

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

HELD ON MONDAY 6 JUNE 2022

Present: Councillors Lisa Bird (Deputy Town Mayor), Peter Hollick (Chairman), Pam Ghent (Vice-Chairman), Wendy Bater, Gloria Martin, Lee Roberts, and Gladys Sanders

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

Apologies: Councillors Liz Jones (Town Mayor), Alan Corkhill, Greg George, John Gurney, and Cameron Restall

Public: Nil

75. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 7 March 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

76. SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor	Interest	Agenda Item
Councillor Lee Roberts	Non-Pecuniary interest – Wife owns a nearby similar business to Priory House Tea Rooms. Councillor Roberts took no part in the discussion or vote.	Item 10
Councillor Pam Ghent	Non-Pecuniary interest – Volunteer with Hospice at Home	Item 11
Councillor Gloria Martin	Non-Pecuniary interest – Has an association with 4 th Dunstable Scout Group	Item 11

77. DUNSTABLE TOWN CENTRE SERVICES

The Committee was updated on Town Centre Services including vacancy rates, Middle Row Markets and partnership working.

Middle Row Markets had started again on 26 March 2022 and continued being held each month. The markets had attracted new traders and the Town Centre Services Officer reported she had secured a new bread stall.

The repairs completed at Ashton Square Toilets were noted. The Committee also noted that steps for children to use the sinks had been purchased for both toilets. Once again the

toilets had been entered into the Loo of the Year competition for 2022.

Town Centre

The Committee noted the vacancy rates. Events on the Square were set out in the report. Ashton Square Day has been confirmed as 6 August with an extra market on this date. Twilight Markets 9, 10 and 11 December (times to be confirmed). Shop Watch had a second meeting in January which had been well attended with those that could not make the meeting receiving notes of the meeting. All partners were present at the meeting to support local businesses and shops. A second meeting constituted with a Chairman and Secretary was held on 1 March 2022.

Christmas Lights

Councillor Martin reported a number of street lighting columns in the vicinity were damaged and needed inspection and repair before they carried Christmas lights and hanging baskets. It was further reported that Christmas lights quotes for the remainder of the High Street was being obtained. Festoons in Grove House Gardens would replace the old decorations this Christmas.

78. OLDER PEOPLE'S SERVICES

The Good Companions Club had twenty members. The Creasey Park Community Football Centre Lunch Club currently had thirty members. There was currently a waiting list with seven people waiting to join. The Committee received a report on its activities.

Coffee Morning

Officers facilitated a coffee morning on Tuesday 3 May at Grove Corner.

Big Lunch

Officers had recently worked on the Big Lunch event held on Tuesday 31 May 2022, which had a Platinum Jubilee theme.

Love Parks Week

It was reported that on 14 July in Priory Gardens there would be a wellbeing event for the older community.

79. GROVE CORNER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Grove Corner

Grove Corner had received 461 visits from young people between 21 February and 29 April 2022. Pokémon was still popular, and numbers continued to increase.

Youth Engagement

Officers had delivered informal discussions and activities during the drop-in session on Monday evenings. A karaoke and disco were held on 1 April 2022.

School Engagement

Officers completed the delivery of Wellbeing Warriors at St Augustine's Academy. The Officers had reintroduced The Good, The Bad and the Ugly project at St Augustine's Academy.

Community Engagement

Officers were working with local businesses and community groups. As part of the engagement process the Good, the Bad and the Ugly was to be held on 23,30 June and 7

July. A litter pick had been held on Thursday 24 March at the Cemetery with the Friends of Dunstable Cemetery.

Volunteer Week

A Volunteers Week coffee morning had been arranged for 7 June. Every volunteer would receive a certificate.

80. HIGH STREET HERITAGE ACTION ZONE (HSHAZ)

The Committee considered the latest update report on the High Street Heritage Action Zone.

Latest Updates

- Number 4 High Street South

Since 13 December 2021 there had been four applications from the owners of 4 High Street South in respect of design work, survey work, scaffolding design and works and project management and Principal Designer/Construction Design Management (CDM) work. The potential restoration works was estimated at £725,000. Based on these costs it was considered unlikely that the property owners would reconsider working with the HSHAZ once the pre-application advice was made available.

- Number 7 High Street South

An application for a new shop front was submitted in late March and it was approved in May.

- Number 18 High Street South

Repair works funded through HSHAZ had been completed, other works not funded by HSHAZ had also been continued.

- Number 29 High Street South

Although the tenant had made inquiries in March to work with HSHAZ it was not expected this would go any further.

- Number 2 High Street South

This property had been subject to two applications but at the time of reporting there were no new developments.

Priory House

The Priory House project was likely to commence in September 2022 but was subject to the timetabled tender process and contractors' availability.

81. **EVENTS**

Future Events

The Committee considered a report on the following events:

- (i) Queen's Jubilee Concert – Saturday 4 June
- (ii) Sunday Band Concerts – through the summer months
- (iii) Dunstable Live
- (iv) Party in the Park
- (v) Around the World
- (vi) Priory Pictures
- (vii) Priory Proms in the Park

Event Review Working Group

At the November meeting it was agreed by the Committee that a Working Group be setup to review the events programme. The Working Group would evaluate the success and viability of the current events programme. The Committee was reminded that the Events Review Working Group met in January and had reviewed the 2021 programme, the methodology for the review of past events and the evaluation of 2022 events. It was further noted that a number of public feedback exercises would be undertaken via Survey Monkey, Talk of the Town, Facebook and surveys undertaken on the day of the events. The Working Group would consider reports on St George's Day, Motor Rally and Dunstable Live.

82. **PRIORY HOUSE INFORMATION REPORT**

Operational Issues

The Committee was advised that the lift was working. It was also reported on a number of staff vacancies that had arisen. The Committee supported the officer decision to not fill those vacancies immediately for operational issues.

Tourist Information Centre and Retail Outlet

It was noted it was trading well. However, an operational decision by bus companies not to supply bus service timetables had impacted greatly on photocopying costs. The printing of timetables for bus users was not sustainable and action had been taken to reduce these costs.

The Jacobean Room

There were eighteen weddings confirmed for 2022.

Events

The Committee noted that St Georges Day was very successful for the House with £2,000 being taken split between the tea rooms, gift shop and the outside stall.

Priory House Tea Rooms

It was noted that the tea rooms were trading extremely well.

83. **PRIORY HOUSE RECONFIGURATION OF THE GROUND FLOOR**

Further to the last meeting of the Committee, officers submitted a report on layout options and ideas. Also, contractors had been contacted for initial quotes for the works as well as scoping the costs for the necessary equipment. The Committee discussed quotations received for capital works and equipment. A further quote was expected but the total costs varied between £34,376.52 and £56,867.79.

RESOLVED: That the Committee recommends to Finance and General Purposes the release of up to £60,000 from the Priory House Building Reserve to reconfigure the ground floor of Priory House as detailed in the report.

84. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT APPLICATIONS

The Committee considered a report on the first round of the four-year Service Level Agreements applications. The Committee also received information on the seed corn funding scheme. It was noted The Dunstable Wombles was to receive £300 worth of equipment.

RESOLVED: That the applications received from Dunstable CAB, Hospice at Home and Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity be approved.

85. PETER NEWTON PAVILION - BEDFORDSHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

The Committee received an annual report on the running and management of the Peter Newton Pavilion by the Bedfordshire Football Association.

86. REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

South Bedfordshire Dial-a-Ride:

Councillor Gloria Martin provided an update on the successful relocation of the service to the Incuba. Secure car parking had been provided for the vehicles and office space at the Incuba had been secured. It had also received grant funding of £4,000 from the National Lottery.

Dunstable Town Band:

No report.

Men in Sheds (MiS)

The Chairman of the Committee advised the Committee he had received a report from Councillor John Gurney. It was reported Cllr Gurney was to remain Chairman until 2023. Membership of the group was increasing. £11,600 had been acquired for shed refurbishments. Councillor John Gurney reported that all members of MiS were now subject to a training arrangement to ensure they were all trained on the use of hand tools and machinery.

The meeting closed at 20.46