

Dunstable Town Council
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Paul Hodson Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Date: 20 February 2024

Dear Councillors

A meeting of the Community Services Committee will be held on **Monday 4 March 2024** in the **Council Chamber at Grove House, High Street North, Dunstable at 7.00 pm**. To view the meeting live or afterwards use this link: [livestream](#). Members of the public and press are also welcome to attend in person. Members of the public may ask a question during the public session, either in person or online via MS Teams. If you would like to ask a question, please contact the Council via democratic@dunstable.gov.uk or 01582 513000 by 4pm on Friday 1 March 2024.

Please scan the below code to view the full Agenda:



This meeting will be filmed by the Council and broadcast live and will be capable of repeated viewing. If you are seated in the Council Chamber it is likely that the cameras will capture your image. By your presence you are deemed to consent to be filmed, and to the use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting or training purposes.

If you address the committee in person or via Teams, your contribution will be recorded and broadcast, unless this is during a private session, as permitted by the Access to Information provisions.

Paul Hodson
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Members are reminded when making decisions that the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010 requires Members to have due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who don't, and to foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who don't.

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. To agree the minutes of the meeting of 8 January 2024 as a true record (previously circulated)
4. Action Tracker (see page 3)
5. Town Centre Services - information report (see page 4)
6. Older People's Services - information report (see page 14)
7. Grove Corner and Community Engagement – information (see page 16)
8. Events - information and decision report (see page 20)
9. Priory House - information report (see page 25)
10. High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) - information report (see page 28)
11. Service Level Agreement - decision report (see page 31)
12. Reports from Outside Bodies:
South Beds Dial-a-Ride Management Committee – Cllr Peter Hollick
Dunstable Town Band – Cllr Robert Blennerhassett
Men in Sheds – Cllr Richard Attwell
13. Date of the next meeting – Monday 3 June 2024 at 7.00 pm.

To: All Members of the Community Services Committee:

Liz Jones (Town Mayor), Louise O'Riordan (Deputy Town Mayor), John Gurney (Chairman), Robert Blennerhassett (Vice-Chairman), Trevor Adams, Gregory Alderman, Wendy Bater, Kenson Gurney, Peter Hollick, Nicholas Kotarski, Matthew Neall, and other Members of the Council for information.

Communities	211/23	30/10/2023	Apply for Million Hours funds	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.	Head of Community Services	Informal notice given that the application was successful. The Council is advertising for a full time Youth Worker to lead the project.	Ongoing
Communities	211/26	30/10/2023	Apply for UKSPF Capital Funds	to apply to Central Bedfordshire Council for UKSPF 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.	Head of Community Services	Officers are working informally with Central Bedfordshire Council to finalise plans for delivery, pending a formal decision.	Ongoing

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 4 MARCH 2024****DUNSTABLE TOWN CENTRE SERVICES**

Purpose of Report:	For information.
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1. MIDDLE ROW MARKETS

- 1.1 Middle Row Market stall bookings are picking up for the year with a positive start for the 9 March market. Markets will take place on the second and third Saturday of the month from March to December. Event Markets will take place on 9 March, 16 March and 20 April.
- 1.2 July 2024 will see a special Youth Market on Saturday 6 July which will support traders 16 to 30 years of age with a special £10 stall offer, plus free public liability insurance from the National Market Traders Federation (NMTF). Public liability insurance can be used six times during the year on Middle Row Markets by anyone under the age of 31. Young Traders who take part in the Competition on the 6 July can also trade at Middle Row Markets up to six times at a cost of £10 per market. No market will take place on the 13 July due to large events in the area and the regional final of Young Traders Market taking place in London on 14 July. The winner of the Dunstable competition will be invited along to Portobello Road Market and will also win a free stall at the Twilight event in December.
- 1.3 Market bookings to date.

9 March	28 booked
16 March	16 booked
13 April	10 booked
20 April	18 booked

2. ASHTON SQUARE TOILETS

- 2.1 Ashton Square toilets were entered into Loo of the Year for 2024. The Town Council received the following awards and recognitions. Platinum Award, Premier league Award for retaining the Platinum Award over the last five years. The Town Council were mentioned in the the Roll of Honor for Local Authority Public Toilets. The Town Council also secured a Period Dignity Recognition Award for the first time in recognition of the free products provided.

3. TOWN CENTRE**Events on The Square**

- 3.1 The events start on the 9 March with the Mother's Day Market and Goodbye to HSHAZ. The event will feature Mother's Day cards and flowers for the children to give to "Mum". Urban Canvas have created four art boards that will be fixed in The Square with doodle art for the public to colour. Hysterical History, Grove Corner and the History Society will also be attending the event.

- 3.2 Easter Market, Saturday 16 March will include an Easter egg hunt and Easter crazy golf. The Town Centre Manager is looking at the cost of working with a local company who provide craft parties and may be able to support the event at Easter as well as in the future.
- 3.3 The Town Centre Manager has booked the 2024 dates with Street Food Heroes, which will take place on the second Thursday of the month, April to September. The first Street Food Heroes market on Thursday 21 March will include a retro arcade area which will include games such as PAC Man and Space Invaders. Two Saturday Street Food Heroes markets will take place on 17 August and 21 December as part of a joint event with Middle Row Markets.
- 3.4 The Vegan Market will return as a standalone market on Saturday 30 March from 10.30 am to 4 00 pm.
- 3.5 The Town Centre Manager and the Events Officer are working together for a joint market and event on the 20 April for St George's Day.

Partnership Working

- 3.6 Shop Watch continues to take place every six weeks. The next meeting is in March, date to be confirmed. Pub Watch took place on Tuesday 13 February. The Town Centre Manager now has regular invites to this meeting.
- 3.7 The Town Centre Manager is working alongside the Quadrant Shopping Centre with events for 2024. A joint Easter event will take place in the Quadrant shopping Centre the first week of the Easter holidays. Roar into Archaeology will be updated and enhanced this year with new branding and new dinosaurs (Dino Day Saturday 27 July). Rentadinosaur will be offering a dinosaur parade, four dinosaur shows and meeting the dinosaurs. Pumpkin Party will also take place during autumn half term.
- 3.8 The Town Centre Manager attended the new business Buzz meeting and will attend at regular intervals to meet and engage with local business. The Town Centre Manager will also attend Chamber of Commerce meetings to engage with new business and promote Dunstable Town Council
- 3.9 The annual footfall count for Dunstable will take place on 8 and 9 March by PMRS limited. The Town Council has been arranging and funding the counts each year at the same counting points in the town since 2010.

4. TOWN CENTRE VACANCY RATES

- 4.1 The vacancy rates to the end of January 2024 are provided below. The count will be undertaken again at the start of April 2024.
- 4.2 The town centre area used for the survey includes properties in High Street North up to Regent Street, High Street South to Friars Walk (excluding Thames Industrial Estate), Church Street up to and including Aldi and West Street up to the Police Station/St Mary's Gate.
- 4.3 Eleanor's Cross, Ashton Square, Albion Street, The Quadrant and Grove Park (including Asda) have been included but rates can be calculated with or without these properties.
- 4.4 These figures have been shared with Central Bedfordshire Council officers:

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
253	36 vacant	14.22%	15.01% count end of Oct 23.

- 4.5 The following figures relate to the High Street (including Grove Park, Albion Street, Eleanor's Cross and Ashton Square but excluding the Quadrant Shopping Centre.

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
210	31 vacant	14.76%	15.70% count end of Oct 23.

- 4.6 The following figures relate to the Quadrant Shopping Centre only.

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
43	5 vacant	11.62%	11.62% count from Oct 23

- 4.7 Units in Grove Park area and Asda.

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
6	0 vacant	0%	16.6% count from Oct 23

5. TOWN CENTRE ASSISTANT

- 5.1 The post for Town Centre Assistant has been advertised, interviews will take place on the 22 March.

6. TOWN CENTRE BUSINESS PLAN

- 6.1 The Town Centre Manager has been working with the Chamber of Commerce to create a business plan for the town centre. The draft is attached (appendix 1). This three year plan will see a focus on developing the market offer, business support and utilising the UKSPF capital fund to deliver the Council's corporate aspiration of a pop up shop.

7. UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

- 7.1 Officers are still awaiting CBC's confirmation of the delivery plan and funding, although recent conversations would suggest that they are happy with the Council's suggestions, the issue of enough funding may mean that not all elements are deliverable as well as where a third party is involved. However, as soon as agreement is given, the Town Centre Manager, the Head of Community Services and the Cultural Services Manager will commence tendering and procurement of the approved capital items.

8. AUTHOR

- 8.1 Annette Clynes - Town Centre Manager
Email - Annette.clynes@dunstable.gov.uk

Town Centre & Markets Business Plan 2024/27



DUNSTABLE
TOWN COUNCIL

Section: Town Centre

Council Priorities: To improve further and develop markets and events within the town to bring in footfall and new business.
 To support start up business within the market and expand to new shops within the town.

Summary

- Objective – 1** **New markets and increase present market**
- Objective – 2** **Increase footfall in the town centre**
- Objective – 3** **Improve the profile of the town centre**
- Objective – 4** **Partnership working with partners to enable business support and new events in the town.**
- Objective – 5** **Support new start up business within the markets and movement to shops in the town.**

As a town team the service will support and bring new traders/ business to the town centre by increasing the market offerings and supporting new business with start-up opportunities. Offering a variety of extra markets and evening events that will attract people to the town centre and engage with both day and night trading. The town centre team will support our existing businesses in the town by offering extra trading opportunity's and engagement during events to increase footfall into the town centre. The town centre team will engage and source new partnerships by attending conferences, networking group and regular visits to local shops and business within and around Dunstable. To work alongside letting agents and The Quadrant shopping centre to support new traders moving to units and shops within the town. The town centre team to support with pop up trading to support and guide new business onto the next step of trading. To bring footfall and trading to a weekday by offering pop up events aimed at young people and families.

Objective (What?)	Action (How?)	Timescale (When?)	Budgeted / Income Resources (What cost?)	Partners (With who?)	% completed Progress	Notes	Outcome
Objective 1-5	To employ Town Centre Assistant April 2024 to assist in plans for 2024 to 2027. Actions below to support the start of new business in the town and support those trading in the town	April to July 2024 on going	24 hours assistant £22,500 cost	DTC	50%	To interview in March 2024	

<p>Year 1 2024/ 2025</p> <p>Objective 1,2,3,5</p>	<p>Promote market with social media, new offers and new business stories. Offering 6-month trading for a business. Use trader's story's and competition's to bring personal element to social media and positive engagement with the public. Look at a town centre branding that can cross over from Middle Row Markets to a positive town brand with new posters to promote town events</p>	<p>April 2024 to March 2025 on going</p>	<p>Support from Communications officer Town Centre Assistant</p> <p>Cost for competition with free trading in Middle Row Market £138.00</p>	<p>All DTC departments Local Press. Businesses in town centre to support competition by mentoring. Branding for the Town Centre</p>			
<p>Objective 1,4.,5</p>	<p>Offer a six-week stall offer with one-to-one support for new traders. Offering social media and website guidance and stall set up. Setting up a mentor for new traders who can receive support from established traders.</p>	<p>April 2024 to August 2024</p>	<p>Income of £120 per 6 markets with offer</p>	<p>DTC departments Business support from Chambers of Commerce WENTA website and free training Middle Row traders</p>			
<p>Objective 2,3,5</p>	<p>Offering deals for existing traders who book and pay for multiple weeks, buy 8 weeks and get one week free</p>	<p>April 2024 to August 2024</p>	<p>Loss of £23.00 per trader every 8 weeks. But increase in stall numbers as an 8 week booking.</p>	<p>Communications Officer DTC staff Middle Row traders</p>			
<p>Objective 1,2,3,4</p>	<p>Regular events during Markets for 2024 to increase footfall and new traders. Increase stall average on event days to 35 which would require funding for</p>	<p>April 2024 to March 2025</p>	<p>Increase budget by £14,245 for events that took place in 2023 paid by HAAZ. Increased revenue</p>	<p>Town centre Assistant for events on the day and support with social media Events staff</p>	<p>50%</p>	<p>Income agreed for 2024 events</p>	

	events either by budget or partners to host an event alongside Middle Row markets		of £230 per event market for extra 10 stalls	DTC staff Sponsorship from business to support events			
Objective 1,2,3,4	Continue to work with Street Food Heroes and Vegan Markets and bring in another regular market. Market to either join Middle Row Markets or as a standalone event markets which will increase footfall and increase trade to The Square	April 2024 to March 2025	Fee of £30 (market licence for the joining market) on second year of joining. First year will be free	Street Food Heroes Vegan Markets Market Place Young Traders Market	50%	Fee charged for street food and both markets returning for 2024	
Objective 1,2	To start enquiring and engage with another market partner/ operator to add to the year calendar for 2025	April 2024 to March 2025	Town centre manager and assistant to search and engage,	Market place Young Traders Market- NMTF Food Markets Bric a Brac Carboot			
Objective 5	Engage with market traders and shops to support with extra trading days at other DTC events, The Quadrant Shopping Centre. Priors House Showcase shelving and shops that offer this service.	April 2024 March 2025	Small stall income, start of business support and trading in The Quadrant and at DTC events	Quadrant manager Events Officer Town Centre Manager Priors House			
Objective 1							
Objective 1,2,3,4,5	Look at increasing capacity and improving infrastructure with more anchor points, gazebos, staff and equipment for setting up stalls.	April 2024	£2000 market budget to increase to £4000 for anchor points and gazebos	Porters x 5 Town Centre Assistant			

	Support and bring a Young Traders market to the town. Offering a £10 stall per market up to six markets and free insurance for those 16 to 30. Social media exposure and entering into awards by NMTF, Engage with colleges and sixth form	July 2024	Increased income in a normally quite month – 10 extra stalls £100 and extra stalls on other markets with the £10 trading.	NABMA Young Traders Market DTC Staff College Schools Prince's trust	40%	Booked 6 July booked with NMTF. Insurance bought for young traders to trade	
<u>Year 2</u> <u>2025/2026</u>	Increase non-event markets to an average of 30 stalls per market	April 2025 to March 2026	Increase income by £2000 per year	Porters x5 Town Centre Assistant Town Centre Manager.			
Objective 1,2,3	To engage with shops and local business to join Middle Row Markets or The Square for promotion stalls as part of increasing to 30 stalls per market	April 2025 to December 2025	Increase stalls and market income at £23 per stall as part of market - £115.00 income per market	Traders/shops Marketing and communication officer Town Centre Team Net working groups			
Objective 1,2,3,4	Support local community groups to access stalls and be part of events. Create a multi-use area within the town. Support with hire of The Square for community fates, performance and promotion of the group. Example- clothing swop, church fundraising event.	April 2025 to March 2026	Offer free use of The Square to community groups, stall licence for stall sellers if applicable.	Local shops and business Grove Corner Community groups Town Centre Assistant Church groups			
Objective 2,3,4							

Objective 1,2,3,4	Increase number of visiting markets on The Square and Middle Row by two extra markets per year. Total of four external markets to Dunstable per year	April 2025 to March 2026	Small fee charged. Increase in new traders for Middle Row Markets Income of £40 per extra market to the area with the first year of trading free	Marketing and Communication officer NMTF Other Towns Town Centre Officer			
	Look at a business surgery for shops and market traders With the view to host and support trading in Dunstable		Price to be quoted for depending on up take and venue	ASA Business			
<u>Year 3 2026 to 2027</u> Objective 5	Work with 4 traders to support a move to the town centre with a unit. Set up training, support in a pop up shop with 5-day trading	April 2026 March 2027	Business support funding needed. Support from partners and CBC	Chambers of Commerce CBC Quadrant ASA			
Objective 1,2,3,4,5	A market event each month to enhance Middle Row Markets. Working in partnership with other organisations for events in The Square. Increase stall numbers to 35 stalls. As average for year three	April 2026 to March 2027	£10,000 extra budget needed to enhance events. But increase Middle Row stall numbers by 5 each month. Income £1,380.00 Cost could be covered by funded groups wanting Market services	Community Groups External funding Town Centre Assistant Shops/ business Consortium or another funded group			

<p>Objective 1,2,3,4,5</p>	<p>Take on a unit that enables business start up and leisure activities during the week and weekends. Promoting art and social use of the unit, Increase footfall in the shop area. Supporting start up business in the unit to move to vacant units within the town. Bring new leisure activities to Dunstable e.g. table tennis, table football, selfie areas, art projects, hire area for community activities and local groups, e.g. -yoga, art class,</p>	<p>April 2026 to March 2027</p>	<p>£30,000 Income from traders rent and possible income for leisure activities. exercise class, table tennis, meeting areas</p>	<p>CBC Business support Quadrant UKSPF Business support Advertisement</p>			
<p>Objective 1,2,3,4</p>	<p>Market/ Event every week in the summer holidays - July and August. A weekday activity and stalls in school holidays. Adding themed events aimed at families to increase weekday footfall in the town and support business in the area</p>	<p>June 2026 – August 2026</p>	<p>Increase income by £2000. Income from stall holders during weekdays and adding footfall midweek in School holidays</p>	<p>Town Centre Assistant Porters x4 Traders</p>			

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
MONDAY 4 MARCH 2024
OLDER PEOPLE'S SERVICES

Purpose of report: For information

1. GOOD COMPANIONS CLUB

- 1.1 The Good Companions Club currently has 21 members. There are 24 places, with three currently still available.
- 1.2 As part of the Dunstable LC Household Support Fund from CBC, officers have been working in partnership with Farmhouse Catering to provide an additional freezable meal for members of Good Companions Club for 11 weeks throughout the winter months.
- 1.3 Several speakers have visited the group over the last few weeks. This includes Bedfordshire Fire, Central Bedfordshire Community Safety Team, History Society, Hedgehog rescue, Sight Concern and Beds Rural Community Chariry.
- 1.4 The group will be going on a trip to Go Bowling on 26 February.

2. CREASEY PARK COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CENTRE LUNCH CLUB

- 2.1 Creasey Park Community Football Centre Lunch Club for the over 55s currently has 34 members, with an average of 28 attending. There is a waiting list of 14 people. Officers continue to keep in touch with those on the waiting list and invite them to other events for the older community.
- 2.2 CPCFC lunch club members have had similar speakers to Good Companions Club, as outlined in 1.3 of the report.
- 2.3 Members of CPCFC lunch club have had a local fitness instructor run armchair exercises for the group and have also enjoyed music from Joe Corrigan.
- 2.4 The group have also enjoyed taking part in various quizzes and games.
- 2.5 The group will continue to use CPCFC with no change when the management arrangements change in April 2024.

3. COFFEE MORNINGS

- 3.1 Officers have been working on plans for coffee mornings for 2024. The following coffee mornings are planned to take place, subject to location confirmation:

Tuesday 9 April – Grove Corner

Tuesday 14 May – Dunstable Cemetery

Tuesday 9 July – Priory View
Tuesday 20 August – Holts Court
Tuesday 10 September – St Marys Church
Tuesday 8 October – Splash Park
Tuesday 12 November – Beecroft Community Centre
Tuesday 10 December – Furness Avenue

4. ROCK AND ROLL

- 4.1 Officers facilitated a Rock and Roll event at Creasey Park Community Football Centre 1.00 pm to 3.00 pm on Tuesday 6 February. This was a sellout event of 50 people and very popular. Feedback included:
“Thank you so much for all you do – keep it up and well done.”
“Good food and great music.”
“I enjoyed everything about the event, it was great to be out and meet people.”
“We would like more of these to happen and for them to be three hours instead of two hours.”

5. HAPPY AND ACTIVE TOGETHER

- 5.1 Officers have begun to run Happy and Active Together, each Tuesday at Dunstable Community Halls for over 55s.
- 5.2 The first four weeks of the project was line dancing. This was attended by approximately 17 people each week; 16 out of the 17 people had not engaged with DTC activities before for the older community.
- 5.3 Officers are currently working with a local Tai Chi instructor; 26 people are attending this four-week activity.
- 5.4 The final activity will be four weeks of creative arts. This is currently fully booked, with 30 people signed up to take part when it begins in March.

6. BIG LUNCH

- 6.1 Officers are currently working on plans for the Big Lunch. Officers are hoping to be able to open this for 150 people to attend. Costs have risen significantly, so this is the highest number that will be possible. Due to how popular Big Lunch has been in previous years, places will initially be allocated to people who have not attended previously, then remaining places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. With providing an additional 50 places officers hope all who want to attend will be able to.

7. AUTHORS

- 7.1 Elaine McGarrigle, Older People’s Services Officer
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- 7.2 Gill Peck, Youth and Community Manager
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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 4 MARCH 2024****GROVE CORNER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Purpose of Report: For information.
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1. GROVE CORNER FIGURES

- 1.1. Grove Corner received 354 visits from young people between 18 December 2023 and 9 February 2024.

Grove Corner received 427 visits from young people between 12 December 2022 and 3 February 2023.

- 1.2. Pokémon sessions received 122 visits from young people between 9 January 2024 and 06 February 2024.

Pokémon sessions received 195 visits from young people between 3 January 2023 and 7 February 2023.

- 1.3. Grove Corner now has over 1,200 Facebook followers and Grove Corner's Instagram has 444 followers.

2. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

- 2.1. Officers have spent time reflecting on the 16 to 18 year old session on Friday evenings. This session has been quieter for this age group and through consultation, officers have identified a need for young people aged 13 to 15 to also have somewhere to go on a Friday evening. Therefore, since Friday 9 February, officers are currently trialling a 13 to 18 year old session. This means that young people aged 10 to 18 can access centre-based youth work on a Friday night.

- 2.2. Officers were approached by Groundwork to work in partnership to deliver some boxing sessions for the young people who attend Grove Corner, as Groundwork had received some external funding from CBC. Officers are supporting the facilitation of this, at the Monday drop-in sessions.

- 2.3. After the successful Christmas party, officers are working with the young people who attend Grove Corner to plan a party on Friday 22 March.

- 2.4. Officers will be facilitating a Pokémon tournament at Grove Corner on Thursday 22 February.

3. DETACHED YOUTH WORK

- 3.1 Between 16 December 2023 and 10 February 2024 officers have delivered 14 detached activities and engagement sessions. This has taken place in Dunstable East (including Tesco, Grove House Gardens, and the Dunstable Centre), Queensbury Academy and surrounding areas, Dunstable North.
- 3.2 In total officers engaged with 317 young people by headcount.
- 3.3 Following the drop-in sessions that officers have arranged for second half of February and March in Manshead Academy and All Saints Academy, officers are planning to do detached work in:
- High Street South
 - London Road
 - Prioory Gardens
 - Downside Recreation Ground
 - The Paddocks
 - Mentmore Recreation Ground
 - Olma Road Recreation Ground
 - Bus way
 - Dunstable North: BMX, Frenches Avenue, Co-op and surrounding shopping area, Beecroft, Chalk Hill, Green Lane.
- 3.4 Officers continue to build positive rapport with professionals and young people and have found young people have begun to recognise them when out and about. Officers are currently in the process of having pop-up flags made to display when running activities in different locations.
- 3.5 Officers facilitated a drop-in session at Grove Corner on Saturday 3 February. This was for young people aged 12 to 19 year olds. 24 young people were in attendance. Officers have seen some of the young people who attended begin to attend Grove Corner sessions and young people have asked for more weekend sessions.
- 3.6 Officers have arranged to run two activities over February half term. On Thursday 22 February, officers have booked a mobile gaming bus to run activities and on Friday 23 February, officers will be facilitating a retro games afternoon at Dunstable Community Church. Officers will also use this time to run consultation with the young people about activities they would like to experience both in Grove Corner and on detached sessions.
- 3.7 Officers have been engaging with the Dunstable Centre as a response to some reported anti-social behaviour that the centre was experiencing. Officers have visited at different times and engaged with young people who have attended. Officers are building positive rapport with some of the young people to encourage positive use of the facility.
- 3.8 Officers are in the process of booking activities for the Easter holidays; a verbal update will be provided at committee.

- 3.9 At the time of writing officers are still awaiting official confirmation of the Million Hours Funding. However, to ensure that deliver can commence on 1 April 2024 the Council has advertised for a qualified level 5 or 6 Senior Detached Youth Worker. In April, there will be three additional nights of detached youth work facilitated within Dunstable East and two existing nights within the rest of the town. As soon as official confirmation of funding has been received marketing and communication of this funding will be produced on our website, social media channels and through press releases.

4. SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1 Officers attended Central Bedfordshire College to provide an activity around kindness for students. Officers spoke to students about how random acts of kindness can make them feel and encouraged students to write down and share when they have displayed or experienced kindness. As part of this activity, officers used the opportunity to do some consultation with the young people at the college around Grove Corner. Officers learnt that some of the barriers to young people aged 16 to 18 being able to attend Grove Corner included: young people working, travel to and from the centre was a challenge due to bus timetables, young people had other hobbies, young people socialised with friends elsewhere.
- 4.2 Officers ran a litter pick with The Vale Academy. This was attended by year 3 and 4 children and all who took part enjoyed the session and want to do more litter picks. Officers used the time to discuss with teachers about continue partnership working. The litter pick took place around the streets within the proximity of the school.
- 4.3 Officers have provided Ashton St Peter with the litter pick equipment, as the school conducted a litter pick around the school grounds for a class of 30 children.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1 Fit and Active Together has completed the initial 13 sessions that the Town Council received funding for from Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC). The feedback from those who have attended the project has been extremely positive, and those who have attended asked if there was scope for the project to continue. Officers spoke to CBC to ask if the remaining funding could be carried over to 24/25 and it was agreed. Therefore, an additional six sessions will run. Feedback has included:
- “I have lost 2 stone.”
- “I have been able to have time to focus on myself, without any distractions, which is not something that happens often.”
- “I usually find it difficult to switch off, but taking part in a body scan has shown me a tool I could use at home.”
- “Receiving a meal has been lovely and also meant a couple of times I have been able to help a friend in need.”
- “We do not want this project to end, please can it continue.”
- 5.2 Officers have continued to build connections with asylum seekers staying in the Old Palace Lodge by organising and facilitating weekly football sessions. Officers secured a weekly booking in the Dunstable centre to facilitate the football sessions, and this has been attended on average by 10 to 15 individuals each week.

- 5.3 Officers have begun to work on plans for the summer activities programme. Officers are hoping to facilitate eight sessions throughout the school holidays aimed at 3 to 10 year olds which will be free/low cost. This year, the detached team are planning to do an additional summer activities programme aimed at 12 to 18 year olds. The summer activities programme is currently in the early stages of planning and locations and activities are to be confirmed.
- 5.4 Officers are facilitating a free family arts and crafts event at Creasey Park Community Football Centre on Monday 19 February. There will be 50 bags available, on a first come, first served basis.
- 5.5 Officers are facilitating arts and crafts at The Quadrant on Wednesday 21 February. Again, these will be available on a first come, first served basis.

6. Central Bedfordshire Youthwork Tender

- 6.1 Central Bedfordshire Council have confirmed that they will soon be going out to tender for its core youth work offer, which is due to be renewed in September 2024. It has been made clear that CBC will not be splitting up Central Bedfordshire and that the commission would be to cover the whole of Central Bedfordshire. Initially it was thought that the Town Councils could not therefore apply due to the lack of infrastructure and youthwork delivery by town councils in the north (old Mid Beds area). However, the Head of Community Services has been keen to explore the possibility of a consortium approach with larger organisations who would be looking to submit a tender for the contract.
- 6.2 To date Heads of Service from Leighton Linlade, Houghton Regis and Dunstable Town Council's have meet with another charitable organisation to scope out the possibility of a consortium approach. This initial meeting was positive, and whilst the funding envelop is small it was felt by the Town Council's that they would rather be involved in the delivery of youthwork in their towns by through the CBC contact than not, which is currently the case. Officers are now waiting for the tender to be launched by CBC, with no date yet given for this.

7. AUTHORS

- 7.1 Gill Peck – Youth and Community Manager
Email – gill.peck@dunstable.gov.uk
- 7.2 Jack Adams-Rimmer – Senior Neighbourhood Development Officer
Email – jack.adams-rimmer@dunstable.gov.uk
- 7.3 Becky Wisbey – Head of Community Services
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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
MONDAY 4 MARCH 2024
EVENTS

Purpose of Report: For information and to discuss the proposed free use of Grove Theatre in 2024/25.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That Members decline the request for a free use of Grove Theatre as detailed in section 5 of the report.

2 FUTURE EVENTS - PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

2.1 St George's Day

The St George's Day celebrations will take place in Priory Gardens on Saturday 20 April 2024 between 11 am and 4 pm. Activities this year include:

- St George Gameshow
- Teaching Talons, Animal Encounter
- Punch and Judy
- Arts and crafts
- Dunstable Town Band
- Letchworth Morris Men
- Falconry Display
- Dragon Town Trail
- St George and the Dragon storytelling
- Meet St George
- Maypole dancing workshop
- Circus Skills
- Stilt Walkers
- Climbing Wall
- Wooden Sculpture Carving

The event will be promoted via leaflets and posters, Facebook, DTC website, Talk of the Town, and the DTC noticeboards.

2.2 Priory Pictures – Saturday 25 May

A poll was set up on Facebook in January for the public to suggest films they would like to see at the event. The poll received over 1,100 votes; two of the films selected in this poll will be shown alongside a classic film. The line-up is as below:

12 noon Adapted Screening – Wonka (PG)
 2.30 pm Wonka (PG)
 5.00 pm The Goonies (12)
 7.30 pm Barbie (12A)

The event will also consist of an outdoor bar and food concessions. The adapted screening will benefit from:

- Lower sound volume
- Subtitles
- Hearing Loop
- Designated smoking area
- Minibus drop off point
- Enclosed quiet/safe space available
- Accessible toilets

2.3 Classic Motor Rally

Registration for the Classic Motor Rally is now open. All past participants have been invited to this year's event on Saturday 8 June. To commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-Day, themed activities will feature at the event including wartime music, children's arts and crafts, crazy golf, and an interactive character trail. A flypast application was submitted to the RAF last October. However, the outcome of the application will not be received until two months prior to the event, at the earliest. An invitation has been extended to owners of military vehicles to join the event this will also be promoted through Talk of the Town and Facebook. Similarly to last year, the event will also have stalls and catering present.

2.4 Sunday Band Concerts

This year the schedule for the Sunday Band Concerts will feature different genres of music on stage alongside brass bands, as agreed by Members in the October committee. To date, two of the four available slots for application have been filled. The first by Beati Voice Ensemble who are a choir whose repertoire consists of a wide range of musical genres, from jazz/swing, classical/choral and musical theatre. The second by the Shambles Brass Band who are a 17-piece swing band performing music from the 40s swing era, swing/jazz arrangements, and also modern tunes. The table below shows the confirmed line-up to date. Since January, an advert has been scheduled on Facebook periodically, and will further be placed in the April edition of the Talk of the Town to invite groups to apply for the remaining available slots. These include musical groups and societies from community-led groups/bands, youth brass groups, school/college ensembles, military bands and choirs. Charities will once again be invited to apply for the tea and coffee concession.

Sun 30 June	12 noon	Dunstable Town Band
Sun 30 June	2.30 pm	Dunstable Salvation Army
Sun 21 July	12 noon	Beati Vocal Ensemble
Sun 21 July	2.30 pm	TBC

Sun 18 August	12 noon	TBC
Sun 18 August	2.30 pm	Shambles Big Band

2.5 **Dunstable Live**

The theme for Dunstable Live this year is 'Soul and Motown.' A poll was created on Facebook with over 1,500 votes received. From these votes, the following tribute acts have been booked:

- 3.00 pm to 4.00 pm: Godfrey Gayle as Stevie Wonder
- 4.10 pm to 4.50 pm: Whitney vs. Motown
- 5.00 pm to 6.00 pm: Sing Baby Sing: The Stylistics Tribute
- 6.10 pm to 7.10 pm: Marcia Lynette as Diana Ross
- 7.15 pm to 8.15 pm: The Classic Motown Show

2.6 **Party in the Park**

Plans are in the early stages of development for this event. However, a headline act has been booked and will be announced on Friday 5 April in line with the distribution of The Talk of The Town. Also confirmed so far is the accessible viewing platform, Kidzone area and the funfair. The Events Officer is currently contacting local groups to increase community involvement in the event.

2.7 **Around The World**

Around the World is coming along well and is currently in the early stages of development. Activities currently confirmed for this event are:

- Around the World storytelling
- Native American Experience including drumming, dance, arts and crafts and storytelling.
- Teaching Talons Animal Experience
- Dr Digby Rocks School of Archaeology
- Shizen-No Judo Club
- Community Groups, including the Dunstable History Society, Dunstable Town Guides and Dunstable in Bloom

The Events Officer is currently inviting local community groups to participate in the event, to showcase their talent.

2.8 **Priory Pictures – Saturday 10 August**

A Facebook poll will be created in March to decide which films will be shown at the event.

3 HSHAZ LEGACY

- 3.1 The HSHAZ ends in March 2024. As agreed by members £10,000 has been allocated to continue the delivery of activities related to heritage, history, and culture within the events programme. Officers are looking at facilitating activities where appropriate and have invited past participants to this year's events.
- 3.2 There will be relevant activities at the following events:
- St George's Day Celebrations
 - The Classic Motor Rally
 - Party in the Park
 - Around the World
- 3.3 Currently the list of facilitators and activities include Black Knight Historical, Hysterical History, Medieval World, Dr Digby Rocks School of Archaeology and a HSHAZ assault course.
- 3.4 Further, to celebrate the 80th anniversary of D-Day, activities will feature throughout the events programme. These will include traditional 1940s games, walkabout entertainers, 1940s music and have a go dance workshops, an interactive character trail, and themed children's arts and crafts. Local community groups will be invited to take part in the event to share their knowledge/recollections of Dunstable's wartime past.

4 UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND - CULTURE

- 4.1 The Council is awaiting CBC's confirmation of funding the cultural application under the UKSPF. However, the confirmation is expected shortly. Once received officers will be working hard to commission an organisation to deliver the project focused on capacity building within the performing arts sector. The delay in the confirmation will impact on how much this project will directly support our existing events programme, however, it is still anticipated that the voluntary and community sector will utilise the existing programme to raise their profile, perform and participate ahead of the finale in January 2025 with a 'scratch card' style event at The Grove Theatre.

5 FREE USES OF GROVE THEATRE

- 5.1 Dunstable Town Council has two free uses of Grove Theatre per year from April to March. These opportunities are offered to the community and voluntary sector and are promoted through social media pages and the Council's website. The first free use for 2024/25 has been allocated to Dunstable Musical Theatre Company for their performance of Joseph and the Technicolour Dreamcoat, staged this Summer.
- 5.2 Recently the Council were approached by the Dunstable U3A, who are a Dunstable-based charity with approximately 850 local members. The aim of the U3A is to educate and stimulate the retired members of the community. The U3A are seeking a venue to celebrate their 25th anniversary, which falls in September. Although in the early stages of planning, it is expected that the event is likely to involve speakers and entertainment, alongside their own choir and musical groups.

- 5.3 However, as part of the Council's UK Shared Prosperity (UKSPF) culture bid the Council proposed to use one of the free uses themselves as an end of UKSPF end of project event. Whilst at the time of writing confirmation of the funding hasn't been confirmed it is understood that CBC are happy with the proposal. Therefore, it is recommended that as DTC will be using the second free use in 2024/25 the request from the U3A be declined by Members this year.

6 AUTHORS

- 6.1 Gina Thanky - Events Officer

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- 6.2 Becky Wisbey - Head of Community Service

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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 4 MARCH 2024

PRIORY HOUSE

Purpose of Report: For information

1. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 1.1 The 16 hours kitchen assistant post holder has resigned due to the current circumstances at Priory House. This has left the team short of experienced kitchen staff now the team are operating two kitchens at Priory House and the Splashside Café (Priory Pop-up).
- 1.2 This does leave operations vulnerable to not being able to fully staff both operations if there is sickness or annual leave.
- 1.3 Currently other staff members are undergoing kitchen training to reduce this risk of this impact to operations. Given the reduced service required for the next few months at least this would not be an appropriate time to recruit a replacement.

2. SHOP

- 2.1 Officers attended the Spring Fair in Birmingham looking for unique and new products to sell in the shop.
- 2.2 A new product which is soon to be delivered will be a personalised named bar of soap. Officers feel that this will appeal to our current customers.
- 2.3 Officers also found new stockists which sell, bags, scarfs, gloves and jewellery. These items will be trialled in the shop from April.

3. Pop-up Priory House

- 3.1 Customers have been very impressed with the transformation at the Splashside Café. Word is spreading, but footfall is very low. The weather appears to be playing the biggest part in determining footfall.
- 3.2 For February half term officers will run daily specials each day to try and attract families and children using the adventure play and general users of the park.
- 3.3 Officers are currently adverting Afternoon Tea for Mother's Day and Bottomless Pizza events. Tickets are on sale via the website.
- 3.4 Officers are also trying different events such as warm space, bump, and baby session. A verbal update on the pop up activities will be given at committee.

4. FINANCE

Priory House Shop taking comparison EX VAT

	2022/23	2023/24	Variation 2022/2023 to 2023/2024
April	£1,014.90	£1,871.88	£856.98
May	£1,931.76	£2,013.57	£81.81
June	£2,042.24	£1,402.17	-£640.08
Total 1st qtr	£4,988.91	£5,287.62	£298.71
July	£1,192.48	£1,098.91	-£93.57
August	£1,132.00	£1,282.86	£150.85
September	£1,043.91	£1,856.44	£812.53
Total 2nd qtr	£3,368.39	£4,238.21	£869.82
October	£1,380.66	£1,370.77	-£9.90
November	£934.49	£1,125.78	£191.29
December	£3,258.37	£3,512.37	£254.00
Total 3rd qtr	£5,573.52	£6,008.92	£435.40
January	£509.38	£1,146.58	£637.21
TOTAL TO DATE	£14,440.19	£16,681.32	£2,241.13

- 4.1 Members will see that January's gift shop takings, which does not include any food purchases, were double that of January 2023. Sales in the shop along with the coffee machine have increased significantly which is really positive.
- 4.2 With new stockist and products being explored it is hoped that the sales can continue to grow.

5. Tea Rooms/Splash Income 23/24

Priory House Tea Rooms taking comparison EX VAT

	2022/23	2023/24	Variation 2022/2023 to 2023/2024
April	£11,244.39	£9,647.09	-£1,597.30
May	£15,262.54	£10,612.85	-£4,649.69
June	£11,808.67	£11,802.63	-£6.04
Total 1st qtr	£38,315.60	£32,062.57	-£6,253.03
July	£13,121.44	£11,188.56	-£1,932.88
August	£17,096.42	£14,213.21	-£2,883.21
September	£10,821.19	£10,670.90	-£150.29
Total 2nd qtr	£41,039.05	£36,072.67	-£4,966.38
October	£9,609.56	£8,580.40	-£1,029.16
November	£8,946.66	£3,306.83	-£5,639.84
December	£12,530.11	£4,778.62	-£7,751.50
Total 3rd qtr	£31,086.33	£16,665.84	-£14,420.49
January	£6,190.91	£762.31	-£5,428.60
TOTAL TO DATE	£116,631.89	£85,563.39	-£31,068.50

- 5.1 Members will see that income for the tea rooms has significantly reduced. Loyal customers are still continuing to have lunch and meet friends, but this has not been enough to produce significant amount of income with only five tables available and limited facilities in the shop.
- 5.2 The Priory Pop-up opened in February, and it is hoped this will increase income for the tea rooms, however this venue is very weather dependant and currently footfall is very low.

6. AUTHOR

- 6.1 Lisa Stephens, Cultural Services Manager – lisa.stephens@dunstable.gov.uk

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 4 MARCH 2024****HIGH STREET HERITAGE ACTION ZONE (HSHAZ)**

Purpose of Report: For information only
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The HSHAZ ends at the end of March 2024, and as anticipated 2024 has involved finalising projects and associated financial reporting along with overarching HSHAZ reporting and evaluation. There has also been significant work involving 21-23 High Street South.
- 1.2. The HSHAZ Programme comprises three complimentary strands (physical interventions, cultural programme/cultural consortium, and community engagement). The physical interventions strand comprises Priory House and privately owned properties.

2. KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- 2.1. The HSHAZ funded works at Priory House were concluded at the end of 2023. The HSHAZ quarterly reporting submitted in January 2024 reported that all DTC's match funding for the HSHAZ had been spent by the end of Quarter 3 (by the end of December 2023).
- 2.2. The final HSHAZ Programme Board meeting was held in person at Grove House on 12 February involving project partners from Historic England, CBC and DCC. It was a positive meeting and partners are keen to look for opportunities to continue to work together beyond the HSHAZ. HE fed back that the Town Council's community engagement and flexible approach had been notable compared to other schemes.

3. PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS**High Street South/Middle Row and Church Street projects**

- 3.1. Updates since 8 January 2024:
 - **Number 21-23 High Street South (Moore's):** Conception Architects are managing the project and liaising with D J Russell Builders Limited, the property owner and other parties and providing feedback to officers. Since 8 January 2024 the project team have been undertaking work to try and complete the project within the HSHAZ timescales. CBC provided Conception Architects with notification of discharge of conditions on 7 February. The work must be completed on site and all final reimbursement requests submitted before the end of March 2024 to conform to the HSHAZ requirements.

Priory House

- 3.2. Messenger BCR (lead contractor) are working with Cliveden Conservation to undertake the refurbishment work. The seventeenth monthly site meeting with The Morton Partnership, Messenger BCR, Cliveden Conservation, HE, and other parties will take place on 27 February 2024. At present attendance on site is limited to one person from each organisation with the remainder joining by Teams.
- 3.3. Since the announcement about the second Heritage at Risk grant from Historic England (HAR 2) and National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) grant further unforeseen issues have been uncovered at first floor and ground floor level. Investigations into the new unforeseen issues including the east wall are ongoing and the impact is currently unknown. The extent of the issues, possible repair methods, costs and timescales will be informed by the investigations. It was hoped that a clear position would be known in February but following some additional concerns being identified it is now hoped to have some clarity on final scope and costs by the end of March 2024.
- 3.4. Officers have commenced discussions with the current funders about the further unforeseen issues and the Town Clerk and Chief Executive, Head of Community Services and High Street Heritage Action Zone Programme Manager have had three Teams meetings with partners from Historic England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). Another meeting will be planned in due course once the costs are better understood.
- 3.5. The focus of work since 8 January has been on the façade and undertaking investigations at first floor and ground floor level.
- 3.6. Officers are sharing photos taken by members of the project team on the Town Council's website at www.dunstable.gov.uk/dunstable-hshaz/prioryhousegallery/ and on social media.
- 3.7. All the HSHAZ grant funds allocated for Priory House have been spent. Accordingly, the work at Priory House is now using the two Heritage At Risk grants (HAR 1 and HAR 2) and the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) grant. It is currently understood that HAR 1 funds must be fully spent before using the other funds.

4. CULTURAL PROGRAMME/CULTURAL CONSORTIUM

- 4.1. Dunstable Cultural Consortium (DCC) posted all their project news on their Facebook page www.facebook.com/DunstableCulturalConsortium. It is understood that DCC's "*Dunstable HeART Trail 2024*" was their last activity and that their funding associated with the HSHAZ ended at the end of February 2024. It is understood that the Consortium's Programme Board is looking for ways to continue the Consortium's work after the end of the HSHAZ and that they will continue to use their Facebook page for the time being. Accordingly, follow this page @DunstableCulturalConsortium for DCC's updates.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1. The Council continues to use the HSHAZ webpages on the Town Centre section of the Council's website, along with the Facebook page and Instagram account to promote the programme and engage with the community. The Facebook Page now has 1,000 followers (987 followers in January 2024). The Instagram account has 258 followers (257 followers in January 2024). There are also four Facebook Groups associated with the HSHAZ Facebook Page - two of which relate to past projects and two of which are ongoing: Carving a Journey Through Dunstable www.facebook.com/groups/169746391702106 and Priory House Conservation and Restoration www.facebook.com/groups/320591406397190. The HSHAZ social media accounts will be closed once the HSHAZ ends. The Corporate Marketing and Communications Officers is looking into the possibility of the accounts being frozen rather than being deleted.

Middle Row Markets and Town Centre Events

- 5.2. Final HSHAZ activities will take place at the 9 March 2024 Middle Row Market – *Mother's Day and Goodbye to Hi!* We will be joined by Urban Canvas www.urbancanvas.org.uk/ and Hysterical History www.hystericalhistory.co.uk/ for a final time, along with the Dunstable and District History Society.
- 5.3. On 9 March Urban Canvas will be creating a Doodle Art piece with help from members of the public. This will comprise four pieces, which will wrap around three trees and one lamppost along High Street South. The Corporate Marketing and Communications Officer set up a Facebook event page www.facebook.com/events/876753127525021 in January and officers have been using this to promote the 9 March activities.

Grove Corner -scrapbook/memories project

- 5.4. The Grove Corner and HSHAZ team are planning final HSHAZ activities for the Good Companions Lunch Club on 4 March and 11 March and for the Creasey Park Community Football Centre Lunch Club on 13 March and 20 March.

6. AUTHOR

- 6.1 Michelle Collings - High Street Heritage Action Zone Programme Manager
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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 4 MARCH 2024****SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT APPLICATIONS**

Purpose of Report:	For members to approve a four-year Service Level Agreement
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1. ACTION RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 It is recommended that members approve a Service Level Agreement with Sorted Counselling Services for £600 per year for four years.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In February 2022, Council approved the allocation of £10,000 per year to fund local community and voluntary sector organisations; £9,000 for Service Level Agreements and £1,000 for smaller Seedcorn funding. However, with the Church choosing to no longer receive a SLA from the town council this increased the SLA pot to £10,000.

3. MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Members are required to consider just one application – Sorted Counselling Services. The charity is requesting funding to digitalise their operations, see appendix 1 for full details.

- 3.2 Sorted Counselling Service have provided the following:

- Safeguarding policy
- Lone Worker Risk Assessment
- Health Safety policy
- Accounts
- Equality Diversity and Inclusion policy
- Charities and Hospices insurance

With the supporting documents that have been provided, officers have no concerns.

- 3.3 Officers have reviewed the application and believe that it meets the criteria for funding.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Council has £1,000 remaining in the Service Level Agreements budget for 2023/24 and thereafter. Therefore, there are funds available to assist with this SLA request.

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None.

7. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN, HUMAN RESOURCE, LEGAL AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The applicant has been asked to submit their equalities policy and no awards would be given to organisations who fail to do this.

7.2 The applicant has been asked how the SLA will benefit Dunstable, thus it is possible to assess the application against the delivery of our corporate objectives.

8. APPENDICES AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 Appendix 1. Application for SLA – Sorted Counselling Services

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 Members are required to make a decision as to whether to fund this Service Level Agreement grant application. Section 3 of the report provides the officer recommendation based on the applications and the supporting documentation.

10. AUTHOR

10.1 Gill Peck – Youth and Community Manager
Email – gill.peck@dunstable.gov.uk

Name of Organisation: Sorted Counselling Services

Organisation website/social media: www.sortedbedfordshire.org.uk

Select category: Individual

Charity number (if applicable): 1141928

In no more than 500 words, please give your aims.:

The aim of Sorted Counselling Services is to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people living in Dunstable through providing them with a confidential, non judgmental talking therapy through counselling.

We've been in existence in various guises since 1997. Each client will receive a minimum of 8 counselling services where they can look at the issues facing them in their life and work out for themselves how they can process the difficulties facing them and find a way forward.

The CYP will learn for themselves how to be more resilient and deal with issues that they come across.

We work with CYP who face many challenges, but some of the main problems they face are around anxiety, missing school, bullying, bereavement, family break up, abuse of all kinds.

How much are you applying for? Please submit in the format of £xxx.xx: £600

In no more than 1000 words, please state what you need this grant for and how this will benefit Dunstable.:

Sorted is looking to digitalise its operations. At present a lot of what we do is paper based. A new cohort of staff who joined the service in December have recognised the need for change to make us more efficient.

We're looking at a new data management programme through a company called Lamplight. There is an initial build cost of between £2.5k and £3.7k, the final figure is yet to be arrived at, but after the build there is an ongoing operational of cost of £50per month or £600 per year inclusive of VAT. This operational cost will give us the base service plus bolt ons which are essential for the full digitalisation of our service to be completed. Support of £600 per year from Dunstable Town Council, will help to subsidise this new cost for our service.

The new data management will give us some of the following improvements to how we operate;

- A new digital diary system where our staff will be able to allocate clients to counsellors, update appointments ahead of them happening to let counsellors know of postponements/cancellations, run a holiday chart for counsellors and staff for greater visibility of cover requirements.
- Improved data collection and ability to analyse the data in the system, producing more meaningful reports in a more timely manner.
- Give the service the ability to send appointment reminders automatically.
- Counsellors will be able to use the system for writing up client notes (currently done by paper)
- System for reporting Safeguarding concerns
- Automated client feedback forms completed via tablets
- Ability for counsellors to let us know what hours that they have completed (currently done via e-mailed spreadsheet form)
- Our assessment forms will go online allowing for digital capture of assessment results.

In addition, what are you going to be able to do as a result of this funding? (500 words or less):

If we receive the support we will be able to save staff hours on administration tasks and therefore they can turn their attention to more proactive duties such as promoting our service more in our community and recruiting more counsellors for our service. Too much time is currently spent on tasks that are paper based

As mentioned, data analysis will be improved. We will be able to change the system easily to allow for different collection of feedback data and potentially more meaningful feedback from clients that will allow for enhancements to our service offering.

We expect our 'no show' appointments to be reduced as reminders will be produced as texts as well as e-mails. We will also potentially save money through being able to let counsellors know that a client isn't going to be at their appointment well ahead of the appointment time and therefore the counsellors won't need to attend our premises and we won't have to pay them.

What new initiatives will you add? (500 words or less):

One new initiative will be the enhanced reminders to clients through e-mail as well as texts.

We will be able to enhance the work that we do with schools. At present all counsellor notes are paper based.

Feedback from our counsellors in schools is rather fractured and the new system will bring more formality to the feedback process.

Any new initiative that Sorted could choose to undertake will be improved through the digitalisation of how that initiative is operated. Less paper saves time, saves money and improves efficiencies.

What other funding are you currently in receipt of? Please include the Funder, the amount, and the start and finish dates.:

We receive £25k per annum from the National Lottery Community Fund. We're in our 2nd year of a 5 year funding programme. We plan to apply to Children in Need in February 2024 for a new funding programme.

Please upload the following documents where applicable: Safeguarding policy, risk assessments / health and safety documents, latest account details, public liability insurance, equalities policy.:

[Safeguarding-policy-Oct23.docx](#)
[Lone-Worker-Risk-Assessment-Questionnaire.docx](#)
[Health-Safety-policy-updated-Oct22.docx](#)
[Statement-02-oct-23-ac-80763705.PDF](#)
[Equality-Diversity-and-Inclusion-policy.docx](#)
[Charities-and-Hospices-insurance.pdf](#)

I have permission to put in this application and declare the information I have submitted is Checked accurate, to the best of my knowledge.: