He is also preparing for the Town Mayors' Charity Golf Day to be held on 6 October 2020

The Town Mayor will report on any other later attendances at the meeting

2. AUTHOR

2.1 Ian Reed - Democratic Services Manager

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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

**HELD VIRTUALLY ON MICROSOFT TEAMS AS A RESULT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC
AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND POLICE AND CRIME
PANELS (CORONAVIRUS) (FLEXIBILITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITY AND POLICE AND CRIME
PANEL MEETINGS) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2020**

ON MONDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2020

Present: Councillors Peter Hollick (Town Mayor), Gloria Martin (Chairman and Deputy Town Mayor), Cameron Restall (Vice-Chairman), Sid Abbott, Lisa Bird, Philip Crawley, Greg George, Pamela Ghent, John Gurney and Gladys Sanders

In Attendance: David Ashlee (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), James Slack (Head of Community Services), Michelle Collings (HSHAZ Manager) and Ian Reed (Democratic Services Manager)

Apologies: Councillors Wendy Bater

Public: One

86 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings of the Community Services Committees held on 2 March and 18 May 2020 were approved as a correct record and it was agreed that they be signed by the Chairman shortly.

87 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no specific declarations of interest.

88 EVENTS AND MARKETING

The Head of Community Services presented an update and information report on the 2019/2020 events programme. It was noted that in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting Government regulations the following events had been cancelled; St George's Day, Around the World, Classic Motor Rally (see paragraph below), Sunday Band Concerts, Dunstable Live, Priory Pictures, Party in the Park, Proms in the Park and Fireworks.

It was noted that the decision to cancel Fireworks was also a result of the building of the additional artificial turf pitch (ATP) at Creasey Park which would stretch into November. The Committee was also updated on a positive increase year on year of likes and followers of the Town Council on both Facebook and Twitter. As a result, the Town Council's social media activities were reaching more people and were continuing to grow.

The Committee welcomed the news that the Classic Motor Rally was to be held on 26 September from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm. and had been organised in line with current Government guidelines. The event would benefit from the following features:

- Static display of 75 motor vehicles with a 2m gap between each vehicle

AGENDA ITEM 8

- A one-way system around the display allowing for social distancing monitored and supervised by stewards during the event
- Accessible toilets on site
- Small children's activities
- Catering units
- A singer performing

The event would be promoted via posters, Facebook and the Town Council website. In order to ensure effective stewarding for the event all Members were invited to volunteer as stewards between 8.00 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. It was noted that in future the events survey would be conducted in relation to each individual event rather than all events.

The Committee had a discussion about other events that were normally in the Town Councils' events and marketing offer. It was noted with regret that Christmas torchlight procession would be cancelled. The proposal to hold a Christmas light switch on 27 November as well as a weekend event in Priory Gardens was welcomed.

In response to a question from a Member the Town Clerk and Chief Executive reported that the Remembrance Sunday arrangements 2020 would be changed this year with the procession, march and church service cancelled but alternative commemorations would be put in place and the act of remembrance would be live streamed via Facebook and the Town Council's website.

ACTION - Members to volunteer as stewards for the Classic Motor Rally on 26 September 2020

89 **GROVE CORNER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The Community and Young People's Services Manager reported on Grove Corner and community engagement following the Covid-19 close down. Officers had maintained links with the young people that had regularly attended Grove Corner. Although Grove Corner was still closed it had 537 likes and its Instagram account had 222 followers.

The Town Council had successfully applied to the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioners' Violence and Exploitation Fund. The application had received a sum of £5,250 to attract young people to Grove Corner to take part in video gaming in a safe environment. The grant would be put towards the provision of 12 new gaming consoles and associated equipment. Officers were working with E-Sports on holding gaming competitions.

It was further reported that the new Youth and Community Manager would be in post in September and this would lead to the launch of a multi -faceted youth programme.

There had not been any daytime hire available during the Covid-19 lock down to 3 August. The following services were returning; Minds2together, Sight Concern, Yawn life NCS, Hear 2 listen, NOAH Enterprise- IT courses.

Officers reported on Community engagement since the Covid-19 lockdown. Officers supported the Central Bedfordshire Council Referral and Befriending Scheme. Officers carried out befriending and check-up calls (850 calls in 17 weeks).

Summer activities had been cancelled although a craft Facebook event was held on 19 August and a 'Dunstable through the ages trail' was arranged on 29 August.

90 PRIORY HOUSE

The Head of Community Services presented a report on recent operations and activities at Priory House, including trading account figures and Priory House maintenance.

There were a number of confirmed bookings for weddings in the Jacobean Room and several provisional bookings.

The Tea Rooms had opened on 6 July and throughout the summer the trade and income had increased. The Government's 'Eat Out to Help Out' scheme had caused a rise in trade Monday to Wednesday, but Thursday and Fridays were quieter. Although income was steadily increasing for the year to date the Tea Rooms were 77% down compared to the same period last year.

91 DUNSTABLE TOWN CENTRE SERVICES

The Head of Community Services updated the Committee on Town Centre Services. **Markets** – Middle Row Markets re-started on 13 July and from July small attractions were added to the Square such as classic cars, buskers and street entertainers. Also, more gazebos were planned so by the Christmas market there would be 25 stalls.

Christmas lights - a review of the condition of the lighting had been carried by the lighting contractor. For the first time the Christmas tree at the rear of Grove House would be illuminated. The Christmas Lights Working Group had not met so far in 2020 so it was likely that the issues would be picked up in 2021.

The Christmas Magic event was planned for 12 and 13 December with the entertainment offer of a ferris wheel, carousel, street entertainers and stalls.

The Dunstable Joint Committee Shop Front Improvement Scheme would be extended in to 2021. The Committee also received reports on Town Centre vacancy rates and the Town Centre benchmarking survey

RESOLVED - (1) That the Town Centre Working Group be appointed to carry out a daytime walkabout

(2) That the Chairman of the Committee and Councillors Ghent, Gurney, Jones and Sanders be appointed to the Working Group

92 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

South Bedfordshire Dial-a-Ride:

No report

Dunstable Town Band:

No report

93 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED - to exclude press and public in accordance with Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 sect 1.2 to discuss matters of commercial confidentiality.

94 HIGH STREET HERITAGE ACTION ZONE (HSHAZ)

The Committee received an information report on the High Street Heritage Action Zone

The Meeting closed at 8.05 p.m.

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE**

**HELD VIRTUALLY ON MICROSOFT TEAMS AS A RESULT OF THE COVID-19
PANDEMIC AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND POLICE
AND CRIME PANELS (CORONAVIRUS) (FLEXIBILITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITY AND
POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEETINGS) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS
2020**

ON MONDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2020

Present: Councillors Peter Hollick (Town Mayor), Gloria Martin (Deputy Town Mayor), Liz Jones (Chairman), Lisa Bird (Vice-Chairman), Matthew Brennan, Philip Crawley, Greg George, Pamela Ghent, and Kenson Gurney

Apologies: None

In Attendance: Councillor Gladys Sanders, David Ashlee (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), John Crawley (Head of Grounds and Environmental Services), Mary Dobbs (Cemetery Manager), Ian Swinnerton (Grounds Operations Manager), Lisa Vincent (Acting Sports and Leisure facilities Manager) and Ian Reed (Democratic Services Manager)

Public: None

At the request of the Chairman the Committee held a minute of silence in memory of former Councillor and Town Mayor Mike Mullany who had sadly died recently

95 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of Grounds and Environmental Services Committee held on 9 March and 18 May were approved as a correct record and it was agreed that they be signed by the Chairman shortly.

96 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no specific declarations of interest.

97 PLANS-SUB COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meetings of Plans Sub-Committee held on 10 March, 21 April, 12 May, 2 June, 23 June, 14 July, 4 August and 25 August 2020 be received.

98 GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON PLANNING ISSUES

The Committee was invited to discuss a report that detailed the Government consultation on planning issues. On 6 August 2020, the Government published the 'Planning for the Future' White Paper which had a 12-week consultation period. The White Paper sought views on proposals for major reforms to speed up and modernise

the planning system in England and meet the Governments' aspiration 'to get the country building.' The proposals, based on 3 main issues, were summarised for the Committee. A further consultation document, 'Changes to the current planning system', was also published on 6 August which proposed four short term measures to improve the immediate effectiveness of the current system. These comprised:

- Changes to the standard method for assessing local housing need.
- Securing of First Homes, sold at a market discount price for first time buyers, including key workers, through developer contributions in the short term until the new Infrastructure Levy system is in place.
- Temporarily lifting the small sites threshold below which affordable housing does not need to be provided up to 40 or 50 units.
- Extending the current Permission in Principle to major developments to fast track the securing of principle of development for housing without having to work up detailed plans first.

The consultation paper 'Transparency and Competition – a call for evidence on data on land' was also published on 6 August and proposed options for improving the data held on contractual arrangements used to control land.

A number of other matters were discussed in the White Paper:

- Making better use of surplus public sector land through regeneration of town and city centres and accommodating Government office estate in strategic hubs in city centres and secondary towns and cities.
- How the disposal of publicly owned land could support small developers (SME's) and self-build sectors.
- Consideration of more flexible development corporation models.
- Resources in planning departments and the consultation indicated that there would be further consideration as to how resource could be maximised and refocused through a new streamlined approach to decision making, good access to technical expertise and transformed systems using the latest technology.
- Greater responsiveness by the Planning Inspectorate and statutory consultees

RESOLVED: that the following comments be submitted to the National Association of Local Council's as this Council's response to the planning consultations

Whilst the Council supports proposals for a more streamlined and speedier planning system that promotes appropriate and sustainable development; they have the following concerns on the detail of the Governments proposals:

- The Council's main concern was that the Governments proposals would further erode local influence and scrutiny of plans that will affect their electorates living environment and communities
- Members were concerned that there will be greater imposition of development on local communities
- Members were concerned that the new proposals would undermine the potential for valuable investment in local communities through the erosion of Section 106 contributions
- Members did not welcome the perceived transfer of greater direct planning decision making to the Secretary of State

- Members were concerned that the Governments proposals would result in limiting access to the social market for those most in need and would reduce the amount of affordable housing available through the lifting of relevant thresholds
- Members were concerned that local influence on the development of Local Plans would be further undermined
- Members were concerned that the lifting of environmental requirements on new builds would have a negative impact on carbon reduction and environmental targets

99 CREASEY PARK COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CENTRE AND SPLASH PARK UPDATE

The Committee was supplied with a summary account of performance to date. The Committee welcomed the news that the centre was nearly back to full operating times with all football anticipated to be back by the end of September.

The ATP was currently being hired every evening and weekends except Fridays by AFC Dunstable, Dunstable Town FC and other local clubs for training and games. The winter block booking re-starts on the 14 September. All users have rehired their existing slots from last season.

AFC and Dunstable Town FC have now hosted a couple of games with spectators, they are both currently allowed 30% capacity according to their league status. This means currently DTFC can hold 300 and AFC Dunstable can hold 400 spectators. AFC Dunstable and Dunstable Town FC respective leagues re-start within the next 2-3 weeks, youth football also returns mid-September.

Work on the new additional ATP had started 10 August although 9 days had been lost due to adverse weather. It was anticipated that the completion would be the end of November

There was currently a forecast for a £30k loss for grass pitches and ATP hire which was mainly due to the centre being closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic for the full first quarter. There had been no income forecast for the new additional ATP, so any income received would help the deficit.

Due to government guidelines the centre had cancelled all functions from March 2020 for the foreseeable future. This has had a substantial effect on income and currently there was a predicted loss of £12k on room hire and a £152k loss in bar & catering sales. The bar sales loss was made up from functions which were cancelled, football matches and tournaments, which were all cancelled. Until adult and youth weekend football returned it was noted that it was difficult to predict income.

There has been some savings due to the centre being closed in the first quarter. There was a predicted £7k saving on staff as currently only contracted staff were being used. There was a forecast £11k saving on cleaning, utilities and marketing due to the centre being closed for the 1st quarter and £62k on bar and catering stock.

Action - All the team at Creasey Park be advised of the Committees' appreciation of their work during the year to date

100 **CEMETERY, ALLOTMENTS, RECREATION GROUNDS, TOWN CENTRE GARDENS AND RANGER SERVICE INFORMATION AND UPDATE REPORT**

The Cemetery Manager and the Grounds Operations Manager presented a detailed information report covering all areas of the Council's grounds maintenance responsibilities.

a) Dunstable Cemetery

Members received the burial figures for March to August 2020 along with the profiled income and expenditure figures. These indicated a positive variance of £24,321.

The Committee was advised that during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown the Cemetery had remained fully operational and staffed throughout, with a number of restrictions in place, in accordance with Government guidelines and requirements. The decision was taken to close the Cemetery for two weeks during March because of inappropriate behaviour and large gatherings taking place at evenings and weekends as well as uncertainty surrounding Government guidance. It was further noted that the Council had worked closely with Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and other Town and Parish Councils to coordinate burial activity in Bedfordshire and to ensure that adequate arrangements were in place to accommodate a spike in demand for burials. Specific operational plans were made to manage a significant increase in burial activity. Officers had also undertaken a groundwater protection risk assessment in accordance with Environment Agency (EA) legislation and best practice. As part of the risk assessment and collection of base line data three bore holes were created in the lawn section so that water samples can be taken on a 6-monthly basis.

Throughout the lockdown period the grass-cutting and grounds maintenance operations continued as normal with robust control measures in place to safeguard all staff. Also, following a risk assessment of the chapel it had been decided that the chapel could not be opened for use for the foreseeable future.

b) Allotments

Members noted that all allotment sites remained open and available for tenants to use during the lockdown period with guidance and restriction signage placed at all gated entrances. Inspections to check for cultivation were suspended during lockdown but recently 39 Notices to Cultivate had been issued. The Council took into account the circumstances for those tenants who have had to shield during lockdown.

The waiting list has grown significantly in the lockdown period and 236 people were currently on the waiting list. Since the last report 31 plots had been re let and 2 allotment tenants had decided not to renew their tenancy agreements.

c) Recreation Grounds

Play Areas, Grove Skate Park and BMX

Since the last report to this Committee there had been one incident of vandalism to play equipment. The incident occurred in mid-June at Mentmore Recreation Ground

when the platform deck and handrail on the Ixo bridge were damaged. At the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown all the Council's play areas were closed in line with the government requirements. The play areas reopened in early July when the Government lifted the restrictions. A risk assessment has been carried out and advisory signage has been placed on the fences and gates of the play area entrances to inform users of the control measures in place. Also, sanitisation of the play areas was being carried by spraying a seven-day active sanitiser on all equipment, fences and gates. Also, extra hours had been used to collect litter, bin emptying and sweeping up broken glass

Sports Pitches and General Grounds Maintenance

Hedge cutting was currently being carried out around the recreation ground perimeters, cutting back growth to the fence lines. The football season commenced on 12 September for both senior and youth teams. The grounds team had marked out pitches and put up goals in preparation. The installation of the irrigation system at Creasey Park had helped to improve the renovation of the grass pitches this season. Luton Road Recreation Ground pavilion was broken into on 25 June. The cost of the repairs would largely be covered by the Council's insurance.

d) Priory and Grove House Gardens and the Town Centre

The lockdown period did not prevent the growing and installation of this year's summer floral displays. This year the Council tried a new form of matrix planting in the long border at Priory Gardens using open flowering plants to encourage bees and other pollinating insects. The variation of colours and scents have received good comments from members of the public who use Priory Gardens.

The grounds team have now taken on responsibility for the maintenance of the rain gardens and Urbis planters in the Town Centre and they have had some help from the Dunstable in Bloom volunteers who carried out pruning and dead heading of plants.

It was noted that the Head of Grounds and Environmental Services was working in partnership with the original designers of the Market Cross Clock Tower and the Grove House Gardens Performance Area to undertake much needed refurbishment and redecoration of the two structures. The works were currently out to tender and the plan was to complete these works by the end of the year.

Dunstable in Bloom.

Dunstable in Bloom had entered the 2020 Anglia in Bloom virtual competition submitting 6 photos and 50 words in each of 12 separate categories. Dunstable was awarded the winner of the Best Local Authority Planting category for its colourful bright floral displays and the community support to keep them in good condition through regular deadheading.

e) Town Ranger Service

The Rangers have resumed the cleaning of the toilets in Ashton Square, they are now working in line with the Covid-19 risk assessments regarding the cleaning which includes an increase in the number of cleans per day. Recently the Rangers had

cleaned the alley near the Oxfam shop. They had scheduled a list of tasks for September which includes removal of chewing gum and oil stains in Middle Row and High Street South.

Action - that a report be submitted to the Committee in six months' time about the ground water quality at the Cemetery

Action - that the cemetery staff, Town Rangers and grounds staff be congratulated on their works in face of extreme challenges since March of this year

Action - That the high levels of littering and dog fouling be noted as matters of concerns of the Committee for future discussion

101 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

CBC Development Management Committee:

The Chairman gave an update on the Health Hub development and Linden House housing site.

The Meeting closed at 7.56 p.m.

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

HELD VIRTUALLY ON MICROSOFT TEAMS AS A RESULT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND POLICE AND CRIME PANELS (CORONAVIRUS) (FLEXIBILITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITY AND POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEETINGS) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2020

ON MONDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2020

Present: Councillor Peter Hollick (Town Mayor), Gloria Martin (Deputy Town Mayor), Sid Abbott (Chairman), Philip Crawley (Vice-Chairman), Wendy Bater, Matt Brennan, John Gurney, Kenson Gurney, Liz Jones, and Johnson Tamara

In Attendance: David Ashlee (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), Lisa Scheder (Finance and Procurement Manager, David Brough (Senior Finance Manager), Kelley Hallam (Business Support Manager) and Ian Reed (Democratic Services Manager)

Apologies for Absence: Cameron Restall

Public Attendance: None

102 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 16 March and 18 May 2020 were approved as a correct record and it was agreed that they be signed by the Chairman shortly.

103 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive presented the financial monitoring report for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 August 2020

Members were advised of the following developments -

- The overall projected outturn for the Council was now predicted to be in the region of £20,000 underspent as a result of less than anticipated income from the Cemetery.
- Income levels at Creasey Park Community Football Centre (CPCFC) and Priory House were improving but still well below last years figures.
- The loss of income at CPCFC during the Covid-19 lockdown might be partially offset following Central Bedfordshire Council making an application to the Government for loss of income, although any potential payment might not be received until next financial year.
- In reply to a question from Councillor Gurney the Committee was advised that the Council staff annual pay award was 2.75% (to be backdated to 1 April) and the Council had already budgeted for a 3% increase
- The roof leak at Grove House was now serious and an insurance claim was to be submitted for the damage and repair

RESOLVED: That members note the current revenue and earmarked reserves position for the Council as at the end of August 2020.

104 PROPOSED COUNCIL MEETING DATES FOR THE YEAR 2021

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive presented the report and sought approval for the draft calendar 2021 report.

RESOLVED: That the Calendar of meetings for the calendar year 2021 be approved

Action: that although the calendar had been prepared on a spreadsheet a word document of the calendar be created and sent to all Members

105 INVESTORS IN PEOPLE ACCREDITATION – SILVER AWARD

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive presented to Members the outcome of the Councils' recent Investors in People (IIP) accreditation. The Committee was reminded that the Corporate Plan for 2017-19 had set an aim of securing silver standard IIP, which was a significant achievement for an organisation the size of the Town Council and in this year the aim had been achieved. Investors in People had identified a range of improvements secured by the Town Council in the past 18 months and listed further recommendations including the adoption of a new staff award scheme(See Minute below).

RESOLVED: that the report on the awarding of the Silver Award for IIP be received

Action: (1) that the improvements required by IIP be completed in 2021
(2) that all staff members be congratulated on the award

106 GROVE HOUSE – LETTING OF MEETING ROOM AND REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE OF HEATING SYSTEM

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive presented a report that covered the occupancy of a meeting room at Grove House by Hospice at Home and the proposed allocation of up to £75,000 from the Grove House allocated reserve to fund the repair and refurbishment of the Grove House heating system.

It was noted that that the first-floor meeting room had been offered to Hospice at Home for a five year and six months licence to occupy the room at a charge of £2,692 per annum.

In relation to the heating system. Members were aware that the condition of the heating system had been of concern for a number of years and now it was recognised action had to be taken as there was no heating system at Grove House.

RESOLVED: (1) That the first floor meeting room as indicated on the plan attached to the report be licensed for occupation to Hospice at Home for a five year and six month period effective from 21 September 2020 on the terms set out in the report.

(2) That the Committee allocates up to £75,000 from the Grove House allocated reserve to fund the repair and refurbishment of the Grove House heating system as outlined in the report

107 STAFF AWARD SCHEME

The Committee discussed a report on proposed changes to the staff awards scheme that had been prepared following the receipt of feedback from a staff working group which had reviewed the current Quarterly Award Scheme

RESOLVED: That the following changes recommended by the staff working group be adopted:

- That staff be nominated and rewarded with a small gift e.g. flowers or wine that is personal to the recipient.
- The new system will allow for cross departmental nominations and nominations at an equal management level or below.
- Nominations be made at any time so that staff are rewarded more regularly and in a timely fashion.
- The nominated person would receive a letter from the Town Mayor, Town Clerk and Chief Executive and relevant Committee Chairman supporting the recognition.
- Any award nomination would need Head of Service or Town Clerk and Chief Executive approval. This would also act to monitor allocation of awards which would not be applicable to Heads of Service and the Town Clerk and Chief Executive. All awards must be made in line with criteria set out in the Council's Corporate Priorities.
- A simplified version of the current form would be used for nominations.
- The new system would exclude councillor authorisation; however, Members be encouraged to make their own recommendations to the Town Clerk and Chief Executive if they personally experienced staff performance that they believe should be recognised. Members to be provided with updates on all awards made through the Personnel Sub-Committee.
- The current £400 per annum budget allocation to remain thereby establishing an annual limit to the number of awards that could be made.
- Awards would be in the form of a gift only, not monetary.
- Awards would be up to a maximum value of £25 per staff member. A maximum of three awards could be made per year per individual staff member.
- Gifts would be purchased from a local Dunstable shop
- That the staff award scheme be reviewed in six months time by the Personnel Sub-Committee

108 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

- a) CAB Management Committee – no report.
- b) DITA – no update.
- c) Hospice at Home Management Committee – Councillor Jones reported that the Committee was not holding meetings by Zoom at present.
- d) Ashton Almshouses Charity – Councillor Hollick advised that a flat was being refurbished

PART 2

109 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: To exclude press and public in accordance with Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 sect 1.2 to discuss matters affecting some town council employees' remuneration and conditions of employment

110 STAFFING MATTERS

Members were satisfied that the proposals were appropriate and passed two resolutions supporting the action recommended.

The meeting closed at 8.04 p.m.

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL

5 OCTOBER 2020

NOMINATION TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE DUNSTABLE MEN IN SHEDS

Purpose of Report:	The purpose of this report is for members to nominate a representative of the Council to serve on the Dunstable Men in Sheds Board of Trustees for a term not exceeding 4 May 2023.
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1. ACTION RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 That members nominate a representative of the Council to serve on the Dunstable Men in Sheds Board of Trustees for a term not exceeding 4 May 2023 and for the Council to appoint a representative to the Board at every Annual Council Meeting following each 4 year normal election.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Members will be aware that Dunstable Men in Sheds (DMiS) has operated from the Council's Meadway Allotment store since 2017.
- 2.2 The membership of DMiS has grown steadily over the years and the organisation is now in a position to take out a licence to operate from the Council owned Meadway store as a result of DMiS having received publicly funded grants from both Dunstable Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council in order to refurbish the store into a proper workshop.
- 2.3 Dunstable Town Council is currently working with DMiS to refurbish the Meadway store and it is hoped that they will be able to occupy a fully functioning workshop by the beginning of the new year.
- 2.4 As a result of their development, DMiS would now welcome the opportunity to have a Council representative on their Board of Trustees, hence the purpose of this report.
- 2.5 Members are asked to nominate a single Council representative who will remain on the Board of Trustees until the end of their term of office which will be May 2023 (at which time, if re-elected, that member may have the opportunity to continue serving on the Board if so desired and if nominated again). At present, Trustee meetings are held monthly and last no more than one hour.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no financial implications to this recommendation

4. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The recommendation of this report accords with the Council Corporate Priorities of *'continuing to improve services targeted to all community sectors in the town and to represent residents, businesses and community groups of Dunstable on key strategic issues facing the town'*.

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 As a representative on the Board of Trustees, the nominated member will have shared responsibility for the health and safety of all users of the DMiS workshop (in the same way as they do all Council employees and associated functions of the Council).

6. HUMAN RESOURCE AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 As a Trustee, the nominated representative will have shared responsibility for ensuring that DMiS is run in accordance with the groups Memorandum and Articles of Association and associated status as a registered charity.

7. AUTHOR

- 7.1 David Ashlee – Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Email: david.ashlee@dunstable.gov.uk