

## **DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL**

**HELD ON MONDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2025 FROM 7:00 PM**

**Present:** Councillors Louise O’Riordan (Town Mayor), Sally Kimondo (Deputy Town Mayor) Peter Hollick, Wendy Bater, Philip Crawley, Liz Jones, Johnson Tamara, Trevor Adams, Mark Davis, Michelle Henderson, Nicholas Kotarski, Richard Attwell, Robert Blennerhassett

**In Attendance:** Georgia Pearson (Democratic Services Manager), Paul Hodson (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), Lisa Scheder (Head of Corporate Services and Responsible Finance Officer), John Crawley (Head of Grounds and Environmental Services) and Becky Wisby (Head of Community Services)

**In Attendance:** Councillor John Gurney  
**(Remotely)**

**Public:** 1

#### **044/25 - Apologies for Absence**

Councillors Gregory Alderman, Matthew Brennan, Kenson Gurney and John Gurney.

#### **045/25 - To agree as a correct record the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 2 December 2024**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 2 December 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

#### **046/25 - Declarations of Interest**

There were no specific declarations of interest

#### **047/25 - Town Mayor's Remarks including Civic Events and Mayoral Activities - attached is a summary of events the Mayor and Deputy Mayor attended**

The Town Mayor update members on the events attended since the last meeting by both her and the Deputy Mayor.

#### **048/25 - Public Question Time**

There were no questions put to the meeting. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive advised Members that he had undertaken to arrange a meeting with the member of the public who was present to discuss issues related to the cemetery with the relevant Councillor and would be in touch directly to arrange this.

**049/25 - To receive reports of the following Committees:**

**049.1/25 - Community Services 6 January 2025**

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 6 January 2025 be received

**049.2/25 - Grounds and Environmental Services 13 January 2025**

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting of the Grounds and Environmental Services Committee held on 13 January 2025 be received

Councillor Jones requested an update regarding Dunstable Bowls Club. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive advised a written update would be provided to Members which would confirm that the project is progressing as planned.

**049.3/25 - Finance and General Purposes 20 January 2025**

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 20 January 2025 be received

**050/25 - Action Tracker – to review progress of previously agreed actions**

The Mayor updated Members on the completed actions that were presented to the Committee.

**051/25 - Budget and Reserves Report 2025/26**

The Head of Corporate Services and Responsible Finance Officer summarised the report provided to Members.

The Town Mayor and Councillor Kotarski thanked Councillors and Officers on behalf of all Members for all of their hard work over the past months which was put into preparing the 2025/26 budget.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED:** That the proposed budget and fees and charges for 2025/26 be approved as recommended by Community Services Committee on 6 January 2025, Grounds and Environmental Services Committee on 13 January 2025 and

Finance and General Purposes Committee on 20 January 2025.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED:** That the proposed ear marked reserves for 2025/26 be approved.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED:** That the 2024/25 forecast underspend of approximately £215,000 be allocated as; General Reserve contribution of £145,871 bringing the level to the minimum requirement; Vehicle Reserve contribution of £40,000 and Grove House Buildings Reserve contribution of £20,000.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED:** That in consequence of the foregoing recommendations, the Town Council issue a precept upon Central Bedfordshire Council of £3,282,168 resulting in a Dunstable Town Council Tax charge of £246.13 for a Band D property per year, being an increase of 11.89%, which equates to an increase of £26.20, £2.18 per month or £0.50 per week.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED:** That the proposed four-year budget be adopted for the purpose of forward planning.

### **052/25 - Community Lottery Report**

The Head of Community Services summarised the report to Members.

Councillor Crawley expressed concerns about whether the Council should be involved in promoting gambling given the harm gambling addiction can cause. It was advised that the risk in terms of gambling addiction from a community lottery is the lowest form of risk from gambling. There would be a limit of 20 tickets per month, per person. Numerous markers would also be continuously monitored by the contractor.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED:**

1.1. That the Council agreed to establish and run a community lottery for Dunstable in partnership with

Gatherwell Ltd. (the External Lottery Manager).

1.2. That the Council approve the spending of up to £5,000 from the general reserve to cover the initial start-up costs, which will be returned to the Town Council over the first 12 to 24 months of the lottery running.

### **053/25 - Annual Council Meeting Report**

The Town Mayor summarised the key points of the report to Members.

It was proposed by Councillor Liz Jones, seconded by Councillor Peter Hollick and

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Sally Kimondo be elected the new Town Mayor of Dunstable for 2025/26.

It was proposed by Councillor Nicholas Kotarski, seconded by Councillor Johnson Tamara and

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Richard Attwell be elected as the new Deputy Town Mayor of Dunstable for 2025/26.

Members noted the plans for the Annual Council Meeting and Mayor Making is to be held on 19 May 2025.

### **054/25 - To receive the minutes of the Dunstable Joint Committee held on 12 December 2024 (to follow)**

The Mayor updated Members that Central Bedfordshire Council had advised that the minutes for the meeting held on 12 December 2024 were not yet available for review.

### **055/25 - To receive reports/updates by Members of Central Bedfordshire Council on matters of interest to the Town Council**

Councillor Crawley informed Members that the 2025/2026 budget for Central Bedfordshire Council was soon to be finalised. Councillor Crawley mentioned that one of the proposed budget cuts would include reducing the opening hours of Dunstable Library on Sundays and Mondays. Further updates will be provided once a decision is made.

Councillor Gurney advised Members that it has unfortunately been proposed to close the Library on a Sunday and Monday in which Monday had been noted as the second busiest day which could have a negative impact on Dunstable residents and local groups.

The Town Mayor advised Members that she would be attending a Central Bedfordshire Council budget briefing meeting on 19 February 2025 on behalf of the Council and invited Members with comments or questions they wish to be raised to please inform her via email.

Members discussed the upcoming change to car parking in the town whereby CBC will be making car parks cashless and the potential negative impact on some residents. Cllr John Gurney informed Members that the decision to do this had been made some months previously.

**056/25 - Date of the next meeting - 7 April 2025 at 7:00 pm**

**The meeting closed at 8:13 PM**