

David Ashlee Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Date: 27 November 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 7 December 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 4 December 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 5 October (enclosed at page 3)
3. Specific Declarations of Interest
4. Chairman's Remarks including Civic Events and Mayoral Activities as detailed in the report of the Democratic Services Manager enclosed at Agenda item 4 (Page)
5. Public Question Time
6. To answer questions under Standing Order 16
7. To receive reports of the undermentioned Committees:

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Page</u>
Dunstable Joint Committee*	March 2020	5
Dunstable Joint Committee*	September 2020	15

*If Members require detailed reports relating to the Minutes contact the Democratic Services Manager

Community Services	2 November 2020	20
Grounds and Environmental Services	9 November 2020	24
Finance and General Purposes	16 November 2020	28

8. Draft Budget 2021/22 and Associated Considerations - (see page 31)

PART 2 OF THE AGENDA

Move to exclude press and public in accordance with Public Bodies (Admissions To Meetings) Act sect 1.2 as the following reports contain information relating to the financial affairs of third parties and relates to ongoing negotiations and discussions with external organisations

9. Downside Community Centre - Proposed Granting of a Licence to Occupy (see page 37).
10. HSHAZ Programme - Outcome of Tendering Exercise for Conservation Architectural Support for the Middle Row Improvement – (see page 66)

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 5 OCTOBER 2020 COMMENCING AT 7.00 P.M.

Present: Councillor Peter Hollick (Town Mayor); Councillor Gloria Martin (Deputy Town Mayor); Councillors, Sid Abbott, Lisa Bird, Philip Crawley, Greg George, Pamela Ghent, John Gurney, Kenson Gurney, Cameron Restall, Gladys Sanders and Johnson Tamara with David Ashlee (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), John Crawley (Head of Grounds and Environmental Services), Becky Wisbey (Head of Community Services) and Ian Reed Democratic Services Manager

Members of the public; One

Before the commencement of the meeting, Revd Tim Davis led the Council in prayer.

111 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Liz Jones

112 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 29 June 2020 were approved as a correct record and arrangements made for the Town Mayor to sign them.

113 DECLARATIONS

There were no specific declarations of interest.

114 CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

The Town Mayor informed the Council that he was supporting local family businesses with regular articles in the Dunstable Gazette. He had supported all the markets held during the Summer and he officially opened new premises for Kasmicks, Sundon Model shop and the refurbished New Crown public house in High Street North.

He also advised the meeting he was writing a weekly diary which was published in the Town Councils' website.

He announced to Members that his charities for the mayoral year would be;

Hospice at Home

Autism Bedfordshire (his charity funds would go to projects in Dunstable)

Air Cadets(460)Dunstable

He advised the meeting that he had been looking at the proposed arrangements for Remembrance Sunday and Remembrance Day and he reported. that the Town Clerk and Chief Executive would be supplying a briefing to Members after the close of the council meeting.

115 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions put to the meeting

116 TO ANSWER QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 16

There were no questions put to the meeting.

117 COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Further to a question from a Member the Council was advised that following the appointment of a new Youth and Community Manager a report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee on the video gaming project at Grove Corner funded from the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioners' Violence and Exploitation Fund.

Becky Wisbey Head of Community Services advised there would be a report to the next meeting on the services provided at Priory House

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 7 September 2020 be received subject to the following amendment; Minute 92 – South Bedfordshire Dial-a- Ride – it was reported at the meeting that Dial -a-Ride was surviving well through the Covid 19 crisis and they had diversified into delivering prescriptions to vulnerable residents at the request of Central Bedfordshire Council and the staff were in good spirits and matters were improving although services to the elderly had reduced.

118 GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

In reply to questions from Members John Crawley, the Head of Grounds and Environmental Services, gave an update on the refurbishment of the Clock House and the performance area, Grove Park and reports would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee. Members also received a report on two Gypsy/Traveller burials at the cemetery. It was noted that the Town Clerk and Chief Executive would be meeting with Chief Inspector Haines of Bedfordshire Police to discuss how future funerals would be policed

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting of the Grounds and Environmental Services Committee held on 14 September 2020 be received.

119 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

A discussion took place on Grove House relating to urgent repairs to the roof and the imminent submission of tenders for the repair of the heating system

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 21 September 2020 be received.

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

The Council was invited to discuss a request 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. It was noted that the Membership of Men in Sheds had grown steadily. The Town Council was working with them to refurbish the Meadway store and it was hoped the group would be able to occupy a fully functioning workshop by the beginning of the of the new year. The Council was advised that Men in Sheds would welcome the opportunity to have a Council representative on their Board of Trustees

RESOLVED: That Councillor John Gurney be appointed to serve on the Men in Sheds Board of Trustees for a term not exceeding 4 May 2023

The meeting closed at 7.50 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 4

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MONDAY 7 DECEMBER 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 5 October 2020.
- 1.2 The Mayor's diary has been subject to a number of changes given the second lockdown.
- 1.3 He has written another four articles about Dunstable Family Businesses for the Gazette plus one further article about another business adding a kitchen showroom to its offer. Further articles are being prepared.
- 1.4 Various meetings were held with David Ashlee and Ian Reed about the changing situation around what could be arranged for Remembrance Sunday.
- 1.5 The Mayor attended the three standing committees as well as other meetings, particularly about the HSHAZ scheme.
- 1.6 He attended the Town Markets in October welcoming, particularly new stallholders. He reported a very positive feedback from stallholders.
- 1.7 06.10.20 A successful Golf Day held at the Dunstable Downs Golf Club
 - 07.10.20 Early morning visit to Creasey Park to thank the Grounds Teams and present the Anglia in Bloom Certificate for the best local authority planting.
 - 07.10.20 Visit to Sundon Model Shop with officers from Grove Corner to explore the possibility of any joint activity.
 - 09.10.20 Virtual meeting with other Mayors in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire and the High Sheriff to introduce ourselves, explain what we and our Councils have been doing during the pandemic, and our charities.
 - 14.10.20 Visit to Nationwide Building Society with officers from Grove Corner to discuss possible youth projects.

29.10.20 Virtual talk to Dunstable Downs Rotary Club about the role of Mayor in a pandemic and developments in the Town.

31.10.20 Visit to Brighton Beautiful Bathroom showroom in Brittany Court, High Street South, to view the new Kitchen Department.

04.11.20 Ashton Schools Foundation virtual meeting

04.11.20 Filming for Remembrance Sunday video

08.11.20 Watched the video for Remembrance Sunday at 11.00

11.11.20 Attended the War Memorial with the Mayoress at 11.00 for a brief ceremony

18.11.20 Ashton Almshouse Charity virtual meeting

25.11.20 Dial a Ride management meeting

03.12.20 Joint Committee virtual meeting

The Mayor is completing a brochure to celebrate 50 years of DITA, 60 years twinning with Porz and 15 years twinning with Bourgin-Jallieu.

The Mayor is finalising his Christmas card.

2. AUTHOR

2.1 Ian Reed – Democratic Services Manager

e-mail: Ian.Reed@dunstable.gov.uk

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DUNSTABLE JOINT COMMITTEE
HELD AT WATLING HOUSE, HIGH STREET NORTH, DUNSTABLE
ON 12 MARCH 2020**

Present: Central Bedfordshire Councillors: Cllr Hegley, (Dunstable Joint Committee Chairman), Cllr Chatterley, Cllr Sanders

Dunstable Town Councilors: Cllr Abbot, Cllr Bird, Cllr Hollick, Cllr Jones (Dunstable Joint Committee Vice Chairman), Cllr Martin

In Attendance: Cllr Gurney (Dunstable Town Council), J Gelder, Officer C Gurr, J Slack, S Hughes, S Sherwood, B Gaynor, P Coker, N Costin, A Townsend

Apologies: D Ashlee, S Warboys, S Knott, S Spicer, E Harrison, H Garrod, A Sparrow, Cllr Young (CBC), Cllr McVicar (CBC)

Members of the public: There were Members of the public in attendance

Cllr Gurney was asked to leave the meeting due to his symptoms of cold. The latest guidance and a statement from BBC news was read out. Cllr Gurney refused to leave as he felt his symptoms were only a cold. (This minute was read back at the meeting and was agreed as an accurate record by the Chair and Cllr Gurney).

SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Hegley's husband has a street traders licence.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

C Plumley asked in advance of the meeting:

"I live on Luton Road virtually opposite the speed camera outside Dunelm, but I haven't seen the camera flash at any vehicles, even emergency vehicles, easily travelling in excess of 30MPH for more than 6 months. I observed the white lines on the side and centre of Luton Road have been repainted but not the lines on Luton Road itself used to measure speed when the camera takes a photo. These lines look virtually worn out. Furthermore, I haven't seen anyone come to change the film, check or maintain the camera in any way for more than 6 months. Therefore, I would like to know if this camera

is actually working, functioning properly and has been taking photos all speeding vehicles over the last 6 months?"

Officers gave the following response:

"Our policy is that cameras should only operate in locations with a longstanding history of collisions with 'excess speed' being the major contributory factor. The Police agree locations as they have to be satisfied with the forward visibility, that the site meets the criteria and all the signage is correct. This camera is still operational. Highways have not been asked to particularly refresh the lines which may be associated with the camera. Please note, it has not been confirmed that the camera needs these lines any more to measure vehicle speeds. Highways believes that the enforcement is dealt with by the tri-force Cameras and Collisions Unit, however it is believed that the system is now digital and fully automated and that offenders are automatically sent a Notice of Intended Prosecution."

M Daniels asked in advance of the meeting:

"Regarding the proposal for the development of the former Linpac site on Luton Road, planning reference: CB/19/01285. Why is there such a long delay in making a decision? Whilst we are waiting for a decision to be made, and in light of the chronic housing shortage our country is facing, can we not revert the status of the land back to 'residential' and be proactive in attracting prospective developers by advertising the availability of this land on a signboard at the site please? While residents in other areas of Central Bedfordshire are opposed to any of the 4000 required homes being built in their backyard, I'm sure you would find Liscombe Road residents have very few objections to residential houses rather than industrial units and drive throughs being built just around the corner."

Officers gave the following response:

"The reason for the long delay in making a decision on application CB/19/01285/FULL is that there has been ongoing discussion and negotiation with the applicant and agent in respect of matters such as the impact of the proposal on the amenity of neighbouring occupants and parking. Whilst noting that outline planning permission has been granted for 100 dwellings (reference CB/15/02821/OUT) on 31 August 2016 the period for its implementation has now expired. Also the site is designated as a 'Main Employment Area' in the South Bedfordshire Local Plan."

S Swan asked in advance of the meeting:

"Following my question on the issue of signs and lighting for the junction at Woodford Road/Katherine Drive at the last DJC meeting, someone has told me that signage will be installed quite soon, to help direct drivers to the correct side of the road. Please could you tell me when CBC Highways expect to install these signs? Furthermore, when will the lamppost that was near the corner of Katherine Drive and Duncombe Drive, which was hit by a vehicle, and subsequently removed last summer, be reinstalled? Please could you also show me, with the use of a map, which signs, and where exactly they will be placed, (e.g. direction of travel, no entry, stop, etc?)"

Officers gave the following response:

"At the moment all that can be said is that the work is in hand. The work will be programmed for the new financial year, but there is no timescales at present."
It was noted that in future questions will only be answered on items on the agenda only but suggested if the Committee wanted to highlight certain issues, such as highways, we could organise a meeting that could address that as officers would be in attendance to respond.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9 JANUARY 2020

The Minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

COURT DRIVE – HOMES FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND INTEGRATED HEALTH AND CARE HUB – UPDATE ON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENT

A presentation update was given by Nick Costin & Patricia Coker, Central Bedfordshire Council, attached for the minutes for detail.

Members noted the following:

- Nick Costin gave an overview of progress on the Hub and Housing.
- Patricia Coker gave feedback on the public engagement event and the initial findings.
- The presentation noted key themes of concern, parking for the hub being an area of importance. It was proposed that a limited time to park in the hub for users, could be free (much like the current scheme at Asda).
- It was noted that were possible, people who asked questions at the engagement would have answers sent to them and there was a dedicated page on the CBC website for information.
- The next steps for the hub were illustrated within the presentation.
- It was noted that there will be further local engagement throughout the process

Members asked for clarification on the following:

- What would be the alternative ways to communicate progress for those who do not have social media or work at times during the day? Patricia Coker will work with colleagues to look at the timings for future events (not during work time), there will be information points within the local area to circulate information, through the Council and the CCG. Information will also be within GP Practices, it was noted DTC has a 'talk of the town' magazine that could assist in circulating information.
- Concerns about the lack of parking for the residential unit was discussed. Nick Costin noted that this had been addressed with the designers and asked them to

look to improving it. It was noted that potential residents will be advised regarding the limited parking provision before moving in to manage expectations.

- It was reported that the theatre parking behind Go Bowling is regularly full at show time, this could be at risk of being used by residents and this could create further parking issues, Nick reiterated his discussions with the designers, he noted the site is constrained and he has not yet had a response from them.
 - Clarification on how many of the GPs have signed up to moving into the hub was asked. It was stated that three practices that have agreed to move in at present. Now there is a PCN (Primary Care Network) other services (phlebotomy, podiatry etc) will come together alongside the GP Practices. The building had been designed to accommodate all five of the GP practices, and the space is flexible to accommodate the needs of patients.
 - There was discussion about concerns of carrying out three housing developments and GP hub at the same time causing poor air quality. Nick and Patricia will speak to colleges in communities and regeneration and this will be looked into and with an air quality study to look at areas of possible mitigation.
 - Concerns around the magistrates court development were discussed. It was asked if this area could possibly have been used as open space, as opposed to the proposal for flats. It was noted that the site has been approved for housing.
 - It was asked if all sites had been looked at cumulatively or each site in isolation.
- The Chair noted that an item for Housing need in Dunstable could be looked at as an item for a future Agenda.**

HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE FUND & DUNSTABLE MASTER PLAN UPDATE

A presentation update was given by Beverley Gaynor, Central Bedfordshire Council, attached to the minutes for detail.

Members noted the following:

- Beverly gave an update on the Master Plan.
- The Master plan was a vision document, first developed between 2009 -11, when the challenges were very different. There have been some significant changes around what is now required within retail and housing in the area and what has been delivered from the plan, has been successful.
- Dunstable Town Centre Regeneration Programme is now in delivery being funded from various sources and Key Sites for development were shown.

Members asked for clarification on the following:

- If the funding would need to be spent by a certain time, it was noted that March 2022 would be the deadline.
- What is happening with Dorchester close, it was noted that CBC will start looking at options to bring it forward by the end of 2020.
- Will the builds be phased? It was noted that Health Hub & Housing should be delivered by 2023 in the most efficient way possible.
- Who will have overall responsibility for the developments, it was reported Marcel Coiffait as Director of Place & Communities will have responsibility.

- Concerns were raised about the time frame of the High Street North and High Street South developments. It was noted that these will be phased and will be monitored as part of regeneration programme. There maybe some activity at the same time on the developments but this will be carefully planned, the phasings of the plans could be shared with DTC Members and the Committee.

POLICE REPORT

A verbal update was given by Officer Gurr in relation to crime in the area.

- The crime figures were reviewed as were other issues concerning Dunstable.
- It was noted that the figures were slightly down per day from this time last year.
- Incidents of theft and burglary were down considerably, but incidents of violent offences have unfortunately increased.
- Overall the committee recognised the Police are doing all they can to help locally and were encouraged by the details given.
- New ways to address offenders in the area were detailed as were contingency plans to deal with the possible effects of Corona virus on staffing.
- In response to a question about the use of knife arches in schools, details on operation Septre to tackle knife crime were given.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES GRANT & COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR GRANTS

A verbal update was given by Sarah Hughes, Central Bedfordshire Council

Members noted the following:

- The Community Councillor grant which was launched in October last year has been very successful, various projects have received rewards.
- The community asset grant scheme has also received 35 applications which are being scored for decision next week. A new bidding round will open again in April.
- It was clarified that £450k worth of bids were received (not including match funding) and there was £282k to allocate. Unsuccessful funders will have constructive feedback and be worked with to look at different avenues of available funding.
- The pooling of old S106 money to create a substantive grant fund has about £15k left in the fund.
- The 4th Scout group reported that there could be another source of £45k funding towards their project from Biffa on the condition that 10% of the grant value (£4.5k) would be donated to the wildlife Trust, it was asked that the previous grant given of £5k could be used in this instance. Complications around the allocation of S106 funds were discussed, it was noted that there are strict conditions linked to the spending of S106 so this may not be able to happen.

The Committee supported the proposal of helping to look at unlocking the significant amount of funds on offer from Biffa by finding an appropriate source of funding for the £4.5k asked for.

REPORTS FROM CO-OPTED OUTSIDE BODIES

Members noted the content of the report from Dunstable in Bloom and discussed the following:

- The Committee Members were asked to promote the initiatives within the report with local business. It was noted that Dunstable in Bloom has been nominated to receive the High Sherriff Award.

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL – UPDATE ON SERVICES

Members noted the content of the report and discussed the following:

- James Slack presented highlights from the update report.
- Information around the Joint Committee budget were discussed.
- Monies requested for the Committee to support were, £600 to continue to toilet scheme, £4k was for the Christmas event, £4k for party in the park event as a deposit for the main act. It was noted that sponsorship for Party in the Park was lost at the last minute and when secured again, the sponsorship for the event would be paid back to the Joint Committee.
The Committee noted that as the funding was to be reimbursed it RESOLVED to support the event on those terms.
- It was noted that the Markets are doing well and the details were given on the proposed VE day events.

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL – UPDATE ON SERVICES

Members noted the content of the report and discussed the following:

- Sarah Hughes presented highlights of the report.
- Use of the Leisure Centres were discussed, and numbers reported.
- Details on highways issues and parking were discussed, it was reported that there has been a number of inappropriate parking incidents recently debated at Dunstable Town Council, it was asked that there be a consistent deployment of enforcement officers in certain areas at all times to combat this, being of even higher importance when the splash park re-opens. It was noted there maybe a scheme of red lining in certain areas and a national programme of making parking on pavements illegal. **This could be addressed as an item on the Agenda in future.**
- It was noted that the list of on-going consultations has been included in the report and members were asked to look at the CBC website to comment on these.
- The cheering volunteering event is taking place, and members were encouraged to put in nominations for volunteers to be considered.

COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

Members noted the content of the work plan and added the following:

- Highways item – an introduction to what highways do and how it works
- Climate Change Agenda – what the council is investing money in
- Housing demand and supply for Dunstable
- Parking and Enforcement for Dunstable (noted included for September).

It was suggested theme meetings could be set up. This will be looked into with the Chair and Vice Chair.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

members noted the date of the next meeting on **11 June 2020 at 19.00** in Committee Room 1, Watling House, High Street North, Dunstable.

Future meetings will be held on: 10 September and 3 December 2020.

The Chairman closed the meeting as 21.03

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF DUNSTABLE JOINT COMMITTEE
HELD VIRTUALLY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS
ON 10 SEPTEMBER 2020**

Present: Central Bedfordshire Councillors: Cllr Hegley, Cllr Chatterley,
Cllr McVicar, Cllr Sanders, Cllr Young

Dunstable Town Councilors: Cllr Abbot, Cllr Bird, Cllr Hollick,
Cllr Martin, Cllr Restall

In Attendance: E Harrison, J Gelder, S Warboys, A Sparrow, Officer C Gurr, D Ashlee,
J Slack, S Hughes, S Sherwood, S Hobbs, Cllr T Stock, Cllr A Ryan,
Cllr T Morris, A Jeppe, S Patel, S Mooring.

Apologies: Cllr Jones, Cllr Bird is substituting
Steve Spicer

Members of the public: There were Members of the public in attendance

TO ELECT A CHAIR & VICE CHAIR

Cllr Carole Hegley was unanimously elected as Chair
Cllr Liz Jones was unanimously elected as Vice Chair

TO CONFIRM SECRETARIAT

It was confirmed that Central Bedfordshire Council Officers will continue in the secretariat function.

SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Hegley's husband has a street traders licence.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

J Richards, representing the COM Church made a supporting statement regarding item 10 'community funding applications.'

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair gave thanks to various organisations, businesses and the voluntary sector for their hard work during the Covid pandemic. Reports on the various challenges' organisations have faced would be welcomed at future meetings.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 MARCH 2020

The Minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

DUNSTABLE HIGH STREET REGENERATION PROGRAMME

A presentation was given by Aziza Jeppe from Central Bedfordshire Council, Sanjay Patel from Ringway Jacobs and Councillor Nigel Young, Central Bedfordshire Council. The presentation is attached to the minutes as Appendix A for detail.

Members noted the following:

- Elements of Phase 2a & 2b of the High Street Scheme were presented including details of flood prevention measures, cycle paths, updates to crossings and the timescales for 2a & 2b were discussed.
- It was noted that all the works discussed would be funded by successful grant bids from various agencies, and not from Council Tax.
- Details of Phase 3 were also summarised which included a 20mph zone and sign decluttering.

Members asked for clarification on the following:

- Details of the crossings proposed were clarified by Cllr Young. It was noted that the design was not finalised at this point.
- Sequencing of traffic lights was clarified as were some of the crossing points and gateways. Following government guidelines, the scheme as presented will lead to improvements to pedestrians and cyclist safety.
- Questions were asked about planting of trees, it was noted there will be large planters that can accommodate similar trees, none of the existing trees will be lost and more trees will be planted in the central reservation, overall increasing the number of trees.
- Funding issues with phase 2a and 2b were clarified. It was noted that initial quotes exceeded the budget but the Council is now using the Open Tender process.
- **The Chair noted that future updates would be welcomed and appreciated the continued investment in the town.**

CBC MARKET TOWN REGENERATION FUND

A report was given by Stephen Mooring, Central Bedfordshire Council

Members noted the following:

- The wide range of projects carried out within Dunstable as a result of the funding, including a repair scheme for shops with the underspend.
- The High Street regeneration fund was a result of this scheme, which had been very successful, with all shops involved very happy with the outcome.
- Some benchmarking has been carried out to explore the impact of the scheme but this had been put on hold due to Covid. Stephen will work with Dunstable Town Council to look at how to measure the impact of the improvements.

Members asked for clarification and commented the following:

- It was noted that during this scheme, grants given from Central Bedfordshire Council were around £610k and Dunstable Town Council around £700k, with the total value of schemes detailed at £1.4m, which includes many small grants given to small businesses.
- Thanks were given to Council Officers and the Town Clerk, David Ashlee for the amount of hard work they all gave to undertake this scheme.
- Members appreciated the collaboration of both Councils during this project which brought about the success of the scheme.
- **All Members in attendance voted in favour of taking a recommendation to Corporate Resources OSC about continuing the Market Town Regeneration fund.**

COMMUNITY FACILITIES FUNDING (S106) APPLICATION

A report was given by Sarah Hughes, Central Bedfordshire Council

Members noted the following:

- J Richards had made a supporting statement to the COM Church application as a public speaker.
- It was noted that the applications were asking for more funding than is available of £14,000.

Members commented the following:

- It was noted that both applications have merit and are supported, especially during the Covid pandemic.
- Men in Sheds bid for £6000 and the COM Church bid for £14,000
- It was suggested that that Men in Sheds are awarded £4k and £6k to the COM Church, to leave some monies available for other projects.
- It was noted that budgets and figures should be discussed with applicants to see how much of the projects could be completed with the funds allocated above.

POLICE REPORT

A verbal update was given by Officer Gurr in relation to crime in the area.

- It was noted that the lockdown had affected crime rates, lowering the crime rate considerably. As the lockdown has started to ease and the night time economy is opening up they have gone back up, but are still low in comparison to last year.
- Only theft from vehicles had remained comparative to last year.
- Recent incidents that required police attendance in the town were discussed.

Members asked for clarity and commented on the following:

- Issues of drugs and potential break in's around the town were discussed.
- Any issues of drug taking or begging should be reported on 101 to allow intelligence gathering of the police.

REPORTS FROM CO-OPTED OUTSIDE BODIES

Members noted the content of the report from Dunstable in Bloom and discussed the following:

- Ann Sparrow asked for any volunteers to help the group with Britain in Bloom as Dunstable has been asked to represent the whole of East Anglia.

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL – UPDATE ON SERVICES

Members noted the content of the report and discussed the following:

- Sarah Hughes presented highlights of the report.

Members noted the following:

- Members were reminded about a pavement parking consultation.
- Thanks were given by the Chair for all of the work done within schools for managing the challenges of Covid so positively.
- It was noted that ward Members may want to take part in the Town and Parish drop in sessions organised by the Safer Neighbourhoods Team

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL – UPDATE ON SERVICES

Members noted the content of the report.

COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

Members noted the content of the work plan and added the following:

- Encouraging businesses to support for Dunstable in Bloom, for the Britain in Bloom competition next year.
- Reports from various organisations detailing challenges faced during the Covid pandemic.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted the date of the next meeting on **3 December 2020** at **19.00**, which would take place virtually via Microsoft Teams

**Future meetings will be held on: Thursday 11 March 2021, Thursday 10 June 2021
Thursday 9 September 2021 & Thursday 2 December 2021**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 21.09

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 2 NOVEMBER 2020

Present: Councillors Peter Hollick (Town Mayor), Gloria Martin (Chairman and Deputy Town Mayor), Sid Abbott, Wendy Bater, Lisa Bird, Pamela Ghent, John Gurney and Gladys Sanders

In Attendance: Councillor Liz Jones, David Ashlee (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), Becky Wisbey (Head of Community Services), Lisa Stephens (Events and Marketing Manager), Gill Peck (Youth and Community Manager), Annette Clynes (Town Centre Services Officer), Michelle Collings (HSHAZ Manager) and Ian Reed (Democratic Services Manager)

Apologies: Councillor Cameron Restall and Gregory George

Public: One

121 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 7 September were approved as a correct record and it was agreed that they be signed by the Chairman shortly.

The Chairman advised the Committee that this was the first meeting Becky Wisbey had attended following her return from maternity leave. She also welcomed Gill Peck to her first committee meeting as Youth and Community Manager.

122 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no specific declarations of interest.

123 EVENTS AND MARKETING

The Events and Marketing Manager advised that further to the discussions at the last meeting of the Committee, due to the Covid-19 lockdown, it was likely all the markets planned for November would be cancelled and the Torchlight Procession was not now going ahead. The Committee was advised that plans were in place to organise an additional Christmas Market on the night of what would have been the Torchlight event, called Twilight Christmas Market. The market would run from 4pm on Friday evening until 9 pm, and then again on Saturday 10am to 4 pm.

The budget from the Torchlight event would be used to enhance the Twilight Christmas Market and the following weekend for the Christmas Magic Market. Event Production Live, the Town Council's contractor, would be providing additional festive lights, music, visual effects on Priory House and the Methodist Church to create a festive atmosphere on both

markets.

The Committee was advised that planning of events for 2021 would take place early in the New Year when there would be some further clarification on the Covid-19 regulations. Also, the Events and Marketing Manager had been asked to work on a YouTube video promoting the work of the Town Council and the HSHAZ programme.

124 GROVE CORNER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Youth and Community Manager advised that the Grove Corner youth sessions remained closed, however, officers had begun to do detached work. There had been three detached sessions; 6 October, 16 October and 20 October, and officers engaged with 74 young people. During detached sessions officers visited the skate park, performance area and library areas.

Grove Corner youth sessions would not be in operation due to the COVID-19 regulations. Grove Corner now had 549 Facebook 'Likes' and Grove Corner's Instagram had 239 followers.

It was further reported that the new Youth and Community Manager would lead a multi-faceted youth programme. The new gaming suite was prepared, and officers were looking for a launch in December or January 2021.

The following services had returned and were operating during the November lockdown because they offered 1-1 services; Minds2together, Sight Concern, Yawn life NCS, Hear 2 listen, NOAH Enterprise- IT courses and Pathway to Recovery.

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. Since the last report 240 telephone calls had been made.

Friends of Dunstable Cemetery had met in October with officers and the Town Mayor had met with Sundon Model Shop and Nationwide Building Society to explore opportunities to work together in the future.

In relation to Downside Community Centre, officers were waiting to hear from the Seventh Day Adventists on whether they wished to terminate their licence with the Council by 31 December 2020. A community boxing club was looking for suitable premises and had expressed interest in the community centre. This would be further explored and reported back to this Committee at a later date.

- RESOLVED** - (1) That the Town Council look to see how it and other organisations can support the groups in Grove Corner providing 1-1 support and in particular investigations be carried out to secure additional funding for Minds Together
- (2) That the Youth and Community Manager be congratulated on the promotion of services through Facebook
- (3) That the Committee would welcome working with the community boxing club if it could secure new premises.

125 OLDER PEOPLE'S DAY CARE SERVICES

The Committee received an update report on older people's day care services. Officers had continued to call members of the three lunch clubs twice per week during the pandemic. Members and their families had contacted Officers to pass on their thanks and appreciation of the service.

126 PRIORY HOUSE

The Committee received a report on recent operations and activities at Priory House, including trading account figures and Priory House maintenance. To cover the absence due to illness of the Manager, the Events and Marketing Manager had been placed in Priory House to offer management assistance and to address capacity issues. The Committee was advised that because of the new Covid-19 regulations the building would be closed on 5 November and open again on 2 December.

For weddings in the Jacobean Room there were already 14 confirmed bookings for 2021 and several provisional bookings. The room had been successfully marketed for Family Afternoon Teas for Halloween and Christmas.

For Christmas, a free children's craft activity would be available for children when customers dine.

RESOLVED - (1) That immediate action be taken to switch off the main lights on the roof of Priory House that were permanently switched on
(2) That the decision to illuminate Priory House in red lights as part of the Town Council's efforts to mark Remembrance Day 2020 be welcomed

127 DUNSTABLE TOWN CENTRE SERVICES

It was noted that due to the four-week Covid-19 lockdown it was likely that no markets would be held this month. There was great demand for traders to be part of the December markets. It was confirmed the markets set for 12, 13 and 19 December would go ahead.

The Committee also received reports on Town Centre vacancy rates (13.83%). It was noted that due to the lockdown a number of shops in the Quadrant had closed.

128 HIGH STREET HERITAGE ACTION ZONE (HSHAZ)

Further to the last meeting of the Committee the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport had lifted the embargo on publicising the programme on 19 September 2020. It was noted that details of the HSHAZ programme would be included in the next Talk of the Town. The Committee was advised that there would be three strands to the scheme.

- a) **Physical Interventions** - undertaking physical works to buildings, including repair, reinstating lost features, supporting the conversion of historic buildings for new uses and improvement of shared spaces.
- b) **Cultural Programme** - facilitating cultural activities and events celebrating the history of the high street and its importance to local communities over the generations. Additional funds are available – Activity Grants for the Cultural Consortia. The Dunstable Cultural Consortium, hereafter "the Consortium" will lead on the Cultural Programme.

As part of the process of preparing the programme design in late 2019 the Town Council facilitated the establishment of the Dunstable Cultural Consortium.

The Consortium would have opportunities to bid for funding to carry out activities and events and Historic England would also be developing a range of commissions on a national basis. It was noted that the inaugural Cultural Consortium meeting was held on 8 September 2020. The Consortium members would work together to plan and organise cultural activities and events celebrating the history of the high street and its importance to local communities over the generations. As additional funds were available to the Consortium, separate from the wider HSHAZ grant, the Consortium submitted a Pilot Activity Grant application to Historic England for £9,940 that had been successful. The Consortium would be working on the pilot activity projects between October 2020 and March 2021. This comprised of two projects - **Project 1** Augustinian Dunstable and **Project 2** Queen Eleanor of Castile. The former comprised a new display for Priory House exhibition area and the latter was a feasibility study for a statue of Queen Eleanor. The Consortium was to apply for grant aid for the period 2020 to 2024 by 11 December 2020, ahead of a determination by Historic England in late January 2021.

- c) **Community engagement** - A Community Engagement Strategy for the HSHAZ would be prepared by the Programme Manager and submitted to HE for comment. Possible community events related to the HSHAZ to be planned on an annual basis. However, the feasibility and timing of any live events would be dependent on Covid-19 restrictions.

A property was being sought in the Middle Row area to serve as an office for the HSHAZ Programme Manager and as a hub for the HSHAZ project. Officers were currently liaising with Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) regarding premises on Middle Row (the former Travel Hub).

129 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

South Bedfordshire Dial-a-Ride:

Councillor Gloria Martin reported it was continuing to operate and a new bus had recently been added to its fleet. Bus routes had been under view and there had been a number of staff changes

Dunstable Town Band:

No report

Men in Sheds

Councillor John Gurney reported that following his appointment at the last meeting of the Full Council he had had an introductory meeting with Men in Sheds and had become a trustee. He thanked the officers who had been involved with the refurbishments that had been required at its premises.

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 9 NOVEMBER 2020 AT 7.00 P.M

Present: Councillors Peter Hollick (Town Mayor), Gloria Martin (Deputy Town Mayor), Liz Jones (Chairman), Lisa Bird (Vice-Chairman), Mark Cant, Greg George, Pamela Ghent, and Gladys Sanders

Apologies: None

In Attendance: Councillor Philip Crawley, David Ashlee (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), John Crawley (Head of Grounds and Environmental Services), Mary Dobbs (Cemetery Manager), Ian Swinnerton (Grounds Operations) and Ian Reed (Democratic Services Manager)

Public: One

130 MINUTES

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

131 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no specific declarations of interest.

132 PLANS-SUB COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meetings of Plans Sub-Committee held on 15 September, 6 October and 27 October 2020 be received.

**133 CREASEY PARK COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CENTRE AND SPLASH PARK
UPDATE**

The Committee had been supplied with a summary account of performance since the last meeting of the Committee in September. The meeting was advised that the Centre was now closed to the public due to the recent Covid-19 restrictions.

The Committee welcomed the news that before the close down the centre was nearly back to full operation with all football having returned.

Additional Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) - The construction of the ATP was delayed by 20 days because of persistent wet weather. It was anticipated that the new pitch would be available from the first week of December. The ATP had been constructed to the highest standards which included 'intelligent play' which, through the use of artificial intelligence, would provide detailed maintenance information on specific areas of the pitch. Access to users would be controlled by a card entry system that was GDPR compliant and it meant that staff would not have to spend additional time monitoring access and use of the pitch by players. Also, LED lighting was being installed and new fencing erected. The new pitch would be more efficient in the amount of rubber crumb required.

The overflow carpark had been resurfaced with black top and 174 parking bays had been provided. This would mean that for large tournaments and matches there would be a marked reduction in on-street parking in neighbouring roads.

A community fun day would be organised to mark the launch of the new ATP pitch.

Existing ATP - New LED lighting units were being installed

The Main Pitch - The main turf pitch had suffered some damage from chafer grub that had been successfully treated. The assistant referee 'runs' on the main pitch were to be replaced with artificial grass that would avoid the need for seasonal repairs to the turf.

Bar and Catering - When matches had returned to the centre attendances had increased due in some part because elite football had banned public attendances. The Council would work with the clubs to maintain and retain current spectator levels

Action - All Members to be invited to visit the centre to see the works that had benefitted from the £1.2 million investment.

134 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 1 September to 30 October 2020 along with the profiled income and expenditure figures. These indicated a positive variance of £15,446.

The Committee was advised that the Friends of Dunstable Cemetery met on 20 October to carry out a tidy up. A further meeting set for 4 November had been cancelled. 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 any future spike in demand for burials. The Committee noted the Cemetery had been successful in retaining its Green Flag for 2020/21.

Further to a question from a Councillor the Committee was reminded that the Council followed the Charter for the Bereaved which provided standards of service including allowing the bereaved to choose a range of services and options.

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. Also, new signage had been placed on the main gates to all the allotment sites to identify each site and provide contact details for the Council.

The waiting list had grown significantly in the lockdown period and 265 people were currently on the waiting list

c) Recreation Grounds

Play Areas, Grove Skate Park and BMX

The Grounds Operations Manager reported that further to the discussion at the last meeting of the Committee there had been no incidents of vandalism to play equipment. It was reported that further repairs to the double zip wire at Bennett's Adventure play area had been required. The installers had re-set one of the support posts and replaced the original bolts on the main support posts with 16mm bolts. Also, sanitisation of the play areas continued as part of the Covid-19 risk assessment control measures for play spaces. The installers of the electrical supply to the skate park had carried out repairs to the timer to the lighting columns because the lighting had remained on overnight. An order had been made to purchase an electric van for the grounds/play maintenance operative to use.

Sports Pitches and General Grounds Maintenance

It was reported Dunstable Bowls Club had carried out autumn maintenance to the bowling green. The grounds team had assisted the Bowling Club by providing machinery and the purchase of materials. Also, leaf clearing at all recreation ground sites were being carried out and the leaves would be used as a compost.

d) Priory and Grove House Gardens and the Town Centre

It was reported both Priory and Grove House Gardens had retained their Green Flag status in 2020/21 and Priory Gardens had been granted Green Heritage status supported by Historic England. Also, some lighting columns in Priory Gardens had not been working and so the lamp holders had been checked and light bulbs replaced.

Dunstable in Bloom.

The Committee noted the town would take part in Britain in Bloom 2021. In supporting the work of Dunstable in Bloom the Committee invited Councillors to promote the campaign by raising awareness amongst their local communities. It was also reported that the Dunstable Joint Committee would consider financing the purchase of hanging baskets and flower tubs and encourage High Street traders to adopt and care for them.

e) Town Ranger Service

The Rangers had recently purchased a new wire brush attachment for the MIC34 sweeper for removal of weeds from kerb edges

Action - that the Grounds team be congratulated on the level and quality of work carried out at the cemetery

Action - that all appropriate staff be congratulated on securing Green flag status again

Action - despite the matter being reported at least two weeks ago the main lights on the roof of Priory House were still on all the time and urgent action was required

Action - That Members of the Council be asked to champion In Bloom activities by collecting a new leaflet and flyers from the Head of Grounds and Environmental Services and hand them out to local residents, businesses, and other organisations

135 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

CBC Development Management Committee:

Councillor Martin gave an update to the Committee on the Health Hub development. She advised the meeting that she had attended the CBC Development Committee to listen to the debate on the Health Hub as a Ward Councillor. She reported that there had been a detailed and thorough discussion of the issues at the meeting.

The Meeting closed at 7.41 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 16 NOVEMBER 2020 AT 7.00 PM

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

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

Apologies for Absence: None received

Public Attendance: None

136 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 21 September were approved as a correct record and it was agreed that they be signed by the Chairman shortly.

137 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive presented a revenue budgetary control report for the period ending 30 September and detail of the Council's earmarked reserves as at 27 October 2020. The summary of outturn position showed a potential overall underspend at the end of the financial year, taking account of lack of opportunities to trade and operate services during the Covid-19 lockdowns and the need to furlough some staff. The Committee noted that the availability of the Artificial Training Pitch at Creasey Park from the New Year would see a new income stream.

RESOLVED: That Members note the current revenue and earmarked reserves position.

138 CHRISTMAS SERVICE OPERATIONS; GROVE HOUSE REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE AND STAFFING ISSUES

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive presented the report which addressed arrangements for Council service operations over the Christmas period; provided an update on the current repairs and maintenance to Grove House and the intention to furlough and part furlough a small number of staff for the duration of the second lockdown period.

(a) Christmas Closures

It was proposed that all Council operations were to be closed down for the period 29 December to 31 December (subject to the normal emergency call out and safety check arrangements being in place). Creasey Park would be open for a limited time because of the need to honour a football fixture on Boxing Day and it is likely that the Cemetery office may also be open for some of the time. It was noted that if the arrangements were approved all staff would take annual leave for the imposed closedown.

(b) Grove House Repairs and Maintenance

Further to discussions at the last meeting of the Committee, the Committee received a report on the heating system overhaul currently taking place at Grove House to be completed by early December within the allocated budget of £75,000. The repairs to the roof of Grove House had started and were likely to cost £20,000 which had been approved in line with the Councils' financial regulations. In early 2021 essential works to repair flood damage to both the main first floor front office and the ground floor reception area would be carried out. It was anticipated that the Grove House allocated reserve would be £90,500 once all the work had been completed.

(c) Staffing Issues – Second Covid-19 Lockdown

All Members had been circulated with a schedule of how council services would be affected by current lockdown on 5 November and due to the need to closedown services approximately 35 staff based primarily at Creasey Park Community Centre, Priory House and Grove Corner had been furloughed or part furloughed.

RESOLVED: that the arrangements for service operations over the Christmas period be approved and the report of the Town Clerk and Chief Executive on the ongoing repairs to Grove House and the arrangements made for furloughing staff during the current Covid-19 lockdown be noted

139 ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING 2021

The Committee considered a report on selecting a venue for the Annual Council meeting on 17 May 2021. It was noted that the hire of premises and catering and associated costs would be met from the Civic Hospitality Budget of £3,000.

RESOLVED: that the venue for the Annual Council Meeting and Mayor Making Ceremony on 17 May 2021 be selected by the Democratic Services Manager in consultation with the Town Mayor subject to the venue hire not exceeding £700

140 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

a) CAB Management Committee

Councillor Bater reported that there had not been any meetings but she was aware the CAB was continuing to provide its services

b) DITA

The Town Mayor updated the meeting on the translation work being undertaken on the celebration brochure relating to twinning arrangements in Dunstable.

- c) **Hospice at Home Management Committee**
Councillor Jones reported that Hospice at Home had recently received £570 by virtual fund raising. Two new funding streams had been secured with the Co-operative Society and Amazon Smile. It was noted that the office in Grove House was ideal for its work.
- d) **Ashton Almshouses Charity**
The Town Mayor advised that a flat was being refurbished and a tenant would be moving in

The meeting closed at 7.26 p.m.

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL****MONDAY 7 DECEMBER 2020****DRAFT BUDGET SUMMARY 2021/22**

Purpose of Report:	The purpose of this report is to present to members a draft, revenue budget summary for the Council for 2021/22 and for members to consider the council tax strategy they would like to adopt in order to determine a balanced budget at the Council meeting planned for 1 February 2021.
---------------------------	---

1. ACTION RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 That the Council consider the draft revenue budget summary enclosed with this report and agree the council tax strategy for adopting a balanced budget at the meeting of the Council on 1 February 2021.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Council's finances have changed considerably over recent years as the Council has grown and developed new services and taken on additional responsibilities. It is perhaps worth reflecting that over the past ten years the Council's gross expenditure budget has increased by over 40%. This increase has been mainly driven by increased income generated from trading activities and expansion of the services the Council offers.
- 2.2 During this phase of growth, the Council has had to identify year on year cost efficiency savings whilst maintaining a focus on 'growing the core business' resulting in continued added value to the Dunstable council taxpayer.

An illustration of the last 7 year's council tax and precept rises is shown below:

Year	Band D Council Tax Charge (£)	Precept (£)
2014/15	171.78 (0.8% increase)	1,984,627
2015/16	171.78 (0% increases)	2,024,084
2016/17	175.21 (1.96% increase)	2,117,238
2017/18	175.21 (0% increase)	2,178,736
2018/19	175.21 (0% increase)	2,219,034
2019/20	179.32 (2.35% increase)	2,297,506
2020/21	£181.11 (1% increase)	2,369,323

- 2.3 It is also worth noting that the majority of properties in Dunstable are not band D. The highest number falling within Band C and as a result, most households in Dunstable pay less than the Band D charge shown above.
- 2.4 The draft budget summary for 2021/22 is submitted as an appendix to this report.

3. REVENUE BUDGET SETTING PROCESS AND EXPLANATION OF DETAIL

- 3.1 Every year the Council's Management Team hold a full day's budget setting exercise that results in the preparation of the initial draft budget. This year the budget-setting day was held at the beginning of November in order to prepare a draft budget for consideration at this Council meeting and included all service managers as well as the senior management team.
- 3.2 Having to do this inevitably means that whilst a full outturn of financial figures from 2019/20 is available only a half-year outturn is available for 2020/21 and this was greatly affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic. As a result, there is always an element of 'educated forecasting' that is required to establish budget proposals for the following year and therefore budget setting is never an exact science. **The draft forecast summary submitted in the appendices has been based on a normal year with no impact from Covid-19. A 'Covid-19 Contingency' of £15,455 has been included to help address any potential further financial impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic post April 2021.**
- 3.3 In addition to the normal exercise undertaken by the Senior Management Team, all Council Chairmen were invited to a briefing meeting held via Teams on 20 and 26 November to go through the draft budget proposals in detail.
- 3.4 Every line of the revenue budget is challenged in this process and as this Council relies more and more on revenue gained from non-council tax sources; i.e. income gained from various services, this challenge focuses not only on expenditure efficiency but also on achieving greater levels of trading income. The proposed draft gross budget illustrates that this Council relies on approximately one third of its income from sources other than the council tax (an unusual and impressive statistic for any level of local government).
- 3.5 Members will note that many of the changes illustrated at appendix 1 reflect a fine tuning exercise in budget savings and growth and many of the main increases to the revenue budget are for reasons beyond direct control such as staff cost increases, waste costs, H&S issues and member requests, etc.
- 3.6 Significant budget growth and savings are highlighted below.

Growth

- **Staffing costs-£35,209 + £10,500¹-** This figure is made up of increases to the Council's wage bill as a result of incremental pay increases where applicable; 1% on the overall Council pension costs; 2% increase on wages that attract the Living Wage Foundation minimum wage. **After the Chancellor of the Exchequer's announcement on another public sector pay freeze, only a minimum £250 pay award has been estimated for those staff earning £24,000 and below.**
- **Grove House rent and rates - £12,823 –** No income target has been set for rent from the ground floor office space as it is proving very difficult to attract interest in the space. Members will need to consider options for this space in Grove House during 2021/22.

¹ £10,500 is an estimated amount to account for those staff that earn less than £24,000 who will get a minimum of £250 pay award. Final details of this award were not known at the time of preparing this report

- **Corporate insurance costs - £4,200** – The premium has recently increased partly, as a result of adding all play areas and additional IT to the Council's schedule. Market testing will take place during 2021/22.
- **Loss of Grounds contract income - £15,600** – This growth occurs as a result of losing grounds contracts from Central Bedfordshire College, All Saints Academy and Dunstable Charities.
- **CPCFC grounds cost - £3,400** – This reflects additional maintenance costs as a result of the new ATP and irrigation system
- **Bar and catering costs - £11,915** – This increase reflects associated costs from extra business anticipated from the second ATP

Savings

- **Additional income from tax base increase - £12,678** – This is determined on the existing Dunstable Town Council tax charge
- **Grove House caretaking - £11,719** – This saving results from the Council making this function redundant during 2020
- **Cemetery burial fees - £7,500** – This saving results from an increase in the income targeted for the Cemetery
- **CBC grounds Agency Agreement - £6,250** – This saving results from additional income that will be achieved through the existing CBC grounds contract that will include new maintenance responsibilities from the ongoing highways improvements
- **Town Ranger public realm maintenance - £5,000** – This saving results from funding no longer being required for planned new gateway electronic signage
- **CPCFC 2nd ATP income - £55,188** – This new income will be achieved through the operation of the 2nd ATP which helps reduce the ongoing CPCFC subsidy to zero.
- **CPCFC bar and catering - £10,000** – This income is additional secondary spend that is anticipated as a result of the 2nd ATP
- **Bennett's Splash Park telephone - £3,000** – This saving occurs as a result of reduced telephone line rental costs
- **Priory House Tea Rooms sales - £3,500** – This savings occurs as a result of increased income targets for the Tea Rooms

3.6 The largest impact on the year on year budget is the increase to the income target at Creasey Park Community Football Centre. This increased income target has resulted in returning the overall budget for Creasey Park to a zero subsidy and has greatly assisted the net revenue surplus shown in the draft summary at appendix 1.

3.7 In summary the table shown at appendix 1 shows identified budget growth items totalling **£125,717** and identified revenue savings of **£141,172** giving an overall projected surplus figure of **£15,455**. The Dunstable tax base has increased from 13,082 to 13,152 (an increase of 70) securing additional income through the council tax charge of £12,678 assuming the Band D council tax charge remains at £181.11. **In normal circumstances this would be an excellent financial position for the Council. However, because of the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic and the associated financial uncertainties this causes, it is strongly recommended that members establish a 'Covid-19 Contingency' for 2021/22. This should be agreed at the surplus figure shown of £15,455 as a minimum but members may also wish to consider a small council tax increase to make this figure up to nearer £50,000 as illustrated in figures shown at the bottom of appendix 1.**

- 3.8 Members should note that the proposed budget is only draft at this stage and there may be forthcoming unforeseen budget pressures between now and February when the final Council revenue budget is agreed for 2021/22.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The draft budget summary would allow members to set a nil increase on the council tax whilst still establishing a contingency sum of £15,455. However, members must reflect on the fact that it is still not possible to accurately project the potential outturn on this year's revenue budget which will be severely undermined by losses of income at, mainly, Creasey Park Community Football Centre and Priory House.
- 4.2 The financial position for this year only remains as positive as it is because of savings achieved through not running the events programme and vacancies. It is unlikely that the vacancy savings achieved this year will be achieved next year, hence the note of caution that the contingency fund could be established at a higher rate by levying a very small increase on the Town Council element of the council tax charge.
- 4.3 Members should also note that whilst a minimal cost of living increase on salaries has been projected, there is always a chance that a full pay award could still be negotiated and as a result, the draft revenue projections could still change between the Council meeting in December 2020 and February 2021.

5. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The proposed draft budget continues to support the Council's Corporate Priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan 2020-23.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The proposed draft budget makes a revenue contribution to the Council's approach to managing health and safety requirements.

7. HUMAN RESOURCE, EQUALITIES AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

8. APPENDICES

- 8.1 Appendix 1 –Summary of growth and savings proposed for the 2021/22 revenue budget

9. AUTHOR

- 9.1 David Ashlee – Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Email: David.ashlee@dusntable.gov.uk

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
BUDGET 2021/22**

SAVINGS	GROWTH
Corporate Costs	
Additional income from tax base increase - £12,678 <i>(tax base has increased from 13,082 to 13,152 = 70 x £181.11 = £12,678)</i>	Overall increase in staffing costs - £35,209 <i>(made up of 2% Living Wage Foundation pay increase, increments, and additional pension contribution costs) + £10,500¹</i>
SUB-TOTAL - £12,678	SUB-TOTAL - £35,209 + £10,500 = £45,709 (est.)
Finance and Support Services	
Grove House / Caretaking – 11,719	Central Services / Subscriptions and publications – 1,100
Grove House / Waste disposal - 400	Central Services / Misc. recharges - 150
Grove House / Repairs and Maintenance – 2,000	Grove House / Building Maintenance Contracts – 1,500
Corporate Management / Health and Safety – 2,000	Grove House / Rents and rates - 12,823
Corporate Management / Beds FA recharge - 322	Grove House / Telephones - 300
Grove House loan repayments – 1,083	Corporate Management / Pension Costs – 1,400
	Corporate Management / Telephones – 1,000
	Corporate Management / Insurance – 4,200
SUB-TOTAL - £17,524	SUB-TOTAL - £22,473
Grounds and Environmental Services	
Allotments / Electricity - 300	Allotments / Water Charges - 200
Allotments / Misc. Income - 100	Cemetery / Rates - 400
Cemetery / Repairs and Maintenance – 1,000	Cemetery / Waste Disposal – 2,000
Cemetery / Memorial Safety - 500	Cemetery / Equipment and materials – 4,750
Cemetery / Burial Fees – 7,500	Cemetery / Stationery - 250
Recreation Grounds / Maintenance Contracts – 2,750	Recreation Grounds / Cleaning – 1,500
Recreation Grounds / Grass Cutting Equipment - 400	Recreation Grounds / Bowling Green Maintenance - 500
Town Centre Gardens / Croquet lawn income - 200	Recreation Grounds / Loss of contract income – 10,450
Town Centre Gardens / CBC agency income – 6,250	Town Centre Gardens / Water - 300
Town Ranger / Waste - 500	Town Centre Gardens / Cleaning – 1,500
Town Ranger / Repairs and Maintenance – 2,000	Town Centre Gardens / Bedding and plants - 500
Town Ranger / Public Realm Maintenance – 5,000	Town Centre Gardens / Green Flags - 800
Loan Charges – 865	Town Centre Gardens / Loss of contract income – 5,150
	Town Ranger / Telephones - 300
SUB-TOTAL - £27,365	SUB-TOTAL - £28,600

¹ £10,500 is an estimated amount to account for those staff that earn less than £24,000 who will get a minimum of £250 pay award. Final details of this award were not known at the time of preparing this report

SAVINGS	GROWTH
Creasey Park Community Football Centre***	
ATP Hire – 55,188	Maintenance Contracts – 500
Bar and Catering Sales – 10,000	Grounds maintenance – 3,400
	Bar and Catering Staff Costs – 7,915
	Licences – 100
	Bar and Catering Stock – 4,000
SUB-TOTAL – £65,188	SUB-TOTAL - £15,915
Bennett Recreation Ground Splash Park	
Cleaning – 1,000	Rates – 720
Telephones – 3,000	Licensing – 50
	Maintenance Contracts – 1,000
SUB-TOTAL – £4,000	SUB-TOTAL – £1,770
Community Services	
SAVINGS	GROWTH
Community Engagement / Grants – 6,800	Grove Corner / Rent Income – 6,800
Grove Corner /Room Hire Income – 1,300	Grove Corner – Repairs and Maintenance – 750
Grove Corner Catering Income – 750	Events / Telephone - 200
Tea Room Sales – 3,500	Priory House / Rates – 500
Town Centre Services / Stall Hire Income – 250	Priory House / Cleaning – 2,000
Priory House Loan Charges – 1,025	Priory House / Licences – 1,000
HSHAZ Grant – 792	
SUB-TOTAL - £14,417	SUB-TOTAL - £11,250
TOTAL - £141,172	TOTAL - £125,717
TOTAL - £15,455 (est.)	

NB

- 2020/21 Band D council tax = £181.11
- 2020/21 tax base = 13,082
- 2021/22 tax base – 13,152 = additional £12,678 of council tax income.
- 0.5% on council tax = £0.91 (£182.02) x 13,152 = £11,968
- 0.75% on council tax = £1.36 (£182.47) x 13,152 = £17,887
- 1% on council tax = £1.81 (£182.92) x 13,152 = £23,795
- 1.5% on council tax = £2.72 (£183.83) x 13,152 = £35,693

*** Creasey Park – 20/21 subsidy of £35,336 is wiped out to £0