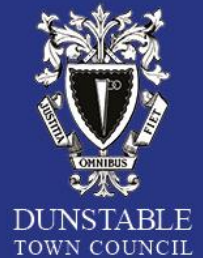


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Paul Hodson, Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Notice of a Meeting of the **Community Services Committee**

Date: **Friday 23 May 2025**

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **Community Services Committee** will be held on **Monday 2 June 2025**, at **Grove House** in the **Council Chamber** 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 4 pm on Friday 30 May 2025.

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.

Please see the below QR code to access the full agenda:



Yours faithfully

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.

AGENDA

132/25 Apologies for Absence

133/25 Declarations of Interest

134/25 Public Question Time

135/25 To agree the minutes of the meeting of 3 March 2025 as an accurate record

Community Services Committee March - Minutes.pdf

136/25 Town Centre

136-25 Information Report Town Centre June.pdf

137/25 Priory House

137-25 Priory House June 2025 2.pdf

138/25 Events

138-25 Events June 2025.pdf

139/25 Grove Corner and Community Engagement

139-25 Youth and Community Report June 2025.pdf

140/25 Older People's Services

140-25 Older People's Services June 2025.pdf

141/25 Beds FA - Peter Newton Pavilion

141-25 Beds FA Report.pdf

141-25 Appendix 1 Beds FA.pdf

142/25 Date of the next meeting - Monday 8 September 2025 at 7.00 pm

To: All Members:

Peter Hollick (Council Member), Wendy Bater (Council Member), Kenson Gurney (Council Member), Matthew Brennan (Council Member), John Gurney (Council Member), Philip Crawley (Council Member), Liz Jones (Council Member), Johnson Tamara (Council Member), Gregory Alderman (Council Member), Louise O'Riordan (Council Member), Trevor Adams (Council Member), Mark Davis (Council Member), Matthew Neall (Council Member), Michelle Henderson (Council Member), Nicholas Kotarski (Council Member), Richard Attwell (Council Member), Robert Blennerhassett (Council Member) and Sally Kimondo (Councillor)

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

HELD ON MONDAY 3 MARCH 2025 FROM 7:00 PM

Present: Councillors Matthew Neall (Vice-Chair) (in the chair), Louise O’Riordan (Town Mayor), Sally Kimondo (Deputy Town Mayor), Robert Blennerhassett, Wendy Bater, Gregory Alderman and Nicholas Kotarski.

In Attendance: Councillor Richard Attwell, Paul Hodson (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), Georgia Pearson (Democratic Services Manager), Gill Peck (Youth and Community Manager) and Lisa Stephens (Cultural Services Manager).

In Attendance (Remotely): Councillors Liz Jones (Chair) and Peter Hollick, Annette Clynes (Town Centre Manager) and Becky Wisbey (Head of Community Services).

Public: Nil

057/25 - Apologies for Absence

Councillors Trevor Adams, Mark Davis and John Gurney and Gina Thanky (Events Officer).

Councillor Jones gave apologies for not being able to attend and chair her last Community Services Committee of the municipal year in person. Councillor Jones expressed her gratitude to all councillors and officers for their support, valued contributions and collaborative approach in ensuring that the town and its residents continue to receive excellent service across the various events, programmes, and services provided by the Council.

058/25 - Declarations of Interest

There were no specific declarations of interest.

059/25 - Public Question Time

There were no questions from the public.

060/25 - To agree the minutes of the meeting of the meeting of 6 January 2025 as an accurate record

The minutes of the meetings of the Community Services Committee held on 6 January 2025 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Vice-Chair.

061/25 - Town Centre Services

The Town Centre Manager highlighted the key points of the report to members.

The Town Ranger and Town Centre team were proud to have achieved multiple

awards at the Loo of the Year Awards 2025 including Platinum Award, Period Dignity Award, Washroom Technician Award, Roll of Honour and the Premier League Award.

It was noted that since the report was written 30 stalls had been booked for the first market of the year on 29 March 2025, with the hope that this number would increase to approximately 35 stalls over the coming weeks.

The Town Centre Manager and the Events Officer had successfully secured the support of Howdens Insurance for the Young Traders Market. Howdens Insurance has generously agreed to sponsor 20 traders by providing them with free stalls on 5 July 2025.

Members were informed that the next Shop Watch would take place on 25 March 2025, which would be the 25th meeting after restarting after Covid.

The bunting for Middle Row had been ordered, featuring the same design as seen on the High Street. The installation was scheduled to take place in mid-March.

There was significant effort put into planning the art display for the festoons. Unfortunately, due to sudden illness the commissioned artists had to pull out, giving the Town Centre Manager only a few weeks to arrange another installation. The Town Centre Manager had been collaborating with Lamps and Tubes, and it was confirmed that the installation would take place on Middle Row in March 2025.

Councillor Hollick inquired about the vacancy rates for Ashton Square and Middle Row, noting that the empty units were owned by Central Bedfordshire Council. There had been no updates. However, Councillor Jones advised that the Dunstable Joint Committee was scheduled to provide an update at the next meeting at the end of March.

062/25 - Events

The Cultural Services Manager summarised the key points in the report.

Members were informed that the lineup for Dunstable Live had been finalised, and the headliner for Party in the Park had been booked. The announcement of this act would be made in the April edition of Talk of the Town.

It was previously requested that officers investigate the possibility of charging an entry fee for the exhibitors at the Classic Motor Rally. A questionnaire had been sent to exhibitors and the results indicated that 40% would not pay to attend and show their cars. After reviewing the comments from the 40% who said no, it was found that if the Council made this a chargeable event, the event would lose around 100 cars based on the 40% who would no longer attend.

On Saturday 15 February, an 'Open Door/Meet the Manager' event was held at Grove Theatre as part of the UKSPF Calling Dunstable project. The event was attended by representatives from Grove Theatre, Dunstable Town Council, Calling Dunstable, NGYT and the BBB group. The aim was to foster more positive

relationships between Grove Theatre and local performers and groups. Officers reported that the event was highly successful, featuring a tour of the building followed by an open and honest conversation. The event was expected to continue in the future, building on the relationships established.

Members were informed that Calling Dunstable would be hosting a Community Arts Day on Sunday 9 March 2025, at Grove Theatre. The event was to feature a variety of workshops, including dance, puppetry, singing, and piano lessons, finishing with a finale performance. Members were encouraged to attend, and seats had been allocated for all members.

Members received a verbal update regarding the Street Party Grant application to celebrate the 80th anniversary of VE Day. Central Bedfordshire Council had agreed to grant free road closures for anyone in Dunstable wishing to apply and host a street party in celebration of VE Day.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: To recommend to the Finance and General Purposes Committee to allocate £1,000 from the 2025/26 civic hospitality budget for ten street parties to mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day within Dunstable.

063/25 - Cultural Services Project UKSPF - Phase 2 Report

The Cultural Services Manager covered this report within the previous Agenda item.

064/25 - Priory House

The Cultural Services Manager summarised the report provided to members and highlighted key information.

Councillor Hollick raised concerns about the delay in the works at Priory House, expressing disappointment over the postponed opening times and potential additional costs. The Head of Community Services informed members that Historic England was currently engaged in serious internal discussions regarding the delays presented by Central Bedfordshire Council's planning processes. The Town Council was working to arrange a meeting with Central Bedfordshire Council's planning officers and Historic England by the end of the month to find a solution to the current hold ups affecting the works at Priory House.

The Town Mayor inquired about the demographic profile of shop item sales and how these sales might be impacted by moving online. It was noted that the demographic has changed significantly and become more diverse. The Cultural Services Manager regularly consults with frequent customers about the shop stock, asking if there are items that are not selling well or things they would like to see more of. Consideration is also given to what stock might appeal to the audience they are not currently reaching. Regarding the transition to online sales, a telephone sales option was being offered, which should not significantly affect sales. Promotions were currently in place to inform regular customers that stock would be moving to Grove House and

online, ensuring they were aware that items would still be available.

065/25 - Grove Corner and Community Engagement

Members noted the report provided which was summarised by the Youth and Community Manager.

Members noted that since the report was written, the attendance figures for the February Half Term Activities were as follows: the swim party was attended by 23 young people, a movie afternoon attended by 10 young people, bowling attended by seven young people, and a games and sports session attended by 16 young people.

Since Monday 17 February, Bennetts Splash Café and Community Hub had been integrated into the Community Services Department. This change provided the service with broader team support and access to expertise in delivering community services within a community development framework and approach. Members were informed that a more detailed report would be presented at the next committee meeting.

Officers had submitted the license application for the Community Lottery and were looking to Launch this at the Annual Council Meeting in May 2025. Working with the project planning guidance from Gatherwell, the Community Engagement Team was compiling a list of good causes to invite to sign up.

066/25 - Older Peoples' Services

The Youth and Community Manager summarised the report provided to members.

It was agreed that the discussion on item 2 would be deferred to a confidential session at the end of the meeting.

Members noted that the over 55s Breakfast Club at Bennetts Café aimed to encourage attendees to become members. The membership fee was £5 per week, which covers food and any speakers or games that may be organised. This project targeted a different group of older individuals who were unable to participate in other services offered.

Due to the increasing popularity of the Rock and Roll event, it was noted that this event would now be held four times a year instead of the current three.

067/25 - Reports from Outside Bodies

South Beds Dial-a-Ride Management Committee - Cllr Peter Hollick

Councillor Hollick advised members that a new bus had been acquired which was hoped to reduce maintenance costs in the future.

Dunstable Town Band - Cllr Robert Blennerhassett

Nothing to report.

Men in Sheds - Cllr Richard Attwell

Councillor Attwell informed members of the Shed were working on a range of items and commissions.

Several new members had joined the shed in recent weeks, including the first female member.

Dunstable Men in Sheds was now a selectable option under the Co-Op Community scheme where loyalty club members can elect a local charity to benefit from shopping there.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: 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 therefore, pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

066.1/25 - Older Peoples' Services

Members were provided with a verbal update progress with efforts to ensure the ongoing provision of the Creasey Park Community Football Centre Lunch Club.

068/25 - Date of the next meeting - Monday 2 June 2025 at 7.00 pm

The meeting closed at 8:35 PM

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 2 JUNE 2025

TOWN CENTRE

Purpose of report: For information

1. MIDDLE ROW MARKETS

1.1. Summer bookings are going well with regular traders securing dates through to November and new young traders joining throughout the year. Twilight bookings will open in June 2025.

1.2. Market bookings to date:

17 May	30 booked
14 June	25 booked
21 June	16 booked
5 July	26 booked

1.3. Event markets are booked for the 14 June – Motor Rally and Truck Convoy, 5 July – Young Traders, 19 July – Party in the Park, 26 July – Dino Day, Friday 15 August and Saturday 16 August – Ashton Square Day.

2. ASHTON SQUARE TOILETS

2.1. A deep clean will be completed in early July by the Town Ranger team and replacement items including baby changer, toilet roll holders and toilet seats will also be in place by early July.

2.2. Dunstable Town Council has applied for Loo of the Year Awards 2025/26. Judging will take place at any time from the end of July to the end of September. Last year the team secured a Platinum Award, Period Dignity, Washroom Technician, Roll of Honour, and Premier League Award for 2025.

3. TOWN CENTRE

3.1. Market events have been booked for the coming months and will be supported by social media to encourage public engagement and attendance. On Saturday 14 June, a joint event will be held in collaboration with Middle Row Markets and the Classic Motor Rally. The event will feature a range of activities including free face painting, as well as live music and dance from Swing Dance MK. The Young Traders

Market on Saturday 5 July has thirteen young traders confirmed to attend. This element of the event is being supported by Howden Insurance, who are sponsoring the young traders' stalls. Dino Day will take place on Saturday 26 July and will be delivered across both The Quadrant Shopping Centre and The Square, creating a town-wide celebration. Both locations will feature themed dinosaur attractions and free family activities throughout the day. Ashton Square Day will be delivered as a two-day event on Friday 15 and Saturday 16 August. The event will highlight local community groups through a dedicated community stage, and Street Food Heroes will participate on the Friday. Across both days, there will be a variety of attractions including free bungee rides and market stalls. The Saturday programme will be extended to include additional stalls and a wider range of free family-friendly activities.

- 3.2. Street Food Heroes returned to The Square on Thursday 20 March, 17 April and 15 May. Feedback from attendees and traders has been overwhelmingly positive. The removal of benches has significantly improved the layout and accessibility of the space. Street Food Heroes will continue the third Thursday of each month from March to September
- 3.3. Vegan Market Co will return to The Square on Saturday 31 May, from 10.30 am to 4.00 pm, along with other additional markets taking place throughout the year as part of the town centre business plan. This event forms part of the Council's strategy to diversify the town centre offer and attract a broader demographic of visitors.
- 3.4. Middle Row Markets will join Party in the Park for the first time. Twenty stalls will be in the park as part of celebrating Middle Row Markets and the 40 Anniversary. All stalls have been successfully booked and paid for.
- 3.5. The annual footfall survey took place on Friday 7 March and Saturday 8 March. Dunstable Town Council footfall data has been collected since 2010. Results showed an increase in footfall, up by 380 with Specsavers having the highest footfall area in the town centre.
- 3.6. Central Bedfordshire Council have commissioned People and Places to carry out another town centre users and town centre businesses survey – it has been over 5 years since the last. To support engagement, the survey has been promoted through social media and posters throughout the town. Additionally, the Town Centre Manager is visiting shops to encourage businesses to take part and share their valuable feedback.
- 3.7. In the last few months Officers have been subject to inappropriate and threatening behaviour. In two incidents the police have been called and statements taken. Officers are also liaising with trading standards in regards to suspicious behaviour at number of businesses/units. This work is ongoing.
- 3.8. Shops and businesses have been invited to take part in a 40th anniversary window competition during the first week of July. All shops must register to take part in the competition that will last one week. Social media will be used for the public vote and judging will also take place in person when dates and details have been confirmed.

4. VACANCY RATES

4.1. The vacancy rates to the end of April 2025 are provided below. The count will be undertaken again at the start of July 2025.

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	29 vacant	11.46%	12.25% count end of Jan 24.

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	26 vacant	12.38%	12.86% count end of Jan 25.

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

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
43	3 vacant	6.97%	9.30% count end of Jan 25

4.7. Units in Grove Park area and Asda.

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
6	0 vacant	0%	0% count end of Jan 25

5. TOWN CENTRE BUSINESS PLAN

5.1. Year two of the business plan has been embedded into the town centre service plan for officers to follow and implement. The new Town Centre Assistant, Adam Watson started on the 6 May. Adam is having a full induction and will start to support the markets and town centre activities over the next few months.

6. HIGH STREET RENTAL AUCTIONS

6.1. A detailed list of potential units that could go forward for High Street Rental Auctions has been created by officers for CBC. The work also involves reviewing the boundaries of the town centre auction area. This initiative aims to help bring long-term vacant shops back into use, supporting the regeneration of the town centre. 12 units have been identified as meeting the criteria, it is now for CBC to consult on the town centre area before any further action can be taken.

7. AUTHOR

7.1 Annette Clynes – Town Centre Manager Annette.clynes@dunstable.gov.uk

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 2 JUNE 2025

PRIORY HOUSE

Purpose of report: For information only
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1. UPDATE

- 1.1. Priory House had a stall at the Around the World event. This was very successful taking just under £800 which was £350 more than St George's Day.
- 1.2. The shop is still selling some items, from Grove House. Customers have been purchasing the Frenchic paint, loose leaf tea, honey and tea time tales tickets. Although sales have reduced significantly it is still good to be able offer these items to our customers.
- 1.3. Officers have been working on sourcing new shop items to sell when the shop is reopened and creating new workshop ideas.

2. PRIORY HOUSE REFURBISHMENT

- 2.1 The repairs to the gift shop roof and guttering are progressing well. The scoping of some additional external works and the internal decoration needed no reopening date had been set.
- 2.2 Officers have now offered the exhibition contract to Creative Core. They will be starting the initial research and development in the next few months.
- 2.3 Officers have given Creative Core a substantial list of contacts and groups to engage with over planning, research and development of the exhibition.
- 2.4 Officers are also conducting research by visiting several museums and exhibitions over the coming weeks to assist Creative Core in development ideas.
- 2.5 Whilst the work is ongoing on the planning of the second floor roof repairs, the consent from CBC has still yet to be formally confirmed. Failure to secure this soon will have a detrimental impact on the project both in terms of time and costs.

3. FINANCIAL

GIFT SHOP TAKINGS EX VAT.

	2024/25	2025/26	Variation 2024/25 to 2025/26
April	£1,759.75	£652.90	-£1,106.85
May	£2,426.56	£734.62	-£1,691.94
TOTAL 1st Quarter	£4,186.31	£1,387.52	-£2,798.79

- 3.1 The main source of income has come from the stalls at St George's Day and Around the World, but it is evident that the closure of the shop is having a significant impact on income. Contractors are working hard to ensure that the shop opens as soon as possible, however necessary works that require the shop to be closed must be a priority.

4. AUTHOR

- 4.1 Lisa Stephens - Cultural Services Manager
Lisa.stephens@dunstable.gov.uk

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 2 JUNE 2025

EVENTS

Purpose of report: For information, and to approve the proposed events programme for 2026/27.

1. ACTION RECOMMENDED

- 1.1. Members are asked to approve the events programme for 2026/27 as detailed in section 5 of the report.

2. PAST EVENTS

2.1 St George's Day Celebrations

The St George's Day celebration event was a success, with over 3,000 visitors throughout the day. Feedback received via Facebook, as well as through SurveyMonkey, has been incredibly positive. In addition to the programme of entertainment and activities, the event featured seven local business stalls, two catering vendors and three community groups/charities. All participating traders and community groups reported that they traded very well and enjoyed the public engagement with the community.

2.2 Around the World

The Around the World event went extremely well, with an estimated attendance of 4,000 across the day. Although the day began with cold weather, conditions improved later, helping to add to the fun yet relaxed atmosphere on site. Feedback received through surveys has been very positive. Visitors particularly enjoyed the wide range of free activities, performances, and the diverse cultural displays and workshops. These elements encouraged families to stay on site for longer periods.

The interactive chalk art on The Square was also well attended and helped draw people across the road to Middle Row Markets. Stallholders, caterers, community groups, charities, and performers have reported that they enjoyed the event and valued the interaction with visitors.

3. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR 2025

3.1 Dunstable Classic Motor Rally - Saturday 14 June (10 am to 4 pm)

To date over 200 vehicles have registered to enter the Dunstable Classic Motor Rally. The event has also now been sponsored by last year's sponsor *Regtransfers*. Similarly to last year, the event will consist of live music with performances from; The Memphis Belles, Vince Lewis and Silas performing a range of genres from the

1940s to present day. In addition, themed activities have also been booked which include the following activities:

- Crazy Golf
- Children's arts and crafts
- Teaching Talons animal encounter
- Small Children's rides
- Living History Character Trail
- WWII and The Blitz with Lieutenant Palmer
- 'A Royal Night Out' – Unbound Theatre

There will also be a number of stalls and catering units, including four business stalls, six charity/community groups, an outdoor bar and three catering units. Priory House will also be having a stall at this event.

3.2 **Dunstable Live - Saturday 28 June (2 pm to 8 pm)**

To link in with Dunstable Town Council's 40th Anniversary the theme for Dunstable is 'Live Aid' celebrating some of the biggest artists from 1985. The line-up of the event is as follows:

2.00 pm to 3.00 pm: The U2 Experience

3.30 pm to 4.30 pm: Andy Crosbie is Rocketman (Elton John Tribute)

5.00 pm to 6.00 pm: Billy West as Freddie Mercury

6.30 pm to 8.00 pm: The Bowie Experience (David Bowie Tribute)

Penrose Estate Agents is this year's sponsor for Dunstable Live. As part of their involvement, Penrose will be attending the event bringing along a climbing wall, where all proceeds raised will be donated towards the Mayor's chosen charities.

A new addition to this year's event is an accessible viewing platform. The platform has space for 10 wheelchair users along with a companion, alongside accessible seating, available on a first come, first served basis.

3.3 **Sunday Concerts – Sunday 29 June, 27 July, 17 August (12 noon and 2.30 pm)**

This year the schedule for the Sunday Concerts will feature different genres of music on stage alongside brass bands. The table below shows the confirmed line-up.

Sunday 29 June	12 noon	Jazz Town
Sunday 29 June	2.30 pm	Dunstable Salvation Army Band
Sunday 27 July	12 noon	Last of the Summer Ukuleles
Sunday 27 July	2.30 pm	Dunstable Town Band
Sunday 17 August	12 noon	Luton Concert Band
Sunday 17 August	2.30 pm	Prestige Trio Jazz Band

The remaining Sunday Concert slots for August, which were outstanding at the time of writing for the March Committee have now been confirmed. The 12 noon performance will feature the Luton Concert Band who will be performing a mixture of traditional, popular, musical theatre and classical brass band pieces. The final concert of the series will be delivered by the Prestige Trio Jazz Band - a versatile ensemble performing a selection of swing and jazz music. The group features male

and female vocals and a range of instruments including keyboard, saxophone, and trumpet. This year's concerts will have tea/coffee cake concessions provided by the Rotary Club and Friends of Priory House and Gardens.

3.4 **Priory Pictures - Saturday 5 July (From 12 noon)**

To link in with Dunstable Town Council's 40th Anniversary the *Back to the Future* trilogy will be screened at Priory Pictures as the original film's release date coincides with the 40th anniversary of the Town Council. The line-up for the event is as follows:

12 noon: Adapted Screening – Back to the Future (PG)

2.30 pm: Back to the Future (PG)

5.00 pm: Back to the Future Part II (12)

7.30 pm: Back to the Future Part III (PG)

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

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

3.5 **Party in the Park - Saturday 19 July (12 noon to 8 pm)**

Plans for this year's Party in the Park are progressing well. The main stage will showcase a varied line-up of music and dance performances from local groups and individual artists. Acts confirmed to date include Stardust Theatre Company, Brooks Academy of Irish Dancing, The Limestones, Akshay Unnikrishnan, and Agnieszka Murchie.

As in previous year, Octave has been allocated a one-hour community performance slot. This year, Octave's slot will feature 'The Limestones', a young local indie band. In addition, two performance slots under the Calling Dunstable initiative have been confirmed, featuring local artists Agnieszka Murchie and Akshay Unnikrishnan.

The evening performance will start with 'Definitely Could Be Oasis' followed by a 90-minute set from this year's headliner, Craig Charles with his funk and soul DJ set. The event will also consist of an outdoor bar, catering and activities throughout the day including the free Kidzone area. An accessible viewing platform, sponsored by *Penrose Estate Agents*, will be available for attendees.

New for this year, Middle Row Market will be joining the event bringing over 20 stalls on the day.

3.6 **Soapbox Derby - Saturday 9 August (From 11 am)**

To date, two teams have registered to enter the Soapbox Derby race. Officers have contacted, invited and promoted the event to charities, not-for-profits, community groups via email, social media and by visiting local businesses to promote the sign

up for the event. While officers have offered advice and support on kart construction, there has been limited feedback from registered teams regarding their progress, and little indication as to why other interested groups have not yet committed.

The closing date for entries is Monday 2 June. As this year is the first year the Soapbox Derby is being held, officers feel that a minimum of six entries are necessary for the event to proceed. Officers are in conversations with some local businesses and based on these conversations are hopeful that the teams will enter. Should entries be close to the number by the deadline, the entry period will be extended for a further two/three weeks. If the minimum number is still not met after the extension, the Soapbox Derby will be cancelled and the event will revert back to a Priory Pictures event. This change would incur minimal cancellation costs, as the infrastructure plans would be adjusted to convert into a Priory Pictures.

Catering stalls and an outdoor bar have already been booked, and a license has now been secured for 'A Minecraft Movie' which is scheduled to be screened following the race.

4. VE DAY CELEBRATIONS 2025

To mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day, Dunstable Town Council allocated £1.000 to support residents, community groups and charities to organise local street parties. Ten £100 grants were made available, and eight applications were received that met the eligibility criteria, including the requirement for the street party to take place in Dunstable. Of the eight successful applicants, seven street parties took place between Saturday 3 May to Sunday 11 May. One event was cancelled due to the organiser's ill health. The street parties have been reported as a success, with participation from a range of organisers including residents, charities such as Bedfordshire Rural Community Charity, and care homes including Priory View and Ridgeway Lodge.

5. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR 2026 ONWARDS

- 5.1 Members are asked to approve the proposed 2026/27 events programme as detailed in 5.2. Due to the wide range of events held across the country, officers have found that when trying to book acts and activities, facilitators have already been booked far in advance. Officers would like to ensure that the best acts/entertainment and activities can be secured.
- 5.2 The table below details the proposed event dates for 2026. It is proposed that there are no significant changes to the timings of any of the established events:

Proposed Event Programme for 2026:

Event and venue	Date 2026
St George's Day (Priory Gardens)	Saturday 18 April 11.00 am to 4.00 pm
Around the World (PG)	Saturday 16 May 10.30 am 4.30 pm
Dunstable Classic Motor Rally (PG)	Saturday 13 June

	10.00 am to 4.00 pm
Dunstable Live (Grove House Gardens)	Saturday 27 June 3 pm to 8 pm
Sunday Concerts (GHG)	Sunday 21 June, 26 July & 9 August 12.00 noon & 2.30 pm
Priory Pictures (PG)	Saturday 4 July From 12.00 noon
Party in the Park (GHG)	Saturday 18 July 12.00 noon to 8.00 pm
Soapbox Derby/Priory Pictures (PG)	Saturday 15 August From 12.00 noon
Priory Proms in the Park (PG)	September (Date and Times TBC from BBC)
Christmas Carols and Torchlight Procession (TS)	Friday 27 November From 7.00 pm

(PG) Priory Gardens

(GHG) Grove House Gardens

(TS) The Square

- 5.3 The Soapbox Derby has been included in the proposed 2026 events programme. However, a final decision on whether the Soapbox Derby will go ahead will be made following an evaluation after this year's event which will be brought to committee. The review will determine whether it is feasible for a Soapbox Derby to proceed in 2026, or if the event should instead revert back to a Priory Pictures format. Provisional dates have been identified for the 2026 programme to enable officers to begin early-stage planning, inform key infrastructure providers, and obtain indicative quotations. However, no bookings or financial commitments will be made until after the 2026/27 budget has been agreed. This approach ensures that no financial risk is incurred at this stage.

6 AUTHOR

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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
MONDAY 2 JUNE 2025
GROVE CORNER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Purpose of Report: For information

1. GROVE CORNER FIGURES

- 1.1 Grover Corner received 323 visits from young people between 10 February 2025 and 7 May 2025. Grove Corner was closed on Friday 18 April, Monday 21 April and Monday 5 May due to the bank holidays.

Grove Corner received 561 visits from young people between 10 February 2024 and 13 May 2024.

- 1.2 Pokémon received 212 visits from young people between 11 February 2025 and 6 May 2025. Pokémon was closed for three sessions, due to the school holidays.

Pokémon sessions received 269 visits from young people between 13 February 2024 and 14 May 2024.

- 1.3 Grove Corner now has 1,465 Facebook followers and Grove Corner's Instagram has 499 followers.

2. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

- 2.1 Officers are aware that both sessions are quieter than last year. However, since April 2024, the detached team have been delivering an additional 9 hours per week youth work in Dunstable East. Therefore, despite the sessions in Grove Corner being quieter, this could be due to more young people now being able to access sessions that are their preferred option. By giving young people the opportunity and choice to choose if they attend centre based sessions or detached sessions, it means that more young people's needs are catered for.

- 2.2 Officers promote the centre based sessions to young people via different platforms. This includes word of mouth, by visiting schools, on the website, through WhatsApp broadcast and during detached sessions. Officers will be planning some assemblies in the coming weeks at different schools within the town to promote sessions.

- 2.3 Officers have been running consultations with young people who attend sessions. The sessions for those aged 8-13 at Pokémon and 10-13 at Juniors are currently the busiest and most popular sessions. Officers have been speaking to young people aged 13+ who attend Grove Corner and have been told by young people that they enjoy the facilities available, find the centre accessible and that it caters for their needs.
- 2.4 Officers took five young people on the bus to Milton Keynes, to take part in a locked in room experience, followed by lunch. This trip allowed the cohort who attended a chance to learn how to use public transport and supported the group to learn how to practice and develop teamwork skills. The activity was enjoyed by those who attended.
- 2.5 Officers continue to work with The Dunstable Centre to run sessions three times per week from the centre. The detached team visit the centre for one hour per session, three times per week. Officers are currently working with a small focus group to develop activities for the upcoming weeks.

3. DETACHED YOUTH WORK

- 3.1 Between 8 February 2025 and 7 May 2025, officers have delivered 21 detached activities and engagement sessions across Dunstable, excluding Dunstable East. The areas covered include, Brewers Hill Recreation Ground, Mayfield Shops, Bennett Memorial Recreation Ground, Mentmore Recreation Ground, Eleanor's Cross, Ashton Square and The Quadrant.
- 3.2 Since 8 February 2025 and 7 May 2025, officers continue to deliver nine hours per week detached youth work in Dunstable East. Officers are currently working three hours per week in The Dunstable Centre, and continue to visit Ridgeway Avenue, White Lion Retail Park, Kingsbury Recreation Ground, Grove Skate Park and Peter Newton Recreation Ground.
- 3.3 Between 8 February and 7 May 2025, officers have engaged with 888 young people by headcount. 565 of these young people have been in Dunstable East and the remaining 323 have been in the rest of the town. Therefore, it is worth noting, the youth team have had **1,423** interactions with young people between 8 February and 7 May 2025; through centre-based youth work and detached youth work.
- 3.4 On Friday 2 May, the youth café run the final session at Bennett's Café and Community Hub. This space has been enjoyed by the young people who have used it over the winter season. Officers are currently making plans to reopen the youth café from September and are working on ways to develop this space into a functional youth café once per week. The team will be working with young people in the coming weeks to plan and develop this project, ready for it returning in the new academic year.

- 3.5 Officers have concluded working with young people on the youth business awards. Young people visited a variety of businesses over several weeks, to rate their experiences of customer service, value for money, overall experience and expressed their feedback to the detached team. Officers are now working with the Town Centre Manager and Marketing and Communications Officer to deliver certificates to those businesses who took part, and the overall winner.
- 3.6 Officers are currently in the process of planning the detached summer activities programme for those aged 11+. This will run throughout the summer in various locations, and a variety of activities will be delivered.
- 3.7 **It is important for members to consider that the detached youth work is currently only externally funded until the end of March 2026. Officers will be commencing discussions with CBC before the summer break to discuss continuation of funding. However, even if CBC funding continues, this only funds two nights a week. As part of the budget setting process members will need to decide what level (if any) of detached youth work they would like to see from the Town Council.**

4. SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1 Officers facilitated four litter picks. On Thursday 20 March, with The Vale Academy and on Thursday 27 March with Beecroft Academy. Officers also facilitated two litter picks with Ardley Hill in May and are currently planning to do more, whilst also continuing to support local schools to borrow litter pick equipment to do their own.
- 4.2 Officers are currently in conversations with Wildlife Trust and St Augustine's Academy to plan the annual wellbeing walk over Blows Downs. This will take place in September.
- 4.3 Officers are going to contact schools to plan assemblies to promote Grove Corner, detached youth work and the summer activity programmes. Officers will also be sending marketing to all schools, to promote the summer activity programmes.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1 Officers continue to plan summer activities for those aged 10 and under. Officers will be facilitating the following:

Tuesday 22 July	Schools Out Party at Bennett Memorial Recreation Ground
Friday 25 July	Inflatable Day at Grove House Gardens
Thursday 31 July	Seaside Day at Bennett Memorial Recreation Ground
Wednesday 6 August	Let's Play at St Augustine's Academy
Thursday 14 August	Adventure and Action Day at Priory Gardens
Thursday 21 August	Learn to skate and scoot at Grove Skate Park

5.2 Officers have picked the above locations based on knowing the footfall of each location and through experience and consultation with those who attend the summer activities.

5.3 Officers will be running a summer project called Happy and Active Together at Bennett's Memorial Recreation Ground. The project will be for those aged 55+ due to funding criteria. The project will run on Thursday mornings and will be free to attend. The project will be encouraging community members to come together and take part in a variety of exercise programmes, over 12 weeks.

6. BENNETT'S SPLASH, CAFÉ AND COMMUNITY HUB

6.1 The Hub has had eight organised activities between 1 March and 30 April 2025. These activities have included: various Home Ed. activities, Chatty Café and breakfast club.

6.2 Between 1 March 2025 and 30 April 2025, there have been four hirers using the space.

6.3 Bennett's Splash, Café and Community Hub taking comparison excluding Vat 2024 comparison to 2025.

	2024	2025
February	Closed for winter period	£1,474.78
March	Closed for winter period	£2,517.18
April	Closed for winter period	£2,641.96
TOTAL		£6,633.92

6.4 Due to the unexpected warmer weather, officers were able to facilitate a soft launch of the splash park. The splash park officially reopened on Monday 5 May.

6.5 Over the next three months, officers plan to carry out consultation with those who use the splash park and café. Officers will be working to set up a Friends of Group, and plan to do a litter pick scheme over the peak season. Officers will be exploring funding opportunities to facilitate further community projects and ensure the summer operates as smoothly as possible.

6.6 Repairs to the fire damage sustained to the cafe will commence on Monday 2 June. This will not affect the running of either the cafe or splash park. Officers will make the public aware these works will be taken place.

7. COMMUNITY LOTTERY

- 7.1 The Dunstable Community Lottery was launched at the Annual Council Meeting on 19 May 2025 and has been promoted on social media, through Talk of The Town and the website. At the time of writing 16 good causes have signed up, with 33 players, with 81 tickets sold so far generating **£2,106.00** for good causes and the central fund. Officers will continue to promote to the community and voluntary sector to get good causes signed and to the wider public to buy tickets, although largely this is for the good causes to promote.

8. AUTHOR(S)

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**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
MONDAY 2 JUNE 2025
OLDER PEOPLE'S SERVICES**

Purpose of Report: For information

1. GOOD COMPANIONS CLUB

1.1 The Good Companions Club currently has 22 members.

1.2 The group have enjoyed several activities since the last report. The group have had an Easter party with live music from a local singer, and a VE Day party, with live entertainment. The group have been bowling, have had a talk on eye health care and taken part in music bingo.

1.3 Officers have several upcoming activities planned for the group, this includes Teaching Talons Animal Encounters attending, medic dogs visiting and a trip bowling.

2. THE LUNCH BUNCH (PRIORY VIEW)

2.1 Creasey Park Football Club Lunch Club has now moved to its new venue, Priory View. Therefore, the group have renamed themselves, The Lunch Bunch.

2.2 There have been some teething issues since the group has moved venue. The week prior to the lunch club starting, the catering company that Priory View had liaised with, pulled out at the last minute due to staffing changes. Therefore, officers contacted many catering companies to resolve the issue.

2.3 During the interim period, Café Nostalgia kindly agreed to support the catering, and therefore throughout April, they catered and delivered the food weekly.

2.4 A new catering company, C:R Catering, began to cater for the group from Wednesday 14 May.

2.5 Some of the existing lunch club members have found the transition and change difficult, and therefore during the first few weeks, officers have been working hard to support members to feel comfortable in their new setting.

2.6 Due to the issues with the catering, it has meant there has been a delay in officers being able to start new members and work through the current waiting list. Officers from June will be slowly beginning to start new members to join the group. There is currently an existing waiting list of 20 people, so officers have been contacting those on the waiting list to offer spaces.

2.7 Since moving venue, residents from Priory View have also begun to complete applications to join the lunch club. Therefore, officers have been speaking to Priory View staff to explore if there is a need for Priory View to run their own lunch club on a different day of the week. This is in the early stages of discussion. The Youth and Community Team would not have capacity to run an additional lunch club per week, however, could support Priory View in the initial set up of a lunch club, that Priory View facilitate, should this be something they wish to pursue.

2.8 Officers are aware there may continue to be some teething issues as the group settle into their new venue, whilst also supporting residents of Priory View to feel comfortable with the group being in their home. This is an ongoing piece of work, and officers are also working closely with the staff at Priory View to ensure all parties are happy, with regular review meetings planned.

3. OVER 55s BREAKFAST CLUB

3.1 The over 55s breakfast club continues to be popular. Those attending have expressed verbally that they are enjoying the variety of breakfast options available and have found the group a space to socialise with others, make new friends, and to take part in a variety of activities, including, speakers visiting the group and in house games and activities. There are two spaces available currently for this group.

4. ROCK AND ROLL

4.1 Officers are currently planning to facilitate up to four Rock and Roll events before the end of March 2026. Officers are currently planning a Rock and Roll event, and tickets will be advertised and on sale once details are finalised.

5. BIG LUNCH

5.1 Officers released tickets for Big Lunch on Monday 14 April. Within five hours, all 175 tickets were allocated. There is now a waiting list of 36 people for the event. Officers are currently exploring whether there is a way to increase the event to accommodate the waiting list.

6. FOOD CLUB

6.1 Officers are currently in the process of setting up a monthly food club. The aim of this club will be for officers to support people aged 55+ to take part in a monthly meet up at different restaurants; with the overall aim of volunteers taking over the facilitation of this

group.

6.2 Officers will be advertising the food club and will work with the group over the upcoming months to support them to form. Officers will initially be involved in going along to the food club and supporting them with finding local restaurants and cafes to visit.

7. COFFEE MORNINGS

7.1 Officers will be resuming running monthly coffee mornings/afternoons from June. These will run in different locations within the town each month.

7.2 Officers are keen to ensure that the community engagement work that the town council delivers builds capacity and is not done to people or for people but is done with people. Officers, therefore, over the coming months, will be exploring if they can recruit volunteers to take over the running of the monthly coffee mornings. Officers would support the volunteers once recruited, and would work with them to develop coffee mornings, before taking a step back and equipping the volunteers to run the sessions fully.

8. AUTHOR(S)

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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 2 JUNE 2025****PETER NEWTON PAVILION – BEDFORDSHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION**

Purpose of Report:	To provide an annual report on the running and management of the Peter Newton Pavilion by the Bedfordshire Football Association.
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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In 2003, Dunstable Town Council agreed to Bedfordshire Football Association being given a lease to manage the Peter Newton Pavilion. At the time, it was agreed that the Council would be kept up to date with the running and the management of the centre. Since this date, the committee has received a formal report each year detailing the facility management and confirming that the terms of the lease are being met.

2. POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND BUILDING MANAGEMENT

- 2.1 Bedfordshire Football Association has provided copies of relevant licenses and Members may wish to note that the building and the Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) is insured by Dunstable Town Council the cost of which is re-charged to Bedfordshire FA. They have also provided evidence to show that they are continuing to manage the facility at a level which matches lease expectations, ensuring that health and safety issues, water and fire risk management is in place, together with the annual servicing of the boiler.

3. CENTRE HIRE

- 3.1 Bedfordshire Football Association has confirmed that they continue to attract and maintain their regular hirers (eight different bookings). They also attract private hirers and occasional users in the current year (25/26 there are 54 bookings).

4. FINANCE

- 4.1 Bedfordshire Football Association has submitted an income and expenditure sheet for the Peter Newton Pavilion (See Appendix 1). It shows an operating profit of £7,005, this is down on last year's profit by £3,325. Bedfordshire FA are yet to meet the agreed threshold of £25,000 profit for sharing any proceeds with DTC.

5. APPENDICES

- 5.1 Appendix 1 - Income and expenditure Peter Newton Pavilion 2024/25

6. AUTHOR

- 6.1 Becky Wisbey – Head of Community Services
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PNP (County Lounge) Income & Expenditure April 24 - March 2025

Income	24-25
Hall Hire	£38,592
Drink Sales	£36,632
	£75,224

Expenditure		
Bar Supplies	£15,844	
Salaries	£34,275	
Business Rates	£931	
Utilities	£9,292	
Administration costs	£2,255	
Insurance	£2,041	
Repairs & maintenance	£3,581	
	£68,219	