

Dunstable Town Council
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David Ashlee Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Date: 25 February 2021

Dear Councillors

Could you please note that a remote meeting of the Grounds and Environmental Services Committee will be held on **Monday 8 March 2021 at 7.00pm** 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 Friday 5 March 2021. Instructions on how to join will then be sent out.

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of Grounds and Environmental Services Committee held on 9 November 2020 (copy previously circulated).
3. Specific Declarations of Interest.
4. Minutes of the Meetings of Plans Sub-Committee held on 5 and 26 January and 16 February 2021 (see page 3).
5. Tree Planting and Associated Grant Funding - to consider recommendations for fund raising tree projects (see page 4)
6. Delegation of Enforcement Powers to Council staff - Littering and Dog Fouling - to consider recommendations (see page 8)
7. Cemetery, Allotments, Recreation Grounds, Town Centre Gardens, Ranger Service and Creasey Park Information and Update Report (see page 10).

8. Reports from Outside Organisations -

CBC Development Management Committee - Councillors Sid Abbott and Gloria Martin

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'DA' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

David Ashlee
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

To: All Members of the Grounds and Environmental Services Committee

Councillors Peter Hollick (Town Mayor), Gloria Martin (Deputy Town Mayor), Liz Jones (Chairman), Lisa Bird (Vice-Chairman), Matthew Brennan, Mark Cant, Alan Corkhill, Greg George, Pamela Ghent, Kenson Gurney, Gladys Sanders and Johnson Tamara and other Members of the Council for information

AGENDA ITEM 4

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF PLANS - SUB - COMMITTEE

Attached are the Minutes of the Meetings of the Plans Sub- Committee held on 5 and 26 January and 16 February 2021

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF PLANS SUB-COMMITTEE

HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

ON TUESDAY 5 JANUARY 2021

Present: Cllrs Phillip Crawley (Chairman), Mark Cant (Vice-Chairman), John Gurney Liz Jones, Cameron Restall and Johnson Tamara

Apologies: None Received

In Attendance: Ian Reed (Democratic Services Manager)

Public:

1. SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor	Interest	Minute
Nil	Nil	Nil

2. PLANNING APPLICATIONS – RECEIVED UP TO 24 DECEMBER 2020

The Sub-Committee considered all planning applications submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council in respect of Dunstable between 8 September and 22 September

RESOLVED: that the following comments be forwarded to Central Bedfordshire Council in respect of the applications indicated:

CB/20/20/04452/FULL 14 Mardale Avenue
Proposal: Part single, part two storey side & rear extension and single storey front extension
Comments: No objection

CB/20/04472/FULL Land at rear of 3 Grove Road
Proposal: Conversion of factory building creating four new 2 bedroom and one 3 bedroom dwellings with private gardens, communal amenity, parking, refuse and cycle stores
Comments: Objection on grounds of overdevelopment and the Local Planning Authority be asked to consider using the 'garden grab' regulations in consideration of this and similar applications

CB/20/04471/FULL 26 Marina Drive
Proposal: Single storey rear extension and rear patio
Comments: No objection

CB/20/03564/FULL	16 Ashton Square
Proposal:	Change of use of first and second floor from commercial premises to residential
Comments:	Objection due to the lack of detailed dimensions of the plans the Sub-Committee cannot determine the suitability of the living areas of the proposed development
CB/20/04530/ADV	Unit 10, White Lion Retail Park, Boscombe Road
Proposal:	Advertisement signage; 5 No. Fascia signs (external) – combination of flex-face signage and built-up signage, 4 No. Lightbox Suspended Signs (Internal)
Comments:	No objection
CB/20/04531/FULL	Unit 1, Frenchs Avenue
Proposal:	Change of use to a mixed use of class B8 storage with ancillary offices and school trading outlet (Sui Generis) including new roller shutter door
Comments:	No objection
CB/20/04564/FULL	Hadrian Academy, Hadrian Avenue
Proposal:	Permanent retention of single storey modular unit as classroom
Comments:	No objection
CB/20/04558/FULL	6 Beechwood Court
Proposal:	Retrospective application for front porch
Comments:	No objection
CB/20/04562/FULL	42 Chiltern Road
Proposal:	Erection of detached residential annexe in rear garden
Comments:	No objection but the Sub-Committee does not expect the development to have an independent residential address
CB/20/03440/FULL	70 Coombe Drive
Proposal:	Single storey front extension
Comments:	No objection
CB/20/03720/FULL	21 Calcutt Close
Proposal :	Single storey rear and two storey side extensions following demolition of link attached single storey garage and erection of open sided front entrance porch and internal alterations
Comments:	No objection
CB/19//01285/FULL	Former Linpac Gpg International, Luton Road
Proposal	Revised Scheme: Development of the site to provide up to 11,850 sqm (GIA) of B8 employment floorspace with ancillary offices and areas for service yards, car parking, landscape and associated activities, and up to 350 sqm (GIA) for drive-through units within use class A1/A3/A5

Comments

Objection on the following grounds;

- (1) This site would be more appropriate as a housing development particularly as there is a high demand for housing in the area
 - (2) As a storage and distribution site it will attract additional HGV movements throughout the day and night
 - (3) The traffic levels to be generated is not acceptable on a site that is tight for vehicular movement and will create difficult egress and access points
 - (4) The 24 hour operation of the site will have a detrimental impact on the local residents because of noise and air pollution
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CB/20/04655/FULL

36 Marina Drive

Proposal:

Proposed single storey rear/side extension

Comments:

No objection

CB/20/04050/FULL:

156 Northfields

Proposal:

Single storey front and single storey rear extensions

Comments:

No objection

3. PLANNING DECISIONS

The Sub-Committee noted the decisions of Central Bedfordshire Council in respect of recent planning applications.

The Meeting Closed at 7.49 p.m.

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF PLANS SUB-COMMITTEE

HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

ON TUESDAY 26 JANUARY 2021

Present: Cllrs Mark Cant (Vice-Chairman), John Gurney Liz Jones, Gloria Martin, Lee Roberts, and Johnson Tamara

Apologies: Cllrs Phillip Crawley and Cameron Restall

In Attendance: Ian Reed (Democratic Services Manager)

Public: Two

1. SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor	Interest	Minute
Nil	Nil	Nil

2. PLANNING APPLICATIONS – RECEIVED UP TO 20 JANUARY 2021

The Sub-Committee considered all planning applications submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council in respect of Dunstable between 8 September and 22 September

RESOLVED: that the following comments be forwarded to Central Bedfordshire Council in respect of the applications indicated:

CB/20/04743830/FULL	219 High Street North
Proposal:	Demolition of existing building and erection of one apartment block comprising 35 residential units with associated parking and landscaping
Comments:	This has been determined by CBC

CB/20/04743/FULL	1 Harvey Road
Proposal:	Single storey rear/side extension and associated internal alterations
Comments:	No objection

CB/20/04323/FULL	13a Richard Street
Proposal;	Demolition of existing workshop structure and replacing with an end of terrace property
Comments:	Objection on the grounds of overdevelopment, detrimental changes to the street scene and problems for the ingress and egress of vehicles in Richard Street

CB/20/02898/FULL	5 Knotts Close
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Proposal:	Retrospective: To erect a glass/chrome barrier around an already established flat roof to the rear of the property to form a balcony
Comments:	No objection but the Sub -Committee would seek assurances that the roof is appropriate for weight bearing
CB/21/00004/FULL	12 Lockington Crescent
Proposal:	Erection of detached garage following demolition of detached of detached garage
Comments:	Withdrawn
CB/20/04552/FULL	44 Vauxhall Way
Proposal:	Proposed front porch, loft conversion with two front dormer windows and skylight
Comments:	No objection
CB/20/04126/FULL	55 Carterweys
Proposal:	Front porch, ground floor rear and first floor rear extension
Comments:	No objection
CB/21/00030/ADV	112 – 114 Luton Road
Proposal:	Re-submission of planning permission CB/20/00058/ADV Advertisement (Retrospective planning application)
Comments:	Objection on grounds of light pollution and the illuminated advertisement sign is detrimental to the residential environment
CB/20/03230/FULL	105 – 107 High Street North
Proposal:	Demolition of current outbuilding to be replaced with a new outbuilding to be replaced with a new outbuilding to be replaced with a new outbuilding measuring 2.3 mtrs high and 48,90 sq mtrs
Comments:	Objection on the grounds of over development. The Sub-Committee is concerned about the potential use of the proposed building as a dwelling
CB/20/04313/LB	St Marys RC Church, 82 West Street
Proposal :	Listed Building: Demolition of Presbytery. Erection of a block of 8 flats and a bungalow and associated works
Comments:	No objection
CB/20/04312/FULL	St Marys RC Church, 82 West Street
Proposal	Demolition of Presbytery. Erection of a block of 8 flats and a bungalow and associated works
Comments	No objection

CB/TRE/21/00022	55 Beechwood
Proposal:	Works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Order SB/58/00001/A10: Inspection of Beech Tree (T1) needed due to branches being unbalanced
Comments:	No objection
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CB/20/03321/FULL	171 West Street
Proposal:	Retrospective construction of a temporary removable wooden structure with a 2cm concrete base for preparation of cars before sale
Comments:	No objection
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CB/21/00123/FULL:	58 Hadrian Avenue
Proposal:	Two storey side/rear extension including alteration of the flat roof over garage to pitch roof
Comments	No objection
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CB/20/0443/FULL	36 Buckwood Avenue
Proposal:	Single storey front and rear extensions. First floor side and rear extension
Comments	No objection
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CB/21/00174 FULL	34 Hillyfields
Proposal	Single storey side extension
Comments	No objection. The Sub-Committee requests that any windows on the side elevation be of obscured glass to protect privacy of neighbours
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3. PLANNING DECISIONS

The Sub-Committee noted the decisions of Central Bedfordshire Council in respect of recent planning applications.

The Meeting Closed at 7.55 p.m.

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF PLANS SUB-COMMITTEE

HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

ON TUESDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2021

Present: Cllrs Philip Crawley (Chairman), Mark Cant (Vice-Chairman), John Gurney, Alan Corkhill, Cameron Restall and Johnson Tamara

Apologies: Cllr Liz Jones

In Attendance: Ian Reed (Democratic Services Manager)

Public: Nil

1. SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor	Interest	Minute
Nil	Nil	Nil

2. PLANNING APPLICATIONS – RECEIVED UP TO 8 FEBRUARY 2021

The Sub-Committee considered all planning applications submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council in respect of Dunstable between 8 September and 22 September

RESOLVED: that the following comments be forwarded to Central Bedfordshire Council in respect of the applications indicated:

CB/21/00124/FULL	58 Hadrian Avenue
Proposal:	Two storey side extension and single storey rear extension with rear facing dormer incorporating loft conversion
Comments:	No objection

CB/21/00177/FULL	96 Evelyn Road
Proposal:	2 storey rear and side extensions
Comments:	No objection

CB/21/00236/FULL	9 Maundsey Close
Proposal;	Single storey side extension
Comments:	No objection

CB/21/00234/FULL	10 Lancot Drive
Proposal:	Single storey rear extension
Comments:	No objection

CB/21/00262/FULL	13 Priory Road
Proposal:	Pitched roof to existing single storey side and rear extension
Comments:	No objection
CB/TCA/21/00046	Shelter 12 m from Dunstable Dental Practice, 85 High Street North 6m from A505, High Street North
Proposal:	Works to a tree within Conservation Area: To fell a Walnut Tree to ground level
Comments:	Object to the felling of the Walnut Tree. It is requested that the tree be managed rather than felled and it be subject to an because the leaves affect the guttering of the adjacent Dentist building. It is requested that the tree be managed rather than be felled and it be subject to an arboriculture inspection
CB/21/00284/FULL	226 High Street South
Proposal:	Single storey rear extension
Comments:	No objection
CB/21/00270/FULL	12 Lockington Crescent
Proposal:	Erection of detached garage following demolition of detached garage (Re-submission of planning permission CB/21/0004/FULL)
Comments:	No objection
CB/19/02439/OUT	Jewson Limited, Beale Street
Proposal:	Outline application: Conversion of existing office building into 15 one bed flat units including new three storey extension to the rear, erection of 6 new one bed and 30 new two bed flat units in 2 No. three-storey blocks and 1 four-storey, following demolition of existing storey storage units. Total 51 mixed flat units
Comments	The outline application was considered by the Central Bedfordshire Council Development Management Committee this month
CB/21/00237/FULL	106 Ridgeway Avenue
Proposal:	A new single storey extension with flat roof to the front elevation, to provide a small office and a covered area
Comments:	No objection
CB/20/04312/FULL	10 Loring Road
Proposal:	Proposed demolition of an existing outbuilding, alterations and single storey rear extension
Comments	No objection

CB/21/00339/FULL	25 Great Northern Road
Proposal:	Single storey rear extension
Comments	No objection
CB/21/00342/FULL	26 Kingscroft Avenue
Proposal:	Single storey side and rear extension
Comments	No objection
CB/TCA/21/00060:	26 Winfield Street
Proposal:	Works to a tree in a conservation area: Cut back branches from Sycamore tree to boundary line of rear garden
Comments	No objection
CB/21/00422/FULL	86 Meadway
Proposal:	Two storey side extension and loft conversion with velux windows to the rear. First floor side and rear extension
Comments	To make an objection based on the removal of the garage (replaced with the workshop) causing the loss of a parking space. There is no parking plan in the planning application to state where any displaced cars, current or future will be relocated.

3. PLANNING DECISIONS

The Sub-Committee noted the decisions of Central Bedfordshire Council in respect of recent planning applications.

The Meeting Closed at 7.28 p.m.

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

GROUND AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 8 MARCH 2021

TREE PLANTING AND ASSOCIATED GRANT FUNDING

Purpose of Report:	To update Members on potential tree planting projects and seek approval to submit grant applications for funding.
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1. ACTION RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 It is recommended that Members approve the outline proposals for tree planting projects detailed within section 3 of this report.
- 1.2 It is further recommended that Members support an application for funds from the Central Bedfordshire Council Community Tree Fund and that officers subsequently explore other match funding sources to maximise this funding opportunity.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2020 to 2023 includes an objective to improve Mentmore Recreation Ground with tree planting and the creation of wildflower areas by the end of 2023.
- 2.2 A number of Members have recently expressed the desire to see more tree planting taking place on other Council owned land to support national initiatives on tree planting linked to climate change, improved biodiversity and carbon reduction.
- 2.3 Central Bedfordshire Council has launched a grant fund to support local tree planting initiatives and the second round of applications for funding is open again in May 2021.
- 2.4 With the creation of the new Parks and Green Space Development Officer post and the post holder now being in place the Council has an ideal opportunity to move forward with tree planting projects.

3. MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

Mentmore Recreation Ground

- 3.1 Mentmore Recreation Ground, which is located in the south west of Dunstable on the outskirts of the town is a prime location for the establishment of trees and wildflower areas and provides an ideal opportunity to link the urban environment with adjacent countryside with associated benefits for wildlife.

- 3.2 Mentmore is a 4.8 ha open space currently comprising a large grass open space cut 16 times a year, a play area and room for a single football pitch. The ground is mostly undulating and is popular with dog walkers, parents with young children and those taking regular exercise. With the exception of a small copse of young trees planted some 15 to 20 years ago, there is very little other vegetation within the space. Shelter belts and woodland exist on adjacent private land on the periphery of the site.
- 3.3 The Parks and Green Space Development Officer is currently developing ideas to enhance the open space which will improve the site for the benefit of existing users and visitors as well as wildlife and protection of the environment. These ideas include the following:
- The creation of a 5000m² (0.5ha) woodland area using deciduous and evergreen native species planted as young whip and transplant trees.
 - The establishment of a 500m² Forest garden planted with edible fruit and nut trees.
 - The creation and strengthening of 270m of new and existing hedgerow with native tree species.
 - The planting of 40 to 50 standard sized oak trees.
- 3.4 The planting described above would form the main framework of structural planting against which further improvements such as wildflower meadows, play area extensions and improved access would sit in future years.
- 3.5 It is estimated that the tree and hedgerow planting could be achieved within a budget of £7,000 (plants and materials only)

Urban Tree Planting

- 3.6 An urban tree planting project would seek to establish groups of standard size trees in larger open spaces throughout the town. The trees would be a mix of ornamental and native species chosen to enhance the aesthetic appeal of an open space and improve biodiversity.
- 3.7 Local communities and volunteers would be encouraged to help with planting and Dunstable in Bloom have indicated a willingness to get involved to support the project.
- 3.8 It is estimated that a budget of £4,000 would be sufficient to plant 40 trees (plants and materials only)

Funding Opportunities

- 3.9 Central Bedfordshire Council is currently operating a community tree planting grant fund and the Council is eligible to bid for funding up to £5000. The next round of applications will be accepted from May 2021 through to March 2022 and this provides an ideal opportunity to secure funds for the two tree planting initiatives described above.
- 3.10 Whilst secured match funding is not an absolute requirement of the CBC grant scheme it would nonetheless strengthen the Councils application if additional

funding were available. Other sources of potential funding include the Woodland Trust, the Tree Council, Trees for Cities, the Apples and Orchards UK Network initiative and the Queens Platinum Jubilee Green Canopy project. Furthermore, the Council could count its own labour resource and that of the volunteer community as match funding.

Community Engagement

- 3.11 Engaging local communities in both of these initiatives will be a key component of the wider project. Engagement will initially take two forms; consultation and planting. Consultation will be particularly important with the Mentmore project as the proposal will lead to a fundamental change of design and improvement of the open space.

Proposal

- 3.12 If Members are minded to support the project outlined above it is proposed that the Council makes a grant funding bid to the CBC Community Tree Fund within the second allocation and furthermore that officers explore other funding sources in more detail and where appropriate bid for additional match funds.
- 3.13 With regard to timescales it is anticipated that planting would take place from November 2021 onwards using National Tree Week as an opportunity to launch the works.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The estimated cost of the two tree planting initiatives is £16,000 of which £11,000 is for plants and materials as identified above. The remaining £5,000 is the estimated value of both Council and volunteer labour and this would be the match funding contribution to assist with securing the grants. The Council would seek to secure at least £5,000 from the CBC Community Tree Planting Fund. The remaining funding required would be sought from other grant sources including the Woodland Trust, the Tree Council and funding initiatives such as Trees for Cities and the Orchard Network.
- 4.2 If the Council fails to secure all or any of the funding required, a further report would be submitted to this Committee detailing the options available and the potential to use direct Council funding.

5. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The tree planting proposed for Mentmore Recreation Ground is in accordance with the specific Objective 26 detailed in the Council's Corporate Plan 2020 to 2023. Both initiatives contribute to the Council's overall aim to 'Further improve and enhance the provision of green and open space in the town'

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY, HUMAN RESOURCE AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None

7. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The proposals detailed in this report are in accordance with the Council's Environment and Sustainability Policy. In particular, tree planting can improve the look and feel of open spaces as well as assist with biodiversity, improve air quality, help mitigate climate change, store carbon and help towards achieving carbon neutral status.

8. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The proposals detailed in this report will help towards future proofing green space in Dunstable, to improve visitor and user experiences both now and for future generations.
- 8.2 Engaging with the local community can have a cohesive effect and provide opportunities for all age ranges and abilities to participate in both decision making and practical activity.

9. APPENDICES

- 9.1 None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 CBC Community Tree Fund Guidance Notes and Application Form

11. AUTHOR

- 11.1 Katherine Doyle
Parks and Green Space Development Officer
katherine.doyle@dunstable.gov.uk

John Crawley
Head of Grounds and Environmental Services
john.crawley@dunstable.gov.uk

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

GROUND AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 8 MARCH 2021

**DELEGATION OF ENFORCEMENT POWERS TO COUNCIL STAFF – LITTERING AND
DOG FOULING**

<p>Purpose of Report: To advise and update Members on the issues and practicalities associated with the delegation of enforcement powers.</p>
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1. ACTION RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 It is recommended that no further action be taken to pursue the adoption of delegated enforcement powers for littering and dog fouling.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Councils Corporate Plan 2020 – 2023 includes a specific action to investigate the feasibility of the Council adopting enforcement powers around dog fouling and littering and to train staff accordingly in carrying out enforcement duties.
- 2.2 This action falls within the remit of the Grounds and Environmental Services Committee with the Chairman of the Committee and the Head of Service identified as the Lead Member and Officer. The timescale requires the feasibility to be determined by the end of March 2021.
- 2.3 The Head of Grounds and Environmental Services has discussed the matter with the appropriate Community Safety Officers at Central Bedfordshire Council.

3. MAIN FINDINGS

- 3.1 The Head of Grounds and Environmental Services has examined the implications of adopting enforcement powers for the Council.
- 3.2 The role of an enforcement officer is a specialist role requiring the person to have a unique set of skills and training if it is to be undertaken effectively and safely.
- 3.3 The delegation of enforcement powers is not something which can be simply added to existing job roles within the Council without careful consideration of the impact on existing duties and responsibilities. In addition, the new duties and responsibilities would likely require a renegotiation of existing employment contracts.
- 3.4 The delegation of enforcement powers would come from Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and or the Police and CBC do not have an agreed policy or procedure in place for such delegations.
- 3.5 Central Bedfordshire Council have advised, based on their own experiences of setting up their new Safer Neighbourhood Officers Team, that the Town Council

would need to have in place appropriate and specific policies and procedures to cover training, performance management, enforcement and options for case disposal, risk management, case tracking, process flow charts, complaint handling and resolution.

- 3.6 Furthermore, the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) is not straightforward and presents a number of practical difficulties, not least that the failure to pay an FPN would require prosecution in the Magistrates Court. Legal proceedings can only be initiated by CBC as this part of the process cannot be delegated. Such legal proceedings would likely tie up officer time in court to present evidence.
- 3.7 Since the Council's Corporate Plan was adopted Central Bedfordshire Council have made considerable progress with developing their Safer Neighbourhood Team partly in response to issues such as litter and dog fouling as well as anti-social behaviour. CBC now have a full complement of Safer Neighbourhood Officers across the Central Bedfordshire area and a number are dedicated to patrolling and working in Dunstable.
- 3.8 Town Council Officers are currently engaging with this new team and their managers to establish strong communication links to help inform enforcement activity and the targeting of these enforcement resources. Discussion will also take place to see how the Town Council can support the work of the enforcement officers through assistance with public engagement as well as target hardening and improvements to open spaces.
- 3.9 Whilst it is accepted that members of the public and Councillors might be frustrated with ongoing issues associated with littering and dog fouling it is clear that the delegation of enforcement powers is far from straightforward and would likely have a significant and disruptive impact on existing grounds activities. Furthermore, the robust arrangements that CBC have now developed around enforcement activity should in time begin to take full effect within our community.
- 3.10 In conclusion, it is considered that it is not feasible or practical for the Council to adopt enforcement powers around dog fouling and littering and it is proposed that no further action be taken to establish enforcement powers.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The action required within the Councils Corporate Plan to establish feasibility has been completed.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY, HUMAN RESOURCE, LEGAL, ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None

7. AUTHOR

- 7.1 John Crawley, Head of Grounds and Environmental Services

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

GROUND AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 8 MARCH 2021

**CEMETERY, ALLOTMENTS, RECREATION GROUNDS, TOWN CENTRE GARDENS,
RANGER SERVICE AND CREASEY PARK INFORMATION REPORT**

Purpose of report: -	The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the management and maintenance of the town's cemetery, allotments, recreation grounds, town gardens, floral displays, play areas and Ranger Service. This report also includes a brief update on Creasey Park Community Football Centre.
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1. DUNSTABLE CEMETERY

- 1.1 Burial activity has remained ongoing and the table below provides a comparison for the period 4 January 2021 to 26 February 2021 against the same period for the previous year.

	Jan 2020 – Feb 2020	Jan 2021 – Feb 2021
New earth grave	12	12
Re open earth grave	18	17
New ashes	1	3
Reopen ashes	6	7

- 1.2 At the time of writing this report, 274 burials will have taken place in the lawn section of the cemetery extension since February 2016.
- 1.3 The Cemetery expenditure and income for the period April 2020 to January 2021 is provided in the table below.

	Totals April - January
Budgeted Expenditure	£84,508
Actual Expenditure	£83,560
Variance	£948

Budgeted Income	£143,833
Actual Income	£164,103
Variance	£20,270

Overall Variance	£21,218
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- 1.4 The overall position shows a positive variance for the period which can again largely be attributed to higher levels of burial income achieved.
- 1.5 The Council continues to work closely with Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and other Town and Parish Councils to coordinate burial activity in Bedfordshire and to ensure that adequate arrangements remain in place to accommodate any future spike in demand for burials. Burials remain limited to 30 mourners attending and the Council will follow the Governments 'road map out of lockdown' guidance as it emerges.
- 1.6 In 2021 the Cemetery was scheduled to receive a full Green Flag judging assessment with judges visiting in the summer. The Green Flag team have advised the Council that for 2021 this will now be reduced to a desk top assessment only, because of the ongoing uncertainty of the pandemic situation. The assessment will be made using the Dunstable Cemetery Management Plan which has been updated and submitted.

2. ALLOTMENTS

- 2.1 All allotment sites continue to remain open and available for tenants to use during the current restrictions with guidance signage placed at all gated entrances.
- 2.2 The waiting list continues to grow and at the time of writing this report there are 287 people on the waiting list. This continues to reflect the national picture of bigger waiting lists largely resulting from the pandemic. Appendix 1 provides some detail about the make-up of the current waiting list.

3. RECREATION GROUNDS

Play Areas, Grove Skate Park and BMX

- 3.1 Since the last report to this Committee there have been no incidents of vandalism to play equipment.
- 3.2 During the latest lockdown period there has been an increase in the number of people using the play areas and grounds staff have continued to sanitise all play areas on a weekly basis.
- 3.3 It will be necessary to carry out some remedial work to the play mat surfacing at Frenchs Avenue play area when the ground starts to dry out. The existing level of the ground under the swings will need to be raised and the mats replaced. If this is not successful a review of the type of surfacing in the play area may be needed.
- 3.4 The Grounds Operations Manager is currently seeking quotations for topping up the levels of the surfacing on the BMX track.

Sports Pitches and General Grounds Maintenance

- 3.5 There is still some uncertainty regarding local football and the completion of league matches. The Government announcement on Monday 22 February stated that team sports could commence on 29 March. The Grounds Operations Manager will be contacting the

relevant leagues and Beds FA to find out if leagues will be continuing and how long an extension to the season will be needed. This would then determine the date of commencing renovation work to the pitches.

- 3.6 The Ground Operations Manager and both Grounds Supervisors attended a training session on Wednesday 17 February for the maintenance of the new ATP pitch at Creasey Park, including using a mobile app to complete weekly reports on the maintenance regime.
- 3.7 The grounds team have been pruning back shrubs on some of the areas maintained by the Council on behalf of CBC under contract. Further pruning will commence in March to stool the Cornus (dogwood) shrubs in the rain borders in West Street and Church Street.
- 3.8 The grounds team have completed the removal of all the dead and diseased Viburnum tinus hedging plants in Frenchs Avenue and have prepared the ground for planting new plants in spring.

4. TOWN CENTRE AREA

Priory and Grove House Gardens and the Town Centre

- 4.1 Pruning and weeding of the shrub beds in Grove House Gardens has been carried out as part of the winter tidy up of the sites. The environmental strip of grass alongside Dog Kennel Walk has also been cut back to allow fresh growth throughout the summer months.
- 4.2 Phase 2B of the work on High Street North has seen two of the raised bedding planters near Argos reduced in size. These planters will be re clad with new stone and copings and once the work is completed will continue to be maintained and colourfully planted by the Council.
- 4.3 Officers have been working with CBC to finalise the locations for new wayfinding and gateway signage in the Town Centre as part of the Dunstable High Street Improvement Programme. Members will recall that the Town Council has made available £67,000 of its Market Town Regeneration Fund (MTRF) grant for installation of the signage. The gateway signs and the wayfinding signs will include maps of the town centre detailing key locations and will also include QR codes linking smart phone users to additional information which will be hosted on the Council's web site. All the signs will be back lit. An illustration of the signage is available at Appendix 2. The detailed map has yet to be designed.

Dunstable in Bloom

- 4.4 Dunstable has been chosen to represent the Anglia Region in the 2021 Britain in Bloom virtual competition. Full Britain in Bloom judging will resume again in 2022. Anglia in Bloom will also be holding a virtual campaign in 2021 and the Dunstable in Bloom team will be submitting entries in all categories.
- 4.5 Dunstable in Bloom continues to meet on a monthly basis via Teams meetings online. The Council's new Parks and Green Space Development Officer has been in post since 8

February and is already working to develop a number of projects and initiatives with Dunstable in Bloom.

5. TOWN RANGER SERVICES

- 5.1 As part of the Rangers work schedule they have been working in the Central Ward during February. Carrying out litter picking in High Street North and South, the rain borders in Church Street and West Street. Also improving areas in Ashton Square car park, carrying out path clearing, hedge cutting and jet washing.
- 5.2 During early February the Rangers were carrying out snow clearing and salt spreading in Grove House Gardens and other key areas in the Town Centre.
- 5.3 The Rangers arranged to have the use of an electric utility tipper vehicle from Friday 5 February until Wednesday 10 February to trial the capabilities of this type of vehicle for towing purposes and mileage range. To draw a comparison further trials of electric utility vehicles will be needed to ensure that the best option is identified.

6. CREASEY PARK COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CENTRE

- 6.1 Due to the continued lockdown since the last committee report there has been no operational activity at Creasey Park.
- 6.2 The new ATP is now fully completed with only minor defects to be signed off and making good of landscaping when the weather allows. The new state of the art CCTV system is fully operational, increasing from 11 to 23 cameras.
- 6.3 Creasey Park has been successful in securing \$106 money to procure a freestanding retractable pergola with a durable roof terrace awning. This will be located on the paved patio area directly next to the serving hatches to encourage secondary spend and meet future hospitality Covid secure guidelines. It is hoped this will be installed by the end of April 2021.
- 6.4 After the recent Government 'road map' announcement the summary below outlines Creasey Parks anticipated 'roadmap' to re-opening services.

Mon 8 March

Central Beds College return.
Clubhouse & ATP in use (in line with Covid Secure Guidance)
Mon to Fri 9.00am to 5.00pm (expected days & times)

Mon 29 March

ATP 1 & ATP 2 open (Covid Secure Guidance)
Offer takeaway catering service (Covid Safe Guidance and CBC approval)

Main pitch matches can resume. At present adult leagues have voided current seasons and no news on when they plan to re-start the season.

Sat 3 & Sun 4 April Youth grass pitches open for fixtures (Covid Secure Guidance)

Mon 17 May Spectators allowed back for main pitch matches.
Clubhouse can open (Covid Secure Guidance)

Mon 21 June Function (party) bookings can begin.

- 6.5 Creasey Park will not only have to follow Government Covid Secure Guidance, but also guidance passed down from The FA in respect to football activity.

7. BENNETT'S SPLASH AND SPLASHSIDE CAFE

- 7.1 In light of the Governments recently announced 'road map out of lockdown' the Splash Park and Café could possibly re-open on 21 June or the date that Step 4 of the roadmap becomes effective. Officers will be making plans accordingly.

8. AUTHORS

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Appendix 1 – Allotment Waiting List

Summary

Waiting list	Total	Resident	Non-Resident
Willing to accept any plot/site	86	33	53
Specific plot/site requested	185	133	52
Second plot requested	12	10	2
Offer made - not yet accepted	4	4	0
TOTAL	287	180	107
Added to list since last report (included in above total)	26	22	4
On list but don't want plot yet (included in above total)	1	1	0

Site	Catchacre	Hillcroft	Maidenbower	Meadway	Pascomb Road	Westfield	ALL SITES
Total available plots on site	21	18	22	111	15	85	272
Vacant plots	0	0	2	4	1	3	10
Notice to Cultivate	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Notice to Quit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Plot Newly let	0	0	0	1	0	3	4
Plot Given up	0	0	2	5	1	3	11
Inspection Dates	Inspections to take place in Spring 2021						

Appendix 2 – Town Centre Gateway (Tall Wide Type) and Way Finding (Tall Slim Type) Signage

y. specification

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