



David Ashlee Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Date: 23 December 2020

Dear Councillors

Could you please note that a remote meeting of the Community Services Committee will be held on **Monday 4 January 2021 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 up to the day of the meeting. Instructions on how to join will then be sent out.

AGENDA

1. Declarations of Interest
2. Apologies for Absence.
3. Minutes of the meetings of the Community Services Committee held on 2 November 2020 (previously circulated).
4. Declarations of Interest
5. Grove Corner and Community Engagement – information report (see page 3).
6. Older People's Services – information report (see page 6).
7. Priory House – information report (see page 7).
8. Dunstable Town Centre Services – information report (see page 11).
9. High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) – information report (see page 14).
10. Budget Proposals 2021/22 (see page 19).

(Continued)

11. Reports from outside bodies:
South Beds Dial-a-Ride Management Committee - Cllr Martin
Dunstable Town Band - Cllr Martin
Men in Sheds - Cllr John Gurney

Yours faithfully



David Ashlee
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

To: All Members of the Community Services Committee
Peter Hollick (Town Mayor), Gloria Martin (Deputy Town Mayor and Chairman), Cameron
Restall, (Vice-Chairman), Sid Abbott, Wendy Bater, Lisa Bird, Philip Crawley, Gregory George,
Pamela Ghent, John Gurney, Lee Roberts, Gladys Sanders and other Members of the Council
for information

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 4 JANUARY 2021****GROVE CORNER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

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

- 1.1 Grove Corner has facilitated one trial session for eight young people that officers have been working with at Central Bedfordshire College. Between 21 October to 11 December; officers have engaged with 199 young people through detached, digital, and face-to-face sessions at Grove Corner. Numbers are recorded through a head count.
- 1.2 Grove Corner youth sessions are hoping to do a soft reopen in January in line with government guidelines and are hoping that by the end of March all evening sessions are fully functioning. Young people who wish to attend will need to book prior to the session.
- 1.3 Grove Corner now has 577 Facebook 'Likes' and Grove Corner's Instagram now has 253 followers.

2. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

- 2.1 The new gaming suite is complete. Officers have continued to speak with young people about the upcoming facilities and consulting with them about games. Officers have purchased two additional VR headsets with the funding that was secured from the Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit (VERU) run by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire. The young people who have visited the gaming suite have fed back that they are impressed with the quality of the resources and have expressed interest in attending evening provision at Grove Corner, once this resumes fully. Due to the lockdown in November, officers had to postpone the launch that was planned for Friday 6 November and are hoping to launch at the end of January.
- 2.2 Officers have been engaging with young people from Central Bedfordshire College through digital provision for six weeks. Officers run one hour sessions to three classes a week. The content they deliver is informal and includes discussion, games and consultation. The young people who attend the sessions requested for them to be informal, to give them an opportunity to relax due to the stresses and anxieties some have experienced during the pandemic.

- 2.3 Officers continue to promote the reopening of the youth sessions at Grove Corner through word of mouth, the dedicated young people's Facebook and Instagram pages and through Talk of the Town.

3. DAY TIME HIRE

- 3.1 Throughout the lockdown, Grove Corner continued to host support groups taking place in the Centre following Government guidelines and ensuring the relevant safety measures in place are adhered to.
- 3.2 Minds2gether continue to run sessions every Friday 10.00 am to 1.00 pm at limited capacity. This group is a mental health social group. From January, a second session will run every Wednesday from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm.
- 3.3 Sight Concern stopped running throughout November during the lockdown but returned to Grove Corner in December – their group runs every Tuesday 12.00 noon to 3.00 pm. This is a support group for those who are visually impaired.
- 3.4 YAWN Life who run a special needs support group on a Monday and Thursday 10.00 am to 1.00 pm have not yet returned to Grove Corner – this group continues to liaise with officers and will decide in January if they will continue to hire Grove Corner.
- 3.5 Pathway to Recovery, a support group for those recovering from substance misuse, meet every Tuesday morning, 9.00 am to 11.00 am and every Friday afternoon, 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm.
- 3.6 NOAH Enterprise have completed their two courses, a weekly creative confidence course and an IT skills course will run twice a week. Noah have booked Grove Corner to run 3 different courses from January. The courses are: an IT skills course, a creative confidence course and a working solutions course.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1 Officers continue to attend the Covid Response meetings fortnightly.
- 4.2 Weekly befriending calls to vulnerable residents either shielding or isolated continue. Officers continue to offer information, advice, and guidance to those who require it. Officers are hoping to begin to resume community engagement events and activities in February and therefore have begun to assess case by case who they have been supporting over recent months, to see whether other services the council offer may be appropriate for them or for others who require less or limited support, officers are beginning to decrease contact and/or signpost where appropriate.
- 4.3 Officers delivered free arts and crafts at the Christmas market. They engaged with 150 children and their parents/carers. Officers gave each child their own resource pack which had everything they required to participate to ensure the activities were

delivered in a Covid secure setting and following the National Youth Agency guidelines.

5. DOWNSIDE COMMUNITY CENTRE

- 5.1 Seventh Day Adventist indicated that they wished to terminate their license on 31 January 2021.
- 5.2 At full Council on 7 December 2020, it was agreed that a community boxing organisation will license Downside Community Centre, and that this will be in place by March 2021. Council also requested details of all the organisations who currently rent space at the centre through the Seventh Day Adventist's. Officers have made this request on several occasions, and have been advised that due to data protection regulations the church will pass our contact details on to the individual organisations and request that they contact named officers at the Council.
- 5.3 Officers have worked with Seventh Day Adventist as they prepare to vacate the building and have begun to work with Conroy Boxing as they prepare to undertake their license of the building.

6. AUTHORS

- 6.1 Gill Peck – Youth and Community Manager
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- 6.2 Jack Adams-Rimmer – Neighbourhood Development Officer
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- 6.3 Joanne Hough – Community Services Assistant
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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 4 JANUARY 2021****OLDER PEOPLE'S DAY CARE SERVICES**

Purpose of report: For information only.

1. TELEPHONE CALLS

- 1.1 Officers have continued to call members of the three lunch clubs twice per week during the pandemic. Officers continue to receive feedback from members that this support has been beneficial for them and allowing them to continue to feel connected and to have a safe space to talk. Officers have been able to signpost members where additional services or support has been required.

2. VIRTUAL SERVICES

- 2.1 Officers have begun to deliver weekly video calls via WhatsApp for members who have this facility. Feedback from members has been positive and during the Christmas break, members plan to continue these calls to each other without officers support.

3. COFFEE MORNINGS

- 3.1 Due to the November lockdown, the coffee morning arranged for Tuesday 3 November was postponed. Officers are planning to resume coffee mornings at the end of February.

4. LUNCH CLUBS

- 4.1 Lunch clubs were unable to resume as planned in the middle of November. Due to it being unknown if there will be a spike with Covid-19 and with the probable adverse winter weather conditions in January; officers are currently planning to resume two of the lunch clubs from end of February, in line with current guidance and associated risk assessments.

5. AUTHORS

- 5.1 Elaine McGarrigle, Older People's Services Officer
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- 5.2 Gill Peck, Youth and Community Manager
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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 4 JANUARY 2021

PRIORY HOUSE

Purpose of Report: For Information only.

1. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 1.1 The two vacancies in the Tea Rooms were filled, with new members of staff starting on 27 October and 7 December respectively.

2. TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE AND RETAIL OUTLET

- 2.1 Although trade is slower than normal Christmas stock is selling well, and staff have restocked where possible.
- 2.2 Facebook advertising is continuing to be used, and is proving to be an effective way to promote the gift shop. A newsletter promoting the gift shop and tea rooms was sent out by Mail Chimp to around 800 subscribers. A virtual shopping video was also produced on Facebook to encourage customers to purchase shop stock, the post had 1,600 views and bought customers into the shop to purchase items they saw.
- 2.3 December's Showcase shelving was full and traded well. Due to the uncertainty, no new traders have booked in for January, but the staff will be pushing for traders for the remainder of the financial year.
- 2.4 To increase trade, the gift shop was open late Friday 11 December (the night of the Twilight market), this proved very successful. It was the highest trading in the shop compared to any Torchlight event late night opening.

3. THE JACOBAN ROOM

- 3.1 There are 16 confirmed weddings (with Registrar) for 2021. Nine of these weddings were rearranged from 2020 after being postponed.
- 3.2 Priory house is now registered with Hitched, the UK's biggest wedding website. Currently we are the only wedding venue in Dunstable that is listed, and so far we have had three enquiries on the back of this marketing.
- 3.3 Table 1 below shows Jacobean Room bookings per month from April 2019. The lockdown and Tier 2 restrictions have had a dramatic impact on our bookings.

2019		2020	
<i>April</i>	6	<i>April</i>	CLOSED
<i>May</i>	7	<i>May</i>	CLOSED
<i>June</i>	10	<i>June</i>	2
<i>July</i>	7	<i>July</i>	1
<i>August</i>	5	<i>August</i>	3
<i>September</i>	6	<i>September</i>	4

<i>October</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>October</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>November</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>November</i>	<i>CLOSED</i>
<i>December</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>December</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>January</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>January</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>February</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>February</i>	<i>Bookings</i>
<i>March</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>March</i>	<i>To Date</i>
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>101</i>		<i>13</i>

4. **EVENTS**

- 4.1 Due to events not taking place this year Priory House has missed out on glow stick sales at Fireworks and Torchlight. Last year we took £2,205 combined at both events, and therefore gives further explanation to our low shop income.
- 4.2 Santa's House Party was unable to go ahead due to lockdown and Tier 2 restrictions. Again, this caused a loss of income. Last year the gift shop takings for this event were £422, again providing further explanation to the low income in the gift shop.
- 4.3 Santa's Cinema and Breakfast with Santa were also cancelled resulting in a loss of £1,000 income.
- 4.4 Festive Film Friday was changed to Festive Family Afternoon Teas and even with lots of advertising on social media this was poorly attended. Three tables on 11 December and two tables on 18 December.

5. **PRIORY HOUSE TEA ROOMS**

- 5.1 The Team at Priory House supported the Twilight Market event on Friday 11 December and remained open on the Friday evening to serve hot and cold beverages and festive food. This was well attended by the general public on the evening, and there was a record take of £478.59 between 6.00pm and 8.30pm.
- 5.2 Christmas Afternoon Teas started on 25 November and ran through until 23 December. The Tea Rooms served 65 Afternoon Teas this year, which is down considerably on the 169 last year.
- 5.3 All Pudding Nights have been cancelled and this has had an effect on the Tea Rooms takings. Last year the tea rooms served 199 people and took £1,679.00.
- 5.4 To try to increase income the Tea Rooms has been open on Sunday 13 & 20 December for Afternoon Teas and the general public. Again, this has been well advertised on social media. However, this has been unsuccessful due to Tier 2 restrictions.

6. FINANCE

6.1 Priory House Profiled Income and Expenditure Report as at end November 2020.

Priory House Tea Rooms taking comparison EX VAT

Date	2019/2020	2020/2021	Variation 2020/2021	% Difference
TOTAL FOR 1ST QUARTER	£32,136.29	£0.00	-£32,136.29	100
TOTAL FOR 2ND QUARTER	£34,524.88	£21,143.47	-£13,381.41	39
OCTOBER	£11,703.96	£6,214.46	-£5,489.50	47
NOVEMBER	£8,458.50	£1,721.72	-£6,736.78	80
TOTAL	£20,162.46	£7,936.18	-£12,226.28	61

Year to date £86,823.63 £29,079.65 -£57,743.98 67%

6.2 Income is dated up to 3 December. Due to the second lockdown in November Priory House tea rooms is 67% down on income compared to the previous year.

6.3 Priory House Shop takings sales comparison EX VAT

	2019/20	2020/2021	Variation 2020/2021	% Difference
TOTAL FOR 1ST QTR	£1,769.41	£144.51	-£1,624.89	92
TOTAL FOR 2ND QTR	£2,596.50	£1,416.79	-£1,179.71	45
OCTOBER	£986.94	£915.99	-£70.95	7
NOVEMBER	£1,292.48	£113.05	-£1,250.38	96
Year to date	£6,645.32	£2,590.35	-£4,125.92	62%

6.4 Income is dated up to 3 December, Unfortunately due to the lockdown in November and the impact of Tier 2 restrictions in the tea rooms the income has been effected in the gift shop. The income is currently 62% down on last year.

- 6.5 It should be noted however, that the negative variation has improved on the figures last reported back in November. This is due to the fact that Priory House furloughed full-time a large number of staff during the second lockdown, as well as part-time furloughing the rest of the team during this time. This yielded a saving on the salary budget of over £7,500. Part-time furloughing has continued throughout December, and looks to continue throughout January as well, due to the negative impact the Tier 2 restrictions have brought to business.

7. **AUTHORS**

- 7.1 Lisa Stephens, Events and Marketing Manager; lisa.vincent@dunstable.gov.uk

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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 4 JANUARY 2021****DUNSTABLE TOWN CENTRE SERVICES**

Purpose of Report:	For information only
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1 MARKETS**1.1 Themed Market**

Themed Markets, which were rebranded Middle Row Markets, have increased bookings during 2020. Middle Row Markets will come under one rebranded banner in 2021. Middle Row Markets will re-start 13 March 2021. The table below shows bookings from October to December, all November dates were cancelled. The Town Centre Services Officer offered two new dates in December for those that were cancelled. Six traders asked for refunds for the November markets.

10 October	18 booked
5 December (new date)	15 booked
11 December (new date)	28 booked
12 and 13 December	30 booked - Full

1.2 Farmers and Craft

The Farmers and Craft Market will also be re branded next year as Middle Row Markets.

17 October	27 booked
19 December	30 booked – full

2 ASHTON SQUARE TOILETS

2.1 Loo of the year award was awarded in October 2020 for Ashton Square toilets with a Platinum award. Feedback from the assessor was very positive with guidance on providing facilities for children to wash/dry hands. The Town Centre Services Officer has contacted The Men in Sheds to make some permanent steps for the sinks and a family toilet in the baby changing area.

3 TOWN CENTRE**3.1 Christmas Lights**

The new lights on the Priory House Christmas tree and Grove House had positive feedback from the public. As Lamps and Tubes no longer supply a real Christmas tree due to cost and environmental impact, the Town Centre

Services Officer found a company that supplies and delivers a real tree. This is to be looked at again in 2021, with the Christmas Lighting Working Group. Quotes for Picket fences have also been acquired by The Town Centre Services Officer for both the main tree and Priory House tree.

Lamps and Tubes, the Town Councils lighting contractor have confirmed that the main high street and town Centre decorations are coming to the end of their life. The Christmas Lighting Working Group met on 16 September for a walk along the town centre and gardens to discuss options for the new town lighting. There was an overarching strategy to light up the trees and natural areas in the town and not artificial structures. The idea was to go away from individual lights on columns and use festoons and lighting to enhance trees and areas in the town's gardens and high street.

The Town Centre Services Officer posted on Facebook to ask the public to put forward their comments on the current scheme and their thoughts for future schemes, this consultation will be verbally reported back at the committee meeting.

Following the committee meeting a date will be set for the Christmas Lighting Working Group to meet to discuss and plan the tender process for the 2021 Christmas lighting scheme. It is likely that the Council will look for the new contractor to deliver the Christmas lighting scheme for up to 5 years. All details will be brought back to committee before the tender process begins.

3.2 Events on the Square

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all events that had been planned for 2020 had to be cancelled. The Twilight Christmas Magic took place on 11, 12 and 13 December with festive lighting, Christmas selfie opportunities, street entertainment, music and 30 market stalls with local traders and local shops. Friday 11 December had a fantastic turn out, and our marshals were however, able to keep social distance measures in place. Facebook comments were positive with the public wanting more of this next year as the replacement of Torchlight. Middle Row shops reported that they traded better during the evening market than Torchlight the year before. They would also like to see this repeated next year in replacement of Torchlight. During the three day market all traders were positive and had plenty of sales. The public commented positively on Facebook and to staff regarding markets and the Christmas lights. On Sunday 13 December the weather was against the market, which lead to a quieter market.

3.3 Partnership Working

Shops and restaurants took part in the Christmas window competition. Judging took place on 5 December; first place went to Timeless Interiors, second place to Moody Styles and third places went to Brighton Beautiful, Sperring Residential and Chez Jerome. Shops that took part all received a small gift. Twenty two business took part with the intention for more to join next year.

Two more shop fronts were awarded money as part of the Shop Front scheme, Happy Pot and Shreeji International. A total of 14 shops have now benefited from the scheme.

4. TOWN CENTRE VACANCY RATES

- 4.1 The vacancy rates to the end of October 2020 are provided below. The count will be undertaken again at the start January 2021.
- 4.2 The town centre area used for the survey includes properties in High Street North up to Regent Street, High Street South to Friars Walk (excluding Thames Industrial Estate), Church Street up to and including Aldi and West Street up to the Police Station/St Mary's Gate.
- 4.3 Eleanor's Cross, Ashton Square, Albion Street, The Quadrant and Grove Park (including Asda) have been included but rates can be calculated with or without these properties.

These figures have been shared with Central Bedfordshire Council officers

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
253	35 vacant	13.83%	13.83% from end of July 20.

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

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
210	27 vacant	12.85%	14.28% last count end of July 20.

The following figures relate to the Quadrant Shopping Centre only.

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
43	8 vacant	18.60%	9.30 % Count from July 20

5. AUTHOR

- 5.1 Annette Clynes - Town Centre Services Officer
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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 4 JANUARY 2021****HIGH STREET HERITAGE ACTION ZONE (HSHAZ)**

Purpose of Report: For information only.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Since the embargo was lifted on 19 September 2020 Historic England (HE) have been starting to publicise the programme, via their website: <https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/heritage-action-zones/regenerating-historic-high-streets> and social media.
- 1.2 Since later September 2020 the Council have set up HSHAZ webpages on the Town Centre section of DTC's website <https://www.dunstable.gov.uk/town-centre/dunstable-high-street-heritage-action-zone-hshaz/>, a Facebook page @DunstableHSHAZ and Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/hazdunstable/> Details of the HSHAZ was included in the December 2020 Talk of the Town. All communications need to be approved by HE, and HE will be leading on communication throughout the HSHAZ programme.
- 1.3 Members are aware that the HE *High Streets Heritage Action Zone Programme: Programme Delivery Guidance* sets out three complimentary strands to the HSHAZ scheme:
- a) **Physical Interventions**
 - b) **Cultural Programme/ Cultural Consortium**
 - c) **Community engagement**
- Updates in respect of these three strands are detailed below.

2. KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- 2.1 There have been numerous HSHAZ meetings since August 2020 and since 2 November 2020 officers have continued to have virtual meetings with several key individuals at HE and other parties. For example, officers have regular meetings with the Historic England HSHAZ Project Officer for the eastern region and the Historic England HSHAZ Project Manager/Lead for Dunstable. Officers also have regular meetings with officers at CBC to provide updates.
- 2.2 The Lead Professional (Conservation Accredited Structural Engineer) for the Priory House works hosted project team meetings by Teams on 2 November and 14 December 2020 involving the project team, HE, the CBC Conservation Officer and DTC officers. These meetings have focused on the findings of initial investigations and the construction impact study. A separate meeting was also held on 6 November 2020 regarding the Priory House project team's community engagement.
- 2.3 The tender process for the Lead Professional for the High Street South/Middle Row projects has been completed since 2 November 2020 and a Conservation

Accredited Architect has been chosen following the full Council meeting on 7 December 2020. It is hoped that this will assist discussions with private property owners in early 2021 and that property owners will benefit from discussions with the lead professional.

- 2.4 The first Dunstable HSHAZ Programme Board meeting was held on 7 December 2020. These meetings have been requested by HE on a quarterly basis, to fall shortly before written quarterly updates are due to HE. These meetings involve representatives from all parties involved in all strands of the programme (including the Consortium and lead professionals).
- 2.5 There have been several meetings and communications regarding the Cultural Consortium and the HSHAZ Cultural Programme 2020-2024. The Grant application was submitted on 11 December 2020. The members of the Cultural Consortium have been liaising with HE directly in respect of queries and have also liaised with one other HSHAZ (Selby) about possible connections. The Cultural Consortium will now be working on the Pilot Activity Grant, which was previously awarded as detailed in Section 4 below.

3. PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS

- 3.1 HE's requirements in respect of grant funds for private property owners and the basis on which private property owners may apply for funding is still being fully established at present. The HSHAZ Programme Manager has made initial contact with a number of private property owners and discussions are ongoing, see points 3.3 to 3.6.

Priory House

- 3.2 Following an initial familiarisation day involving the Morton Partnership, Conservation Accredited Structural Engineers and the project team working under them, a number of key members of the team have returned in mid-October, November and early December 2020. The Morton Partnership and the project team working under them have been undertaking initial investigations which have informed the first draft of the Construction Impact Study that was issued to officers on 14 December 2020. Investigations are ongoing and the Construction Impact Study will be updated following further investigations and discussions between the project team, HE and officers.

Middle Row projects

Number 4 High Street South (Pizza Roma)

- 3.2 There has been limited progress since early November 2020. Quotes are still being obtained for a number of surveys that are required including an asbestos survey, a full structural survey and a Level 4 Historic Building Record to inform what might be required and feasible going forward. The HSHAZ Programme Manager is in the process of liaising with various parties regarding these surveys.

Number 18 High Street South (next to the Coffee Pod)

- 3.4 Unfortunately, a planned site meeting was cancelled and a revised date was delayed by lockdown 2. An initial site visit and meeting is now planned for mid-January 2021. The intention is that Officers will attend and take photographs, which can be shared with HE and Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) for comment to facilitate discussions regarding grant eligible works.

Numbers 21-23 High Street South (Moore's)

- 3.5 There has been limited progress since early November 2020. Unfortunately, there has been no U-turn and HE are unable to provide funding based on the existing planning permission and approved plans. The current approved plans for the façade are based on a generic historical style. HE require that any shopfronts are based on scholarly research and a previous façade. (This does not have to be from a particular period in the past). The owner is still considering the implications of this and how they would like to proceed. It is possible that they will continue with their approved scheme rather than working with the HSHAZ programme.

Numbers 20 and 22 High Street South (Celebrations and Coffee Pod)

- 3.6 An initial meeting was held with the owner of 20 and 22 High Street South. The owner is still considering the scope of works they would like to carry out to the two properties. The owner had previously indicated that it would be useful for them to have discussion with the conservation accredited architect and it hoped that these discussions can be progressed in early 2021 now they have been appointed.

Methodist Church

- 3.7 Since the HSHAZ has been promoted via Facebook officers have been approached by the Methodist Church regarding possible works. An initial Teams meeting is planned with members of the Methodist Church in mid-January 2021.

4. CULTURAL PROGRAMME

- 4.1 As previously stated the Dunstable Cultural Consortiumⁱ, hereafter "the Consortium" have a separate grant and opportunities to bid for funding to carry out activities and events. HE will also be developing a range of commissions on a national basis. Following the inaugural Cultural Consortium meeting on 8 September, the Consortium has four lead members/postsⁱⁱ, (a chair, secretary, treasurer and communications post) who are collectively responsible for liaising with all members of the Consortium, HE and all other parties to inform decision making. The four lead members/posts are coordinating members of the Consortium, any proposals, work schedules and activities. They are also liaising directly with and reporting directly to HE. The Consortium will providing written quarterly updates to HE, the same as required for the wider HSHAZ programme.

Dunstable Cultural Consortium

- 4.2 The Cultural Consortium have held three Consortium wide meetings to date (on 8 September, 21 October and 18 November 2020). The Consortium members will

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.

- 4.3 As detailed above additional funds are available to the Consortium, separate from the wider HSHAZ grant. In the first instance HE set out details of pilot grants in *Historic England June 2020 - High Street HAZ Pilot Activity Grants for Cultural Consortium. Cultural Programme Call for Proposals V3*. As reported in November the Consortium's Pilot Activity Grant application for £9,940 was successful. The paperwork for this has now been finalised between all parties.
- 4.4 HE set out details of the main Activity Grant in *Historic England High Street Heritage Action Zone Cultural Programme 2020-2024, Guidance for completing your application form*. The Consortium have been focusing on the main Activity Grant application since the guidance came out. There have been numerous meetings between Consortium members, HE, the CBC Archaeologist and other parties regarding this and potential projects. The Consortium had some external assistance to assist with the final stages of preparing the bid and bid writing. The application for the Activity Grant to cover the period 2020 to 2024 was due on 11 December and was submitted on time. It is currently understood that HE intended to undertake the sifting process in later January 2021.
- 4.5 After the Christmas break the Consortium will be working on the Pilot Activity projects until March 2021. This comprises two projects - **Project 1** Augustinian Dunstable and **Project 2** Queen Eleanor of Castile. The former comprises a new display for Priory House exhibition area. The latter comprises a feasibility study for a statue of Queen Eleanor.
- 4.6 The Consortium had hoped to hold a market stall in mid-November but this was not possible due to lockdown. However, they have created a survey using Survey Monkey and this has been shared online to engage with members of the community.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1 Since the embargo has been lifted the Council have started to promote the scheme through the Town Council website and social media as detailed in Section 1 (Introduction), with a positive response. The Facebook Page now has 80 likes and has a reach of 6,824.
- 5.2 The HSHAZ Programme Manager held a stall at the Christmas Market on 11 December and 12 December and the Senior Neighbourhood Development Officer held a stall at the Christmas Market on the 13 December, promoting the HSHAZ. This provided an initial opportunity to make members of the local community aware of the HSHAZ.

Programme Hub

- 5.2 HE required DTC to obtain a property in the Middle Row area to serve as an office for the HSHAZ Programme Manager and as a hub for the HSHAZ project. Officers

have been liaising with Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) regarding premises on Middle Row (the former Travel Hub). In November it was agreed that this property will be shared by DTC and CBC, for the HSHAZ Programme Manager, the Town Centre Services Officer and members of the Highways Team respectively. Although keys were obtained for the property in early December 2020 it is currently anticipated that it will not be possible to use this space in any great capacity at present due to Covid-19 restrictions. There are also some initial set up arrangements that are still being discussed between DTC and CBC that require resolution before the property can be used as an office space. In the meantime, HSHAZ posters (created by HE Creative) have been put up in the window along with some additional information to promote the HSHAZ.

Community events programme

- 5.3 A Community Engagement Strategy for the HSHAZ is currently being prepared by officers and will shortly be submitted to HE for comment. Possible community events related to the HSHAZ will be planned on an annual basis. However, the feasibility and timing of any live events will be dependent on Covid-19 restrictions. Since mid-October officers in the Community Services Team have been working on project plans to inform the Community Engagement Strategy – these include standalone projects and overarching projects such as larger events (that will include a number of individual HSHAZ related projects).

6. AUTHOR

- 6.1 Michelle Collings – High Street Heritage Action Zone Programme Manager
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ⁱ In late 2019 the Consortium comprised Priory Church of St Peter, Medieval Dunstable, Middle Row traders representative – The owner of the Workshop has agreed to represent Middle Row traders on the Consortium, Promoting Dunstable, Dunstable Town Guides, Dunstable Education Group, Friends of Priory House and Gardens and Grove Theatre.

ⁱⁱ Jean Yates (Medieval Dunstable) is acting as chair of the Consortium and will lead on coordinating members of the Consortium, any proposals, work schedules and activities. Joanne Bowes (The Workhouse) has taken the communications role for the Consortium, Kay Kempster (Town Guides) is acting as secretary and Steve Williams (Medieval Dunstable) is acting as treasurer.

1

Excluding staffing costs, the overall Community Services budget for 2021/22 has decreased by £1,235. This can be explained as follows:

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
Tea Room Sales – 3,500	Events / Telephone - 200
Town Centre Services / Stall Hire Income – 250	Priory House / Rates – 500
Priory House Loan Charges – 1,025	Priory House / Cleaning – 2,000
Bar & Catering Sales – 750	Priory House / Licences – 1,000
	HSHAZ Grant – 1140
SUB-TOTAL - £13,625	SUB-TOTAL - £12,390
TOTAL - £1,235 saving	

NB – Members should note that at the time of preparing this report, CBC had not yet confirmed in writing their contribution to the elderly day care service. The budget presented assumes this ongoing income from CBC.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 If approved, the recommendations of this report contribute to the Council achieving their aspiration for no more than a 0.5% increase in the 2021/22 council tax charge.
- 4.2 Members should also be aware that no cost of living pay award has been budgeted for those staff earning above £24,000 p/a. There remains the possibility of the trade unions negotiating such a pay award. Should this come to fruition, any arising negative impact on the revenue budget would have to be funded through the General Reserve.

5. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council has set itself a number of challenges and aspirations as contained in the draft Corporate Plan 2020-23. These budget proposals accord with the aspirations contained within the Corporate Plan and will allow the Council to continue to grow and become more influential in terms of service delivery in the town for many years to come.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The draft general health and safety budget for 2021/22 has been reduced slightly, but should still be sufficient for current needs.

7. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The staffing costs as illustrated on the separate enclosure assume a 0% pay award for all staff that earn above £24,000 p/a. A £10,500 contingency is provided for a minimum £250 increase for those staff that earn below £24,000 p/a. The budget

AGENDA ITEM 10

includes a further 2% increase for those staff earning the 'National Living Wage Foundation Living Wage' which will increase from £9.30 p/h to £9.50 p/h.

8. EQUALITIES AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

9. SEPARATE ENCLOSURES

9.1 Enclosure 1 - Draft budget 2021/22 and draft pricing schedule 2021/22

NB - Would all members please retain the enclosures, as this report will be duplicated for the Grounds and Environmental Services Committee and Finance and General Purposes Committee.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Meeting of full Council, 7 December 2020 - *Draft Budget 2021/22*

11. AUTHOR

11.1 David Ashlee – Town Clerk and Chief Executive
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