

## Notice of a Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

**Paul Hodson** Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Date: 16 September 2022

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **Finance and General Purposes Committee** will be held on **Monday 26 September 2022** at **Grove House in the Council Chamber commencing at 7.00 pm**. Members of the public and press are welcome to attend, either online via Teams or in person. Anyone wishing to attend is asked to notify their intention to attend by emailing [Ian.Reed@dunstable.gov.uk](mailto:Ian.Reed@dunstable.gov.uk) by 23 September 2022.

### **A G E N D A**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. To approve as an accurate record the minutes of the meeting of Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 20 June 2022 (copy previously circulated)
3. Specific Declarations of Interest
4. Financial Monitoring - Report (see page 3)
  - 4.1. To receive and note the outcome of the External Audit for financial year 2021/2022
5. To agree to approve a further three month's absence from Town Council meetings for Councillor Cant due to personal circumstances (Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 refers)
6. Performance Area Refurbishment - Report (see page 16)
7. Refurbishment of Meadway Store - Report (see page 19)

8. Marketing and Communications - Report (see page 22)
9. Town Clerk Robes - Report (see page 25)
10. Honour Boards - Report (see page 27)
11. Calendar of Meetings - Report (see page 33)
12. Representatives on Outside Organisations - to receive reports from representatives on the following outside organisations:

Citizen's Advice 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 to it are reminded to provide a report in time for the meeting.**

Yours faithfully,



Paul Hodson  
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

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

13. RECOMMENDED In terms of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, the following items will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment and contractual matters and it is, therefore, RECOMMENDED that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

14. Utilities – Report (to follow)

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL****FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE****26 SEPTEMBER 2022****FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	<p>To:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) provide a revenue budgetary control report for the period ending 31 July 2022</li> <li>ii) provide detail of the Council's earmarked reserves as at 31 August 2022</li> <li>iii) report the outcome of the External Audit report for financial year 2021/2022</li> <li>iv) provide detail on current investments</li> </ul>
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**1. ACTION RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 For Members to note the revenue budget position for the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 July 2022.
- 1.2 For Members to note the current balance of the Council's earmarked reserves as at 31 August 2022 and known commitments in the current financial year.
- 1.3 For Members to receive and note the outcome of the External Audit for financial year 2021/2022.
- 1.4 For Members to note current investments.

**2. INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 This budgetary control report summarises the net expenditure against the budget for each service area as at 31 July 2022. 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 July 2022 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 £1,524. This takes account of the £50,000 contribution from general reserve agreed and a £33,000 estimate of the potential pay increase effect (over and above what has been budgeted).
- 3.3 Within **Finance and Support Services** the overall forecast is to be £6,612 underspent. Significant variances to budget are as follows:
  - *Corporate Management* income to overachieve by £8,423 due to an increase in investment and bank interest received/due to be received in this financial year.

- *Democratic Representation* is forecast to be overspent by £2,202, this is mainly due to the purchase of the honour boards.

3.4 Within **Grounds and Environmental Services** the overall forecast is to be £23,849 underspent. Significant variances in the budget are as follows:

- *Grounds Staff Costs* is due to be overspent by £5,000 due to additional overtime requirements to cover sickness/vacancies.
- *Allotments* is due to be overspent by £1,725, this is mainly due to Meadway Shed electricity usage not budgeted for.
- *Cemetery* is due to overachieve by £9,536 based on burial income to date.
- *Recreation Grounds* is due to overachieve by £5,233, mainly due to an external maintenance contract not budgeted for and an insurance claim settlement received.
- *Town Centre and Gardens* is due to be overspent by £2,449, this is due to high electricity usage at the Skatepark.
- *Creasey Park* is due to overachieve by £16,000; this is mainly due to additional income now forecast for ATP Hire.
- *Bennett Memorial Recreation Ground Splash Park* is predicted to be underspent by £2,564 mainly due to reduced staffing costs offset by the purchase of a replacement slushy machine.

3.5 **Community Services** overall is forecast to be £45,937 overspent. Significant variances to budget are as follows:

- *Grove Corner cost centre* is due to overachieve by £4,216 mainly from an increase in room hire bookings.
- *Priory House* has a forecast overspend of £50,000 which will be offset from the contingency contribution from the general reserve agreed, if required.

#### 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 31 August 2022.

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 during the meeting.

#### 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 and was completed on the 8 August 2022 with the Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee, Councillor Martin and Councillor Liz Jones 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 April, May and June 2022.

- 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. EXTERNAL AUDIT 2021/2022**

- 6.1 Officers have received the completed AGAR for the financial year 2021/2022 from our appointed external auditors Mazars LLP, and Members will be pleased to note the successful completion of external audit. Please find Appendix 3 attached for information.

## **7. INVESTMENTS UPDATE**

- 7.1 Dunstable Town Council's current bank and investment account balances as 7 September 2022 were as follows:

<b>Account</b>	<b>Balance</b>	<b>Interest earned in month</b>
Current Account	£10,000.00	
Business Reserve Account	£1,065,520.44	£175.16
CCLA Deposit Account 1 – CP 3G Pitch	£90,888.64	£82.78
CCLA Deposit Account 2	£1,763,761.04	£923.41

- 7.2 On reviewing the current interest being earned, the Head of Finance and Town Clerk and Chief Executive have transferred £750,000, included in the above Business Reserve Account, from the Business Reserve Account to the CCLA Deposit Account 2 on 7 September 2022. This is included in the figures above. As at 15 September, the CCLA Deposit Accounts were paying interest of 0.16914% and the Business Reserve Account was paying interest of 0.0164%

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **9. APPENDICES**

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Summary of Net Revenue Expenditure

Appendix 2 – Summary of Reserves

Appendix 3 – External Audit Completion Letter and AGAR 2021/22

## **9. AUTHOR**

- 9.1 Lisa Scheder – Head of Finance and Responsible Financial Officer  
[lisa.Scheder@dunstable.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.Scheder@dunstable.gov.uk)

## Dunstable Town Council

## Summary of Actuals vs Budget

31 July 2022

## Town Clerk and Chief Executive's Office

Service Area	Budget 2022/23	Actuals to Date	Year-end Forecast	Year-end Variance
Staff Costs	-341,959	-115,791	-342,259	-300
Central Services	-105,850	-36,271	-105,450	400
Grove House	-12,168	-16,069	-11,877	291
Corporate Management	-129,075	-92,292	-120,652	8,423
Democratic Management & Representation	-20,750	-6,882	-22,952	-2,202
Capital & Projects (inc loan charges)	-94,749	-70,824	-94,749	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>-704,551</b>	<b>-338,129</b>	<b>-697,939</b>	<b>6,612</b>

## Grounds and Environmental Services

Service Area	Budget 2022/23	Actuals to Date	Year-end Forecast	Year-end Variance
Staff Costs	-718,178	-217,948	-723,178	-5,000
Allotments	600	-2,437	-1,125	-1,725
Cemetery	66,954	36,987	76,490	9,536
Recreation Grounds	-64,100	-26,388	-58,867	5,233
Town Centre and Gardens	-30,900	-18,093	-33,349	-2,449
Town Ranger Service	-12,000	-4,091	-12,310	-310
Capital & Projects	-129,001	-105,939	-129,001	0
Sub Total	-886,625	-337,909	-881,340	5,285
Income: Creasey Park - Football	201,022	34,987	219,500	18,478
Costs: Creasey park - Football	-75,528	-33,024	-78,378	-2,850
Income: Bar & Catering	210,000	68,816	223,500	13,500
Costs: Bar & Catering	-349,118	-130,114	-362,246	-13,128
Sub Total	-13,624	-59,335	2,376	16,000
Bennett Memorial RG Splash Park	-31,664	-14,553	-29,100	2,564
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>-931,913</b>	<b>-411,797</b>	<b>-908,064</b>	<b>23,849</b>

## Community Services

Service Area	Budget 2022/23	Actuals to Date	Year-end Forecast	Year-end Variance
Staff Costs	-249,474	-77,663	-249,474	0
Older People's Support Service	-26,045	-3,125	-26,589	-544
Community Engagement (inc Grants)	-19,707	-11,928	-19,707	0
Grove Corner	-23,630	6,478	-19,415	4,216
Events Programme	-135,910	-59,223	-135,519	391
Central Marketing	0	0	0	0
Town Centre Services (inc Special Markets)	-64,301	-10,404	-64,103	198
Public Conveniences (Ashton Square)	-3,050	-1,691	-3,248	-198
High Street Heritage Action Zone	-26,167	7,274	-26,167	0
Capital & Projects	-65,588	-44,497	-65,588	0
Sub Total	-613,872	-194,779	-609,809	4,063
Income: Priory house - Tea Rooms	138,500	51,135	88,500	-50,000
Costs: Priory house - Tea Rooms	-48,000	-22,121	-48,000	0
Income: Priory house - Shop	14,600	6,441	16,100	1,500
Costs: Priory house - Shop	-6,500	-4,354	-8,000	-1,500
Other Costs (Inc Staff)	-378,754	-111,285	-378,754	0
Sub Total	-280,154	-80,184	-330,154	-50,000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>-894,026</b>	<b>-274,963</b>	<b>-939,963</b>	<b>-45,937</b>

<b>DTC Grand Total</b>	<b>-2,530,490</b>	<b>-1,024,889</b>	<b>-2,545,966</b>	<b>-15,476</b>
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	50,000	Contribution from General Reserve	50,000
Precept	-2,480,490	Balance	34,524
		Estimated Pay Increase Impact	-33,000
			1,524



	Description	Officer	Balance as at 01.04.22	Contributions Revenue/Other	Expenditure in year	Bal as at 31.08.22	Commitments/Programme of works, etc	Committed Amount	Bal after committed
310	General Reserve	TC&CE / HofF	£638,214			£638,214	Agreed in 22/23 Budget Setting: £50,000 contribution to revenue budget re Priory House Contingency	-£50,000	£588,214
312	Vehicles Reserve	HofGES	£30,027	£20,000	-£3,747	£46,280			£46,280
313	CPCFC Reserve	TC&CE	£50,078		-£5,397	£44,681	Bal of £5,697 - 4 years sponsorship 22/23-25/26 (from £7,596) - £9,942 Chairmans Approval 29.07.22-new furniture	-£15,639	£29,042
314	Christmas Lights Reserve	HofCS	£17,002	£3,500		£20,502	5 year replacement lighting plan 21/22-25/26	-£20,502	£0
316	Downside Building Maintenance Res	HofCS	£1,530	£3,000		£4,530			£4,530
317	Grove Corner Building Maint Reserve	HofCS	£29,565	£4,000		£33,565			£33,565
318	Building Security Systems	TC&CE / HofF	£5,357			£5,357			£5,357
319	Cemetery Memorial Safety	HofGES	£4,300	£1,000		£5,300	Memorial safety inspections		£5,300
320	Priory House Tearooms Equipment	HofCS	£3,000	£1,500		£4,500			£4,500
321	IT/Equipment Reserve	TC&CE / HofF	£28,840	£15,000		£43,840	Bal of £2,100 for Cemetery Software (from £21,690 agreed)	-£2,100	£41,740
322	Older People's Day Care Svce	HofCS	£12,545		-£220	£12,325	£3,687 for increased transport costs	-£3,687	£8,638
323	Election Reserve	TC&CE / HofF	£30,517	£12,500		£43,017			£43,017
324	Grove House Building Reserve	TC&CE / HofF	£119,550	£29,000		£148,550			£148,550
326	Mayoral Reserve	TC&CE / HofF	£3,000			£3,000	FGP 19.01.15-Minute 24 - to be retained for transport/allowance as required		£3,000
327	Priory House Exhibition	HofCS	£11,149			£11,149			£11,149
328	Priory Churchyard	HofGES	£39,862	£5,000		£44,862	As determined by quinquennial report		£44,862
329	Performance Area Reserve	HofCS	£10,174			£10,174	Council Minute 65 29.06.20- Bal of £10,385 for Performance Area (from £14,000 agreed); reduced commitment following CS 10.01.22	-£3,410	£6,763
330	Town Twinning Reserve	TC&CE / HofF	£8,833	£500	-£790	£8,543	Retained for twinning activities to be determined	-£176	£8,367
331	Tree Reserve	HofGES	£1,544	£10,000	-£2,560	£8,984	GES Minute 67 13.03.17- 5 year tree maintenance programme	-£8,984	£0
332	Open Spaces Improvement Plan	HofGES	£39,137	£15,000		£54,137	FGP Minute 8 20.01.20- Bal of £4,723 for improvement works (from £26,646 agreed) Council Minute 85 29.06.20- £15,000 agreed for Priory Gardens Pergola Repairs	-£19,723	£34,414
333	Priory House Building Reserve	HofCS	£78,174	£20,395	-£554	£98,015	Chairmans Approval 08.07.22= bal of £9,446 - lease of bean machine (£10,000 approved)	-£9,446	£88,569
334	Pavilion Buildings Maintenance Res	HofGES	£78,590	£15,000	-£850	£92,740	FGP Minute 107 20.06.22= Bal of £74,150 - Downside repair works upto £75,000	-£74,150	£18,590
335	Capital Receipts Reserve	TC&CE / HofF	£0	£500,000		£500,000	Income from sale of land- report to future committee		£500,000
336	Staff Restructuring/Recruitment	TC&CE / HofF	£2,603		-£2,603	£0	Restructuring / TC&CE Recruitment	£0	£0
338	Allotments Reserve	HofGES	£29,170	£5,000	-£3,828	£30,342	FGP Minute 107 20.06.22= 5 year improvement programme- upto £20,000 in 2022/23 & £22,600 in subsequent years (includes £5,000 per contribution)	-£18,972	£11,370
339	Creasey Park 3G Pitch - Interest	TC&CE	£6,946	£220		£7,166	Interest accrued on ringfenced deposit - retained for contribution towards future pitch replacement - with 381 below		£7,166
341	Splashpark/Skatepark/BMX Reserve	TC&CE / HofGES	£56,718	£12,000		£68,718			£68,718
342	Memorial Kerbs Reserve	HofGES	£6,570			£6,570	for purchase of future supplies		£6,570
343	Cemetery Building Maintenance Res	HofGES	£56,769	£5,000	-£500	£61,269	FGP Minute 148 20.09.21- Bal of £54,600 - Cemetery repair works (from £58,342 agreed)	-£54,600	£6,669
344	Fencing Maintenance Reserve	HofGES	£2,000	£5,000		£7,000			£7,000
346	NEW - HSHAZ Scheme	HofCS	£606,529	£24,345	-£157,458	£473,416	4 year HSHAZ scheme programme	-£473,416	£0
348	NEW - Unfulfilled Orders	TC&CE / HofF	£51,466		-£27,997	£23,469	Unfulfilled orders committed in 2021/22= all committed	-£23,469	£0
	<b> earmarked Reserves Total</b>		<b>£2,059,759</b>			<b>£2,560,216</b>		<b>-£778,275</b>	<b>£1,781,940</b>

## S106/External Funding/Ringfenced Expenditure specified by funding body

325	Shop Front Improvement Scheme	HofCS	£990			£990	Shop Front Scheme	-£990	£0
380	Developers Contributions- CAP	HofGES	£18,065			£18,065	Frenchs Avenue S106 £13,779; Frenchs Avenue Fencing £4,286		£18,065
381	CPCFC Capital	TC&CE	£83,641			£83,641	Retained for future repair/replacement of All Weather Pitches at CPCFC (with 339 above)		£83,641
385	Development Contributions- REV	HofGES	£34,316			£34,316	£8,000 committed in 22/23 revenue budget from Bal of £30,129 for Wiloughy (from S106 £47,645) Bal of £4,038 for Court Drive Landscaping (from CBC £15,000)	-£12,038	£22,278
570	Joint Committee Fund	HofCS	£8,766	£50,000	-£650	£58,116	Bal in holding code as committed Joint Committees fund only = not DTC	-£58,116	£0
	<b>S106/External Funding Total</b>		<b>£145,778</b>			<b>£195,128</b>		<b>-£71,144</b>	<b>£123,984</b>
			<b>£2,205,538</b>			<b>£2,755,344</b>		<b>-£849,419</b>	<b>-£1,905,925</b>

## Key:

= Finance and General Purposes Committee  
= Grounds and Environmental Services Committee  
= Community Services Committee



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Date: 17 August 2022

Dear Mrs Scheder

#### **Completion of the audit for the year ended 31 March 2022**

We have completed our audit for the year ended 31 March 2022 and I have pleasure in enclosing the certified Annual Governance and Accountability Return. The External Auditor's Certificate and Report is given in Section 3.

If there are any significant matters arising from the audit, they are summarised in the External Auditor's certificate in Section 3. If we have identified minor scope for improvement we have recorded this on page 2 of this letter. The Council must consider these matters and decide what action is required. In most cases this will be self-evident. In some instances we have referred to further guidance available, in particular, in the publication "*Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – A Practitioners' Guide (England) 2010*". This can be obtained via your NALC or SLCC branch, or downloaded free of charge.

#### **Action you are required to take**

The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 set out what you must do at the conclusion of the audit. In summary, you are required to:

Publish (which must include publication on the authority's website) a statement:

- that the audit has been concluded and that the statement of accounts has been published;
- of the rights of inspection conferred on local government electors by section 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; and
- the address at which, and the hours during which, those rights may be exercised.
- Keep copies of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for purchase by any person on payment of a reasonable sum.
- Ensure that the Annual Governance and Accountability Return remains available for public access for a period of not less than five years beginning with the date on which the Annual Governance and Accountability Return was first published.

#### **Mazars LLP**

Mazars LLP is the UK firm of Mazars, an integrated international advisory and accountancy organisation. Mazars LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales with registered number OC308299 and with its registered office at 30 Old Bailey, London, EC4M 7AU. Registered to carry on audit work in the UK by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. Details about our audit registration can be viewed at [www.auditregister.org.uk](http://www.auditregister.org.uk) under reference number C001139861. VAT number: GB 839 8356 73



*The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 do not specify the period the Completion Notice needs to be on the council's website but this period must be reasonable.*

**Minor scope for improvement in 2022/23**

No minor issues identified.

**Accessibility Regulations**

We are aware that the Accounts and Audit Regulations requirement for a physical 'wet ink' signature on the original AGAR, does not allow parish council's to fully comply with the Accessibility Regulations. The National Audit Office are aware that the two pieces of legislation are not compatible, therefore smaller authorities are advised to make it clear on their website that the document is a scan and will not be fully compliant with the Accessibility Regulations.

**Audit fee**

Our fee note for the audit, which is in accordance with the audit fee scales set by SAAA, and available at <http://www.localaudits.co.uk/fees.html> will follow.

We would be grateful if you could arrange for this to be paid at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely



**Cameron Waddell**

Partner

For and on behalf of Mazars LLP

# Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021/22 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities\*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
  - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
  - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

## Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021/22

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:
  - The Annual Internal Audit Report must be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
  - Sections 1 and 2 must be completed and approved by the authority.
  - Section 3 is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2022**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2022**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
  - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
  - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2022
  - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
  - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
  - Annual Internal Audit Report 2021/22

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

## Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2022 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2021/22**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2021/22**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2022 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.

It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

\*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

## Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2021/22

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide\** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty), and is properly signed and dated. If the AGAR contains unapproved or unexplained amendments, it may be returned and additional costs will be incurred.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2022.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- Do not send the external auditor any information not specifically requested. However, **you must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide\**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the external auditor has to review unsolicited information, or receives an incomplete bank reconciliation, or variances are not fully explained, additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2021) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2022).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2022**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?	✓	
	Has all additional information requested, including <b>the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights</b> , been provided for the external auditor?	✓	
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?	✓	
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?	✓	
Section 2	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?	✓	
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?	✓	
	Has the bank reconciliation as at <b>31 March 2022</b> been reconciled to Box 8?	✓	
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?	✓	
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? <b>NB:</b> do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.		✓

*\*Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities In England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices*, can be downloaded from [www.nalc.gov.uk](http://www.nalc.gov.uk) or from [www.ada.org.uk](http://www.ada.org.uk)



## Annual Internal Audit Report 2021/22

### DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

ENTER PUBLICLY [www.dunstable.gov.uk](http://www.dunstable.gov.uk) ENTER ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2022, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2021/22 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2020/21, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2020/21 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority publishes information on a free to access website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with any relevant transparency code requirements	✓		
M. The authority, during the previous year (2020-21) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2020/21 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable
			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

17/11/2021

08/03/2022

07/06/2022

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

SF Christopher for Auditing Solutions Ltd

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

*SF Christopher*

Date

07/06/2022

\*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

\*\*Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

## Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2021/22

We acknowledge as the members of:

### DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022, that:

	Agreed		Yes* means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.		✓	during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓

\*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

27/06/2022



and recorded as minute reference:

127

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

Clerk

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## Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2021/22 for

### DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2021 £	31 March 2022 £	
<b>1. Balances brought forward</b>	1,723,714	1,866,332	<i>Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.</i>
<b>2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies</b>	2,369,323	2,393,969	<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
<b>3. (+) Total other receipts</b>	725,446	1,579,975	<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
<b>4. (-) Staff costs</b>	1,687,643	1,832,647	<i>Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.</i>
<b>5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments</b>	111,553	108,426	<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
<b>6. (-) All other payments</b>	1,152,955	1,702,431	<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
<b>7. (=) Balances carried forward</b>	1,866,332	2,196,772	<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
<b>8. Total value of cash and short term investments</b>	2,013,545	2,302,961	<i>The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.</i>
<b>9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets</b>	7,837,531	7,873,739	<i>The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.</i>
<b>10. Total borrowings</b>	917,154	850,443	<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>
<b>11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)</b>	Yes	No	N/A
			✓
			<i>The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets. N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.</i>

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2022 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval



Date

20/06/2022

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

27/06/2022

as recorded in minute reference:

127

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved



## Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2021/22

In respect of

**Dunstable Town Council**

### 1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/>.

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2022; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

### 2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2021/22

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with *Proper Practices* and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

The Council acknowledged that it did not receive the audited 2020/21 AGAR back in time to publish by the statutory deadline of 30 September 2021 by answering no to assertion 4 of its Annual Governance Statement. The Council needs to ensure that the 2021/22 AGAR is published by 30 September 2022.

### 3 External auditor certificate 2021/22

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2022.

\*We do not certify completion because:

Not applicable.

External Auditor Name

**Mazars LLP, Newcastle, NE1 1DF**

External Auditor Signature

*Mazars LLP*

Date

**16 August 2022**

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

**FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2022**

**PERFORMANCE AREA REFURBISHMENT**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	For members to agree to additional funding to ensure the refurbishment of the performance area in Grove House Gardens.
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**1. ACTION RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 For members to approve the allocation of up to £34,000 from the General Reserve to part fund the planned restoration of the performance area in Grove House Gardens.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At Full Council on 29 June 2020 it was agreed to release £57,000 from the reserves to pay for the refurbishment of the clock tower, the performance area in Grove House Gardens and the pergola in Priory Gardens.
- 2.2 Works to the clock tower were in 2021, however, despite additional external funding from Central Bedfordshire Council ward councillors and Historic England, the works came to over the £28,000 originally budgeted.
- 2.3 Despite no works being undertaken on the pergola, the significant overspend on the clock tower means that there is not enough funding remaining to complete the performance area refurbishment.

**3. MAIN CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 The refurbishment of the performance area in Grove House Gardens is included within the Council's Corporate Plan 2020 – 2023 as a key objective. Whilst parts of the structure have been repainted over the years and minor modifications have been made, it has received very little attention and is now showing signs of significant wear and tear. It is not possible to say whether the performance area will be useable in its current condition for the 2023 events season.
- 3.2 It had been hoped that these works would have been completed during the Covid lockdown(s), but due to various reasons, this has not been the case. It is now imperative that these improvements are completed by the end of March 2023.
- 3.3 As with the clock tower refurbishments going over the allocated amount, it is understood that the same will happen with the performance area. Originally, £14,000 was allocated, this was then costed up fully at the same time as the clock tower coming in at around £22,000. Members will be aware that material and labour costs have risen significantly over recent months and therefore in January officers chose to revisit these costings and have been advised to expect the costs

to be in the region of £34,000. This includes a budget for £5,000 (approximately 15%) increase on the earlier costs.

- 3.4 Members need to determine whether they wish to fulfil their corporate plan priority by refurbishing the performance area, and in doing so agreeing to additional spend. However, it should be noted that to chose to do nothing would mean that the performance area may not be in safe condition for the 2023 events and beyond.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 In June 2020, the Council agreed a sum of £57,000 for the refurbishment of the clock tower, the performance area in Grove House Gardens and the pergola in Priory Gardens. However, actual costs have been higher than originally anticipated.
- 4.2 The clock tower refurbishment used £33,009.50 of the amount agreed in 2020. In addition to this there is still the cost of the wireless audio system to come from the total agreed which was in the region of £18,000.
- 4.3 Once the £18,000 for the audio system has been deducted, the actual balance is £5,990.50.
- 4.4 At the January Community Service committee members were requested to consider allowing up to £29,000 to be spent from the general reserve in order to complete this corporate priority. However, with increasing costs across the board (materials and labour) it is now requested that the members consider allowing up to £34,000.

#### **5. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The refurbishment of the performance area in Grove House Gardens is in the Corporate Plan as a key objective, to be completed by March 2022. Whilst this milestone has past the priority remains in the Corporate Plan

#### **6. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Since the last report in January 2022, the condition of the performance area has deteriorated further, including two near misses where the ceiling planks have fallen. Works have now become essential in some places on the grounds of health and safety; the overall improvements will make the performance area safer to perform on. Therefore, these works are now part of the events Health and Safety recommendations.
- 6.2 It is difficult to say whether the performance area will be useable in its current condition for the 2023 events season, as this is dependent on the amount of vandalism over the next eight months and the severity of the winter weather. The only way to guarantee that the performance area can be used next year for the Council's events programme is for these works to be completed by May 2023.

#### **7. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 None

**8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 None

**9. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None

**10. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 None

**11. APPENDICES**

11.1 None

**12. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

12.1 Full Council Monday 29 June 2020 – clock tower, performance area and pergola refurbishment report.

12.2 Community Services Community Monday 10 January 2022 – performance area refurbishment report.

**13. AUTHOR**

13.1 Becky Wisbey – Head of Community Services  
[becky.wisbey@dunstable.gov.uk](mailto:becky.wisbey@dunstable.gov.uk)



**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

**FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2022**

**REFURBISHMENT OF MEADWAY STORE – DUNSTABLE MEN IN SHEDS**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To consider the release of funding from allocated reserves to support the refurbishment of the Meadway store currently used by Dunstable Men in Sheds.
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**1. ACTION RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 That the Council releases of up to £9,908 from the earmarked Pavilion Building Reserve (334) for the works described to enable the works to commence at the currently quoted price.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Since 2019 the Council has been working in partnership with Dunstable Men in Sheds to refurbish and create a fit for purpose workshop for their activities at the Meadway allotment store. The store was originally built as a community space for a Dunstable wide allotment association based at the site and had a designated planning use specific to that purpose.
- 2.2 In 2009 the store was being used as a grounds team storage space and in 2018 it was made available to Dunstable Men in Sheds (DMiS), as a permanent home, whilst they were being established with support from the Community Services team. Dunstable Men in Sheds currently hold a licence to occupy the building at nil cost.
- 2.3 In 2018/19 the Council commenced discussions with DMiS to undertake basic repairs to the fabric of the building ahead of a future long term lease arrangement with them. DMiS seized the opportunity to consider additional upgrades to the building in line with their workshop activities including the installation of a ventilation system, electrical upgrades to support machinery, a toilet and partitioned rest area provision and roller shutter security improvements.
- 2.4 In March 2020 the project stalled as the Covid pandemic struck and little progress was made. Cost estimates at the time suggested that the works could be completed for around £25,000

**3. MAIN CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 Based on the cost estimate of around £25,000 and taking account of the specific requirements and improvements put forward by DMiS it was agreed that DMiS would seek to secure grant funding and also use funds from their own fund-raising activities to support the cost of the project as well as donations of materials from sponsors. The Head of Grounds and Environmental Services indicated that it might be possible

to utilise up to £5,000 of existing in-year revenue savings to support the basic repair elements of the refurbishment and that the Council would fund the various professional fees to support the works. The in-year saving was not utilised because the project was put on hold during the Covid pandemic.

- 3.2 The full works package and specification has been tendered and the lowest tender sum has recently been confirmed at £36,483 including a £2,500 contingency sum. Fees to complete the works will be £3,400 creating a budget requirement of £39,893 to complete the project. The difference in cost between the tendered sum and the original cost estimate are due to increased building and material costs and minor changes to the specification.
- 3.3 The current secured funding available for the project is detailed in the table below:

<b>Dunstable Men in Sheds</b>	
existing bank account	£8,333
private donation	£5,000
	<i>(Sub-total - £13,333)</i>
<b>CBC Grants</b>	
CAGS grant	£12,652
Section 106	£4,000
	<i>(Sub-total – 16,652)</i>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>£29,985</b>

- 3.4 The total secured funding is £29,985. This leaves a project shortfall of £9,908.
- 3.5 The Council has been approached by DMiS seeking additional financial support to make up the shortfall. If members are minded to support this request, funding would need to be approved from the Pavilion Building Reserve which currently stands at £18,590

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Taking account of existing commitments, the Pavilion Building Reserve currently stands at £18,590. A further commitment of £9,908 would reduce the reserve balance to £8,682.
- 4.2 Members should note that the Council has been advised that the current tendered sum for the works is likely to rise significantly if an order is not placed before the end of September. While other funding options such as external grants may be achievable, this would take at least several months, and the necessary delay would lead to significant cost rises. It would therefore be beneficial to place an order for the works at the earliest opportunity.

#### **5. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The refurbishment works will assist DMiS with ensuring that they continue to operate in a safe working environment. The proposed works also include the removal of external asbestos located around the soffits and fascias which would remove future cost and risk for their management.

**6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Council was instrumental in setting up the Dunstable Men in Shed project as part of an initiative to encourage groups of men to come together to work in a supportive environment and assist with tackling loneliness and isolation.

**7. ENVIRONMENTAL, POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN, HUMAN RESOURCE, AND LEGAL.**

- 7.1 None

**8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1 Tender Documentation

**9. AUTHOR**

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

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL****FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2022****MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS****Purpose of Report:** For information only.**1 SOCIAL MEDIA**

- 1.1 The Corporate Marketing and Communications Officer is still overseeing all social media channels and regularly posting on all of them. Officers have been utilising Twitter more for Events and Creasey Park Community Football Centre, which has proven to be effective.
- 1.2 A Dunstable Town Council Instagram page has also created, which has acquired over 100 followers in its first month. A 'verified badge' has also been added to the Town Council Twitter account, which lets Twitter users know that it is an official account.
- 1.3 The social media channels have continued to see significant growth, with the Dunstable Town Council Facebook page growing by over 400 followers since the last report, (now sitting at over 10,000 followers), and Bennett's Splash Park Facebook page growing by over 800 followers. Most of the Facebook pages have been switched to Facebook's 'new pages experience', which now only counts followers instead of likes. Page followers are people that see your posts in their feed. Page followers are shown below:

**Facebook page followers are:**

Dunstable Town Council	10,168 (+4.9%)
Bennett's Splash Park	3,711 (+26.6%)
Town Ranger Services	1,353 (+2.2%)
Creasey Park Community Football Centre	918 (+29.9%)
Grove Corner	1,005 (+7.8%)
High Street Heritage Action Zone	713 (+12.3%)
Priory House	830 (+29.2%)

**Twitter account followers are:**

Dunstable Town Council	2,431 (+0.6%)
Middle Row Market	2,144 (-0.2%)
Dunstable Events	2,049 (+1.2%)
Creasey Park Community Football Centre	713 (+0.8%)
Bennett's Splash Park	98 (+6.5%)

**Instagram followers are:**

Grove Corner	366 (+0.3%)
High Street Heritage Action Zone	199 (+7.6%)
Dunstable Town Council	102 (New account)

These figures are accurate as of Thursday 1 September 2022, and percentages are since the previous report dated 20 June 2022.

- 1.4 Templates have been created for Officers to use, to make the Town Council's social media pages more consistent with one another, and to ensure all corporate communications are in line with the style guide created in January.

## **2 EMAIL MARKETING**

- 2.1 The Corporate Marketing and Communications Officer has been working with Priory House Heritage Centre and Tea Rooms staff to create more attractive and engaging email marketing campaigns. Officers are also utilising email marketing for the Events Programme, sending out regular reminders, survey links and event updates.
- 2.2 As part of Dunstable Town Council's Investors in People Improvement Plan, a monthly newsletter for Town Council staff has been implemented. This newsletter includes upcoming events, staff achievements and events, a bulletin, and more. It has proven popular among staff so far, and the August staff newsletter was opened a total of 76 times as of 1 September 2022.

## **3 WEBSITE**

- 3.1 Since the last report, the website has continued to see more visitors, particularly with the continuation of the Events Programme and the reopening of Bennett's Splash Park and Splashside Café. The website is still primarily being looked after by the Corporate Marketing and Communications Officer, with Treacle Factory on hand for support. Below are updated statistics since the last report:

Unique website visitors	23,389 (+20.4%)
Pages per session	2.13 (-14.8%)
Average session duration	01:23 (-14 secs)
Mobile users	76.61% (+7.1%)
Desktop users	19.55% (-18.5%)
Tablet users	3.84% (-13.9%)
Sessions per user	1.40 (-2.8%)

- 3.2 Since the last report, some of the more popular pages, such as the Events and Home page have been updated. The CM&CO has also done some work on the website to ensure that visitors are able to find what they are looking for in less time, making the website easier to use, and has begun work on making the website more friendly for mobile users.

## **4 NOTICEBOARDS**

- 4.1 Local noticeboards are regularly updated with the help of the Town Rangers. The CM&CO plans to redesign the backing paper of the ward noticeboards.

## **5 COMMUNITY SHOWCASE WINDOW**

- 5.1 Dunstable Town Council received a grant from the Central Bedfordshire Council Ward Councillor Grant Scheme for an LED screen to be placed in the Community Showcase Window on West Street. The Town Centre Manager and Corporate Marketing and Communications Officer are working closely together to compile content for the screen. The Corporate Marketing and Communications Officer has been in contact with the



Marketing Manager and one of the Marketing Officers from CBC to discuss their use of the screen. Local community groups and organisations are welcome to submit images and videos for the screen.

**6 TALK OF THE TOWN**

- 6.1 The next deadline for Officers to complete their articles for *Talk of the Town* is 26 September 2022. The next edition will be delivered to the distribution company on Thursday 3 November, with delivery to Dunstable homes predicted the week after.
- 6.2 Officers are aware that the previous edition of *Talk of the Town* had some issues with distribution. Since then, the Corporate Marketing and Communications Officer has made contact with the distribution company to seek to ensure that this doesn't happen again, and the situation will be closely monitored.

**7 EVENTS**

- 7.1 The Corporate Marketing and Communications Officer has attended every event from the main Town Council Events Programme this year and has been photographing them for use in the coming years. The photos taken are available to view on the Dunstable Town Council website event page, and on the Dunstable Town Council Facebook page.

**8 MAYORAL**

- 8.1 Since her appointment, the Dunstable Town Mayor Cllr. Liz Jones has been working closely with the Corporate Marketing and Communications Officer to promote her role. This has included regular updates on the website, attendance at some events, and greater presence on social media for advertising charity events. It is hoped that this marketing strategy will continue for future Mayors.

**9 AUTHOR**

- 9.1 Jemma Candy – Corporate Marketing & Communications Officer  
[jemma.candy@dunstable.gov.uk](mailto:jemma.candy@dunstable.gov.uk)

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL****FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE****26 SEPTEMBER 2022****TOWN CLERK ROBES**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To consider and approve the purchase of Ceremonial Robes and Wig for the Town Clerk & Chief Executive using in year budgets.
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**1. ACTION RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 That the sum of up to £2,400 be approved from existing in year budgets.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 On ceremonial occasions, many Town Clerks will wear a formal gown. In Dunstable, Town Clerks wore a wig and gown historically. The latest wig is still in the Council's possession, although is no longer fit for use. The second to last Town Clerk occasionally borrowed a gown from other Councils for formal occasions.
- 2.2 The professional body for Town Clerks in the United Kingdom is the Society of Local Council Clerks who represent over 5000 Clerks across the country. SLCC support the wearing of the wig and gown for Clerks on ceremonial occasions.

**3. MAIN CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 Promoting civic pride is included in Dunstable Town Council's Mission Statement and residents and councillors value the role of the Mayor, mace and civic party at key civic events. Restoring a robed clerk to these events would add to the Council's civic presence and maintain a tradition in the town.

**4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The cost of purchasing the ceremonial robes, wig, neck tabs and storage would be £2,400. This can be met from the Town Clerk & Chief Executive's Office budget as set, due to financial prudence and the transfer of funds raised due to a higher than forecast rate of interest on the Council's reserves.

**5. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 In line with the Council's priority as set out in the Corporate Plan *"To preserve and enhance the history and identity of the town, creating a sense of pride in Dunstable"*.

**6. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 None

**7. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 None

**8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 None

**9. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None

**10. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 None

**11. APPENDICES**

11.1 None

**12. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

12.1 None

**13. AUTHOR**

13.1 Paul Hodson – Town Clerk and Chief Executive  
[paul.hodson@dunstable.gov.uk](mailto:paul.hodson@dunstable.gov.uk)

## **DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

### **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2022**

#### **HONOUR BOARDS - REVIEW**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	<b>Further to the Committee report to the March 2022 meeting</b> Members are invited to consider an updated report on the progress made to secure honour boards and to agree the final cost.
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#### **1. ACTION RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 For Members to approve the purchase of honour boards to record the names of the Mayors of Dunstable and the Town Clerks for Dunstable Town Council along with a plaque to record the unveiling of the boards by the current Town Mayor.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 There has been a mayor of Dunstable since 1865 and although the service of Councillors is recorded the provision of honour boards at Grove House would provide a record of service to be seen by all visitors to Grove House. The recording of the service of Town Clerks is appropriate as a record of service.
- 2.2 The provision of honour boards is part of the Town Councils' objective to enhance the history and identity of the town, creating a sense of pride in Dunstable.

#### **3. MAIN CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 Appended to the report are representations of the boards in the wood colour and lettering which has been selected by the Town Mayor in conjunction with the Town Clerk and Chief Executive. The first board carries the names of all Mayors up to the present date and has space for more than thirty additional names. The second board is divided; one half of the board carries the names of Town Clerks, the other half provides space for approximately seventy more names.
- 3.2 The Council has invited the company of John Weddle to quote for the work who is well experienced in working with Town and Parish councils. The company would visit Grove House each year to add a new name to the board in situ. The Council would be charged £100 for this. The company would also ensure the font and style of boards was easily accessible for future sign writers

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The financing of the honour boards would be found from existing budgeted resources. For the boards the cost is £2,860 excluding VAT. The Committee agreed a cost of £2,000 when this was discussed in March, but the increased cost is consistent with other price rises at present.

<b>Board number 1</b>	
To supply the board with a moulded framed edge, stained, sealed and lacquered to a size of 850mm wide x 2150mm high	1,000
To prepare stencils, set out and letter in 24 carat gold leaf, the header and 119 dates and names	750
Fitting	30
<b>Board number 2</b>	
To supply the board with a moulded framed edge, stained, sealed and lacquered to a size of 700mm wide x 2150mm high	800
To prepare stencils, set out and letter in 24 carat gold leaf, two headers and 16 dates and names	150
Fitting	30
Travel to and from for both boards	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,860</b>

## 5. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The recommendations contained within this report meets the general corporate priority of *'preserve and enhance the history and identity of the town, creating a sense of pride in Dunstable'*.
- 5.2 Officers anticipate that through the provision of honour boards recording Mayors from the creation of modern local government from 1865 and the record of Clerks to the Town Council the boards will provide an active and regularly updated record of the service to the Town by Councillors and senior officers which will be of interest to visitors to Grove House and promote the celebration of these civic roles in the town.

## 6. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None

## 7. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Currently none.

## 8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None

## 9. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The materials used in the creation of the boards and the boards themselves are all from sustainable sources.



**10. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 None

**11. APPENDICES**

11.1 Appendix 1 - example of the proposed honour boards

Appendix 2 - visual of plaque recording unveiling of the honour boards by the Town Mayor Councillor Liz Jones

**12. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

12.1 Minutes of the March meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

**13. AUTHOR**

13.1 Ian Reed – Democratic Services Manager  
[ian.reed@dunstable.gov.uk](mailto:ian.reed@dunstable.gov.uk)



"Mayors & Clerks of Dunstable"  
Honours board 700mm wide x 2150mm high  
(All gold leaf text on mahogany backing board)

Appendix 1  
(continued)

HEADER  
30mm high  
(Condensed  
to 80%) →

LETTER  
SIZES  
16mm high  
(Condensed  
to 80%) →

## MAYORS

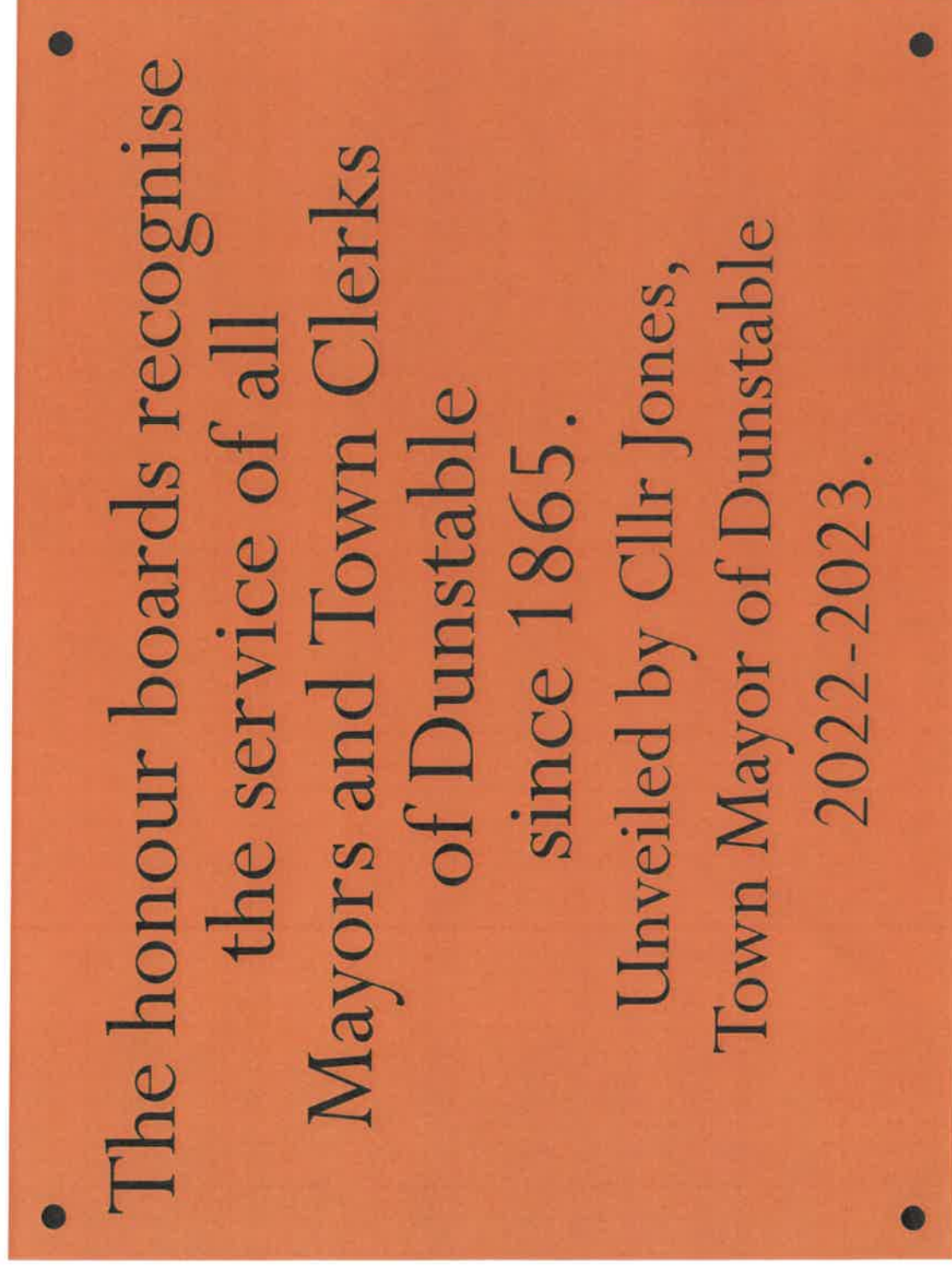


## CLERKS

1892/1924	CCS BENNING
1924/1939	J.M. COOMBES ESQ.
1939/1947	A.D. HARVEY
1948/1950	J. HILTON
1950/1966	J. SMITH
1966/1974	L.V. RALLINSON
FEB-APR. 1974	P.M. RADGE
SEPT. 1985	T.D. RIX
	(Acting Town Clerk)
1985/2007	R. WALDEN
2007/2022	D. ASHLEE
	(Town Clerk & Chief Executive)
2022/	P. HODSON
	(Town Clerk & Chief Executive)

2007

Font type: Perpetua  
(Polished brass plaque)



Letter sizes  
8mm

Letter sizes  
6.5mm

Appendix 2

Slight bevel edge on face edge

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

**FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**26 SEPTEMBER 2022**

**PROPOSED TOWN COUNCIL CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2023**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	<b>To seek approval for the Calendar of Meetings for the calendar year 2023</b>
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**1. ACTION RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 That the Committee approves the Calendar of Meetings for the calendar year 2023 and approves an extension of dates to 31 March 2024 as submitted at Appendix 1 to this report and agrees that the next calendar of meetings approved by the Council in 2023 will be for the Municipal Year 2024/2025 which bring the council in line with most other councils

**2. INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 Dunstable Town Council is required to hold 6 meetings of full Council during the year (including the Annual Council Meeting) with each cycle of Committee meetings reporting to it. In accordance with Standing Orders, the Statutory Annual Meeting is held on the third Monday in May except for an election year when it is a week Monday following the ordinary day of elections to the Council.
- 2.2 In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 the town is required to hold a meeting of all electors of the Parish of Dunstable between 1 March and 30 June(tbc) – the Town Meeting. The Town Mayor presides at this meeting (or in his/her absence, the Deputy Town Mayor).

**3. DRAFT CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2023**

- 3.1 The draft Calendar of Meetings makes provision for the requisite number of Council meetings and also allows for a meeting of full Council on the last Monday in June, to ensure that the Council complies with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 (S1 234) in that the Council “**must** no later than 30th June – consider the accounting statements by the members meeting as a whole”.
- 3.2 In normal circumstances all meetings are held at the Council Chamber, Grove House other than:
- Annual Council Meeting – if appropriate a larger venue will be determined
  - Town Meeting – may be held at an alternative venue if appropriate
  - Dunstable Joint Committee, meetings are held at Watling House, draft dates are included in the calendar for information.



3.3 The meeting dates for Plans Sub-Committee are set in accordance with the meetings of Central Bedfordshire Council's Development Management Committee in order that comments may be forwarded within the required time scale.

3.4 The draft calendar for 2023 goes from January to December 2023 and it has been extended to the end of March 2024. This is to allow the Council in the future to determine the calendar of meetings each municipal year.

#### **4. COMMENCEMENT TIME OF MEETINGS**

4.1 All evening meetings commence at 7.00 pm, except for the Annual Council Meeting and Town Meeting which commence at 7.30 pm

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

#### **6. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

#### **7. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

#### **8. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

#### **9. LEGAL AND EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The draft Calendar of Meetings provides for the timely meeting of full Council to approve the Annual Return and Annual Governance Statement for submission to the auditor, in compliance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 (S1 234).

#### **10. APPENDICES**

10.1 Appendix - Calendar of Meetings 2023/24

#### **11. AUTHOR**

11.1 Ian Reed – Democratic Services Manager  
E-mail: [ian.reed@dunstable.gov.uk](mailto:ian.reed@dunstable.gov.uk)

TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS CALENDAR 2023-2024					
ALL MEETINGS COMMENCE AT 7.00 PM UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED					
Monday		Tuesday		Thursday	
2023					
02/01/2023	BANK HOLIDAY	03/01/2023	Plans	05/01/2023	
09/01/2023	Community Services	10/01/2023		12/01/2023	Personel Sub-Committee
16/01/2023	Grounds and ES	17/01/2023		19/01/2023	
23/01/2023	FGP	24/01/2023	Plans	26/01/2023	
30/01/2023		31/01/2023		02/02/2023	
06/02/2023	Council	07/02/2023		09/02/2023	
13/02/2023		14/02/2023	Plans	16/02/2023	
20/02/2023		21/02/2023		23/02/2023	
27/02/2023		28/02/2023		02/03/2023	
06/03/2023	Community Services	07/03/2023	Plans	09/03/2023	Dunstable Joint Committee
13/03/2023	Grounds and ES	14/03/2023		16/03/2023	
20/03/2023	FGP	21/03/2023		23/03/2023	
27/03/2023	Annual Town Meeting	28/03/2023	Plans	30/03/2023	
03/04/2023		04/04/2023		06/04/2023	
10/04/2023	BANK HOLIDAY	11/04/2023		13/04/2023	Personel Sub-Committee
17/04/2023	Council	18/04/2023	Plans	20/04/2023	
24/04/2023		25/04/2023		27/04/2023	
01/05/2023	BANK HOLIDAY	02/05/2023		04/05/2023	LOCAL ELECTIONS
08/05/2023		09/05/2023	Plans	11/05/2023	
15/05/2023	Annual Council Meeting 7.30 pm	16/05/2023		18/05/2023	
22/05/2023	Community Services	23/05/2023		25/05/2023	
29/05/2023	BANK HOLIDAY	30/05/2023	Plans	01/06/2023	
05/06/2023	Grounds and ES	06/06/2023		08/06/2023	Dunstable Joint Committee
12/06/2023	FGP	13/06/2023		15/06/2023	
19/06/2023		20/06/2023	Plans	22/06/2023	
26/06/2023	Council	27/06/2023		29/06/2023	
03/07/2023		04/07/2023		06/07/2023	
10/07/2023		11/07/2023	Plans	13/07/2023	Personel Sub-Committee
17/07/2023		18/07/2023		20/07/2023	
24/07/2023		25/07/2023		27/07/2023	
31/07/2023		01/08/2023	Plans	03/08/2023	
07/08/2023		08/08/2023		10/08/2023	
14/08/2023		15/08/2023		17/08/2023	
21/08/2023		22/08/2023	Plans	24/08/2023	
28/08/2023	BANK HOLIDAY	29/08/2023		31/08/2023	
04/09/2023	Community Services	05/09/2023		07/09/2023	Dunstable Joint Committee
11/09/2023	Grounds and ES	12/09/2023	Plans	14/09/2023	
18/09/2023	FGP	19/09/2023		21/09/2023	
25/09/2023		26/09/2023		28/09/2023	
02/10/2023	Council	03/10/2023	Plans	05/10/2023	
09/10/2023		10/10/2023		12/10/2023	Personel Sub-Committee
16/10/2023		17/10/2023		19/10/2023	
23/10/2023		24/10/2023	Plans	26/10/2023	
30/10/2023	Community Services	31/10/2023		02/11/2023	
06/11/2023	Grounds and ES	07/11/2023		09/11/2023	
13/11/2023	FGP	14/11/2023	Plans	16/11/2023	
20/11/2023		21/11/2023		23/11/2023	
27/11/2023		28/11/2023		30/11/2023	
04/12/2023	Council	05/12/2023	Plans	07/12/2023	Dunstable Joint Committee
11/12/2023		12/12/2023		14/12/2023	
18/12/2023		19/12/2023		21/12/2023	
25/12/2023	BANK HOLIDAY	26/12/2023	BANK HOLIDAY	28/12/2023	

01/01/2024	BANK HOLIDAY	02/01/2024	Plans	04/01/2024	
08/01/2024	Community Services	09/01/2024		11/01/2024	Personel Sub-Committee
15/01/2024	Grounds and ES	16/01/2024		18/01/2024	
22/01/2024	FGP	23/01/2024	Plans	25/01/2024	
29/01/2024		30/01/2024		01/02/2024	
05/02/2024	Council	06/02/2024		08/02/2024	
12/02/2024		13/02/2024	Plans	15/02/2024	
19/02/2024		20/02/2024		22/02/2024	
26/02/2024		27/02/2024		29/02/2024	
04/03/2024	Community Services	05/03/2024	Plans	07/03/2024	
11/03/2024	Grounds and ES	12/03/2024		14/03/2024	
18/03/2024	FGP	19/03/2024		21/03/2024	
25/03/2024		26/03/2024	Plans	28/03/2024	
01/04/2024	BANK HOLIDAY	02/04/2024		04/04/2024	Personel Sub-Committee
08/04/2024		09/04/2024		11/04/2024	Dunstable Joint Committee
15/04/2024		16/04/2024	Plans	18/04/2024	
22/04/2024	Council	23/04/2024		25/04/2024	
29/04/2024		30/04/2024		02/05/2024	
06/05/2024	BANK HOLIDAY	07/05/2024	Plans	09/05/2024	
13/05/2024		14/05/2024		16/05/2024	
20/05/2024		21/05/2024		23/05/2024	
27/05/2024	BANK HOLIDAY	28/05/2024	Plans	30/05/2024	