

## **DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**HELD ON MONDAY 30 OCTOBER 2023 FROM 19:00**

Present: Councillors Liz Jones (Town Mayor), Louise O’Riordan (Deputy Mayor) John Gurney (Chair), Robert Blennerhassett (Vice-Chair), Trevor Adams, Gregory Alderman, Wendy Bater, Nicholas Kotarski and Matthew Neall.

In Attendance: Becky Wisbey (Head of Community Services), Gina Thanky (Events Officer), Lisa Stephens (Cultural Services Manager) and Georgia Pearson (Democratic Services Manager) and Michelle Collings (HSHAZ Manager)

In Attendance: Councillor Peter Hollick, Annette Clynes (Town Centre Manager) and Paul Hodson (Town Clerk and Chief Executive)  
(Remotely)

Apologies: Councillor Kenson Gurney

Public: Nil

#### **206/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None received.

#### **207/23 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 4 September 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **208/23 UPDATES ON SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS**

##### **Town Guides: Kay Kempster**

Kay Kempster summarised what the Town Guides provide to the town along with other organisations who help to make it all happen. The Council’s funding enables training for their guides, provide a library for the guides to utilise history books to aid their walks and insurance is provided. The SLA helps the prices of guided walks to stay at a lower cost which have not changed for 8 years.

Teatime tales are also aided by the SLA and these ticket prices have not raised since 2016.

##### **BRCC: Cliff Andrews**

Members were provided with a PowerPoint summarising the usage of the SLA provided. Dunstable Cultural Consortium utilises the funds provided to help engage the community in activities within the town.

Good Neighbours has managed to help 2,245 clients over the last 12 months with the help of 16 regular volunteers and has also seen 76 new clients in this time seeking acts of help

across the community.

Time banking and Wellbeing walks and You can do it in Dunstable have been hosted to provide residents with assistance and support all with the help of volunteers.

### **Dunstable Town Band: Becky Williams**

Members were provided with an update on the Town Band's expenditure which is funded through the SLA. The band now pays for a conductor. The village hall used for rehearsal sees a yearly fee of £1,050 however no storage is charged which sees a saving for the band. Insurance of instruments and licencing are paid out by the Town Band. The SLA provides security to the Town Band to enable them to continue to spread joy across the community at different events.

### **Dunstable Food Bank – Jemma Watkeys (Operations Manager) and Stuart Douglas (Chairman)**

Dunstable Food Bank provided members with a PowerPoint. The SLA supports the food bank's work to host 2 distribution centres across Dunstable. In 2022 the food bank saw an increase of 47% due to the cost-of-living crisis.

In the first year of funding from the SLA the foodbank was able to buy a freezer, work bench and provide fresh food for the community in need. The freezer enables the food bank to utilise food for a longer period and minimises food waste.

In year 2 the food bank was able to increase the variety of fresh food provision to people in need.

## **209/23      TOWN CENTRE SERVICES**

Members received the report provided. The Town Centre Manager updated members that for Middle Row Markets on 11 November there are now 18 stalls and for 18 November there are now 33 stalls.

The Town Centre Manager advised members that Ashton Square toilets had retained its Platinum rating overall with the Loo of the year awards. The Ladies toilets won a Platinum + award which was a first for Ashton Square. The Men's got Platinum and the disabled received Gold.

In 2024 the Vegan markets and Street food heroes have been booked and since the report there will be a new group, Continental Foods who will be joining the markets next year.

For Christmas markets and Torch lights there are now 10 stalls booked + Priory House and Rotary will be joining this year.

For the Twilight markets, Friday 8 sees 28 stalls booked, Saturday 9 sees 41 stalls booked and Sunday 10 sees 22 stalls booked.

The Christmas Tree is confirmed to be delivered on November 7.

**210/23**      **OLDER PEOPLES' SERVICES**

Members received the report provided.

**211/23**      **GROVE CORNER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Members received the report provided.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED:** to submit a funding application to the National Lottery's Million Hours funding for youth work.

**212/23**      **EVENTS**

Members received the report provided. Cllr Hollick declared an interest due to holding an honorific position with Dunstable musical theatre.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED:** that the Council apply to the National Lottery's Million Hours Fund for £100,000 to be spent on youth work over two years, and that the Council accepts a grant if awarded.

**213/23**      **PRIORY HOUSE**

Members received the report provided. The Cultural Services Manager updated members on the key points of the report.

**214/23**      **HIGH STREET HERITAGE ACTION ZONE (HSHAZ)**

Members received the report provided. The HSHAZ Programme Manager summarised the key elements of the report to members.

**215/23**      **PRIORY HOUSE SECOND FLOOR USE**

Members received the report provided.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED:** that members agreed to approve the use of the second floor of Priory House (post repair works) for the sole purpose of Priory House operations and cease letting out of this space.

**216/23**      **UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND**

Members received the report provided.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED:** that members agreed to apply to Central Bedfordshire Council for UKSP funding and to delegate authority to the Town Clerk and Chief

Executive to determine the contents of this application, in liaison with the Chair of Community Services, and the Town Mayor.

**217/23**      **COMMUNITY SERVICES BUDGET 2024-25**

Members received the report provided. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive summarised key points of the report. Members were invited to ask questions or make suggestions to officers in the following weeks to support the preparation of the final version of the budget for the next meeting of the Committee.

**218/23**      **REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

South Beds Dial-a-Ride Management Committee – Cllr John Gurney

Cllr Jones declared an interest in South Beds Dial-a-Ride being one of her charities this year and her spouse is employed with them.

Cllr Gurney has been unable to attend any meetings however in regard to the location of buses for South Beds Dial-a-Ride on Watling House land, CBC have been approached and it is in discussion if they will retain that land.

Dunstable Town Band – Cllr Robert Blennerhassett

No Update.

Men in Sheds – Cllr Richard Attwell

No Update.

**The meeting closed at 20:58pm**