

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

HELD ON MONDAY 6 MARCH 2023 FROM 19:00

Present: Councillors Lisa Bird (Deputy Town Mayor), Wendy Bater, Greg George, Pam Ghent, John Gurney, Peter Hollick (Chairman), and Gladys Sanders.

In Attendance: Paul Hodson (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), Becky Wisbey (Head of Community Services), Gill Peck (Youth and Community Manager).

In Attendance remotely: Annette Clynes (Town Centre Manager), Michelle Collings (HSHAZ Manager), Gina Thanky (Events Officer).

Apologies: Councillors, Liz Jones (Town Mayor), Gloria Martin, and Cameron Restall.

Public: Nil

59/23 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

60/23 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 9 January 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

61/23 TOWN CENTRE SERVICES

Members received the report provided. The Town Centre Manager update that there are 25 stalls booked for 18 with two craft stalls. There are already 16 stalls booked for the 8 April, along with three craft stalls. Members noted that four businesses who started with market stalls now have their own shop units in the Quadrant.

Members congratulated the Town Centre Manager on her work to enable the Council to receive the platinum award for the public toilets in Ashton Square.

62/23 OLDER PEOPLE'S SERVICES

Members received the report provided which was summarised by the Youth and Community Manager. Members were informed that officers had met with South Beds Dial A Ride, and the organisation will be providing transport to the Town Council's lunch clubs from April onwards.

63/23 GROVE CORNER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Members received the report provided. It was agreed to apply for and accept grant funding of £30,000 per year for three years from Central Bedfordshire Council to pay for equipment and activity costs together with additional staffing to cover additional sessions and activities. This could be using casual youth and community staff or through the creation of a temporary part time position until March 2026.

Members were informed that Grove Corner will be closed in the evening on Friday 17 March to enable staff to attend Bedfordshire Police's Cohesion Awards evening.

RESOLVED: To apply for and accept grant funding of £30,000 per year for 3 years from Central Bedfordshire Council to pay for equipment and activity costs together with additional staffing. If required, to create new youth and community position(s) if successful with funding.

64/23 HIGH STREET HERITAGE ACTION ZONE (HSHAZ)

Members received the report provided. The HSHAZ Manager updated Members that the likely length of the extension to the project is not year clear. The grant application submitted to Historic England for a Heritage At Risk Grant had been submitted. It is anticipated that a decision will be provided by the third week of March. The application was to fund the additional works to the Undercroft in full; Historic England had indicated that no further match funding would be required, in light of the additional funding the Town Council has already had to provide for the project.

RESOLVED: To approve the acceptance of a Heritage at Risk grant from Historic England to fund a cost increase to the Priory House works if the grant application is successful.

65/23 EVENTS

Members received the report provided. The Events Manager summarised the report.

66/23 PRIORY HOUSE INFORMATION REPORT

Members received the report provided. Members noted that the additional opening hours and seating area had enabled income to be higher than forecast during the period of works to the Undercroft.

67/23 SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

The Head of Community Services reported on the only Service Level Agreement (SLA) application received so far in 2023. The application was from Dunstable Foodbank requesting an SLA to further develop and extend their current provision.

RESOLVED: For the Council to enter into a Service Level Agreement with the Dunstable Foodbank for £1,000 per year for four years.

68/23 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

Men in Sheds (MiS)

Councillor Gurney updated Members that the Shed is now back to full operational use. The only outstanding items are an extractor fan, glass front doors and replacement windows. Seven new people have expressed interest in joining, which would increase membership by 25%. New safety procedures have been put in place, which will limit members allowed into the workshop to six at any one time. However, the kitchen is now separated, so more members can sit in there. Additional funding has been obtained for new projects. The official re-opening will be carried out by the Town Mayor on Friday 12 May at 15:00. Andrew Selous MP has also agreed to intended. Invitations will also be sent to Town and CBC councillors, along with officers and businesses who have been involved. The AGM will be held in mid-May after the Town Council elections.

Councillor Bird expressed thanks to Councillor Hollick for chairing the committee during the current electoral year.

The meeting closed at 20:11