

Notice of a Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

David Ashlee Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Date: 4 March 2021

Dear Councillor,

Please note that a remote meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee will be held on **Monday 15 March 2021 at 7.00 p.m.** 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 12 March 2021**. 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 approve the Minutes of the Meeting of Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 18 January 2021 (copy previously circulated).
3. Specific Declarations of Interest.
4. Well Being Policy - Report (see page 3)
5. Financial Monitoring - Report on the Revenue Budget Position for period ending 31 January 2021 and details relating to the Council's earmarked Reserves as at 28 February 2021 (see page 6)
6. Referral Report from the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 1 March 2021 (see page 12)
7. Working Towards Carbon Neutral Status 2030 – Report (see page 14)

Continued

8. Audio - Vision Facilities for Council Chamber – Report (see page 17)

9. Representatives on Outside Organisations - to receive reports from representatives on the following outside organisations:

CAB Management Committee – Councillor Bater

Dunstable International Town Twinning Association – Town Mayor and Councillors Corkhill and Abbott

Hospice at Home Management Committee – Councillor Jones

Ashton Almshouses Charity – Councillors Corkhill and Hollick

NB: Those Members who are not members of this Committee but are representatives of organisations reporting thereto are reminded to provide a report in time for the meeting.

PART 2 of the Agenda

10. Move to exclude press and public in accordance with Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1961 sect.1.2 to discuss matters;

- (a) affecting the information relating to the financial affairs of a third party**
- (b) affecting employees' remuneration and conditions of employment**

11. Bad Debt Report (see page 30)

12. Car Allowance Report (see page 34)

Yours faithfully,



David Ashlee
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

To: All Members of Finance and General Purposes Committee:

Councillors Peter Hollick (Town Mayor), Gloria Martin, (Deputy Town Mayor), Sid Abbott (Chairman), Philip Crawley (Vice-Chairman), Wendy Bater, Matthew Brennan, Mark Cant, Alan Corkhill, John Gurney, Kenson Gurney, Liz Jones, Cameron Restall, Lee Roberts and Johnson Tamara and other Members of the Council for information.

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 22 MARCH 2021

WELLBEING POLICY

Purpose of Report:	To request that members approve the adoption of a Wellbeing Policy.
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1. ACTION RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 That the Committee approve the adoption of a Wellbeing Policy, the details of which are set out below.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 As part of the Council's approach to becoming an "Investors in People" organisation, the Council's senior management team is continually considering ways in which to improve our management of the organisations and its employees.
- 2.2 Good mental health has been a relatively high profile agenda over the last 12 months, and with the additional pressures that the pandemic has brought to many, now more than ever supporting employees to have good mental health is very important.
- 2.3 Whilst staff have not raised concerns regarding the way in which the Council manages the issue of employee mental health, this is not to say that the Council could not improve this further. Members will be aware of the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) with its access to free help and guidance, including counselling that the Council is signed up to. This is well used, and a useful tool for line managers to offer staff. More recently, with the Council signing up to the Virtual College, and as a result the Council now offers an online mental health training course with access to additional resources.

3. WELLBEING POLICY

- 3.1 The policy at appendix 1 clearly states the Council's responsibilities as an employer and how it encourages, supports and enables good mental health of its workforce.
- 3.2 The policy makes reference to management actions which are embedded in the organisation such as regular 1:1 and annual appraisals. The policy does not bring any additional burdens or responsibilities to the Council, and merely lays out clearly what the workforce can expect from the Council and how the Council manages mental health of its employees.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The recommendation accords with the Council's aim of becoming an Investors in People Organisation and specifically with the Council's objective of '*continuing to improve the organisational management and efficiency of the Council*'.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None.

7. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None

9. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

- 9.1 By adopting the policy it enables the Council to clearly state and further evidence how they will ensure they meet the requirements under the Equality Act 2010.

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 Appendix 1 – Wellbeing Policy

11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The adoption of this policy compliments what the Council is already doing (e.g. EAP and mental health training) to ensure that its workforce has positive mental health. Through the adoption of the policy, it will ensure the way in which mental health issues are managed and dealt with is consistent across the organisation.

12. AUTHORS

- 12.1 Becky Wisbey – Head of Community services
E-mail – Becky.Wisbey@dunstable.gov.uk
- 12.2 Gill Peck – Youth and Community Manager
E-mail – Gill.Peck@dunstable.gov.uk

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy Overarching Statement

Appendix to
Agenda item 4



DUNSTABLE
TOWN COUNCIL

Dunstable Town Council understands the impact that healthy and engaged employees make to the success of the business and therefore, acknowledges the importance of positive mental health and wellbeing whilst pledging to support those who may be going through mental ill health challenges.

Dunstable Town Council wish to create an open and honest workplace where line managers and employees can discuss mental health problems, and to ensure the necessary support is known, and offered to employees when needed.

The Council understands the role it has in ensuring that health and safety legislation is adhered to. The Council works to create a safe workplace where risks to mental health and wellbeing are limited as far as possible. Additionally, the Council understands the protection employees with a disability have against discrimination under the Equality Act 2010, including the obligation for employers to make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees.

Dunstable Town Council will aim to ensure that all employees feel valued in their workplace and will promote positive health and wellbeing by providing staff with opportunities to be open and transparent; this will be done through 1 to 1 meetings, team meetings, annual appraisals and inviting all staff to complete the staff survey.

Employees will be invited to provide feedback on their service areas and that of the wider council; their ideas will be taken into consideration and employees will be provided with relevant training to help eliminate risk to poor mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.

When a Line Manager identifies that an employee may be suffering from a mental health problem, whether personally or professionally, early intervention will be undertaken. Line managers may recognise changes within employees; for example, but not exclusive to; poor hygiene, struggling to meet deadlines, increase in conflicts, change of eating habits or tiredness/lack of concentration. If a manager identifies one or more of these being displayed over a short period of time, the line manager will speak with the employee.

The Line Manager will speak with the employee, in a series of meetings if required, and encourage the employee to speak openly and honestly about their situation. The line manager will be aware that these meetings may need to happen outside of the office if this is a potential stressor for the employee. If this is the case, an alternative office may be used, or a mutual place may be agreed to meet. The meetings will be used to ascertain how the employee may be supported by the Council and whether any adjustments are to be made. Adjustments may be made on a temporary basis. Meetings will be held in complete confidence, except for where information needs to be shared with HR or other managers regarding any adjustments made or if the employee or somebody else is a risk of harm. The employee will be consulted regarding the detail of the information shared.

Employees are encouraged to use the confidential telephone counselling service provided via our Employee Assistance Programme for the opportunity to talk to a trained expert on any issues that are concerning them. All staff will be required to complete a mental health awareness course and refreshers to be completed every 3 years.

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE****15 MARCH 2021****FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

Purpose of Report:	<p>The purpose of this report is to:</p> <p>i) provide a revenue budgetary control report for the period ending 31 January 2021</p> <p>ii) provide detail of the Council's earmarked reserves as at 28 February 2021</p>
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1. ACTION RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 For Members to note the revenue budget position for the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 January 2021.
- 1.2 For Members to note the current balance of the Council's earmarked reserves as at 28 February 2021 and known commitments in the current financial year.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This budgetary control report summarises the net expenditure against the budget for each service area as at 31 January 2021. This forms the basis for the projected outturn at the end of this financial year taking account current known variances.

3. REVENUE BUDGETARY REPORT

- 3.1 The summary at Appendix 1 shows the net expenditure at 31 January 2021 per service area and an indication of the anticipated outturn against budget, taking account of seasonal variances and known commitments for the remainder of the financial year.
- 3.2 The summary shows a potential overall net revenue underspend at the end of the financial year of £103,482. However, members should note that this figure will reduce to under £60,000 if recommendations for expenditure are approved as presented elsewhere on this agenda.
- 3.3 It should be noted that whilst officers have a better view on the effects of Covid-19 on the finances, there is still uncertainty as to how this will impact the year-end position. Changes in Government guidance and a significant number of external factors could impact costs as well as income.
- 3.4 Within **Finance and Support Services** the overall forecast is to be £2,020 overspent. Significant variances to budget are as follows:
 - *Finance and Support Services staff costs forecast to be underspent by £4,506 due a retirement payment offset by a saving in maternity costs to cover maternity leave within the team. There is also a saving from a 3-month vacancy in the team.*

- *Central Services is forecast to be overspent by £9,117* mainly attributable to professional fees for various largescale works within the financial year offset by a reduced expenditure on training.
- *Grove House cost centre is forecast to be overspent by £13,508* due to the offices on the ground floor being vacant due to the current circumstances surrounding the global pandemic.
- *Corporate Management Cost centre is forecast to be underspent by £5,565.* this underspend, in part due to an underspend projected for un-claimable VAT.
- *Democratic Representation is forecast to underspend by £10,534* mainly due to unused Mayoral allowance, transport and hospitality during the lockdown period where Mayoral activities were limited.

3.5 Within **Grounds and Environmental Services** the overall forecast is to be £50,432 overspent. Significant variances to budget are as follows:

- *Grounds Staff Costs* is due to be underspent by £52,763 mainly attributable to a forecast 10-month vacancy on the Parks Development Officer position and a Grounds Assistant 7-month vacancy (both posts are now filled).
- *Cemetery* is due to be underspent by £31,463 mainly due to over-achievement of income on burials offset by an increase in equipment, cleaning, waste disposal costs due to Covid-19.
- *Recreation Grounds* Cost centre has a forecast overspend of £8,563 mainly attributed to a loss of income on external contracts and rent due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- *Town Centre and Gardens* also has a forecast underspend of £2,355 due to another potential loss of income on an external contract due to the Covid-19 pandemic
- *Town Ranger Service* is forecast to be underspent by £5,845. This underspend is attributable to underspend on public realm maintenance due to CBC not installing electronic information signs at the town gateways therefore it has not been necessary to expend this budget this year.
- *Creasey Park* has a forecast overspend of £154,478 due to a £94,000 loss of income on the ATP and a £137,000k loss on room hire, bar and catering sales due to circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there are offsetting savings: £72,000 not spent across bar/catering stock, bar/catering casual and overtime staffing budgets, and cleaning contracts during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown.
- *Bennett Memorial Recreation Ground Splash Park* has a forecast underspend of £21,938 due to the lack of expenditure and commitments as a result of the closure this summer because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

3.6 Within **Community Services** overall it is forecast to be £155,934 underspent. Significant variances to budget are as follows:

- *Community Services staff cost centre has a forecast underspend of £36,456* mainly attributable to two vacancies within the team; Community Assistant and Youth and Community Manager (both posts are now filled).
- *Older Peoples Services* has a forecast underspend of £12,615 based on a closure of services due to Covid-19 pandemic.
- *Community Engagement* has a forecast underspend of £12,621 based on all future events currently cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic
- *Grove Corner cost centre is underspent by £10,192* from a number of smaller savings.

- *Events programme* is forecast to underspend this financial year by £85,019 due to the cancellation of all events this year until further notice, subject to Government guidance on large gatherings.
- *Central Marketing* is due to underspend by £14,925 due to a saving in production of the Council magazine 'Talk of the Town'.
- *Priory House* is forecast to overspend by £25,841 due to loss of income due to the temporary closure; the overall overspend was partly offset by savings on catering costs.
- *Town Centre Management* is forecast a £9,075 underspend due to reduced events and waste during the Covid-19 lockdown period.
- *High Street Heritage Action Zone* budget is forecast to be on-budget.

4. RESERVES

- 4.1 The schedule enclosed at Appendix 2 provides detail of actual contributions to and expenditure from reserve funds in the current financial year as at 28 February 2021.
- 4.2 The schedule also includes the detail of further agreed/known commitments from earmarked reserves in this financial year and indicates an estimated end of year balance, which is of course subject to any further agreed expenditure.
- 4.3 The schedule does not take account of the recommendations for release of funds to be considered at other agenda items.

5. FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE

- 5.1 In place of Accounts Sub-Committee, Councillors should, as a minimum, view and audit the Councils accounts on a quarterly basis.
- 5.2 The last quarterly financial Councillor audit took place virtually due to Covid-19 Pandemic and was completed on the 9 February 2021 with the Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee, Councillor Abbott and Councillor John Gurney taking part. The Councillors carried out a 'mini-audit' which included requests of financial information on various purchase ledger invoices paid, together with verifying all of the bank statements of the accounts against the Accounts Software relating to October, November and December 2020.
- 5.3 No issues or discrepancies material or otherwise, were raised.
- 5.4 Further quarterly meetings have been arranged and all Councillors have been made aware and invited to attend any future Financial Governance Audit meetings they can make.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 These are inherent within the content of this report.

7. APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix 1 – Summary of Net Revenue Expenditure

Appendix 2 – Summary of Reserves

8. AUTHORS

8.1 David Brough – Senior Finance Manager
Lisa Scheder – Finance & Procurement Manager
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Finance and Support Services

Service Area	Budget 2020/21	Actuals to Date (31st Jan)	Year-end Forecast	Year-end Variance
Staff Costs	321,437	272,485	316,931	-4,506
Central Services	105,600	76,643	114,717	9,117
Grove House	47,505	57,629	61,013	13,508
Corporate Management	91,447	81,561	85,882	-5,565
Democratic Management & Representation	15,750	4,591	5,216	-10,534
Capital & Projects (inc loan charges)	96,915	96,915	96,915	0
Grand Total	678,654	589,824	680,674	2,020

Grounds and Environmental Services

Service Area	Budget 2020/21	Actuals to Date (31st Jan)	Year-end Forecast	Year-end Variance
Staff Costs	660,850	504,763	608,087	-52,763
Allotments	-800	-566	1,050	1,850
Cemetery	-71,190	-80,540	-102,653	-31,463
Recreation Grounds	40,200	31,522	48,763	8,563
Town Centre and Gardens	29,100	18,523	26,745	-2,355
Town Ranger Service	19,200	7,765	13,355	-5,845
Capital & Projects	121,696	121,602	121,601	-95
Sub Total	799,056	603,069	716,948	-82,108
Income: Creasey Park - Football	-148,000	-128,072	-84,692	63,308
Costs: Creasey park - Football	67,532	69,321	93,668	26,136
Income: Bar & Catering	-190,000	-43,436	-52,878	137,122
Costs: Bar & Catering	305,804	188,683	233,715	-72,089
Sub Total	35,336	86,496	189,813	154,478
Bennett Memorial RG Splash Park	33,216	10,314	11,278	-21,938
Grand Total	867,608	699,879	918,040	50,432

Community Services

Service Area	Budget 2020/21	Actuals to Date (31st Jan)	Year-end Forecast	Year-end Variance
Staff Costs	187,246	124,294	150,790	-36,456
Older People's Support Service	24,074	7,603	11,459	-12,615
Community Engagement (inc Grants)	23,507	6,160	10,886	-12,621
Grove Corner	14,879	-1,731	4,687	-10,192
Events Programme	147,176	48,546	62,158	-85,018
Central Marketing	28,500	7,196	13,575	-14,925
Town Centre Services (inc Special Markets)	60,911	47,160	51,836	-9,075
Public Conveniences (Ashton Square)	3,050	1,351	2,176	-874
High Street Heritage Action Zone	24,594	23,777	24,594	0
Capital & Projects	66,020	66,019	66,020	0
Sub Total	579,957	330,375	398,182	-181,775
Income: Priory house - Tea Rooms	-135,000	-32,794	-32,794	102,206
Costs: Priory house - Tea Rooms	48,000	13,716	13,716	-34,284
Income: Priory house - Shop	-13,500	-3,941	-3,941	9,559
Costs: Priory house - Shop	6,500	2,451	2,451	-4,049
Other Costs (Inc Staff)	337,104	233,367	289,513	-47,591
Sub Total	243,104	212,799	268,945	25,841
Grand Total	823,061	543,174	667,127	-155,934
DTC Grand Total	2,369,323	1,832,877	2,265,841	-103,482

	Description	Balance as at 01.04.20	Contributions Revenue/Other	Expenditure In year	Bal as at 28.02.21	Commitments/Programme of works, etc	Committed Amount	Bal after committed
310	General Reserve	£520,570			£520,570			£520,570
311	Corporate Plan Reserve	£16,342	£2,000	£14,360	£3,982	Bal of £786.85 for GH Gdns Entrance/Car Park Improvements (from £35,000 agreed) Council Minute 85 29.06.20- Bal of £3,194.50 for Market Clock refurbishment (from £6,432 agreed)	£3,981	£0
312	Vehicles Reserve	£54,719	£20,000	£20,221	£54,498	FGP Minute 8 20.01.20- Bal of £10,020 for new grounds equipment (from £42,000 agreed)	£10,020	£44,477
313	CP Sinking Fund	£14,874		£6,995	£7,879	£5215.93 S108 agreed for Canopy/Awning at CPCFC	£5,216	£2,663
314	Christmas Lights Reserve	£23,744	£3,500		£27,244	New/improved lighting		£27,244
316	Downside Building Maintenance Res	£4,523			£4,523			£4,523
317	Grove Corner Building Maint Reserve	£38,596	£6,936	£15,751	£29,781	Bal of £2,989 for e-gaming equipment (from £10,000 agreed) £2,936 CBC Project Grant	£5,905	£23,876
318	Building Security Systems	£5,357			£5,357			£5,357
319	Cemetery Memorial Safety	£2,300	£1,000		£3,300	Memorial safety inspections		£3,300
320	Priory House Tearooms Equipment	£0	£1,500		£1,500			£1,500
321	IT/Equipment Reserve	£14,700	£15,000	£4,904	£24,796	Bal of £14,700 for Cemetery Software (from £21,600 agreed)	£14,700	£10,096
322	Older People's Day Care Svce	£12,545			£12,545	£3,687 for increased transport costs Bal of £297 donation for activities (from £1,000 received)	£3,924	£8,621
323	Election Reserve	£5,517	£12,500		£18,017			£18,017
324	Grove House Building Reserve	£157,427	£29,000	£64,148	£122,279	Bal of £877 for GH Gdns Entrance/Car Park Improvements (from £17,000 agreed)	£877	£121,402
326	Mayoral Reserve	£3,000			£3,000	FGP 19.01.15-Minute 24 - to be retained for transport/allowance as required		£3,000
327	Priory House Exhibition	£15,000			£15,000	Exhibition		£15,000
328	Priory Churchyard	£29,862	£5,000		£34,862	As determined by quinquennial report		£34,862
329	Performance Area Reserve	£6,000	£8,772	£3,238	£11,535	Council Minute 85 29.06.20- Bal of £10,762.50 for Performance Area (from £14,000 agreed)	£10,763	£772
330	Town Twinning Reserve	£7,867	£500		£8,367	Retained for twinning activities to be determined		£8,367
331	Tree Reserve	£14,436	£5,000	£8,410	£11,026	GES Minute 67 13.03.17- 5 year tree maintenance programme	£11,026	£0
332	Open Spaces Improvement Plan	£25,000	£15,000		£40,000	FGP Minute 8 20.01.20- Bal of £23,543 for improvement works (from £28,668 agreed) Council Minute 85 29.06.20- £15,000 agreed for Priory Gardens Pergola	£38,543	£1,457
333	Priory House Building Reserve	£334,618	£21,778	£300,000	£56,396			£56,396
334	Pavilion Buildings Maintenance Res	£50,435	£15,000		£65,435			£65,435
338	Allotments Reserve	£20,246	£5,000	£1,076	£24,170	Improvement works required		£24,170
339	Creasey Park 3G Pitch	£6,869	£174		£6,869	Interest accrued on ringfenced deposit - retained for contribution towards future pitch replacement - with 381 below		£6,869
341	Splashpark/Skatepark/BMX Reserve	£35,408	£12,000		£47,408			£47,408
342	Memorial Kerbs Reserve	£6,570			£6,570	for purchase of future supplies		£6,570
343	Cemetery Building Maintenance Res	£24,413	£5,000	£450	£28,963	FGP Minute 8 20.01.20- Bal of £23,350 agreed for Cemetery works (from £23,800 agreed)	£23,350	£5,613
344	Fencing Maintenance Reserve	£2,957	£1,000		£3,957	FGP Minute 8 20.01.20- £2,957 agreed for Fencing works	£2,957	£1,000
346	NEW - HSHAZ Scheme	£98,751	£331,956	£40,536	£390,171	4 year HSHAZ scheme programme	£390,171	£0
	Earmarked Reserves Total	£1,552,470			£1,589,997		£521,433	£1,068,565

S106/External Funding/Ringfenced Expenditure specified by funding body

315	Awards for All Event	£207			£207	Weird and Wonderful Event- 7 & 8 September 2019	£207	£0
325	Shop Front Improvement Scheme	£7,153	£6,025	£9,632	£3,546	Shop Front Scheme	£3,546	£0
337	Market Town Regeneration Fund	£23,010		£23,010	£0	Bal trfd to HSHAZ Scheme		£0
380	Developers Contributions- CAP	£18,065			£18,065	Frenchs Avenue S106 £13,778; Frenchs Avenue Fencing £4,286		£18,065
381	CPCFC Capital	£88,491		£4,850	£83,641	Retained for future repair/replacement of All Weather Pitches at CPCFC (with 339 above)		£83,641
385	Development Contributions- REV	£34,316			£34,316	Bal of £149 for Priory Gardens Footpaths (from Eastgate S106 £847); £8,000 committed in 20/21 revenue budget from Bal of £22,129 for Willoughby (from S106 £47,845) Bal of £4,038 for Court Drive Landscaping (from CBC £15,000);	£12,187	£22,129
570	Joint Committee Fund	£13,009		£2,300	£10,709	Bal in holding code as committed Joint Committees fund only = not DTC	£10,709	£0
	S106/External Funding Total	£184,251			£150,484		£26,649	£123,835
		£1,736,722			£1,740,482		£548,082	£1,192,400

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 15 MARCH 2021

REFERENCE FROM COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Purpose of Report: To consider and approve a recommendation made by the Community Services Committee on 1 March 2021 – **Members will need to familiarise themselves with the 1 March Community Services agenda for this item.**

1. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS

- 1.1 At the meeting of the Community Services Committee, held on 1 March 2021, Members received a report detailing necessary changes to the 2021/22 Service Level Agreements relating to grants to the voluntary sector.

Following a full discussion on the proposals the following was approved:

- RESOLVED:** (i) That it be recommended to the Finance and General Purposes Committee that a member working group be established to review current arrangements for grant aiding the voluntary sector through Service Level Agreements. The working group to comprise Councillors Gloria Martin, John Gurney, Cameron Restall and at least one other member from the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The working group to report back recommendations to the Community Services Committee.
- (ii) That it be recommended to the Finance and General Purposes Committee that the current grant given to Community Action Bedfordshire (CAB) be assigned to the Bedfordshire Rural Community Council (BRCC) in light of the BRCC merger with the CAB.
- (iii) That it be recommended to the Finance and General Purposes Committee that the payment of the 2020/21 grant to the Dunstable Town Guides and Priory Church be deferred until both organisations have submitted required financial information to officers.
- (iv) That it be recommended to the Finance and General Purposes Committee that the payment of the 2021/22 grant to Dunstable Town Band be deferred until the Band is fully operational again and their exact financial requirements are established.

2. ELECTRONIC HIGHWAYS SIGNAGE

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Community Services Committee, held on 1 March 2021, Members received a report detailing the costs involved in meeting the Council's aspiration for an electronic highways sign as detailed in the current Corporate Plan.

Following a full discussion on the proposal the following was approved:

RESOLVED: (i) That it be recommended to Finance and General Purposes Committee that up to £20,000 from anticipated 2020/21 revenue savings be allocated for the purchase of an electronic highways sign.

3. AUTHOR

- 3.1 Becky Wisbey - Head of Community Services
becky.wisbey@dunstable.gov.uk

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 15 MARCH 2021

WORKING TOWARDS CARBON NEUTRAL STATUS 2030

Purpose of Report:	To seek Member approval for funding to appoint consultants to undertake a baseline review of the Council's greenhouse gas emissions and carbon footprint.
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1. ACTION RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 That Members approve the release of up to £5,000 from predicted corporate revenue savings 2020/21 to fund the consultancy work outlined in this report.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members will be aware that one of the Council's ambitions set out in the Corporate Plan 2020 to 2023 is to work towards making the organisation carbon neutral by 2030.
- 2.2 This Committee established a Member / Officer working group in March 2020 and at the working group meeting held in September 2020 it was decided that it would be appropriate to secure the services of a specialist consultant to undertake a baseline study of the Council's greenhouse gas emissions and carbon footprint across the whole of the organisation and its wide range of services.

3. MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Head of Grounds and Environmental Services is currently preparing a consultancy brief for the baseline study, for approval by the working group members.
- 3.2 Once the brief has been finalised the Council will approach a number of specialist consultants (identified with assistance from Central Bedfordshire Council) to obtain quotations for the work and establish methodologies for the survey.
- 3.3 It is estimated that the cost of employing consultants should be no more than £5,000. It is therefore proposed that the funding required is taken from predicted corporate revenue savings for 2020/21.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Council is predicting a corporate revenue saving of approximately £55,000 (subject to financial requests considered elsewhere on this agenda) for 2020/21. This is detailed more fully in a separate report to this Committee.

5. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The proposal detailed in this report supports the Council's ambition to work towards making the organisation carbon neutral by 2030.

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

- 6.1 None

7. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The proposal detailed in this report is in line with the Council's Environmental Policy.

8. APPENDICES AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None

9. AUTHOR

- 9.1 John Crawley
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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 15 MARCH 2021****PROVISION OF AUDIO - VISION FACILITIES FOR COUNCIL CHAMBER**

Purpose of report:	The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the provision of audio-vision facilities for the Council Chamber that could potentially allow for the following: sound reinforcement, assistive listening, wireless presentations, voting, web streaming and recording, AV and room control, live web streaming to Council social media platforms, audio – video recording to provide a complete copy of the meetings for the public record, integration with document management systems (agendas, minutes, motions), audio visual care, service desk/user support, remote diagnostics, onsite engineering
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1. ACTION RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 That the Committee considers the immediate purchase of appropriate audio-vision facilities for the Council Chamber in Grove House, including the purchase of speakers, microphones and supporting equipment, ensuring that Committee and Council meetings are enabled for recording and streaming and that provision be made to ensure hybrid meetings can be held effectively.
- 1.2 That the Democratic Services Manager be tasked to prepare a publication scheme for the Council as well as ensuring the Council has effective retention and disposal policies for the retention of documents and recordings.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Principal Councils and many larger parish and town councils provide facilities in their council chambers that enable meetings to be recorded and broadcast through appropriate social media outlets.
- 2.2 Members have recently requested that the feasibility for the installation of similar facilities be tested for the Council chamber.
- 2.3 This report presents proposals and costings for a fully specified service that will allow for all meetings to be broadcast and recorded as well as making provision for more effective presentations in the chamber and the possibility to stage hybrid meetings allowing for some members to attend meetings remotely.

3. MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The streaming and recording of Council and Committee and Sub - Committees would ensure all electors/residents had an opportunity to access meetings and other proceedings of the Council and ensure there was a complete record of meetings for the public record.

- 3.2 In accordance with the 'Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014' all meetings of the Council can be recorded.
- 3.3 This is in addition to the rights of press and public who are also able to record, film and broadcast meetings. The Council itself can photograph, film, record or broadcast meetings and can use or dispose of such material in accordance with its retention and disposal policies. Where a Council proposes to record all its own meetings it will be bound by its own policies. The Council can resolve how long such recordings will be kept and how members of the public can obtain copies. The Town Council will include the availability of such recordings within its 'Publication Scheme'. However, it should be noted that the minutes of Council meetings remain the statutory and legally binding, formal record of Council decisions.

4. OPTIONS FOR RECORDING AND STREAMING EQUIPMENT REQUIRED

- 4.1 Appendix 1 of this report provides detailed descriptions for three potential purchase options.

Option 1 - takes the position that because of the size of the chamber individual microphones are not required. In order to stream meetings a platform will be required and account (YouTube is free) and software - which is free such as OBS. Therefore, the system could be in place for a sum of £1,384 plus VAT.

- 4.2 **Option 2** – provides for individual microphones; 20 individual microphones on stands with handheld radio microphones for audience / officer questions, reports etc. All of the above provides HD quality recording/streaming, and includes all the cabling, and cases/storage racks needed to ensure it is packed away safely. Content can be streamed live on Facebook (or any other social platform/website) with live feedback/chat/comments/ if wanted or just placed as a recorded playback after the event. Purchase price approximately £9,180 plus VAT (including time for installation and setup of cabling, that would be made specifically for Grove House and programming of software etc)

- 4.3 **Option 3** - As above, but wireless at a cost of £19,320.77 plus VAT to include installation, setup and training for Members and officers. This would be a top of the range system with the mixer and camera system and is the option recommended by officers.

- 4.4 It is estimated there are 60 Council, Committee, and sub-committee meetings a year. It is recommended that the set up and monitoring of the streaming be provided by Event Production Live. This would ensure remote support and set up was available for every meeting if required. Also, the use of the Council Chamber and the audio/vision facilities could be used by outside organisations and could create an income stream for the Council.

- 4.5 In providing these services it is important to be sensitive to Grove House listed building status; consultations would be needed with the conservation officer. It is important to note that no work/ installation would occur in Grove House until all works had been approved by the conservation officer. Also, to keep Grove House as an office and meeting venue for the twenty first century facilities like this as described in the report and appendix are required.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is no current budget allocated to this potential expenditure. As a result, depending on which option members prefer, a sum of up to £25,000 be identified from corporate revenue savings details of which are reported elsewhere on this agenda.

6. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The recommendations detailed within this report are in accordance with the Councils Corporate Plan objective of '*Continuing to improve the organisational management, efficiency and environmental sustainability of the Town Council*'.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The recommendations detailed in this report will assist in ensuring that the Council meets its obligations with regard to the safe management of its buildings and ensures efficient and effective meetings and ensures the public can follow and participate where appropriate either at the meeting or via streaming.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None.

9. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 None

9. APPENDICES AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 **Appendix 1 -** Detailed quotation and specification document prepared by Event Production Live

10. AUTHORS

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David Ashlee – Town Clerk and Chief Executive
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*Appendix 1 for
Agenda item 8*

Council Chamber Streaming System Dunstable Town Council

Quotation & Specification Document



Event Production Live
1 The Cloisters
Houghton Regis
Beds, LU5 5JN

0800 086 9695
hello@eventproductionlive.co.uk

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Brief

Supply of microphone and camera system and related equipment primarily for use in the council chamber at grove house; allowing the streaming of meetings to the internet via social media channels.

Particulars

Clear Audible sound of all meeting participants when sat around the boardroom style table

Facility to take audience questions

Visual representation of the room, and person speaking

Facility to overlay slides/meeting information

Capacity to stream to Facebook/YouTube style social sites and potentially the council website with further arrangement of that contractor

Facility to start and stop the stream quickly

Overview

Below are three systems at increasing price points with further benefits to each system. Each system provides a different degree of calibre and professionalism, though all service the needs of online broadcast and creating a public copy of meetings held. By using a publicly available channel such as YouTube the stream will be automatically saved, without the need for additional archiving. (though in package 2 & 3 this is available). It is important to note whilst Options 2 and 3 have the option to connect external speakers, these are not supplied and the system is purely designed for broadcast of sound to online.

Option 1

- The simplest options comprises of a single camera and a pair of (condenser) microphones that pick up the whole room.
- The camera supplied would use a wide angle (goldfish) style lens creating a slight warped look but allowing all to be in the shot.
- The microphones would be mounted to the ceiling centrally and cabled back using external trunking to a control box
- The microphones would connect to a small mixer
- Both the mixer and the camera (via a capture card) will connect to a PC and be streamed to the internet via a platform such as OBS (Freeware)
- External documents can also be played out via OBS, plus a relay of what is being played to OBS available via an external monitor/screen.

Council Chamber Streaming System

System Notes:

Things to note with this system include the audio will pick up everything and be gained high so as to do so, this means any private conversations between individuals will be picked up, it also means if several people talk at once the stream will be hard to follow and audio jumbled

As the room is so long and thin It will be hard to pick out who in the room is talking from this single point camera especially toward the far end (Chairperson end) of the system.

Cabling for the system, whilst minimal for two microphones and one camera mount, will have to run externally being housed in trusing to match the room/ceiling colour. This option is not aesthetically pleasing as others and may be subject to restriction placed on the building due to its listed status.

The powerpoint or other presentation would need to be run from the computer doing the stream.

Pricing

£1384+vat inc installation, setup and training.

A full breakdown of the system can be seen in appendix A.

Option 2

- This option feature individual wired microphones for each participant and 2 wireless microphones for audience questions along with a single camera.
- The single tripod/pole mounted camera in HD with optical zoom, allowing it to be altered manually should you need a close up view or a smaller meeting with less people.
- This camera will then be cabled to an external vision mixer (ATEM)
- 18 Cabled Desktop Gooseneck microphones, cabled individually to a rack mounted sound desk located under the main table in the room.
- 2 Wireless handheld Microphones for audience questions of people not at the table.
- All microphones will be automatically mixed from internal sound desk, meaning the channel will open when someone speaks, using voice detection.
- The sound desk and camera, both connect to vision mixer, (ATEM) that would allow future upgrade for further cameras, and to connect external devices such as laptops to display power point presentations etc.
- The Vision Mixer (ATEM) then connects straight via ethernet connection to the internet. No computer is required, however one has been specified for configuration of this, and to allow online monitoring. Plus for use if the connection via ethernet is not possible in existing infrastructure.

Specification Document

System Notes:

Things to note with this system include the audio will be clear per person, however will open each mic anytime someone speaks, thus private conversations will be heard. There is an option for buttons on the microphones, however there are no visual indications to know when the microphone is on or off.

The wireless handheld microphones, do not form part of the auto mixing system and can be turned on and off with the switches on them. They require AA batteries to run, and have a life time of approx. 4-6hrs use per set of 2 AA batteries.

As the room is so long and thin It will be hard to pick out who in the room is talking from this single point camera especially toward the far end (Chairperson end) of the system. This camera has a manual zoom that could be adjusted to facilitate a smaller meeting with less attendees. This camera has a better focal range allowing the entire picture with the large depth of the table being in focus, it should be noted however that the people furthest will be very small.

Cabling for the system, is extensive as each microphone will require its own cable, and due to the existing furniture theses would have to be run down the centre of the desk. Whilst this can be done neatly it is not the most aesthetically pleasing option. Further cables would need to be run from the sound desk (Located under the main table) to control point.

The power point or other presentation can be run from an external machine, and connected into the system, with choice over if it is displayed full screen to the stream or in a small picture window. Again, a cable would need to be run from this machine to the control machine to facilitate this.

Pricing

£9180+vat inc installation, setup and training.

A full breakdown of the system can be seen in appendix B.

Option 3

- This option feature 9 individual push to talk wireless microphones for each participant to share and 2 wireless microphones for audience questions along with three switching cameras. The system is completely wireless. (With the exception of camera signal)
- The high cardoid mics have a pickup pattern to pick up with a 120deg pattern so are suitable to share, though if required additional mics can be purchased at £1060+vat (with volume discounts available) and will seamlessly integrate upto 20 microphones total.
- The cameras mounted freestanding on space saving poles on 3 sides of the room providing the two sides of the table and an wide/end shot of the room. These cameras, also have a similar zoom option to option two allowing a zoomed in view of the "chair/top" end of the table.

Council Chamber Streaming System

- The cameras will then be cabled to an external vision mixer (ATEM) that will handle switching these cameras automatically. For example when someone speaks on the left side of the table the ATEM will switch to the camera with that view.
- 18 wireless desktop microphones, are located around the table, each features a push to talk button, with green/red lights indicated when the microphone is on. They come with a 12 hour battery life and are rechargeable. (No ongoing battery cost)
- 2 Wireless handheld Microphones for audience questions of people not at the table, these again are rechargeable.
- The microphones automatically connect to receivers, located at control, and feed into the vision mixer in groups related to the camera that would show the person speaking.
- The Vision Mixer (ATEM) then connects to a computer that does the digital camera processing, and encodes the footage to go out to any online service.
- The vision mixer can take a feed from a laptop / computer for powerpoint to display on the stream or an external screen.
- The system is digital and thus encrypted so cannot be picked up by receivers nearby, useful for recording, and not streaming private meetings.
- This system also includes a 70" HD screen on portable wheeled stand for connection and display in room of any presentations/connection. This feed can also be sent out to the stream.

System Notes:

This system is a new concept, state of the art system. The wireless microphones use the latest digital technology and have been designed with future proofing in mind.

The system is further expandable should the need arise. Being completely portable and not connected to building infrastructure, it can be reconfigured to different room layouts, and is cased in such a way that can be moved to uses its streaming capabilities for meetings in other locations, events etc.

As stated above, whilst some cabling may want to be run permanently for the camera power and data, all infrastructure is free from attachment to building, thus helping with listed building status and aesthetics of the room.

The system can also be used in many configurations, as an example microphones can be set as push to talk as described above, but also auto mic mixing or with preference from a chairperson unit to take questions/allow talking.

The system requires little setup, other than removing microphones from charge and laying them out, plus powering on the vision mixer and camera feeds.

You can turn on and off the stream at the touch of a button, and also blank the output/display a holding slide for private sections of a meeting.

The system can be connected to an external system for if the meeting is heavily attended in person by public. (Using existing DTC events speakers)

Specification Document

Options for this system (with an external technician) to be hired to other councils and organisations on and off the premises.

Additional Microphones can be purchased at a cost of £1060+vat per unit. Upto a maximum of 20 units

Pricing

£19,320.77+vat inc installation, setup and training.

We currently have a special trade discount available to us on this product line, so a 20% discount is included in the above cost, this option is only available until 31/04/2021 at which time the price would increase to £23,184.92+vat

A full breakdown of the system can be seen in appendix C.

Summary

All 3 systems meet the needs of providing a streaming option to meet requirements for public documentation and attendance of meetings. Due to the nature of the building is listed status and restrictions around building aesthetics it is suggested option 3 as the best option due to its wireless nature and the addition of an in room screen.

All systems come with a one year return to base warranty.

Whilst the systems are fairly maintenance free, systems should be updated by a professional once per year to ensure continued reliability and warranty.

Full training is supplied to one or a few people in person on each system, including some troubleshooting. We are however never more than a phone call away and can help where we can.

As per always we can fit around any timetable needed for install, there is currently a lead time on option 3 of a couple of weeks, on the microphones, but all other components of all 3 options are readily available.

It is possible for a combination of these systems to make a more bespoke option, please just let us know your ideal requirements.

Contact

QUOTATION VALID FOR 30 DAYS UNLESS SPECIFIED OTHERWISE

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Director

Event Production Live
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Appendix A – Option One Breakdown

Item	Unit	Qty	Total	Link to Products - Manufacturer
Camera (Inc PSU)	£ 250.00	1	£ 250.00	https://gopro.com/en/gb/shop/
HDMI Extension	£ 31.49	1	£ 31.49	https://cpc.farnell.com/pro-signi
Converter Cable	£ 17.99	1	£ 17.99	https://cvc.com/product/blackni
Tripod Mount	£ 72.96	1	£ 72.96	https://cvc.com/product/manfre
Capture Card	£ 130.00	1	£ 130.00	https://www.elgato.com/en/gar
OBS	£ -	1	£ -	https://obsproject.com/
Computer	£ 290.00	1	£ 290.00	https://www.laptopsdirect.co.uk/
Condenser Microf	£ 129.00	2	£ 258.00	https://www.leisuretec.co.uk/p
Ceiling Mount	£ 6.67	2	£ 13.34	https://www.leisuretec.co.uk/p
XLR Cable	£ 34.43	2	£ 68.86	https://cpc.farnell.com/van-dam
Trunking	£ 6.30	5	£ 31.50	https://www.diy.com/departme
Trunking Adaptors	£ 1.00	20	£ 20.00	https://www.diy.com/departme
Installation	£ 200.00	1	£ 200.00	1 Person, 1 Day - inc training
Total			£ 1,384.14	+vat

Appendix B – Option Two Breakdown.

Item	Unit	Qty	Total	Link to Products - Manufacture
Camera (Inc PSU)	£1,164.00	1	£ 1,164.00	https://www.blackmagicdesign.com
Expansion cable (For PSU)	£ 34.49	1	£ 34.49	https://cyp.com/product/blackm
Camera Lens	£ 350.40	1	£ 350.40	https://www.panasonic.com/uk/
SDI cable convertor	£ 17.99	1	£ 17.99	https://cyp.com/product/blackm
Manfrotto Tripod Mount	£ 72.96	1	£ 72.96	https://cyp.com/product/manfro
ATEM Mini	£ 650.00	1	£ 650.00	https://www.blackmagicdesign.c
PC (All in One i7)	£ 889.97	1	£ 889.97	https://www.lenovo.com/gb/en/
Gooseneck Table Mics	£ 25.00	20	£ 500.00	https://www.avsl.com/brands/ad
Sennheiser XSW 2 Way System	£ 529.00	1	£ 529.00	https://en-uk.sennheiser.com/xs
SQ 5 Digital Sound Desk (With Mic Auto Mix)	£1,736.00	1	£ 1,736.00	https://www.allen-heath.com/al
AR-2412	£ 710.00	1	£ 710.00	https://www.allen-heath.com/al
AR-84	£ 455.00	1	£ 455.00	https://www.allen-heath.com/al
Flightcase SQ5	£ 201.15	1	£ 201.15	
Rackcase AR2412	£ 94.99	1	£ 94.99	
Rackcase AR84	£ 94.99	1	£ 94.99	
Cat5 Desk to AR	£ 79.99	1	£ 79.99	
Cat 5 AR to AR	£ 79.99	1	£ 79.99	
XLR loom	£ 400.00	1	£ 400.00	
HDMI Short	£ 1.91	4	£ 7.64	
HDMI Splitter (W PSU)	£ 55.56	1	£ 55.56	
Anker Powerport Mini Dual	£ 11.99	2	£ 23.98	
USB A to Micro USB 2 Pack	£ 6.99	1	£ 6.99	
HDMI-SDI	£ 39.90	1	£ 39.90	
SDI-HDMI	£ 55.20	2	£ 110.40	
SDI Reel	£ 218.40	2	£ 436.80	
Jack to Mini Jack	£ 16.95	1	£ 16.95	
13amp extension/6way	£ 3.49	6	£ 20.94	
Installation	£ 200.00	2	£ 400.00	2 Person, 1 Day - inc training
Total			£ 9,180.08	+vat

Appendix C – Option Three Breakdown

Item	Unit	Qty	Total	Link to Products - Manufactu
Camera (Inc PSU)	£ 1,164.00	1	£ 1,164.00	https://www.blackmagicdesign
Expansion cable (For PSU)	£ 34.49	1	£ 34.49	https://cyp.com/product/blackr
Camera Lens	£ 350.40	1	£ 350.40	https://www.panasonic.com/uk
Camera Non Zoom	£ 250.00	2	£ 500.00	https://gopro.com/en/gb/shop/
SDI cable convertor	£ 17.99	3	£ 53.97	https://cyp.com/product/blackr
Manfrotto Tripod Mount	£ 72.96	1	£ 72.96	https://cyp.com/product/manfr
Roland AV Mixer	£ 1,252.50	1	£ 1,252.50	https://www.leisuretec.co.uk/e
PC (All in One i7)	£ 524.00	1	£ 524.00	https://www.lenovo.com/gb/e
GooseMics	£ 1,060.00	9	£ 9,540.00	https://www.leisuretec.co.uk/e
Handheld	£ 667.85	2	£ 1,335.70	https://www.leisuretec.co.uk/e
GM Charger	£ 184.54	9	£ 1,660.86	https://www.leisuretec.co.uk/e
HH Charger	£ 127.54	1	£ 127.54	
Antenna	£ 126.35	1	£ 126.35	
70" Screen & Wheeled Stan	£ 1,828.00	1	£ 1,828.00	
Accessories and Cabling	£ 250.00	1	£ 250.00	
Installation	£ 500.00	1	£ 500.00	1 Person, 2 .5Days - inc training
Total			£ 19,320.77	+vat