Dunstable Town Council

Grove House, 76 High Street North, Dunstable, Beds, LU6 1NF

PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETING

Finance and General Purposes Committee

Thursday, 12 November 2026

Dear All,

Notice is hereby given of a public meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee to be held at 7:00 PM on Monday, 23 November 2026 in the Council Chamber, Grove House, 76 High Street North.

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. To submit a question, please contact the Council at democratic@dunstable.gov.uk or call 01582 513000 by 4 pm on the Friday immediately before the meeting.

This meeting will be filmed, livestreamed and will be made available for repeated public 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 to Dunstable Town Council

Apologies for Absence

1. Declarations of Interest

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Public Question Time

4. To agree the minutes of the meeting of 21 September 2026 as an accurate record

To resolve that the minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 21 September 2026, having been circulated, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair (LGA 1972 Schedule 12 para 41).

5. Action Tracker

To receive updates on previous actions

6. Corporate Compliance and Facilities Report

7. Corporate Policies Reports

7.1 Fire Safety Policy Report

7.2 Co-option Policy Report

8. Reference up from Community Services Committee and Grounds and Environmental Services Committee

Budget Report

9. Finance Report

10. Corporate Services Budget Report

11. Marketing and Communications Report

12. Town and Parish Council Charter Report

13. Reference up from Personnel Sub-Committee

Policies Report

14. Reports from Outside Organisations

Citizen's Advice Management Committee – Councillor Attwell
Dunstable International Town Twinning Association – Town Mayor and Councillors Hollick and Kenson Gurney

Hospice at Home Management Committee – Councillor Wendy Bater
Ashton Almshouses Charity – Councillors Hollick and Alderman
Ashton Schools Foundation – Councillors Hollick and Alderman
Chew's Foundation – Councillors Brennan and Kenson Gurney
Poor's Land Charity – Councillors Tamara and Bater
Lockington Charity and Marshe Charity – Councillors Tamara and Kimondo
Dunstable and District Scout Council Executive – Councillor Kotarski

15. Exclusion of Public and Press

To RESOLVE that, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s.1(2), the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

16. Reference up from Community Services Committee *(Exempt)*

Staffing Report

17. Dunstable Busway/Court Drive Pocket Park Report *(Exempt)*

18. Date of the Next Meeting

Monday 25 January 2026 at 7 pm

APPENDIX I — Public Documents

---

4. To agree the minutes of the meeting of 21 September 2026 as an accurate record

Finance and General Purposes Committee-Draft-Minutes.pdf

5. Action Tracker

5. Action Tracker (1).pdf

6. Corporate Compliance and Facilities Report

6. Corporate Compliance and Facilities Report November 2026.pdf
6. Corporate Compliance and Facilites Report Appendix 1 - Corporate Risk Register.pdf
6 Corporate Compliance and Facilities Report Appendix 2 - Corporate and Financial Risk Management Policy.pdf
6 Corporate Compliance and Facilities Report Appendix 3 - Business Continuity Plan.pdf

7.1 Fire Safety Policy Report

7.1 Fire Safety Policy Report.pdf
7.1 Fire Safety Policy Appendix 1.pdf

7.2 Co-option Policy Report

7.2 Co-option Policy Report.pdf
7.2 Co-option policy - Appendix 1.pdf

9. Finance Report

9. Finance Report 23 November 2026.pdf
9. Finance Report FGP 23.11.26 - Appendix 1 - Budget Summary.pdf
9. Finance Report FGP 23.11.26 - Appendix 2 - Reserves Summary.pdf

10. Corporate Services Budget Report

10. Corporate Services Budget Report November 2026.pdf
10. Corporate Services Draft Budget - Appendix 1.pdf

11. Marketing and Communications Report

11. Marketing and Communications Report.pdf

12. Town and Parish Council Charter Report

12. Central Bedfordshire Town and Parish Council Charter.pdf
12. Draft Central Bedfordshire Town and Parish Council Charter Appendix 1.pdf

13. Reference up from Personnel Sub-Committee

13. Referral Report from Personnel Sub-Committee.pdf

Pending supporting documents

Item 8. Reference up from Community Services Committee and Grounds and Environmental Services Committee — Report to Follow (no document supplied)

Dunstable Town Council — MINUTES

Finance and General Purposes Committee — Monday, 21 September 2026

Published: Thursday, 12 November 2026

Attendance

Present: Councillors Tamara (Chair), Alderman, Attwell, Brennan, Davis, J Gurney, K Gurney, Henderson, Hollick, Moulster, Neall

Apologies: Councillor Collins

Also present: Paul Hodson, Katie Williams, Lisa Scheder, Georgia Pearson

Public: 1

253/26 Declarations of Interest

There were no specific declarations of interest

254/26 Public Question Time

Nick James of Greensand Community Energy attended and addressed the Committee in connection with a motion submitted by Councillor Brennan. Mr James explained that Greensand Community Energy is a non-profit volunteer organisation working to assist communities and organisations in the mid-Bedfordshire area to reduce their reliance on fossil fuels. He outlined the organisation's ambitions to support local bodies in making that transition.

255/26 To agree the minutes of the meeting of 15 June 2026 as an accurate record

The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 15 June 2026 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

256/26 Action Tracker

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive summarised the Action Tracker items to members.

Councillor Hollick informed members that initial discussions had taken place regarding a potential visit of six representatives from Germany, following an invitation received earlier in the year. Formal invitations had not yet been issued but would be sent before the end of the calendar year.

An update was provided regarding the delivery of Talk of the Town. Members were advised that the previously reported delivery issues had been resolved. However, residents and Members were encouraged to report any future concerns, including non-delivery or duplicate deliveries, to enable officers to investigate these with the distribution contractor.

257/26 Motion from Councillor Brennan

Councillor Brennan presented the motion to members.

In presenting the motion, Councillor Brennan advised that no specific decisions were being sought at this stage. The purpose of the motion was to authorise officers to enter into discussions with Greensand Community Energy to explore opportunities for supporting energy generation initiatives within the town. Any proposals arising from those discussions would be reported back to Council for consideration and decision at a future meeting.

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: that officers engage with the voluntary group Greensand Community Energy, and explore any possible opportunities for community owned energy generation projects using council owned facilities or land, to help realise the Council's ambitions around renewable energies in line with the corporate plan objective

258/26 Marketing and Communications Report

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive outlined the key aspects of the report for Members.

Members were advised that the Council's social media presence continued to grow, with Facebook followers exceeding 17,000. It was noted that the Council remained the only Town Council with the highest number of Facebook followers.

259/26 Corporate Compliance and Facilities Report

The Corporate Performance and Compliance Manager summarised the report to members.

Since writing the report, an update was provided to members advising that a meeting had been booked for 28 September, where CBC would attend Grove House in person as a part of the pre application process for Grove House Building works. It was considered encouraging that the meeting would take place on site, and Members were advised that a further update would be provided at the next meeting.

Members were advised that consideration was being given to holding a further wedding venue open day event later in the year to promote twilight wedding packages available.

260/26 Corporate Plan Update Report

The Corporate Performance and Compliance Manager updated members, which detailed progress against those objectives, falling within the remit of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Members queried the KPI relating to income generated from sources other than Council Tax. Officers explained that the original target had been set when the Council operated Creasey Park Community Football Centre and included income from football bookings, catering and bar sales. Since the Council’s management contract ceased for these premises, the target was no longer achievable. However, Members were advised that the original target would remain within the Corporate Plan for comparison purposes.

Members discussed the staff retention KPI and noted that the reported figure had been affected by the retirement of two long-serving employees. Concern was expressed that retirements should not necessarily be viewed negatively within staff retention statistics. Officers agreed to review the calculation methodology and confirm whether the measure had been reported correctly.

Members noted on the Residents' Satisfaction Survey KPI, that too few residents had responded to the survey for the results to be considered reliable. Previous efforts to increase responses through social media and Talk of the Town had limited success. Members discussed using an external company to carry out a larger survey and suggested conducting a full residents' survey every four years to provide a reliable benchmark, with other engagement activities taking place in between.
Officers agreed to include a suggested budget in the 2027/28 draft budget to present at the next committee meeting.

ACTION: To include a suggested budget for an external company to carry out a larger survey and research in the 2027/28 draft budget - The Head of Corporate Services and RFO

ACTION - To review and amend the staff retention KPI - The Head of Corporate Services and RFO

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

261/26 Finance Report

The Head of Corporate Services and RFO highlighted the key parts of the report to members.

Members were updated that, since writing the report, officers had been in communication with the External Auditors, and further information had been submitted. Officers are hopeful that it will be completed by the deadline of 30 September.

Members noted that the annual pay award had been agreed for 2026/7 at 3.3%.

It was proposed, seconded and:

RESOLVED:

1.1) To note the revenue budget position and year end forecasts for the current financial year, to 31 July 2026

1.2) To note the Council's earmarked reserves as at 31 July 2026

1.3) To note current investments as at 31 August 2026

1.4) To note the financial governance update

1.5) To note and confirm the current Direct Debits as at September 2026

1.6) To note the pay award for 2026/2027

1.7) To note the current position of the Internal and External Audits

262/26 Reference up from Personnel Sub-Committee

The Head of Corporate Services and RFO summarised the report to members.

The Committee was asked to adopt the Violence and Aggression at Work Policy and approve the amendments to the reviewed policies as detailed within the referral report.

It was proposed, seconded and:

RESOLVED: i)that the adoption of the Violence and Aggression at Work Policy be approved
ii)that the acceptance of the reviewed policy amendments be approved

263/26 Reports from Outside Organisations

Citizen's Advice Management Committee – Councillor Attwell

Councillor Attwell advised members that the demand for the service remained high, with increasing numbers of residents seeking support. Members were advised that many clients faced digital exclusion and required significant assistance to access online services and benefit applications. As a result, advisers were often required to spend considerable time supporting individual clients through the process. It was noted that Ian Porter had retired as Chair and that John Kane had taken over the role.

Dunstable International Town Twinning Association – Town Mayor and Councillors Hollick and Kenson Gurney

It was noted that there was no further information to add beyond the update provided earlier under the Action Tracker item.

Hospice at Home Management Committee – Councillor Wendy Bater

No Update

Ashton Almshouses Charity – Councillors Hollick and Alderman

A meeting was scheduled for November, and an update would be provided following that meeting.

Ashton Schools Foundation – Councillors Hollick and Alderman

Councillor Hollick advised that an extraordinary meeting had recently been held to amend the number of

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

representatives serving on the committee. The change had been agreed without issue.

Chew's Foundation – Councillors Brennan and Kenson Gurney

Councillor Kenson Gurney reported that the most recent meeting had been particularly well attended, with approximately twelve people present compared to lower attendance levels in previous years. It was advised that Dunstable Little Theatre had delivered a presentation on its youth work programme and the work being undertaken to encourage greater participation by young people.

It was also reported that 179 donations had been made for School Uniforms.

Poor's Land Charity – Councillors Tamara and Bater

No Update

Lockington Charity and Marshe Charity – Councillors Tamara and Kimondo

No Update

Dunstable and District Scout Council Executive – Councillor Kotarski

No Update

264/26 Exclusion of Public and Press

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 it was therefore AGREED that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

265/26 Cemetery Matters - Verbal Update

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive Provided members with a verbal update

266/26 Date of the Next Meeting

23 November 2026 at 7pm

The meeting closed at 20:30.

Signed: _____

Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Date: _____

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Committee	Minute	Date	Action	Action Full	Responsible	Update	Status
						AGENDA ITEM 5	
FGP	048/26	26/01/26	Reports from Outside Organisations	Town Twinning - Town Clerk to meet with Councillor Peter Hollick	Town Clerk and Chief Executive	Cllr Hollick and the TCCE have met. The Dunstable Twiinning issued a press release seeking interest in twinning, with no response to date. The Council will now write to the two twin towns to seek their ongoing support.	**In Progress**
FGP	195/26	15/06/26	Dunstable Mayoral Fund	Members requested that officers provide a more detailed report to FGP later on in the year on the Mayoral Fund and how Dunstable Town Council would become the sole trustee of the charity, within section 1.2 of the report	The Town Clerk and Chief Executive and the Head of Corporate Services and RFO		**Ongoing**
FGP	260/26	21/09/26	Corporate Plan Update Report	To review and amend the staff retention KPI	Head of Corporate Services and RFO	This has been amended and the Annual Report has the accurate information included	**Completed**
FGP	260/26	21/09/26	Corporate Plan Update Report	To include a suggested budget for an external company to carry out a larger survey and research in the 2027/28 draft budget	Head of Corporate Services and RFO	This has been added to the budget for 2027/28 for consideration by this committee in the November Cycle	**Completed**

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2026

CORPORATE COMPLIANCE AND FACILITIES REPORT

Purpose of report, to:

1.1) To update members regarding Corporate Compliance and Facilities.
1.2) To note the updates to the Corporate Risk Register, Corporate and Financial Risk Management Policy and Business Continuity Plan.
1.3) To assess the significant risk to achieving the Councils objectives and review the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended to:

1.1 Adopt the Corporate Risk Register as provided in Appendix 1

1.2 Adopt the Corporate and Finanical Risk Management Policy as provided in Appendix 2

1.3 Adopt the revised Business Continuity Policy as provided in Appendix 3

2 PROCUREMENT

2.1 The Council is reviewing its process for selecting approved contractors. A new form has been created and is in the process of being tested. The Procurement Policy will be reviewed, once a process has been finalised.

2.2 Officers have agreed a new 2-year utility contract through the Council's current broker, the electricity contract will renew in April 2027, and the Gas in June 2027.

3 GROVE HOUSE

3.1 The new flag is due to be installed on 19 November to the front of the building.

3.2 Grove House Room Hire is being proactively promoted through the Council’s website and social media channels. Officers have developed a more streamlined process. These improvements provide users with a more efficient booking experience, and greater opportunity to provide feedback on service received.

3.3 **Building Works**

Central Bedfordshire Council attended Grove House in September as part of the pre-application process for the assessment of the works required to the building. During this meeting it was agreed that the Council can proceed with the emergent repairs to the front of the building (exposed failed beam), and repairs to the roof immediately. Officers are hopeful these will commence within the next month.

The application is still required for the remaining work to the building, and the appointed planning consultant and structural engineers are working with the Council's Building consultants to progress this.

3.4 **Weddings**

Grove House has hosted 14 weddings since re-launching ceremonies in 2026, and a further four booked are before the end of this financial year.

Eight further weddings have been booked already for the next financial year.

4 GREENSANDS COMMUNITY ENERGY

4.1 The Corporate Performance and Compliance Manager (CP&CM) has worked closely with Head of Grounds and Environmental Services to progress the initial enquiry with Greensands Energy. A tour of potential sites has been completed, and Greensands have proposed the three sites most suitable:

4.1.1 Peter Newton Pavillion
4.1.2 Creasey Park Depot
4.1.3 Downside Community Centre

4.2 Greensands Community Energy have submitted an application to GB Energy and have updated officers that the proposal came together well, and they are optimistic that the three projects meet the criteria for the funding for feasibility studies.

4.3 Future updates on this project will be reported to the Grounds and Environmental Services Committee.

5 POLICIES

5.1 The reviewed Fire Safety Policy, together with new policies: Co-Option Policy and Scheme of Delegation Policy have been brought to this meeting for approval. Separate decision reports are included elsewhere on the agenda.

6 HEALTH AND SAFETY

6.1 The CP&CM has arranged for the completion of Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICRs) across all Council owned assets. Two sites have been completed to date, with the remainder scheduled by the end of November. It is anticipated that the results from these inspections will lead to costly repairs, as many of the Council's assets have old electrical installations.

6.2 The CP&CM is in the process of assessing alternative providers of Health and Safety management software and support, as the contract with the current provider is due to end in February 2027. This work is ongoing and no decision has yet been made. The next steps are to assemble a panel of employees who regularly use the current system and to meet with the proposed providers to assess their proposal.

7 10 YEAR ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANS

7.1 The CP&CM is undertaking work to provide 10-year asset management plans for each of the Council's buildings. Initial reports have been produced, and the Council's contractor is going to work with officers to produce complete and updated management plans over the coming months. Progress will be reported at a future meeting of this committee.

8 REDUCING CARBON EMMISIONS

8.1 The council remains committed to reducing carbon emissions and is continuing in its effort to replace existing lighting fixtures with suitable LED alternatives. 8 light fixtures will be replaced at Grove House in the coming weeks. Officers are working with the electrical contractor to plan for further replacement scheduling.

9 CORPORATE AND FINANCIAL RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY AND REGISTER

9.1 The Council's Internal Auditor is asked to make the following assertion each year:

We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this smaller authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.

9.2 The Practitioners Guide 2026/27 [1] explains that:

To warrant a positive response to this assertion, the authority needs to have the following arrangements in place:

***1.31 Identifying and assessing risks** – The authority needs to identify, assess and record risks associated with actions and decisions it has taken or considered taking during the year that could have financial or reputational consequences.*

***1.32 Addressing risks** – Having identified, assessed and recorded the risks, the authority needs to address them by ensuring that appropriate measures are in place to mitigate and manage risk. This might include the introduction of internal controls and/or appropriate use of insurance cover.*

9.3 The Corporate Risk Register has been comprehensively reviewed and updated to reflect emerging risks, changes in legislation and developments across Council services. The following new risks have been introduced:

9.3.1 **Artificial Intelligence:** Risks associated with AI use, including data protection, inaccurate information and inappropriate use.
9.3.2 **Martyn's Law:** New requirements relating to terrorism preparedness and public safety.
9.3.3 **Violence and aggression:** Risks to staff, councillors and the public, including lone working and crowd management.

[1] https://www.nalc.gov.uk/resource/practitioners-guide-2026-27.html

9.3.4 **Protected wildlife:** Financial and operational risks associated with badgers, bats and other protected species.

9.4 Existing risks have been reassessed; significant changes are highlighted:

	Risk	Previous	Updated	Change
4	Burial capacity	8	4	↓ Reduced
5	Cemetery protection	6	9	↑ Increased
13	Council buildings	15	12	↓ Reduced
14	Loss of equipment	8	12	↑ Increased
29	Loss of corporate knowledge	10	5	↓ Reduced
31	Staffing resources	4	5	↑ Increased
32	Payroll compliance	5	4	↓ Reduced

9.5 Other notable changes are:

9.5.1 **Priory House:** The previous specific structural risk has been removed.

9.5.2 **Grove House:** A specific structural risk has been introduced, with a residual score of 12.

9.5.3 **Safeguarding:** The severity of risks relating to children and vulnerable adults has increased, although residual scores have only increased from 4 to 5.

The revised Corporate Risk Register can be found at Appendix 1 of this report.

9.6 The Corporate and Financial Risk management policy has also been reviewed; however, no significant changes were required. A copy of this is at Appendix 2 of this report.

9.7 The Council's Business Continuity Plan has been reviewed; however, no significant changes were required. A copy of this is at Appendix 3 of this report.

10 FINANCIAL IMPACT

10.1 The review of the Corporate Risk Log is not expected to result in any additional financial implications, as the costs associated with existing risk mitigation measures are covered within existing budgets.

10.2 However, there remains a potential financial risk should identified corporate risks materialise or additional mitigation measures become necessary. These will continue to be monitored through the Council's existing risk management and budgetary processes.

11 POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The review of the Corporate Risk Register supports the Council's Corporate Plan priority of *"Continuing to improve the organisational management, efficiency and environmental sustainability of the Town Council."*

11.2 The review supports the Council's Corporate and Financial Risk Management Policy by ensuring that risks are regularly assessed, monitored and appropriately managed.

11.3 The Corporate and Financial Risk Management Policy and Business Continuity Plan have both been reviewed, with no significant amendments required. There are no further policy implications identified at this stage.

12 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The ongoing identification and management of corporate risks supports the Council in ensuring that its services, facilities and activities remain safe, accessible and inclusive for all members of the community.

13 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The review of the Corporate Risk Register supports the Council's ongoing commitment to identifying, assessing and managing health and safety risks.

13.2 The updated register highlights areas requiring continued monitoring, including building safety and safeguarding. This helps ensure appropriate control measures remain in place to protect staff, contractors and members of the public.

13.3 No additional health and safety implications arise directly from the review.

14 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

14.1 The register includes risks relating to staffing resources and workforce management. The ongoing monitoring of these risks supports the Council in maintaining appropriate staffing levels, employee wellbeing and effective service delivery.

15 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

15.1 The review of the Corporate Risk Register supports the Council in meeting its statutory obligations relating to risk management, financial governance and health and safety.

15.2 It also supports compliance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, which require the Council to maintain effective arrangements for managing risk and internal control.

15.3 There are no additional legal implications arising directly from the review.

16 ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIODIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

16.1 The ongoing monitoring of corporate risks supports the Council in identifying and managing potential environmental risks and ensuring that environmental responsibilities are considered as part of its wider risk management arrangements.

17 CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IMPLICATIONS

17.1 The ongoing monitoring of corporate risks supports the Council in identifying and managing potential risks relating to crime, antisocial behaviour, vandalism and the security of Council premises and facilities.

18 APPENDICES

18.1 Corporate Risk Register – Appendix 1
18.2 Corporate and Financial Risk management policy – Appendix 2
18.3 Business Continuity Plan – Appendix 3

19 AUTHOR

Katie Williams - Corporate Performance & Compliance Manager
compliance@dunstable.gov.uk

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

CORPORATE RISK LOG NOVEMBER 2026

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC RISKS

Risk Area		RISK	Assessment of initial risk		Initial Score	Control Measures & Resources in place	Owner	Corporate Plan Action No.	Assessment of residual risk		Residual Score
			Severity	Likelihood					Severity	Likelihood	
	1	**Loss of services or effective management due to an emergency**	5	4	**20**	Business Continuity Insurance is in place, and the Council has a Business Continuity plan. All office staff are able to work from home or alternative locations. Some staff have use of mobile phones. The IT contract includes a requirement to provide emergency support. The Council is part of the Central Bedfordshire Emergency Response Group.	SMT	**9**	5	2	**10**
	2	**Loss of service due to emergency, disease or disaster**	5	3	**15**	The Council has a Business Continuity Policy which ensures services will be continued with appropriate timescales within an emergency. The Council does not provide any life or death services, however, it does work with a number of vulnerable users and therefore service areas will address on an individual basis.	SMT		5	1	**5**
Cemetery Services	**3**	**Failure to properly manage the Cemetery service or to meet legislative requirements.**	4	2	**8**	The Council employs a cemetery team including grounds staff and a Cemetery Manager. The Council is a member of the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) who provide professional advice. The Council retains the silver award under the ICCM Charter for the Bereaved. Cemetery records are managed through a specialised digital package. The Council reviews the Cemetery rules and regulations each year. The Cemetery manager is undergoing training for ICCM qualification. The Council use BACAS system to ensure records are managed safely.	HoGES		4	1	**4**
	4	**Failure to provide sufficient burial space to meet the town's needs**	4	5	**20**	It is currently estimated that there is sufficient burial space to last until the end of 2031. The Council has begun work to develop a new cemetery site. Permission has been granted by the environment agency to use the proposed site as a cemetery. Purchase price for the land has been agreed but sale is not yet complete. Design of cemetery is at RIBA stage 2. Pre-application planning advice has been received.	TC&CE & HoGES	**6, 26**	4	1	**4**
	5	**Failure to protect the cemetery**	3	5	**15**	Risk of rule breaking and breakdown of cohesion at the cemetery. Mitigation is continue to review rules, and employ specialist legal and professional support as appropriate.	HoGES		3	3	**9**
Climate and Severe Weather	**6**	**Council facilities or services severely damaged or impeded by unpredictable, extreme weather including when caused by climate change.**	5	4	**20**	All events, markets and other outdoor activities have a bad weather risk assessment with mitigations including cancellation for wind, rain, and extreme hot or cold temperatures. Grounds Management Plans take account of possible climate change when selecting new plants and trees. An increase in extreme heat in summer months has lead to requirement for air conditioning units to be installed at additional sites.	SMT		5	2	**10**

Risk Area		RISK	Assessment of initial risk		Initial Score	Control Measures & Resources in place	Owner	Corporate Plan Action No.	Assessment of residual risk		Residual Score
			Severity	Likelihood					Severity	Likelihood	
Reputation and Communication	**7**	**Damage to the Council's reputation**	2	4	**8**	The Council employs a Marketing and Communications Officer who manages the Council's social media and traditional media output and responses. Staff receive media training. The Media Policy ensures staff and Councillors are clear about their roles. The website is updated regularly and Talk of the Town issued quarterly to ensure residents are aware of the Council's services. Contract is in place with communications specialist to support with Data Protection and FOI.	SMT		2	2	**4**
Information and Digital Governance	**8**	**Failure to effectively manage data or to respond to Data Protection/FOI disclosure requests as required by law**	3	2	**6**	A Council policy is in place to ensure compliance with Data Protection and Freedom Of Information requirements. The Policy is administered and reviewed by the Compliance Manager, and reviewed annually to FGP committee. Where personal data is collated for users - this is managed in accordance with policy and regularly reviewed. Contract is in place with communications specialist to support with Data Protection and FOI. A review of GDPR across the council is in progress.	TC&CE		3	1	**3**
	9	**Data loss, IT security / cyber attacks**	4	4	**16**	The Council operates a layered cyber security framework incorporating managed firewalls, endpoint detection and response, antivirus protection, ransomware protection, multi-factor authentication, conditional access controls, device encryption, centralised device management, continuous security monitoring and cloud-based backup arrangements. Security controls are managed and monitored by the Council's IT provider, supported by a 24/7 Security Operations Centre. The Council maintains Cyber Essentials certification and regularly applies security updates to reduce vulnerability to cyber threats. Council staff and members receive regular training.	TC&CE C&CM	**11**	4	2	**8**
	10	**Failure to keep records in accordance with the GDPR**	3	4	**12**	A Council policy is in place to ensure compliance with the GDPR. The Policy is administered by the Compliance Manager, and regularly reviewed by the Head of Corporate Services and RFO and annually at FGP committee. Contract is in place with communications specialist to support with Data Protection. A review of GDPR across the council is in progress.	TC&CE		3	2	**6**
	11	**Uncontrolled use of AI or automated tools causes disclosure of personal or confidential data, inaccurate decisions, bias or unauditable records.**	3	2	**6**	The Council has an AI Use Policy in place and has provided training, delivered by CloudyIT, on the safe and effective use of Microsoft Copilot. Risks associated with the use of AI will be monitored and assessed regularly. The council confines use of AI to Copilot for all council data, to protect its integrity.	TBC – C&CM / DPO		3	1	**3**
	12	**Structural failure or additional works required to Grove House**	4	5	**20**	Works are underway to rectify known structural failures. This has taken over 1 year and work is not yet commenced. The proposed budget for 27/28 includes sufficient funds to carry out the required work.			4	3	**12**

Risk Area		RISK	Assessment of initial risk		Initial Score	Control Measures & Resources in place	Owner	Corporate Plan Action No.	Assessment of residual risk		Residual Score
			Severity	Likelihood					Severity	Likelihood	
Assets & Infrastructure	**13**	**Unplanned expense or loss of service due to damage or structural failure of Council buildings**	4	5	**20**	The Council has retained the services of a property expert and has made considerable progress on completing a back log of work that was required on Council property. The Council has prepared draft 10-year maintenance plans for all its assets. These will be reviewed by the FGP Committee, with professional assessments commissioned where appropriate. The proposed budget for 27/28 includes sufficient funds to carry out the required work. Ashton Square Toilets at risk whilst no long term formal agreement is in place. Youth services would be significantly affected should Grove Corner become damaged. Current surveys would suggest this is low risk.	TC&CE	**3**	4	3	**12**
	14	**Loss of equipment**	4	4	**16**	The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) maintains a detailed asset register and accurate values are provided to the insurance company. Council equipment, including laptops, are stored securely to reduce the risk of theft or loss. Members and staff are given advice on secure storage, transport and use of Council equipment, including the protection of devices when working away from Council premises.	SMT		4	3	**12**
	15	**Financial loss, structural or asset damage, and disruption arising from badgers or other protected wildlife, including bats, and associated management requirements.**	3	4	**12**	There is a growing population at a number of sites. Badgers are a protected species, so any measures are likely to be costly to implement. A detailed assessment and options appraisal is in progress. There are also issues at Bennets Recreation Grounds and other sites. This could also become a problem with planning applications. The council will seek profesisonal advice and support as and when required.	TBC		3	3	**9**
	16	**Failure to properly manage the Council's finances**	4	2	**8**	The Council is subjected to both internal and external financial audits which are reported to Full Council and any actions arising are monitored. Then internal audit ensures controls are adequate. The financial regulations lay out the Council's monitoring and safety procedures. The Council employs Rialtas to carry out quality assurance of the use of the accounts package each year, and receives VAT advice from PS Tax to ensure full compliance.	RFO		4	1	**4**
	17	**Loss of income**	3	3	**9**	Whilst the Council maintains effective financial control systems, the generation of income will always be subject to wider market and economic factors. The Council budgets for c. £763,000 of earned income. However most income streams are offset against the relevant service costs; if the income from events concessions, Splash Cafe, Cemetery or Priory House were lost, the only impact would be to that service, not the Council's wider finances, for example. The majority of the Council's income is from the precept. It is a statutory requirement for Central Bedfordshire Council to provide this. Any change to the law or process would require longer than a year, so the Council would have time to plan ahead for any proposed changes.	RFO		3	2	**6**

Risk Area		RISK	Assessment of initial risk		Initial Score	Control Measures & Resources in place	Owner	Corporate Plan Action No.	Assessment of residual risk		Residual Score
			Severity	Likelihood					Severity	Likelihood	
Financial and Insurance	18	**Failure to meet pension liabilities**	4	3	**12**	The Council's pension fund contribution rates are determined by the fund's actuary as part of the three-yearly valuation process. As of 31 March 2025, the fund was reported to be 101.6% funded against its liabilities, in accordance with relevant government regulations. The last actuarial valuation took place in March 2025 and the current contribution rates are in line with their requirement.	RFO		4	1	**4**
	19	**Fraud**	4	2	**8**	The financial regulations ensure Councillors and the internal auditor have full oversight of financial processes. Measures are in place to ensure no single staff member can make or authorise transactions without another staff member checking. Dual authorisation is required for all cheques and online payments.	RFO		4	1	**4**
	20	**External economic factors such as high inflation or energy price rises substantially impact service delivery**	4	4	**16**	The Council's precept is set in advance of the year; CBC carry the risk of in year changes to Council Tax payment. The Council holds adequate general reserves to cover the salary bill for 3 months. Ear-marked reserves are in place for the Council's key facilities and assets. Any requirement for additional funds or reductions to services would be identified in future years budget setting processes. 2 year utility agreement has been secured starting in 2027. CBC are responsible for providing 12 month precept, irrespective of any changes to council tax collection, this gives the town Council time to respond to any major financial crash.	RFO		4	2	**8**
	21	**Financial loss due to over reliance on external funding**	4	4	**16**	The Council has established reserves to enable continuation of some externally funded services. The Council monitors income monthly and has a robust contract management process in place.	RFO		3	3	**9**
	22	**Failure to adequately insure the Council's assets and activities.**	4	3	**12**	The Council makes provision for public, employers, fidelity, building, contents, and equipment etc insurance liability. All insurance cover is reviewed on an ongoing basis and adjustments such as new purchases and additional service provision is identified.	TC&CE RFO		4	1	**4**
Contractor Failure	23	**Financial loss, loss of service or damage to reputation due to contractor failure**	4	4	**16**	The Council has a comprehensive procurement policy and process. The Head of Corporate Services, Head of Community Services and Head of Grounds and Environmental Services are responsible for ensuring effective procurement and management of contractors and associated risks.	RFO		4	2	**8**
Governance and Compliance	24	**Failure to comply with legislation in service delivery, including equalities and other duties.**	4	3	**12**	Professional staff encouraged to be aware of and understand legislation, staff training, careful service planning, use of internal audit and other checks and controls to ensure continued compliance, consideration of legislation when designing new services, membership of professional bodies by managers, use of professional / consultant support where appropriate, CPD training by managers. Corporate membership of NALC and service specific bodies.	TC&CE SMT		4	1	**4**

Risk Area		RISK	Assessment of initial risk		Initial Score	Control Measures & Resources in place	Owner	Corporate Plan Action No.	Assessment of residual risk		Residual Score
			Severity	Likelihood					Severity	Likelihood	
	25	**Failure to comply with legislation or recommended practice, resulting in unsafe decisions or decisions made beyond the Council's legal powers.**	4	3	**12**	The Council has a Constitution, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations that are regularly updated and based on national good practice. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive holds the Certificate in Local Council Administration and has access to legal advice from NALC, the BATPC, the SLCC, peers and solicitors when required.	TC&CE		4	1	**4**
Health, Safety and Security	**26**	**Failure to prepare qualifying premises or public events for terrorism and serious security incidents, including Martyn's Law duties.**	5	2	**10**	At present there is limited information available regarding Martyn's Law. Priory House is in scope when there is an event. Bennett's Recreation Splash Café also comes under the scope. Sites which come under scope are only required to register with Security Industry Authority (SIA). Emergency Evacuation and Invacuation procedures are required also, but are not audited by SIA. The Council will continue to monitor ongoing changes and requirements under Martyn's Law and exercise continued good practice at sites and events which are out of scope.	TC&CE / HoCS / CSM		5	1	**5**
	27	**Violence, aggression, disorder or crowd-management failure affects staff, councillors, volunteers or the public at meetings, facilities or events.**	5	5	**25**	Risk assessments are in place for all events and include consideration of crowd management. All staff who work alone are provided with personal safety devices and have received training in their use. CCTV is installed at sites where risks are elevated. Specific risk assessments are in place for higher-risk activities, including events and civic activity. Risk assessments cover all job roles, with activity-based assessments used for Grounds Services. Each risk assessment addresses violence, aggression and lone working.	TBC – TC&CE / SMT		4	4	**16**
	28	**Death or injury due to Council failure**	5	3	**15**	Staff receive appropriate training and take the necessary precautions to manage risks. The Council ensures that third-party providers and contractors are fully insured, have appropriate risk assessments in place and operate in accordance with Council policies.	TC&CE SMT		5	2	**10**

Risk Area		RISK	Assessment of initial risk		Initial Score	Control Measures & Resources in place	Owner	Corporate Plan Action No.	Assessment of residual risk		Residual Score
			Severity	Likelihood					Severity	Likelihood	
People and Workforce	29	**Loss of skill, corporate memory or expertise due to staff leaving**	4	4	**16**	The Council has ensured that as far as possible, the knowledge, experience and training for all roles is held by more than one person. The council is vulnerable due to only having one qualified level 6 youth worker - the council are ensuring others are on a training pathway. One employee is currently in training, and so there will be one additional qualified level 6 youth worker next year. There is a residual risk of lack of funding for this post. The Council's approved use of Microsoft Copilot also helps reduce the risk of losing corporate memory by enabling staff to locate, summarise and reuse information held within Council systems.	SMT		5	1	**5**
	30	**Loss of staff, poor staff wellbeing or legal claims due to poor staff management or failure to comply with legislation including equalities and employment law.**	4	3	**12**	The Council updates the Staff Handbook at least annually, following advice provided by the HR advisor. The Council has retained the services of a specialist HR company and has introduced an HR management package called BrightHR. All members of staff have access to the handbook. The Council is a silver accredited Investors in People Organisation, which requires the Council to continually demonstrate excellent leadership and management arrangements. The Council carries out an annual staff survey and takes appropriate actions, holds regular wellbeing sessions, and provides a programme of enhanced staff benefits. The Council has insurance in place to cover legal claims.	TC&CE		4	2	**8**
	31	**Failure to provide sufficient resources to meet the Council's delivery requirements**	5	3	**15**	The Personnel Sub-Committee meets to consider any staffing issues. The Council's budget is set each year alongside an establishment review to ensure sufficient resources are in place.	SMT		5	1	**5**
	32	**Failure to meet staff terms and conditions correctly**	4	2	**8**	Payroll is outsourced to a specialist provider. Both the Responsible Financial Officer and HR and Payroll Manager keep up to date with the payroll process. All digital timesheets are authorised by line managers and the HR and Payroll Manager.	RFO		4	1	**4**
	33	**Failure to deliver the services required by Councillors due to multiple sickness, unfilled vacancies or staff absence**	4	3	**12**	The Council has a clear management structure and all staff have relevant job titles and clear job descriptions. The Council has a Corporate Plan, which includes Key Performance Indicators which are reported to Councillors annually. Each Service Area has an annual Service Plan which is based on the Corporate Plan. The Council has a wellbeing programme to support staff. Multiple recruitment approaches are taken, however, recruitment to qualified youth worker positions is a risk due to lack of interest. Wherever possible roles can be carried out by more than one member of staff. Knowledge is shared through team meetings and joint working. The Council also uses SharePoint to store and share key documents and Microsoft Copilot to help staff locate and summarise relevant information, supporting service continuity when colleagues are absent or posts are vacant.	SMT		4	1	**4**

Risk Area		RISK	Assessment of initial risk		Initial Score	Control Measures & Resources in place	Owner	Corporate Plan Action No.	Assessment of residual risk		Residual Score
			Severity	Likelihood					Severity	Likelihood	
Safeguarding	34	**Failure to properly care for children and young people (child protection)**	5	3	**15**	The Council has a child protection policy which is reviewed annually. This was reviewed in February 2026. All staff and volunteers that regularly come into contact with young people are subject to a DBS check. These staff and volunteers undertake specific safeguarding training and permanent staff are able to access additional regular training updates. The Council employs a qualified youth worker. Relevant staff undergo safeguarding training on a regular basis.	TC&CE		5	1	**5**
	35	**Failure to properly care for vulnerable adults (vulnerable adult protection)**	5	3	**15**	The Council operates its older people's services in partnership with Central Bedfordshire Council and through a service contract that identifies minimum service requirements. The Council has adopted a Vulnerable Adults Policy and both staff and volunteers have access to regular training updates. Volunteers and members of staff in direct contact are subject to a DBS check.	TC&CE		5	1	**5**

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

CORPORATE AND FINANCIAL RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

1. Introduction

Dunstable Town Council recognises that it has a responsibility to manage risks, both internal and external, and is therefore committed to the implementation of a risk management strategy in line with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in order to protect the Council from avoidable losses.

2. Responsibilities

This policy places a responsibility on all members and officers to have regard for risk in carrying out their duties. Its purpose is to enable the Council to manage its risks through anticipation and control.

3. Definition

The Audit Commission (2001) defined "risk" as an event or action which will adversely affect an organisation's ability to achieve its objectives, project plans and processes and to successfully execute its strategies. Therefore "risk management" is the process by which risks are **identified**, **evaluated** and **controlled**.

It is good business practice that risk management processes should be supportive rather than restrictive and should be embedded in the culture of the Council and embraced by all staff and Members.

4. Aims

The Council's aims with respect to risk management are as follows:

a) To integrate risk management into the culture of the Council.

b) To raise awareness of the scope of risk management including business risk, the identification of opportunities as well as threats and that the process supports innovation.

c) To manage risk in accordance with best practice.

d) To minimise losses, injury and damage and reduce the cost of risk.

e) To ensure appropriate actions are taken to address identified risks.

f) To ensure that risks are monitored and that an appropriate reporting mechanism exists to support the annual assurance statement on the effectiveness of the Council's system of internal control.

g) To ensure appropriate actions are taken to identify and pursue opportunities.

These aims will be achieved through the Council's risk management strategy which details the roles, responsibilities and actions necessary for successful implementation.

The co-operation of all Members and officers is essential to ensure the Council's resources and service provision are not adversely affected by uncontrolled risk, to ensure the Council does not fail to seize opportunities which benefit the community.

5. Relevant Legislation

Dunstable Town Council will implement its Risk Management Policy using the Risk Management Strategy (Appendix 1) in accordance with the current legislation governing local authorities and the associated codes of practice.

APPENDIX 1 RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

1. Introduction

This strategy sets out the framework on which risk management processes at Dunstable Town Council are based. This framework ensures a consistent approach is taken across the Council and provides for an element of independent oversight by Council Officers.

2. Objectives

The objectives of this strategy are:

- to clearly identify roles and responsibilities for managing risk,
- to follow a structured framework for the identification, assessment and evaluation of risks,
- to ensure a corporate approach is adopted across the Council which facilitates the prioritisation of risks and avoids duplication of mitigating action,
- to ensure risk management principles are embedded in all systems and processes to help demonstrate openness, integrity and accountability in all the Council's activities,
- to ensure the risk management process contributes to the development of a more robust internal control framework, providing assurance to senior officers and Members that appropriate levels of control exist, and
- to provide a framework for ensuring actions are proportionate to identified risks thereby efficiently and effectively utilising resources and maintaining a balance between risks and controls.

3. Definitions

a) **Risk:** an event or action which will adversely affect an organisation's ability to achieve its project plans or processes and thus to successfully execute its strategies

b) **Risk Management:** the process, by which risks are identified, evaluated and controlled, which includes the following:

- Improve the controls to reduce the probability or impact to acceptable limits (treat the risk)
- Insure against risk / outsource / design & build option for contracts (transfer the risk)
- Live with it, the risk is acceptable and additional controls would not be cost effective (tolerate the risk)
- Do not pursue the course of action, the risk is unacceptable and cannot be economically mitigated to an acceptable level (terminate the risk)

4. Categories of Risk

The risks facing the organisation can be split into Strategic and Operational.

STRATEGIC Risks which may threaten the achievement of the Council's objectives	**OPERATIONAL** Risks which members and staff may encounter in the daily course of their work.
Political: failure to deliver key objectives or policies of other levels of Government use of political allegiance to influence Council polices	**Professional:** professional competences of staff
Economic: the Council's ability to meet its financial commitments and risks	**Financial:** financial planning and control and the adequacy of insurance cover
Social: the effects in changes in demographic, residential or socio-economic trends on the Council's ability to deliver its objectives	**Legal:** possible breaches of legislation
Technological: the Council's capacity to deal with technological change or its ability to use technology to meet changing demands	**Physical:** fire, security, accident prevention and health & safety
Legislative: current or potential changes in national or European law.	**Contractual:** the failure of contractors to deliver services or goods to agreed costs and specifications

STRATEGIC Risks which may threaten the achievement of the Council's objectives	OPERATIONAL Risks which members and staff may encounter in the daily course of their work.
Environmental: the environmental consequences of service delivery (in terms of energy efficiency, pollution, recycling, landfill needs, emissions etc)	**Technological:** reliance on operational equipment (IT systems or equipment and machinery)
Competitive: the competitiveness of the service/ the ability to deliver best value.	**Environmental:** pollution, noise or energy efficiency of ongoing service operation.
Customer: failure to recognise the changing needs and expectations of the community	**Resources (inc Employment):** Ensuring that the right level and amount of human resources and other resources available to meet objectives and risks including employment risk costs.

5. Processes

In line with best practice, the Council has adopted a seven-step process to support the implementation of risk management and help maintain momentum. In addition to whole Council risk assessment, there are many service specific and operational risk assessments.

	Steps	
1	Identifying risk	Risks will be identified during the service delivery planning process and cross-referenced, where possible, to key tasks and to the achievement of corporate objectives.
2	Analysing risk	Risks will be assessed against probability / likelihood and impact of the identified risks using the Council's approved evaluation criteria to give a risk score.
3	Profiling risk	The evaluation exercise will result in a risk score from which significant risks can be established.
4	Prioritising action	Risks will be entered in the risk register detailing the inherent risk score, existing controls and residual risk score.

5	Determining action	Further actions required to reduce the threat of the risk occurring or minimise its impact will be stated in the risk register. Assignment of responsibility will also be stated.
6	Controlling risk	The specified actions will be carried out as stated in the risk register.
7	Monitoring	The Finance & General Purposes Committee will keep the Corporate Financial and Management Risk Register under review and progress against further actions identified will be monitored quarterly. The identification and mitigation of risks is a continual process and risks emerging throughout the year will be evaluated and, where necessary, added to the register.

Categories of Risk

The Council manages applies this strategy by carrying out risk assessments including for:

- The Corporate Risk and Financial risks
- Job based risk assessments
- Task based risk assessments
- Events and activities
- Building and asset risk assessments

The Council employs Worknest to provide support and advice in applying this strategy and carrying out risk assessments.

Dunstable Town Council

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

Adopted
Review by Paul Hodson 13 June 2025

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Plan details the procedures that will be followed in the event of significant interruption to the business of the Council. The plan covers all sites at which Dunstable Town Council provide services to the public. This is an operational document which will be monitored and updated.

2. AIM OF THE PLAN

2.1 The aim of this Business Continuity Plan (BCP) is to ensure that the Town Council is able to continue business with as little disruption as possible, no matter what the location, and to ensure that any critical business functions are re-established as soon as possible.

3. PLAN ACTIVATION SEQUENCE

3.1 For larger councils such as Districts, Counties, Unitary Councils, the Fire Service and Police the following activation sequence is used. In the event of any major disaster or terrorist act the Town Council would follow the instructions of Central Bedfordshire Council's 'Resilience' team who have statutory responsibility for implementation of emergency procedures under the Civil Contingencies Act. It is therefore important that all staff understand the activation sequence.

• "Standby" phase – Standby will be used as an early warning of a situation which might at some later stage escalate and thus require implementation of this plan. A standby phase allows key officers time to think, brief staff, start a business interruption log and prepare for the deployment of resources should an implementation message be received. Resources are not normally deployed at this stage. It is possible that 'Stand Down' may follow this type of alert.

• "Implementation" phase – Implementation will be used to request the immediate utilisation of the Council's officers and resources in the activation of the plan.

• "Stand Down" phase - Stand Down will be used to signify the phased withdrawal of any services provided due to the activation of the plan.

Dunstable Town Council's only critical business function is the cemetery service.

3.2 The Town Council will endeavour to support and provide assistance to other organisations in the event of a major disaster in accordance with the Major Incident Plan.

4. DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL PLAN ACTIVATION

4.1 The Town Council does not require such a detailed activation sequence. In the event of a business interruption, an immediate notification will be given to the most appropriate manager who will then inform the Town Clerk & Chief Executive. If there is an interruption to the IT system, the Manager should be notified to contact the IT support service.

4.2 In response to any major interruption to business the Town Clerk & Chief Executive will notify all staff, the Mayor, and any emergency services.

4.3 Most business interruptions will be able to be dealt with in a relatively short space of time without the need to contact any other organisation or persons.

4.4 The Town Clerk & Chief Executive, Heads of Service and senior managers will be provided with feedback regarding any significant business interruption, which will allow an assessment of the effectiveness of this plan and inform any future planning.

5. NOTIFICATION OF BUSINESS INTERRUPTION

5.1 Notification of a business interruption will be most likely to come from Town Council personnel who occupy the sites identified within the plan or Central Bedfordshire Council in the case of a major emergency. In any situation it is essential that the Town Clerk & Chief Executive is contacted as soon as possible.

5.2 The Town Clerk & Chief Executive, Head of Community Services, Head of Corporate Services & RFP and Head of Grounds & Environmental Services all have the authority to activate the plan and will act as the co-ordinator to assist the quickest return to normal business.

5.3 The Town Clerk & Chief Executive will assume the role of the Business Continuity Manager. If the Town Clerk & Chief Executive is not available another member of the Senior Management Team will take this role. The primary role of the Business Continuity Manager is to formulate the Town Council's overall strategic response to the business interruption. The Business Continuity Manager will inform any other relevant bodies such as the Emergency Services and the Mayor.

6. BUSINESS FUNCTION IMPORTANCE

6.1 Business Critical Functions are defined as follows:

• Class One Function - an essential function needing to be restored within 0-24 hours.

• Class Two Function - is an important function needing to be restored within 3 days.

• Class Three Function - is a function which can be restored progressively after 14 days.

• Time Sensitive Functions - are identified as being functions which become more important to re-instate depending upon the time of the week, month, or year etc.

7. DEFINITIONS

7.1 A 'Business Interruption' is any unwanted incident which threatens personnel, buildings or the operational procedures of the organisation and requires special measures to be taken in order to restore daily activities.

For the purpose of the plan the following scales of business interruption have been determined:
• Minor Business Interruption - is defined as a business interruption which affects part of a service area.

• Significant Business Interruption - is defined as a business interruption which affects a number of service areas but not in their entirety which may be located over a number of sites, or one specific site.

• Major Business Interruption - is defined as a business interruption which affects a number of service areas in their entirety or more than one specific site.

8. BUSINESS SUMMARY

8.1 Dunstable Town Council has one 'class one function' (burials) and 'time sensitive functions' such as the payment of wages and accounts. All other services are likely to be 'class three functions.

8.2 Generally speaking, any business interruptions are likely to be minor. In the event of a major business interruption the Town Council would follow the instructions of Central Bedfordshire Council.

8.3 Council Offices:

8.3.1 Dunstable Town Council offices (Grove House) are the central point for the service provision of IT, financial, administrative support, and the main meeting facilities.

8.3.2 In the event of the loss of the building the services would be transferred to the next most appropriate building. This is likely to be Priory House if building works are not going on. Failing that the Cemetery office and chapel would be used. Officers would be able to access files and emails from home if necessary, in the short term and demountable buildings would be hired if necessary. All IT records are backed up off site and Priory House has phone lines and is able to sustain basic Town Council office functions for a short period, while additional equipment is installed as required. The main business re-instatement, as a time sensitive business requirement, would be the financial systems and IT, followed by office and meeting accommodation.

8.4 Cemetery/Mess Room

The cemetery mess room facilities are key to the provision of cemetery services for the residents of Dunstable. In the event of short-term loss, the administrative and operational functions would be returned to the Grove House. The main area and class one function would be to ensure the continuation of burials. All other services could be resumed as and when ready.

8.5 Priory House

PH is a key but not a critical service provided by the Town Council. In the event of short-term loss, the administrative and operational functions would be returned to the Grove House. Public services would be suspended. The service would be resumed as and when ready.

In the event of the loss of the building the services would be transferred to the next most appropriate building. This is likely to be Grove House if building works are not going on. Officers would be able to access files and emails from home if necessary, in the short term and demountable buildings would be hired if necessary. All IT records are backed up off site and Priory House has phone lines and is able to sustain basic Town Council office functions for a short period, while additional equipment is installed as required.

8.6 Grove Corner

In the event of short-term loss, the administrative and operational functions would be returned to Grove House. The service would be resumed as and when ready.

8.8 Bennetts Splash and Café

In the event of short-term loss, the administrative and operational functions would be returned to the Grove House. The service would be resumed as and when ready.

8.7 Grounds Operations

In the event of short-term loss, the administrative and operational functions would be returned to the Grove House. The service would be resumed as and when ready.

9. INSURANCE

9.1 As soon as practical the RFO will be appraised of the circumstances and all losses and contact the Council's insurers, Zurich Municipal (tel. 0870 2418050 and fax 0845 6000083). Where possible, loss mitigation and salvage should be identified and reported accordingly.

10. RISK AND ACTION PLAN

The following is a risk-based action plan of potential business disruption causes. Incident	Who is affected	Recovery Actions (lead officers in brackets)
Significant damage to/loss of Council Offices Inc - fire, theft, malicious damage or incident at any nearby large industrial facility	Staff, Members, customers	Salvage as much IT and office equipment as possible and set up alternative base in Priory House or secondary option. Notify staff (TC) Contact IT provider to arrange emergency IT support (RFO) Source replacement IT and office equipment (RFO/TC&CE) Contact BT to install additional telephones if required (RFO Notify local media of re-location and display appropriate signage (Communications and Marketing Officer) Place information on website (Communications and Marketing Officer) Pursue insurance claim/repair (RFO) If required, source demountable/temporary office accommodation (TC&CE)

Significant damage to/loss of Cemetery Mess Room Inc - fire, theft, malicious damage or incident at any nearby large industrial facility	Staff, customers	Salvage as much equipment as possible and transfer to other Council-owned locations (GS) Notify staff (GS) Transfer operations to Grove House Source replacement or hire of new equipment – prioritised by need. (Head of Grounds and Environmental Services/RFO/TC&E) Pursue insurance claim/repair (RFO) Contact CBC regarding any emergency outstanding work (Head of GES) Place information on website and in local press if needed (CMO)

Significant damage to/loss of PH Inc - fire, theft, malicious damage or incident at any nearby large industrial facility	Staff, users of services/facilities, public	Salvage as much equipment as possible and transfer to Grove House Pursue insurance claim/repair (RFO) Reinstate IT equipment and networks as soon as possible, or source replacement IT and office equipment (RFO) Notify staff (TC) Notify local media (CMO) Place information on website (CMO)

Significant damage to/loss of Grove Corner Inc - fire, theft, malicious damage or incident at any nearby large industrial facility	Staff, users of services/facilities, public	Salvage as much equipment as possible and transfer to Grove House Pursue insurance claim/repair (RFO) Reinstate IT equipment and networks as soon as possible, or source replacement IT and office equipment (RFO) Notify staff (TC) Notify local media (CMO) Place information on website (COM)

Significant damage to/loss of Bennetts Splash Inc - fire, theft, malicious damage or incident at any nearby large industrial facility	Staff, users of services/facilities, public	Salvage as much equipment as possible and transfer to Grove House Pursue insurance claim/repair (RFO) Reinstate IT equipment and networks as soon as possible, or source replacement IT and office equipment (RFO) Notify staff (TC&CE) Notify local media (CMO) Place information on website (CMO)
Loss of gas/electric supply	Staff, customers	Council Offices/PH/Cemetery Mess Room – hire temporary heaters (FO)
Loss of water supply	Staff, customers	Depending on severity: - Council Offices/Cemetery Mess Room/PH - Purchase bottled water for drinks and washing; hire temporary toilets (FO)
Pandemic/epidemic affecting service delivery	Staff, Members, customers	Follow instructions from Central Bedfordshire Council Resilience (TC&CE)
Industrial action affecting service delivery	Staff, customers	Inform staff (TC & CE) If required use outside contractors (TC & CE) Inform the media and place information on the website (TC & CE)

Loss of IT services	Staff, customers	Council Offices; Contact Manager who will contact IT Provider (RFO) If infrastructure is damaged ie fibre optic cut though - implement paper systems where necessary (TC&CE)
Loss of Town Clerk & Chief Executive	Staff	The three Heads of Service would share the responsibilities of the role in the short term. They would investigate interim cover to assume duties in liaison with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor & Chair of Finance and General Purposes. All Councillors to be informed and an action plan drawn up
Loss of RFO	Staff	TC&CE to assume duties and investigate interim cover to assume duties (TC&CE)

Significant loss of staff due to sickness	Staff, customers	Investigate interim cover to assume duties (Senior Management Team)

TC&CE = Town Clerk & Chief Executive
RFO = Responsible Financial Officer
CMO = Communications and Marketing Officer

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2026

REVIEWED FIRE SAFETY POLICY

Purpose of report: For members to approve the reviewed Fire Safety policy.

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1. That the Finance and General Purposes Committee approves the adoption of the reviewed Fire Safety Policy (Appendix 1), to take effect immediately upon approval.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Dunstable Town Council's existing Fire Safety Policy was last reviewed in July 2018 and requires updating to reflect changes in legislation, current fire safety practices and the Council's management arrangements.

2.2. A comprehensive review has therefore been undertaken, resulting in a revised policy that provides a clearer framework for managing fire safety across Council premises. The updated policy strengthens accountability, clarifies roles and responsibilities, and introduces more detailed arrangements for fire risk assessments, emergency evacuation, training and compliance monitoring.

2.3. The revised policy is presented for consideration and approval to ensure the Council continues to maintain appropriate fire safety standards and meets its statutory responsibilities.

3. MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

3.1. The revised Fire Safety Policy has been updated to reflect current legislation and strengthen fire safety arrangements across the Council.
The main amendments include:

- Legislation: Updated references to current fire safety legislation.
- Responsibilities: Clearer roles and accountability for managers, employees and Fire Wardens.
- Risk assessments: Improved requirements for reviews, recording findings and monitoring actions.
- Fire prevention: Additional controls for electrical safety, contractors and other fire hazards.
- Emergency evacuation: Strengthened procedures, including PEEPs and GEEPs.
- Training: Clearer requirements for staff training, fire drills and record keeping.
- Monitoring: Improved compliance monitoring and a three-year policy review cycle.

3.2. Overall, the revised policy provides a clearer and more consistent approach to managing fire safety across Council premises.

4. FINANCIAL IMPACT

4.1. There are no significant direct costs associated with adopting the revised Fire Safety Policy. However, changes to fire safety legislation and increasing competency requirements for fire risk assessors may result in additional expenditure.

4.2. Recent amendments to Approved Document B, including changes scheduled for implementation up to 2029, may have financial implications for future building works. Separately, proposed changes to the regulation and competency requirements of fire risk assessors could increase the cost of commissioning professional fire risk assessments.

4.3. The Council may therefore need to make additional budgetary provision for fire risk assessments and any resulting remedial works. The full financial impact is not yet known and will be monitored as requirements develop in future years.

5. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

5.1. The revised Fire Safety Policy supports the Council's commitment to maintaining safe, well-managed premises and ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of employees, councillors and members of the public.

5.2. It strengthens the Council's governance and risk management arrangements and supports the effective management and maintenance of Council assets.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. The revised policy supports equality and inclusion by ensuring fire safety arrangements consider the needs of all building users, including those who may require additional assistance during an evacuation.

6.2. Existing arrangements for Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) and General Emergency Evacuation Plans (GEEPs) have now been formally incorporated into the policy, reinforcing the Council's commitment to safe and inclusive evacuation procedures.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

7.1. The revised policy strengthens the Council's approach to fire safety by clarifying responsibilities, improving risk management and formalising existing safety arrangements.

7.2. It supports the prevention of fire-related incidents and helps ensure the safety of employees, councillors, contractors and members of the public across Council premises.

8. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

8.1. The revised policy clarifies employees' responsibilities for fire safety and reinforces existing requirements for training, awareness and compliance with fire safety procedures.

8.2. There are no significant changes to existing employment arrangements, although staff will need to be made aware of the updated policy.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1. The revised policy supports the Council's compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the Fire Safety Act 2021 and the Building Safety Act 2022.

9.2. It also reflects the increased emphasis on fire safety following the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and the subsequent changes to legislation and guidance.

9.3. Recent amendments to Approved Document B (Fire Safety), including further changes scheduled for 2029, reinforce the need to keep fire safety arrangements under review and ensure that relevant building works meet applicable standards.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIODIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS – none

11. CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IMPLICATIONS – none

12. APPENDICES

12.1. Appendix 1 - Fire Safety Policy

13. AUTHOR(S)

Katie Williams - Corporate Performance and Compliance Manager
compliance@dunstable.gov.uk

(Assisted by Co-Pilot)

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

FIRE SAFETY POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Dunstable Town Council is committed to providing and maintaining safe premises for employees, councillors, volunteers, contractors, hirers, visitors and members of the public.

The Council will take all reasonably practicable measures to prevent fire, minimise the risk of injury, protect property and ensure effective arrangements are in place for the safe evacuation of all persons in the event of a fire.

The Council will achieve this through fire risk assessments, appropriate preventative measures, staff training, emergency planning, inspection and maintenance of fire safety systems, and continual monitoring of fire safety performance.

2. SCOPE AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy applies to all Council-owned, occupied or controlled premises and to all employees, councillors, volunteers, contractors, visitors, hirers and members of the public who use those premises.

The Council will comply with all relevant fire safety legislation including:

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (as amended)
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Building Safety Act 2022
- Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 (where they apply to Council premises or activities)
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Equality Act 2010

Premises-specific Fire Risk Assessments and Fire Procedures shall support this policy.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Town Clerk and Chief Executive

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive has overall accountability for fire safety and shall ensure adequate resources are available to implement this policy.

Corporate Performance & Compliance Manager

- Maintain this policy.
- Monitor fire safety compliance.
- Oversee the fire risk assessment programme.

- Report significant fire safety issues.
- Monitor completion of fire safety actions.

Managers and Responsible Persons

- Ensure compliance within their premises.
- Maintain suitable Fire Risk Assessments.
- Implement required control measures.
- Ensure fire safety inspections, testing and maintenance are completed.
- Review fire safety arrangements following changes or incidents.

Employees

- Follow fire safety procedures.
- Participate in training and drills.
- Report fire hazards and defects.
- Keep escape routes clear.
- Co-operate with fire safety arrangements.

Fire Wardens

Fire Wardens shall assist with evacuation procedures, roll calls and emergency response arrangements where appropriate. Their primary role is life safety and evacuation support.

4. FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

The Council shall ensure a suitable and sufficient Fire Risk Assessment is undertaken for each relevant premises.

Risk Assessments shall:

- Identify hazards and persons at risk.
- Assess existing controls.
- Record significant findings.
- Include actions where improvements are required.
- Be reviewed periodically and following significant changes, incidents or concerns regarding validity.

Action plans arising from Fire Risk Assessments shall be monitored and completed within agreed timescales.

Where major refurbishment, alteration or capital works are undertaken to Council premises, including listed or heritage buildings, the Council will review opportunities to improve fire safety standards and incorporate measures required by current legislation, guidance and building regulations, subject to statutory approvals and conservation constraints. Such requirements shall be considered during project scoping, design and

budget development to ensure that fire safety improvements are delivered wherever reasonably practicable. Such works may identify the need for significant fire safety remedial measures, including more complex and costly solutions for listed or heritage buildings.

5. FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL MEASURES

The Council shall implement measures to reduce the likelihood of fire occurring and spreading.

These shall include, where applicable:

- Good housekeeping standards.
- Safe storage of combustible materials.
- Electrical safety management.
- Portable appliance testing and inspections.
- Control of contractors and hot works.
- Safe use and charging of electrical equipment and batteries.
- Appropriate storage of hazardous substances.
- Smoking and vaping controls.
- Security measures to reduce the risk of deliberate fire setting.

Control measures shall be proportionate to the risks identified within individual premises.

6. EMERGENCY PLANNING AND EVACUATION

Each Council premises shall have a documented Fire Emergency Evacuation Procedure, including:

- Raising the alarm.
- Calling the emergency services.
- Evacuation routes and exits.
- Assembly points.
- Visitor and contractor arrangements.
- Roll-call arrangements where appropriate.
- Re-entry controls.

Evacuation procedures shall be communicated to employees and practised periodically through fire drills.

7. PERSONAL EMERGENCY EVACUATION ARRANGEMENTS

The Council recognises that some individuals may require assistance during an emergency evacuation.

Where required, Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) shall be developed for employees and other regular building users.

Each Council premises shall have a documented General Emergency Evacuation Plans (GEEPs).

Arrangements shall be reviewed whenever circumstances change, or annually, whichever is first.

8. TRAINING AND INFORMATION

The Council shall provide appropriate fire safety information, instruction and training to employees. All employees must be familiar with the evacuation arrangements for the premises in which they work and may be required to assist visitors, hirers and members of the public to evacuate safely, where it is safe and appropriate to do so. Fire Wardens provide additional support but do not replace the wider responsibility of staff to follow emergency procedures.

Training shall include:

- Fire safety induction.
- Refresher training.
- Fire Warden training where applicable.
- Training relating to evacuation assistance arrangements where required.

Records of training and fire drills shall be maintained.

9. INSPECTION, TESTING AND MAINTENANCE

The Council shall ensure that fire safety equipment, systems and protective measures are inspected, tested and maintained by competent persons.

This includes, where installed:

- Fire alarm systems.
- Emergency lighting.
- Fire extinguishers.
- Fire doors.
- Fire signage.
- Fire detection systems.
- Other fire protection measures identified by the Fire Risk Assessment.

Records shall be retained and made available for inspection when required.

10. CONTRACTORS, SHARED PREMISES AND INFORMATION SHARING

Where fire safety duties are shared with landlords, tenants, contractors or other occupiers, the Council will co-operate and exchange relevant fire safety information.

Contractors working on Council premises shall comply with site-specific fire safety arrangements and any permit-to-work requirements.

Appropriate information shall be shared with hirers, event organisers and other relevant parties to ensure fire risks are adequately controlled.

11. MONITORING, RECORDS AND REVIEW

The Council shall maintain records relating to:

- Fire Risk Assessments.
- Fire safety inspections.
- Fire drills.
- Training.
- Fire alarm testing.
- Maintenance and servicing.
- Fire safety action plans.

Performance shall be monitored through inspections, audits, risk assessment reviews and completion of corrective actions.

This policy shall be reviewed by Health and Safety Advisory Group:

- Every three years as a minimum.
- Following significant legislative changes.
- Following a fire or significant incident.
- Following substantial changes to premises or operations.

Signed: _____

Dated:

Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Signed: _____

Dated:

Chair of the Council

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2026

ADOPTION OF CO-OPTION POLICY

Purpose of report: For members to approve the adoption of a Co-Option Policy.

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1. That the Finance and General Purposes Committee approve the adoption of a Co-option Policy (Appendix 1) and application form.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. A casual vacancy may occur on Dunstable Town Council through resignation, death, disqualification or another qualifying event. Where a vacancy cannot be filled through an election, the Council may appoint a councillor by co-option.

2.2. Co-option has been rarely used in Dunstable, however co-option has occurred, and therefore it would be appropriate to have a policy in place.

2.3. Whilst there is no legal requirement to adopt a Co-option Policy, doing so provides a clear, transparent and consistent framework for filling vacancies and reflects recognised sector good practice. The proposed policy has been developed using guidance and examples from other local councils and in line with the National Association of Local Council's guidance.

3. MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

3.1. The introduction of a Co-option Policy is necessary to ensure that Dunstable Town Council has clear arrangements in place to establish a fair and transparent process for filling casual vacancies by co-option.

3.2. The policy ensures all applicants are treated consistently and helps protect the Council from allegations of bias or unfairness.

4. FINANCIAL IMPACT

4.1. There are no financial implications arising from the adoption of this policy. Any advertising costs associated with co-option exercises would be met from existing Council budgets.

5. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

5.1. The policy supports the Corporate Plan objective of maintaining an efficient, transparent and well-governed Council by providing a consistent process for appointing Town Councillors to casual vacancies.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. The policy promotes equality of opportunity by providing a fair and transparent process for considering all eligible applicants.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS- none

8. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS- none

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1. The policy supports compliance with the Local Government Act 1972 and recognised sector guidance relating to the filling of casual vacancies by co-option.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIODIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS – none

11. CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IMPLICATIONS – none

12. APPENDICES

12.1. Appendix 1 - Co-option Policy

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

13.1. None

14. AUTHORS

Katie Williams - Corporate Performance and Compliance Manager
compliance@dunstable.gov.uk

(Assisted by Co-Pilot)

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

CO-OPTION POLICY

Introduction

This policy sets out the procedure to be followed by Dunstable Town Council when filling a casual vacancy for a Town Councillor by co-option.

The Council is committed to ensuring that the co-option process is transparent, open, fair and conducted in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 and relevant electoral legislation.

Background

A casual vacancy occurs when a Town Councillor:

- Resigns;
- Dies;
- Ceases to be qualified to hold office;
- Fails to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office;
- Is disqualified from office; or
- Fails to attend meetings for a continuous period of six months without approval of the Council.

When a vacancy arises, the Council must first notify the Electoral Services Team at Central Bedfordshire Council.

If ten electors request an election within the statutory notice period, a by-election will be held.

Where no election is requested, the vacancy shall be filled by co-option as soon as practicable.

Where a vacancy occurs within six months of ordinary elections, the Council may choose not to fill the vacancy.

Eligibility

A person is eligible to be co-opted if, on the date of appointment, they:

- Are aged 18 years or over;
- Are a British citizen, eligible Commonwealth citizen, citizen of the Republic of Ireland, or an eligible qualifying citizen; and

Meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Are registered as a local government elector for the Dunstable Town Council area; or
- Have occupied land or premises within the area during the previous 12 months; or

Date Adopted:
Last Reviewed:
Minute No:

- Have had their principal or only place of work within the area during the previous 12 months; or
- Have lived in the area, or within three miles of it, during the previous 12 months.

Applicants must not be disqualified from holding office under any relevant legislation.

Publicising Vacancies

When a co-option opportunity arises, the Council will seek to encourage applications from eligible residents by:

- Publishing details on the Council website;
- Advertising through Council social media channels;
- Displaying notices on Council noticeboards;
- Including information in appropriate Council communications;
- Providing details of the role of a Councillor and expected commitments;
- Explaining the application process and timescales;
- Publishing the date of the meeting where the co-option will be considered.

The Council may also undertake additional publicity where appropriate.

Application Process

Applicants must complete the Council's Co-option Application Form and return it to the Town Clerk by the published closing date.

Applications must normally be received at least 14 clear days before the meeting at which co-option will be considered.

Applicants will be asked to:

- Confirm their eligibility;
- Provide contact details;
- Explain why they wish to serve on the Council;
- Outline relevant skills, experience and community involvement.

Any relationship with an existing Town Councillor should be declared within the application.

Applications received after the closing date will not normally be considered.

Consideration of Applications

The Town Clerk will review applications to confirm eligibility.

Eligible applicants will be invited to attend the meeting at which the vacancy is to be filled.

Date Adopted:
Last Reviewed:
Minute No:

Copies of applications will be circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting.

Applications will be treated as confidential and personal information will be processed in accordance with data protection legislation.

Co-option Meeting Procedure

The co-option will be determined by Full Council.

Applicants may be invited to make a presentation of up to three minutes outlining:

- Their interest in the role;
- Relevant experience and skills;
- How they would contribute to the Council and community.

Councillors may ask questions to clarify information provided by applicants.

Following presentations and questions, applicants and members of the public may be asked to withdraw while the Council considers the applications.

Voting

Voting shall take place in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

Only Councillors present at the meeting may vote.

Each vacancy shall be filled by a vote of those Councillors present and voting.

If there are multiple candidates, Councillors will vote for their preferred candidate.

The successful candidate must receive an absolute majority of votes cast.

Where no candidate receives an absolute majority, the candidate receiving the lowest number of votes shall be eliminated and a further vote held. This process shall continue until a candidate obtains an absolute majority.

In the event of an equality of votes, the Chair of the meeting shall have a casting vote.

Interests and Bias

Councillors must comply with the Council's Code of Conduct throughout the co-option process.

Any Councillor with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or other registrable interest must declare that interest and act in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

The Council will ensure that the process is conducted fairly and without discrimination.

Date Adopted:
Last Reviewed:
Minute No:

Appointment

Following a successful vote:

- The successful applicant will be notified as soon as practicable;
- The appointment will be recorded in the minutes;
- The Councillor must sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office before acting as a Councillor;
- Appropriate induction and training arrangements will be offered.

Date Adopted:
Last Reviewed:
Minute No:

Appendix 1 - Co-option Application Form

Full Name:		
Address:		
Postcode:		
Telephone Number:		
Email Address:		
Eligibility Declaration		I confirm that I am 18 years of age or over.
		I confirm that I meet the legal requirements to serve as a Town Councillor.
		I confirm that I am not disqualified from holding office as a local councillor.
Supporting Information		
Why do you wish to become a Dunstable Town Councillor?		

Date Adopted:
Last Reviewed:
Minute No:

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2026

FINANCE REPORT

Purpose of report, to:

1.1) provide a revenue budgetary position report for the financial year 2026/2027
1.2) note the Council's earmarked reserve balances
1.3) provide details of current investments
1.4) provide an update on financial governance
1.5) provide an update on the new utilities contract
1.6) request approval for the addition to fees and charges

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1. To note the revenue budget position and year end forecasts for the current financial year, to 30 September 2026, at item 3, and Appendix 1.

1.2. To note the Council's earmarked reserves as at 31 October 2026, at item 4, and Appendix 2.

1.3. To note current investments, at item 5.

1.4. To note the financial governance update, at item 6.

1.5. To note the new utilities contract, at item 7.

1.6. For Members to approve the addition of an income charge to the Council's existing fees and charges, at item 8.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. The budgetary control report summarises the net expenditure against budget for each service area as at 30 September 2026 (as, at the time of writing this report, October month end was not complete). This forms the basis for the projected outturn at the end of the current financial year, taking account of known variances.

2.2. Members should note that we are still faced with substantial unknowns, and forecasts can only take account of known or estimated income and expenditure at the point of writing the report.

3. REVENUE BUDGETARY REPORT

3.1. The summary at Appendix 1 shows the net expenditure at 30 September 2026 per service area and an indication of the anticipated outturn against budget, taking

account of seasonal variances and known commitments for the remainder of the financial year.

3.2. The summary shows an overall net revenue underspend forecast for the financial year of **£7,175**. The underspend is predominantly due to the National Pay Award for 2026/27 agreed in August 2026 being slightly less than budgeted, as well the reduced employers' pension contribution required to Bedfordshire Pension Fund.

3.3. The most significant forecast variations to the agreed budget are:

- Within Corporate Services, the main underspends are due to forecast savings on utilities within Grove House, together with the insurance premium for the current year being lower than budgeted. Underspends have been offset by an expected underachievement on bank interest receivable.
- Grounds and Environmental Service is currently showing a forecast reduction in income from burials due to current bookings known; this is offset by the savings from the Pay Award and pension costs. The budget has been managed within the service areas to ensure the bottom line is at neutral.
- Community Services are showing an underspend; this is predominantly due to the delay in the opening of Priory House until the new year. This is a planned saving which will be used to enable improvements to the building which are now required due to the length of building works. Bennett's Splash is showing an overspend due to the salaries and wages – this is due to the budget set not taking account of lone working.

3.4. The year end forecast is subject to change, to account for year-end movements, including stocktakes and accrued loan interest, as well as unknown requirements up to 31 March 2027.

4. RESERVES

4.1. The schedule enclosed at Appendix 2 provides detail of actual contributions to, and expenditure from, reserve funds at 31 October 2026 as well as approvals for committed spend.

5. INVESTMENTS UPDATE

5.1. Dunstable Town Council's bank and investment account balances as at 30 October 2026 were as follows:

Account	Balance	Interest earned in month
Current Account	£10,000.00	-
Business Reserve Account	£436,338.33	£176.91
CCLA Deposit Account	£3,067,024.51	£10,737.78

6. FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE

6.1. Councillors should, as a minimum, view and audit the Council's accounts on a quarterly basis.

6.2. The last quarterly financial Councillor Audit was completed on 12 November 2026, with Councillors Johnson Tamara and Matt Brennan taking part. The Councillors carried out a 'mini audit' which included requests for financial information on various purchase ledger invoices paid from months July, August and September 2026.

6.3. The Chair of Finance and General Purposes and the Responsible Financial Officer have signed the bank reconciliations for the second quarter 2026/2027, verifying the amounts to the bank statements provided.

6.4. Further quarterly audits will be arranged, and all Councillors who are members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee are invited to be part of any future Financial Governance Audits they are available for.

7. UTILITIES CONTRACT

7.1. The Head of Corporate Services and RFO has secured a new utility contract, working with one of the SLCC's recommended providers for procuring supplies for local authorities, having access to combined pricing structures specifically for Councils.

7.2. As well as obtaining quotations through the existing provider, whom approached 2 separate utilities suppliers, further quotations were sought from a second procurement 'agent', also an SLCC recommended provider. They provided competitive quotations for varying 12, 24, 36 and 42 month contracts from 3 suppliers, 2 of which also quoted through the existing provider.

7.3. Although marginally differing, the existing provider procured slightly cheaper rates and following research on known market at this time, a 2 year contract was secured, resulting in a slight saving across all site's supplies.

8. FEES AND CHARGES

8.1. As part of ongoing budget monitoring, the Cemetery Manager has been reviewing the Council's fees and charges for the cemetery operations and it has become apparent that the existing fees and charges do not include the cost for the Exclusive Right of Burial (ERoB) transfer of ownership. Requirement for transfers average on an amount of 54.6 per year. Please see following numbers over the last 5 years;

Year	ERoB transfers
2022	53
2023	58
2024	64
2025	58
2026	40
Total	**273**
5-year annual average	**54.6**

8.2. On comparing with 5 neighbouring authorities with cemeteries, all of whom charge for the service, the average cost for this service is £98.40, including vat. Please see following table of local authorities charges for information:

Authority	Transfer / assignment fee	Notes
Luton Borough Council, The Vale	£89	Assignment, transfer or reissue of deed. [luton.gov.uk]
Toddington Parish Council	£100	Transfer of ERoB, per transfer. [toddington...cil.gov.uk]
St Albans City & District Council	£90	Transfer of Exclusive Rights of Burial, Deed of Grant. [stalbans.gov.uk]
Dacorum Borough Council	£93	Exclusive Right of Burial deed transfer. Same rate applies rather than a non-resident multiplier. [dacorum.gov.uk]
Buckinghamshire Council	£120	Transfer of ownership fee. The council's current Great Missenden and Parkside Cemetery schedules both show £120. [buckingham...ire.gov.uk], [media.buck...ire.gov.uk]

8.3. Transfer of ownership of an ERoB is essentially the formal legal and administrative process of changing the person recorded in the cemetery register as having the rights over a grave. This isn't just "reissuing a grave deed". The Council is effectively providing an administrative/legal verification service:

8.4. application received → cemetery records checked → legal entitlement established → supporting evidence examined → assignment/assent/statutory declaration/renunciation completed as appropriate → cemetery register amended → revised evidence of ownership issued/recorded.

8.5. Taking account of this, it is proposed to add a charge of £100.00 including vat (£83.3380 excluding vat), into the existing fees and charges, with immediate effect.

9. FINANCIAL IMPACT

9.1. These are inherent in this report.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIODIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS - none

11. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

11.1. The careful management of the Council's finances support the corporate plan objective to "Continue to improve the organisational management, efficiency and environmental sustainability of the Town Council."

12. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS – none

13. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS - none

14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

14.1. The National Joint Council for local government services has agreed rates of pay applicable from 1 April 2026 (covering the period 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027), the new pay rate being an increase of 3.3 percent on all Spinal Column Points (SCP).

15. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

15.1. All financial transactions and processes are managed and monitored in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

16. ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIODIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS – none

17. CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IMPLICATIONS - none

18. APPENDICES

18.1. Appendix 1 – Summary of the Revenue Budget at 30 September 2026
Appendix 2 – Summary of Earmarked Reserves at 31 October 2026

19. BACKGROUND PAPERS - none

20. AUTHOR

20.1. Lisa Scheder – Head of Corporate Services and Responsible Financial Officer
lisa.scheder@dunstable.gov.uk

Dunstable Town Council ***Summary of Actuals vs Budget*** ***##################***

Corporate Services

	Service Area	Budget 2026/27	Actuals to Date	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	Year-end Forecast	Year-end Variance	
100	Staff Costs	(550,680)	(298,644)	0	(252,036)	(550,784)	(104)	Pension and Pay Award saving, offset by mat cover (Dem 5 weeks, compliance 5.5months)
101	Central Services	(136,630)	(122,496)	(7,721)	(4,663)	(138,618)	(1,988)	Underspend forecast on telephones - streamlined accounts/ saving on mobile contract, offset by o
102	Grove House	(35,984)	(20,923)	(1,517)	(31,650)	(32,604)	3,380	Underspend forecast on equipment and utilities
106	Corporate Management	(78,111)	(38,273)	(1,144)	(98,259)	(74,008)	4,103	Underspend forecast on Insurance and Newsletter, offset by underachievement forecast on intere
107	Democratic Management	(26,360)	(15,384)	(881)	(10,058)	(25,790)	570	By-election over reserve amount= £2850; regalia valuation, offset by printing and civic hospitality
110	Capital & Projects (inc loan charges)	(211,316)	(191,055)	(3,009)	(188,654)	(211,316)	0	
	Grand Total	***(1,039,081)***	***(686,775)***	***(14,272)***	***(585,320)***	***(1,033,120)***	***5,961***	

Grounds and Environmental Services

	Service Area	Budget 2026/27	Actuals to Date	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	Year-end Forecast	Year-end Variance	
200	Staff Costs, Vehicle Costs	(997,061)	(510,266)	(3,014)	(483,783)	(982,348)	14,713	Pension and Pay Award saving
201	Allotments	3,595	(4,912)	(1,000)	(4,442)	5,038	1,443	Forecast underspend on electricity
202	Cemetery	(29,944)	(10,329)	(76,596)	(76,700)	(53,910)	(23,966)	Underachievement on income forecast based on bookings to date
205	Recreation Grounds	(88,270)	(29,036)	(4,517)	(61,346)	(80,460)	7,810	Underspend on repairs and maintenance to offset underachievement on Cemetery budgets
403	Town Centre and Gardens	(29,721)	(37,518)	(509)	(27,086)	(29,721)	0	
206	Town Ranger Service	(11,280)	(1,675)	(1,682)	(13,552)	(11,280)	0	
210	Capital & Projects	(186,085)	(170,053)	(8,769)	(68,718)	(186,085)	0	
	Grand Total	***(1,338,766)***	***(763,789)***	***(96,087)***	***(735,627)***	***(1,338,766)***	***0***	

Community Services

	Service Area	Budget 2026/27	Actuals to Date	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	Year-end Forecast	Year-end Variance	
300	Staff Costs	(369,323)	(156,487)	0	(182,836)	(360,766)	8,557	Pension and Pay Award saving
209	Older People's Support Service	(25,823)	(8,854)	(2,202)	(22,886)	(26,166)	(343)	
303	Community Engagement (inc Grants)	(27,505)	(23,389)	(1,330)	(29,179)	(25,151)	2,354	Salaries and wages saving - vacancy in first part of year
304	Grove Corner	(20,929)	(9,913)	(1,020)	(17,087)	(21,683)	(754)	
115	Bennett Memorial RG Splash Park	(74,164)	(47,779)	(3,504)	(29,421)	(86,076)	(11,912)	Overspend forecast on salaries and wages, maintenance contracts and repairs
401	Events Programme	(191,685)	(128,280)	(24,709)	(31,445)	(190,595)	1,090	Overachievement on concessions income
402	Priory House	(270,408)	(27,138)	(2,875)	(287,015)	(204,150)	66,258	Savings forecast on salaries and wages due to later than scheduled recruitment, plus rates rebate
405	Town Centre Services (inc Special Markets)	(125,773)	(37,832)	(17,076)	(74,885)	(123,552)	2,221	Pension and Pay Award saving
407	Public Conveniences (Ashton Square)	(7,802)	(2,769)	(779)	(4,254)	(7,802)	0	
310	Capital & Projects	(120,287)	(88,193)	(77,883)	114,696	(120,287)	0	
	Grand Total	(1,233,699)	(530,634)	(131,378)	(564,312)	(1,166,227)	67,472	

	DTC Grand Total	***(3,611,546)***	***(1,981,198)***	***(241,737)***	***(1,885,259)***	***(3,538,113)***	***73,433***
	Priory House - any underspend on budget to be reinvested for improvements (Community Services Committee Meeting 7 Sept 26)						(66,258)
						TOTAL	**7,175**

Dunstable Town Council - Reserves Summary 2026/2027

	Description	Officer	Balance as at 01.04.26	Contributions Revenue/ Other	Expenditure in year	Bal as at 31.10.26		Commitments/Programme of works, etc	Committed Amount	Bal after committed
310	General Reserve	TC&CE / HofCorp	**£565,714**			**£565,714**		Minimun requirement c/fwd to 2026/27 = 25% of annual salaries = £544,587	-£544,587	**£21,127**
312	Vehicles Reserve	HofGES	**£94,169**	£60,000	-£81,820	**£72,349**		FGP 17.06.24- Minute 141/24- bal of £28,347 for 2 replacement vehicles & 1 additional ride on mower (of £92,337 approved) GES 19.01.26- Minute 032/26- £35,000 for Ranger vehicle and £15,000 refurbishment of cemetery digger GES 08.06.26- Minute 182/26- bal of £8,180 of an additional £75,000 for a mower & cemetery digger (with £15,000 from above)	-£71,527	**£822**
314	Christmas Lights Reserve	HofCS	**£19,766**	£7,000		**£26,766**		FGP 26.01.26- Minute 042/26= £13,041 - Additional lighting CS 09.11.26- Minute 287/26= £5,000 for repair works	-£18,140	**£8,626**
316	Downside Building Maintenance Res	HofCS	**£15,840**	£5,000	-£6,803	**£14,037**		for 2nd phase roof repairs FGP 26.01.26- Minute 041/26= £34,297- for 2nd phase roof repairs totalling £79,769 approved less exp to date	-£9,037	**£5,000**
317	Grove Corner Building Maint Reserve	HofCS	**£42,565**	£4,000		**£46,565**		Council 05.10.26- Minute 277/26= £9,870 for internal and external redecoration	-£9,870	**£36,695**
318	Building Security Systems	HofCorp	**£5,357**			**£5,357**		Council 15.04.24- Minute 99/24= £5,357 for improved security for Grove House	-£5,357	**£0**
319	Cemetery Memorial Safety	HofGES	**£4,730**	£1,738		**£6,468**		Council 15.04.24- Minute 99/24= £3,075- ongoing for periodic inspections and subsequent works	-£3,075	**£3,393**
320	Priory House Tearooms Equipment	HofCS	**£12,000**	£3,000		**£15,000**		Council 15.04.24- Minute 99/24= Existing balance + ongoing for replacement of kitchen/catering equipment	-£15,000	**£0**
321	IT/Equipment Reserve	TC&CE / HofCorp	**£21,213**	£20,000	-£3,315	**£37,898**		For future IT hardware replacement/upgrade as required		**£37,898**
322	Older People's Day Care Service	HofCS	**£12,325**			**£12,325**		CS 01.06.26- Minute 156/26= £12,325 for service requirements	-£12,325	**£0**
323	Election Reserve	TC&CE / HofCorp	**£0**	£20,000	-£20,000	**£0**				**£0**
324	Grove House Building Reserve	HofCorp	**£160,194**	£69,000	-£4,728	**£224,466**		Council 24.06.24- Minute 165/24= £86,456.91 for essential repair and maintenance works (of £226,550 approved)	-£86,466	**£138,000**
325	Priory House Works Contingency	HofCS	**£29,864**		-£11,651	**£18,213**		Council 07.04.25- Minute 115/25= bal of £18,213 (of £29,864 approved for PH Exhibition (in £161,013 total with £11,149 on 327 & £120,000 on 333))	-£18,213	**£0**
326	Mayoral Reserve	HofCorp	**£3,000**			**£3,000**		FGP 19.01.15-Minute 24 - to be retained for transport/allowance as required	-£3,000	**£0**
327	Priory House Exhibition	HofCS	**£11,149**		-£11,149	**£0**				**£0**
328	Priory Churchyard	HofGES	**£0**	£5,000		**£5,000**		As determined in quinquennial report		**£5,000**
330	Town Twinning Reserve	TC&CE / HofCorp	**£8,274**		-£75	**£8,199**		Retained for twinning activities to be determined		**£8,199**

Dunstable Town Council - Reserves Summary 2026/2027

	Description	Officer	Balance as at 01.04.26	Contributions Revenue/ Other	Expenditure in year	Bal as at 31.10.26		Commitments/Programme of works, etc	Committed Amount	Bal after committed
331	Tree Reserve	HofGES	**£11,261**	£15,000	-£1,400	**£24,861**		FGP 15.06.26- Minute 197/26- bal of reserve for ongoing required works	-£24,861	**£0**
332	Open Spaces Improvement Plan	HofGES	**£73,949**	£30,000		**£103,949**		FGP 20.01.20- Minute 8- Bal of £4,723 for recreation grounds improvement works (from £26,668 agreed); Council 29.06.20- Minute 85- bal of £12,982 for Priory Gardens Pergola Repairs (from £15,000 agreed)	-£17,705	**£86,244**
333	Priory House Building Reserve	HofCS	£223,426	£50,000	-£185,609	**£87,816**		Community Services 12.01.26- Minute 012/26= bal of £87,816, for required maintenance/improvement works (of £220,282.49 approved; £170,522.59 + £50,000 26/27 res contrib)	-£87,816	**£0**
334	Pavilion Buildings Maintenance Res	HofGES	**£50,632**	£15,000	-£980	**£64,652**				**£64,652**
338	Allotments Reserve	HofGES	**£26,482**	£5,000		**£31,482**		FGP Minute 107 20.06.22= bal for 5 year infrastructure improvement programme (upto £42,800 approved) (includes £5,000 pa contributions to 26/27)	-£15,112	**£16,370**
340	NEW Community Lottery Reserve	HofCS		£1,750		**£1,750**				**£1,750**
341	Outdoor Leisure (non play) Reserve	HofCS / HofGES	**£27,052**	£12,000		**£39,052**		Council 05.10.26- Minute 277/26= £5,140 for internal redecoration & counter install- Splash Café; Community Services 11.11.26- Minute 296/26= upto	-£13,140	**£25,912**
342	Memorial Kerbs Reserve	HofGES	**£461**			**£461**		Council 15.04.24- Minute 99/24= £300 for purchase of memorial kerbs	-£300	**£161**
343	Cemetery Building Maintenance Res	HofGES	**£54,773**	£10,000		**£64,773**		GES Minute 150/25= £27,281 for cemetery building works, information board and footpath repairs FGP Minute 167/25 = £27,492 (tfrd from general reserve) for cem building works, with above	-£54,773	**£10,000**
344	Fencing Maintenance Reserve	HofGES	**£7,088**	£7,000		**£14,088**		FGP 15.06.26- Minute 197/26= bal of reserve for ongoing required works	-£14,088	**£0**
346	HSHAZ/Priory House HAR	HofCS	**£63,343**	£286,785	-£702,370	**-£352,243**		Priory House works programme- to future claim / claims due	£352,243	**£0**
347	Play Equipment Improvement Res	HofGES	**£2,616**			**£2,616**				**£2,616**
349	Website Development	HofCorp	**£1,612**	£900		**£2,512**				**£2,512**
354	Detached Youth Service Reserve	HofCS	**£31,000**			**£31,000**		FGP 26.01.26, Minute 043/26 - £31,000 Approved of 25/26 year end underspends to ringfence and release of funds for future detached youth service	-£31,000	**£0**
355	Ranger Stores Maintenance Res	HofGES	**£30,000**			**£30,000**		FGP 26.01.26, Minute 043/26 - £30,000 aproved from 25/26 year end underspends to ringfence and release of funds for roof repairs to ranger stores	-£30,000	**£0**
356	Professional Fees Reserve	TC&CE / HofCorp	**£44,854**		-£3,910	**£40,945**		FGP 26.01.26, Minute 043/26 - bal of y/end underspends to ringfence and release of funds for professional fees as required	-£40,945	**£0**
357	NEW Health and Safety Reserve	TC&CE / HofCorp		£5,000		**£5,000**				**£5,000**
358	NEW Council Tax Base Contingency Reserv	TC&CE / HofCorp		£63,000		**£63,000**				**£63,000**
	Earmarked Reserves Total		**£1,654,709**	£696,173	-£1,033,811	£1,317,071			-£774,096	**£542,976**

Dunstable Town Council - Reserves Summary 2026/2027

	Description	Officer	Balance as at 01.04.26	Contributions Revenue/ Other	Expenditure in year	Bal as at 31.10.26		Commitments/Programme of works, etc	Committed Amount	Bal after committed
	Capital Receipt - Sale of Land at Meadway									
	Description	**Officer**	**Balance as at 01.04.26**	**Contributions Revenue/ Other**	**Expenditure in year**	**Bal as at 31.10.26**		**Commitments/Programme of works, etc**	**Committed Amount**	**Bal after committed**
371	White Lion Land Landscaping	HofGES	**£10,000**		-£750	**£9,250**		Chairs Approval 11.04.25- bal of £9,250 (from £10,000 approved) - land development	-£9,250	**£0**
372	New Cemetery Development	HofGES	**£147,361**		-£29,420	**£117,940**		FGP 18.09.23- Minute 187/23= balance of £2,715 for development of the new cemetery (of £76,775 approved) Council 09.02.26- Minute 062/26- £102,500 for the purchase of Cottage Bottom Field to develop the new cemetery GES 08.06.26- Minute 184/26= bal of uncommitted of £12,725 towards cost of development works	-£117,940	**£0**
373	Grounds Depot Extension	HofGES	**£95,685**		-£11,530	**£84,155**		FGP 17.06.24- Minute 141/24= bal of £84,155 - Depot Extension (of £100,000 approved)	-£84,155	**£0**
374	Luton Road MUGA	HofGES	**£42**			**£42**				**£42**
375	Priory House Furniture	HofCS	**£26,000**			**£26,000**		Council 17.04.23 Minute 93/23- release from capital receipt received July 2022 for Priory House furniture	-£26,000	**£0**
376	Kingsbury Pavilion Refurbishment	HofGES	**£166,250**			**£166,250**		Chairs Approval 11.04.25- bal of £166,250 (from £170,000 approved) - refurbishment	£0	**£166,250**
377	Splash Canopies	TC&CE	**£57**			**£57**			-£57	**£0**
	Capital Receipts Total		**£445,395**	£0	-£41,700	£403,695			-£403,695	£0
	S106/External Funding/Ringfenced Expenditure specified by funding body									
352	Development Contributions- REV	HofGES	**£18,316**			**£18,316**		Bal of £14,129 for Willoughy to rev budget 26/27 & 27/28 (from S106 £47,645) Bal of £4,038 for Court Drive Landscaping (from CBC £15,000) - FGP approval 26.01.26 for town centre & Court Drive planting for 2026 programme	#REF!	**£149**
570	Joint Committee Fund	HofCS	**£50,021**		-£877	**£49,144**		Bal in holding code as committed Joint Committees fund only = not DTC	-£49,144	**£0**
	S106/External Funding Total		**£68,337**	£0	-£877	£67,460			#REF!	**£149**
			£2,168,441	**£696,173**	**-£1,076,388**	£1,788,226			**#REF!**	**£543,125**

Key:
= Finance and General Purposes Committee
= Grounds and Environmental Services Committee
= Community Services Committee

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2026

BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2027/28

Purpose of Report:	For members to consider and comment on highlight budget proposals for Corporate Services for 2027/28

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 For members to consider and comment on draft budget proposals for the Corporate Services' service area for 2027/28, as well as indicative budget changes for the following three years.

2. BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

2.1. A budget for 2027/28 has been drafted and is included below. This year each committee is being given two opportunities to review the budget; for Corporate Services, this will be on 16 November 2026 and 18 January 2027. This will enable members to review proposed changes in the first meeting, to enable officers to prepare a full budget for the second meeting.

2.2. In drafting the budget, officers have had to make assumptions about the salary increase forecast for 2027/28. Staff contracts specify that pay will increase by the amount set by the national agreement each year. For 2027/28 this has been estimated at 3.5%. When the 4-year budget was produced to Council, at 2026/27 budget setting, the percentage increase was estimated at 3% year on year. However, based on national RPI known, this would be a risk on the Council's finances and therefore 3.5% has been used for salaries.

2.3. For other inflationary increases, these were set at 3% when the four-year budget was agreed in February 2026, and the budget now being prepared for 2027/28 has kept increases to 3% where specific increases are yet unknown. This may put some pressure on services but will help to keep budget increases down.

2.4. It is not yet possible to be precise about the impact of the proposed budget on the precept and individual Council Taxpayers because any changes to the Council Tax Base have not yet been included. This will be available for the next budget round. We have therefore had to make assumptions at this stage that it will stay the same as the current year at 13,596.

2.5. A summary of the proposed budget increases for Corporate Services for financial year 2027/28 are below, which include significant variances, noting that the 3% RPI and 3.5% staffing increases are included. The detailed breakdown of the draft budget follows at item 2.7.

Service Area	Budget 2026/27	Proposed	Variance	Highlights

		Budget 2027/28		
Staff Costs	-550,680	**-569,962**	-19,282	3.5% increase
Central Services	-136,630	**-165,679**	-29,049	- *£26,100 Increased training requirements - £3,538 IT maintenance support contract increase - £2,400 saving on equipment hire (copier contract) - £1,326 Professional Fees RPI increase
Grove House	-35,984	**-32,060**	3,924	- £4,500 utilities savings (new contract)
Corporate Management	-78,111	**-85,803**	-7,692	- NEW *£10,000 Survey/Research - NEW *£8,000 Corporate Plan development - £10,000 saving on insurance - £1,000 income on newsletter advertising - £4,082 Health and Safety budget reduction - £1,287 increased HR related costs - £1,001 interest receivable reduction
Democratic Management	-26,360	**-26,695**	-335	- RPI increases
Capital & Projects (inc loan charges)	-211,316	**-247,233**	-35,917	- £5,000 IT/Equipment reserve increase - £24,000 Elections reserve increase - *£50,000 Grove House maintenance reserve increase - NEW *£20,000 VAT partial exemption reserve - £63,000 saving as Capital tax base reserve contribution not required
	-	-		
Grand Total	***1,039,081***	***1,127,432***	***-88,351***	

2.6. New or increased budgets over and above the known, unavoidable increases (RPI, National Pay), recommended for consideration are:

- within the Central Services budget an increase to the staff training budget of £26,100 has been recommended; this is due to

- within the Corporate Management budget are 2 new budget lines recommended;
  1) £10,000 – following conversations at the previous meeting of this committee in support of professional survey work for proper market research to be carried out to obtain a baseline every 4 years, whilst using other forms of engagement along side it, rather than continually conducting surveys.

  2) £8,000 – next 4 year corporate plan development

- Within the Capital and Projects budget, an increase of £50,000 is recommended for the contribution to the Grove House building maintenance reserve. This was previously set at a contribution of £69,000 for 2027/28, however Members are aware that the majority of the current reserve has already been committed on initial repairs, there are further extensive repairs and refurbishment of the building required over the coming months and years.

- Also within the Capital and Projects budget, a new reserve has been recommended for VAT of £20,000.

- This reserve is recommended to manage the financial risk arising from the Council's VAT partial exemption calculation, particularly during the period of significant building works at Grove House.
- As a local authority, the Council is normally able to recover VAT incurred on its activities under section 33 of the VAT Act 1994. However, there is a limit on the amount of VAT attributable to exempt activities that can be recovered. HMRC currently treats this VAT as insignificant where it is no more than £7,500 per annum, or less than 5% of the Council's total input VAT for the financial year, whichever is the greater.
- The proposed works at Grove House are likely to result in a significant increase in input VAT. Depending upon the use of the building and how those costs are attributed between taxable, exempt and non-business activities, this could affect the Council's partial exemption calculation.
- Importantly, the HMRC test is effectively an all-or-nothing test. If the Council exceeds the applicable Section 33 limit, VAT attributable to exempt supplies that has been recovered may have to be repaid, rather than simply the amount by which the limit has been exceeded. HMRC confirms that where both Section 33 criteria are exceeded, none of the VAT attributable to exempt activities can be recovered. HMRC Section 33 insignificance test (link found in item 11.2 of this report).
- The reserve would therefore provide financial protection should the final annual VAT partial exemption calculation result in a repayment to HMRC. Any amount not required would remain within the Council's reserves and could subsequently be released following completion of the annual calculation.

2.7. Corporate Services draft budget:

STAFF COSTS - 100

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Expenditure:					
4001	Salaries	-550,680	**-569,962**	-587,061	-604,673	-622,813
		-550,680	**-569,962**	**-587,061**	**-604,673**	**-622,813**

CENTRAL SERVICES - 101

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Expenditure:					
4007	Staff Training	-20,000	**-46,100**	-47,483	-48,907	-50,375
4010	Payroll Services	-7,344	**-7,564**	-7,791	-8,025	-8,265
4021	Telephones / Data Links	-14,150	**-14,150**	-14,575	-15,012	-15,462
4022	Postage	-1,000	**-1,000**	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000
4023	Stationery	-3,000	**-3,000**	-3,000	-3,000	-3,000
4025	Subscriptions/Publications	-8,827	**-9,092**	-9,365	-9,646	-9,935
4037	Equipment Maintenance / Software	-49,384	**-52,922**	-54,510	-56,145	-57,829
4039	Equipment Hire (Photocopier rental)	-6,400	**-4,000**	-4,120	-4,244	-4,371
4058	Professional Services	-26,525	**-27,851**	-28,687	-29,547	-30,434
		-136,630	**-165,679**	**-170,529**	**-175,525**	**-180,671**

GROVE HOUSE - 102

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Income:					
1001	Lettings/Facility Hire	5,000	**5,000**	5,150	5,305	5,464
1002	Rents and Rates (Tenants)	28,072	**28,350**	29,201	30,077	30,979
		33,072	**33,350**	34,351	35,381	36,442
	Expenditure:					
4011	Rates	-18,032	**-17,752**	-18,640	-19,199	-19,775
4012	Water	-1,000	**-1,050**	-1,103	-1,136	-1,170
4014	Electricity	-9,000	**-7,500**	-7,500	-7,725	-7,957
4015	Gas	-10,000	**-7,000**	-7,000	-7,210	-7,426
4016	Cleaning	-14,308	**-14,737**	-15,179	-15,634	-16,104
4017	Waste disposal	-1,008	**-1,267**	-1,305	-1,344	-1,384
4018	Security	-200	**-200**	-200	-200	-200
4027	Licences	0	**-180**	-1,480	-180	-1,480
4036	Building Maintenance Contracts	-4,319	**-4,319**	-4,449	-4,582	-4,719
4038	Repairs and Maintenance	-7,210	**-7,426**	-7,649	-7,878	-8,115
4040	Equipment/Materials/Tools	-3,979	**-3,979**	-4,098	-4,221	-4,348
		-69,056	**-65,410**	-68,602	-69,310	-72,677
	Total Net Expenditure:	**-35,984**	**-32,060**	**-34,251**	**-33,929**	**-36,235**

CORPORATE MANAGEMENT – 106

Nominal		Budget	Proposed Budget	Proposed Budget	Proposed Budget	Proposed Budget

Code	Nominal Description	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	Income:					
1096	Investment/Bank Interest	101,000	**100,000**	102,999	106,089	109,272
1093	Advertising/Sponsorship (TOTT)	0	**1,000**	1,030	1,061	1,093
1099	Beds FA Buildings and ATP Insurance + recharges	6,335	**5,850**	5,850	5,850	5,850
		107,335	**106,850**	109,879	113,000	116,215
	Expenditure:					
4003	Pension/HR Related Costs	-8,157	**-8,402**	-8,654	-8,914	-9,181
4006	Health & Safety	-30,609	**-26,527**	-27,323	-28,142	-28,987
4019	DBS Checks	-550	**-550**	-550	-550	-550
4026	Insurance	-80,854	**-70,854**	-74,397	-76,629	-78,927
4032	Publicity / Marketing	-5,500	**-5,500**	-5,665	-5,835	-6,010
4033	Newsletter	-40,132	**-41,336**	-42,576	-43,853	-45,169
4034	Website	-4,500	**-4,635**	-4,774	-4,917	-5,065
4053	Surveys / Research	0	**-10,000**	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000
4054	Corporate Plan Development	0	**-8,000**	0	0	0
4056	Audit Fees - External	-3,649	**-3,893**	-4,010	-4,130	-4,254
4057	Audit Fees - Internal	-2,599	**-2,677**	-2,757	-2,840	-2,925
4062	HR Related Costs	-3,713	**-5,000**	-5,150	-5,305	-5,464
4063	Uniform	-3,183	**-3,278**	-3,376	-3,478	-3,582
4096	Bank Charges	-2,000	**-2,000**	-2,060	-2,122	-2,185
		-185,446	**-192,652**	-182,292	-187,714	-193,299
	Total Net Expenditure:	**-78,111**	**-85,803**	**-72,413**	**-74,714**	**-77,084**

DEMOCRATIC MANAGEMENT AND REPRESENTATION - 107

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Expenditure:					
4007	Member Training	-1,000	**-1,000**	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000
4024	Printing Costs (Civic Events)	-1,250	**-1,000**	-1,030	-1,061	-1,093
4025	Subscriptions	-2,369	**-2,572**	-2,649	-2,729	-2,810
4501	Mayoral Transport	-3,500	**-3,500**	-3,500	-3,500	-3,500
4502	Mayoral Allowance	-4,500	**-4,500**	-4,500	-4,500	-4,500
4503	Civic Hospitality	-9,558	**-9,845**	-10,140	-10,445	-10,758
4504	Civic Regalia	-1,000	**-1,000**	-1,000	-1,900	-1,000
4515	Remembrance Services	-3,183	**-3,278**	-3,376	-3,478	-3,582
	Total Net Expenditure:	**-26,360**	**-26,695**	**-27,196**	**-28,612**	**-28,243**

CAPITAL AND PROJECTS - 110

Nominal		Budget	Proposed Budget	Proposed Budget	Proposed Budget	Proposed Budget

Code	Nominal Description	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	Expenditure:					
4051	Loan Interest Payable (Grove House)	-9,849	**-8,766**	-7,683	-6,599	-5,516
4052	Loan Capital Repaid (Grove House)	-23,567	**-23,567**	-23,567	-23,567	-23,567
4721	Cont. to Reserves (IT)	-20,000	**-25,000**	-35,000	-35,000	-35,000
4723	Cont. to Election Reserve	-20,000	**-44,000**	-30,000	-30,000	-30,000
4724	Cont. to Reserve (Building Maint)	-69,000	**-119,000**	-119,000	-119,000	-119,000
4750	Cont. to VAT Partial Exemption	0	**-20,000**	-20,000	-20,000	-20,000
4952	Cont. to Health and Safety	-5,000	**-5,000**	-5,150	-5,305	-5,464
4977	Capital tax base contingency	-63,000	**0**	0	0	0
4936	Cont. to Personnel Reserve	0	**-1,000**	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000
4949	Cont. to Website Development	-900	**-900**	-927	-955	-983
	Total Net Expenditure:	**-211,316**	**-247,233**	**-242,327**	**-241,425**	**-240,530**

SUMMARY

Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
Staff Costs	-550,680	**-569,962**	-587,061	-604,673	-622,813
Central Services	-136,630	**-165,679**	-170,529	-175,525	-180,671
Grove House	-35,984	**-32,060**	-34,251	-33,929	-36,235
Corporate Management	-78,111	**-85,803**	-72,413	-74,714	-77,084
Democratic Management	-26,360	**-26,695**	-27,196	-28,612	-28,243
Capital and Projects	-211,316	**-247,233**	-242,327	-241,425	-240,530
	-1,039,081	**-1,127,432**	**-1,133,777**	**-1,158,878**	**-1,185,577**

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1. The proposed budget would ensure the Council continued to provide the current level of service while maintaining good governance and treasury management. The provision of indicative budget changes for the following three years enables Members to ensure that plans are in place to maintain sufficient reserves to sustain the Council's current assets.

3.2. The draft budget for all service areas can be found at Appendix 1 to this report.

4. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

4.1. The Council adopted a Corporate Plan for 2024-2027, with a new Corporate Plan being produced in financial year 2027-2028. The budget proposed would enable the Council to maintain the current range and quality of services provided.

4.2. The Council's budget setting process aligns to the 6 Corporate Priorities

5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Under the Equalities Action 2010, the Town Council has a public sector duty to ensure that it has due regard to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advancing the equality of opportunity and fostering good relations. The recommendations contained within this report enable the Council to meet these requirements in the coming year.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. The proposed health and safety budget has been recommended, in line with known cost rises and budgetary requirements.

7. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1. The draft budget provides for salaries and associated employment costs, including anticipated pay awards, increments, employer National Insurance and pension contributions, together with any known staffing changes. Employee costs will be monitored throughout the year against the approved budget.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1. The Council is required to determine its financial requirements for each financial year and to set an appropriate precept to fund its services and activities. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 Local Government Finance Act 1992 provides the statutory framework for local precepting authorities to issue a precept, while Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 Local Government Act 1972 requires the Council to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIODIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

The recommendations contained in this report will enable the Council to continue to meet and the develop its Biodiversity Policy and Grounds and Environmental Service.

10. CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IMPLICATIONS

10.1. The Council has a legal duty to consider the impact that its decisions have regarding crime and ASB. The budget ensures that there is no adverse impact on these matters and that the Council's work with Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedfordshire Police to advance community resilience and community safety will continue.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1. BUDGET-BOOK-2026-2027.pdf
11.2. VATGPB4510 - Section 33 bodies: calculations: insignificance test - HMRC internal manual - GOV.UK

12. APPENDICES

12.1. Appendix 1 – Proposed Budget Report

13. AUTHOR

Lisa Scheder – Head of Corporate Services and Responsible Financial Officer
Email – lisa.scheder@dunstable.gov.uk

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
BUDGET 2027/2028

CORPORATE SERVICES

Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
Staff Costs	-550,680	-569,962	-587,061	-604,673	-622,813
Central Services	-136,630	-165,679	-170,529	-175,525	-180,671
Grove House	-35,984	-32,060	-34,251	-33,929	-36,235
Corporate Management	-78,111	-85,803	-72,413	-74,714	-77,084
Democratic Management	-26,360	-26,695	-27,196	-28,612	-28,243
Capital and Projects	-211,316	-247,233	-242,327	-241,425	-240,530
	-1,039,081	**-1,127,432**	**-1,133,777**	**-1,158,878**	**-1,185,577**

GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
Staff & Vehicle Costs	-997,061	-992,195	-1,021,961	-1,052,620	-1,084,198
Allotments	3,595	3,808	4,012	4,133	4,257
Cemetery	-29,944	-69,767	-116,154	-188,422	-185,556
Recreation Grounds	-88,270	-95,052	-103,223	-105,884	-109,156
Town Centre & Gardens	-29,721	-30,438	-31,087	-31,906	-32,749
Town Ranger Service	-11,280	-11,618	-11,967	-12,326	-12,695
Capital and Projects	-186,085	-296,329	-310,733	-321,240	-314,025
	-1,338,766	**-1,491,591**	**-1,591,112**	**-1,708,265**	**-1,734,123**

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
Staff Costs	-369,323	-310,899	-364,254	-375,182	-386,437
Older People's Day Care Services	-25,823	-26,575	-36,150	-39,982	-41,182
Community Engagement	-27,505	-31,277	-32,083	-32,912	-33,766
Grove Corner	-20,929	-24,348	-24,958	-25,756	-26,579
Bennett Memorial Recreation Ground Splash Park	-74,164	-73,677	-75,942	-78,383	-80,901
Events Programme	-191,685	-303,099	-312,111	-321,474	-331,116
Priory House	-270,408	-333,551	-343,122	-353,675	-364,558
Town Centre Services	-125,773	-174,645	-163,707	-167,892	-172,206
Public Conveniences (Ashton Square)	-7,802	-8,037	-8,277	-8,527	-8,782
Capital and Projects	-120,287	-84,273	-128,221	-127,187	-126,171
	-1,233,699	**-1,370,381**	**-1,488,825**	**-1,530,971**	**-1,571,698**
	-3,611,546	**-3,989,404**	**-4,213,714**	**-4,398,113**	**-4,491,397**
Contribution to/*from) Reserves		-77,326			
Precept	**-3,611,546**	**-4,066,729**			
Band D Council Tax	-265.63	-299.11			
Tax Base	13596	13596			
Per Month		-24.93			
Per week		-5.75			
Precept increase (%)		**12.60%**	3.61%	4.38%	2.12%

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
SUMMARY OF NET EXPENDITURE

CORPORATE SERVICES

Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
Staff Costs	-550,680	-569,962	-587,061	-604,673	-622,813
Central Services	-136,630	-165,679	-170,529	-175,525	-180,671
Grove House	-35,984	-32,060	-34,251	-33,929	-36,235
Corporate Management	-78,111	-85,803	-72,413	-74,714	-77,084
Democratic Management	-26,360	-26,695	-27,196	-28,612	-28,243
Capital and Projects	-211,316	-247,233	-242,327	-241,425	-240,530
	-1,039,081	**-1,127,432**	**-1,133,777**	**-1,158,878**	**-1,185,577**

CORPORATE SERVICES

STAFF COSTS - 100

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Expenditure:					
4001	Salaries	-550,680	-569,962	-587,061	-604,673	-622,813
		-550,680	**-569,962**	**-587,061**	**-604,673**	**-622,813**

CENTRAL SERVICES - 101

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Expenditure:					
4007	Staff Training	-20,000	-46,100	-47,483	-48,907	-50,375
4010	Payroll Services	-7,344	-7,564	-7,791	-8,025	-8,265
4021	Telephones / Data Links	-14,150	-14,150	-14,575	-15,012	-15,462
4022	Postage	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000
4023	Stationery	-3,000	-3,000	-3,000	-3,000	-3,000
4025	Subscriptions/Publications	-8,827	-9,092	-9,365	-9,646	-9,935
4037	Equipment Maintenance / Software	-49,384	-52,922	-54,510	-56,145	-57,829
4039	Equipment Hire (Photocopier rental)	-6,400	-4,000	-4,120	-4,244	-4,371
4058	Professional Services	-26,525	-27,851	-28,687	-29,547	-30,434
		-136,630	**-165,679**	**-170,529**	**-175,525**	**-180,671**

CORPORATE SERVICES

GROVE HOUSE - 102

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Income:					
1001	Lettings/Facility Hire	5,000	5,000	5,150	5,305	5,464
1002	Rents and Rates (Tenants)	28,072	28,350	29,201	30,077	30,979
		33,072	33,350	34,351	35,381	36,442
	Expenditure:					
4011	Rates	-18,032	-17,752	-18,640	-19,199	-19,775
4012	Water	-1,000	-1,050	-1,103	-1,136	-1,170
4014	Electricity	-9,000	-7,500	-7,500	-7,725	-7,957
4015	Gas	-10,000	-7,000	-7,000	-7,210	-7,426
4016	Cleaning	-14,308	-14,737	-15,179	-15,634	-16,104
4017	Waste disposal	-1,008	-1,267	-1,305	-1,344	-1,384
4018	Security	-200	-200	-200	-200	-200
4027	Licences	0	-180	-1,480	-180	-1,480
4036	Building Maintenance Contracts	-4,319	-4,319	-4,449	-4,582	-4,719
4038	Repairs and Maintenance	-7,210	-7,426	-7,649	-7,878	-8,115
4040	Equipment/Materials/Tools	-3,979	-3,979	-4,098	-4,221	-4,348
		-69,056	-65,410	-68,602	-69,310	-72,677
	Total Net Expenditure:	**-35,984**	**-32,060**	**-34,251**	**-33,929**	**-36,235**

CORPORATE MANAGEMENT - 106

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Income:					
1096	Investment/Bank Interest	101,000	100,000	102,999	106,089	109,272
1093	Advertising/Sponsorship (TOTT)	0	1,000	1,030	1,061	1,093
1099	Beds FA Buildings and ATP Insurance + recharges	6,335	5,850	5,850	5,850	5,850
		107,335	106,850	109,879	113,000	116,215
	Expenditure:					
4003	Pension/HR Related Costs	-8,157	-8,402	-8,654	-8,914	-9,181
4006	Health & Safety	-30,609	-26,527	-27,323	-28,142	-28,987
4019	DBS Checks	-550	-550	-550	-550	-550
4026	Insurance	-80,854	-70,854	-74,397	-76,629	-78,927
4032	Publicity / Marketing	-5,500	-5,500	-5,665	-5,835	-6,010
4033	Newsletter	-40,132	-41,336	-42,576	-43,853	-45,169
4034	Website	-4,500	-4,635	-4,774	-4,917	-5,065
4053	Surveys / Research	0	-10,000	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000
4054	Corporate Plan Development	0	-8,000	0	0	0
4056	Audit Fees - External	-3,649	-3,893	-4,010	-4,130	-4,254
4057	Audit Fees - Internal	-2,599	-2,677	-2,757	-2,840	-2,925
4062	HR Related Costs	-3,713	-5,000	-5,150	-5,305	-5,464
4063	Uniform	-3,183	-3,278	-3,376	-3,478	-3,582
4096	Bank Charges	-2,000	-2,000	-2,060	-2,122	-2,185
		-185,446	-192,652	-182,292	-187,714	-193,299
	Total Net Expenditure:	**-78,111**	**-85,803**	**-72,413**	**-74,714**	**-77,084**

CORPORATE SERVICES

DEMOCRATIC MANAGEMENT AND REPRESENTATION - 107

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Expenditure:					
4007	Member Training	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000
4024	Printing Costs (Civic Events)	-1,250	-1,000	-1,030	-1,061	-1,093
4025	Subscriptions	-2,369	-2,572	-2,649	-2,729	-2,810
4501	Mayoral Transport	-3,500	-3,500	-3,500	-3,500	-3,500
4502	Mayoral Allowance	-4,500	-4,500	-4,500	-4,500	-4,500
4503	Civic Hospitality	-9,558	-9,845	-10,140	-10,445	-10,758
4504	Civic Regalia	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000	-1,900	-1,000
4515	Remembrance Services	-3,183	-3,278	-3,376	-3,478	-3,582
		-26,360	**-26,695**	**-27,196**	**-28,612**	**-28,243**

CAPITAL AND PROJECTS - 110

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Expenditure:					
4051	Loan Interest Payable (Grove House)	-9,849	-8,766	-7,683	-6,599	-5,516
4052	Loan Capital Repaid (Grove House)	-23,567	-23,567	-23,567	-23,567	-23,567
4721	Cont. to Reserves (IT)	-20,000	-25,000	-35,000	-35,000	-35,000
4723	Cont. to Election Reserve	-20,000	-44,000	-30,000	-30,000	-30,000
4724	Cont. to Reserve (Building Maint)	-69,000	-119,000	-119,000	-119,000	-119,000
4750	Cont. to VAT Partial Exemption	0	-20,000	-20,000	-20,000	-20,000
4952	Cont. to Health and Safety	-5,000	-5,000	-5,150	-5,305	-5,464
4977	Capital tax base contingency	-63,000	0	0	0	0
4936	Cont. to Personnel Reserve	0	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000
4949	Cont. to Website Development	-900	-900	-927	-955	-983
		-211,316	**-247,233**	**-242,327**	**-241,425**	**-240,530**
	CORPORATE SERVICES	**-1,039,081**	**-1,127,432**	**-1,133,777**	**-1,158,878**	**-1,185,577**

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
SUMMARY OF NET EXPENDITURE

GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
Staff & Vehicle Costs	-997,061	-992,195	-1,021,961	-1,052,620	-1,084,198
Allotments	3,595	3,808	4,012	4,133	4,257
Cemetery	-29,944	-69,767	-116,154	-188,422	-185,556
Recreation Grounds	-88,270	-95,052	-103,223	-105,884	-109,156
Town Centre & Gardens	-29,721	-30,438	-31,087	-31,906	-32,749
Town Ranger Service	-11,280	-11,618	-11,967	-12,326	-12,695
Capital and Projects	-186,085	-296,329	-310,733	-321,240	-314,025
	-1,338,766	-1,491,591	-1,591,112	-1,708,265	-1,734,123

STAFF AND VEHICLE COSTS - 200

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Expenditure:					
4001	Grounds Staff	-945,195	-930,837	-958,762	-987,525	-1,017,151
4005	Grounds Staff Overtime	-18,125	-25,105	-25,858	-26,634	-27,433
4076	In Bloom Support	0	-1,500	-1,545	-1,591	-1,639
4045	Vehicle Fuel	-15,000	-15,450	-15,914	-16,391	-16,883
4145	Vehicle Maintenance Costs	-18,741	-19,303	-19,882	-20,479	-21,093
		-997,061	**-992,195**	**-1,021,961**	**-1,052,620**	**-1,084,198**

ALLOTMENTS - 201

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Income:					
1002	Rent Receivable	11,485	12,059	12,421	12,793	13,177
1091	Misc Income	500	500	515	530	546
1099	INC - Recharges etc	3,090	3,183	3,278	3,377	3,478
		15,075	15,742	16,214	16,701	17,202
	Expenditure:					
4012	Water	-4,120	-4,244	-4,371	-4,502	-4,638
4014	Electricity	-3,000	-3,000	-3,000	-3,090	-3,183
4017	Waste Disposal	-1,671	-1,721	-1,773	-1,826	-1,881
4036	Maintenance Contracts	0	-200	-206	-212	-219
4038	Repairs and Maintenance	-2,122	-2,186	-2,252	-2,319	-2,389
4041	Tree Maintenance	-567	-583	-600	-619	-637
		-11,480	-11,934	-12,202	-12,568	-12,945
	Total Net Expenditure:	**3,595**	**3,808**	**4,012**	**4,133**	**4,257**

GROUNDS AND EINVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

CEMETERY - 202

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Income:					
1021	Burial Fees	175,000	164,800	169,744	174,836	180,081
1022	Book of Remembrance	600	600	600	600	600
1023	Memorials	56,084	58,888	61,832	64,924	68,170
1025	Memorial Bench Plaques	0	1,400	2,800	2,800	2,800
1027	Kerb Blocks	1,000	1,000	1,030	1,061	1,093
1028	Sanctums	2,500	2,500	2,575	2,652	2,732
		235,184	229,188	238,581	246,873	255,476
	Expenditure:					
4001	Staff Costs	-94,352	-101,821	-104,876	-108,022	-111,263
4011	Rates	-10,192	-9,166	-9,624	-10,106	-10,611
4012	Water	-4,120	-4,120	-4,244	-4,371	-4,502
4014	Electricity	-5,000	-5,000	-5,000	-5,150	-5,305
4015	Gas	-2,200	-2,200	-2,200	-2,266	-2,334
4016	Cleaning	-6,684	-8,684	-8,945	-9,213	-9,489
4017	Waste Disposal	-9,134	-9,408	-9,690	-9,981	-10,280
4018	Security	-3,657	-3,767	-3,880	-3,996	-4,116
4023	Stationery	-600	0	0	0	0
4029	Memorial Granite Benches	0	-4,400	0	0	0
4036	Building Maintenance Contracts	-3,090	-3,290	-3,389	-3,490	-3,595
4037	IT Licences and Support	-5,686	-6,157	-6,342	-6,532	-6,728
4038	Repairs and Maintenance	-8,487	-8,742	-9,004	-9,274	-9,553
4040	Equipment/Materials/Tools	-7,426	-7,649	-7,878	-8,115	-8,358
4041	Tree Planting/Surgery	-1,700	-1,751	-1,804	-1,858	-1,913
4047	Green Flag	-400	-400	-400	-400	-400
4127	Kerb Blocks	-500	-500	-515	-530	-546
4128	Sanctums	-1,500	-1,500	-1,545	-1,591	-1,639
4201	Book of Remembrance	-400	-400	-400	-400	-400
4743	New Cemetery Development	-100,000	-120,000	-175,000	-250,000	-250,000
		-265,128	-298,955	-354,735	-435,296	-441,032
	Total Net Expenditure:	**-29,944**	**-69,767**	**-116,154**	**-188,422**	**-185,556**

GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

RECREATION GROUNDS - 205

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Income:					
1009	Football Pitches	7,875	8,269	8,517	8,773	9,036
1024	Maintenance / Contracts	2,400	2,472	2,546	2,623	2,701
		10,275	10,741	11,063	11,395	11,737
	Expenditure:					
4011	Store Rates	-4,603	-4,833	-5,075	-5,328	-5,595
4012	Water	-3,090	-3,483	-3,587	-3,695	-3,806
4013	Depot Rent Contribution	-17,500	-17,500	-17,500	-17,500	-18,025
4014	Electricity	-11,800	-14,000	-14,000	-14,420	-14,853
4016	Cleaning	-2,060	-2,122	-2,186	-2,251	-2,319
4017	Waste Disposal/Skips	-9,803	-10,097	-10,400	-10,712	-11,033
4018	Security/Locking/Patrols	-10,753	-11,076	-11,408	-11,751	-12,103
4026	Depot Insurance	0	-350	-361	-371	-382
4036	Building Maintenance Contracts	-4,333	-4,463	-4,597	-4,735	-4,877
4038	Repairs and Maintenance	-15,000	-15,450	-15,914	-16,391	-16,883
4040	Equipment/Materials/Tools	-5,933	-6,111	-6,294	-6,483	-6,678
4041	Tree Planting/Surgery	-1,700	-1,751	-1,804	-1,858	-1,913
4046	Play Areas Equipment/Maintenance	-19,570	-20,157	-20,762	-21,385	-22,026
4047	Green Flag	-400	-400	-400	-400	-400
4834	Contribution from commuted sums	8,000	6,000	0	0	0
		-98,545	-105,793	-114,286	-117,280	-120,892
	Total Net Expenditure:	**-88,270**	**-95,052**	**-103,223**	**-105,884**	**-109,156**

GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

TOWN CENTRE AND GARDENS - 403

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Income:					
1009	Croquet Lawn Hire	1,751	1,804	1,858	1,914	1,971
1051	Town Centre Agency with CBC	39,147	40,231	41,438	42,681	43,961
		40,898	42,035	43,296	44,595	45,933
	Expenditure:					
4012	Water (Mess Room)	-824	-849	-874	-901	-928
4014	Electricity (Mess and Market Clock)	-5,000	-5,000	-5,000	-5,150	-5,305
4016	Cleaning	-1,545	-1,591	-1,639	-1,688	-1,739
4017	Waste Disposal/Skips	-9,409	-9,691	-9,982	-10,281	-10,590
4036	Maint Contracts - CCTV (Priory Gardens)	-8,978	-9,247	-9,524	-9,810	-10,104
4038	Repairs and Maintenance	-4,244	-4,371	-4,502	-4,637	-4,776
4040	Equipment/Materials/Tools	-2,122	-2,186	-2,252	-2,319	-2,389
4041	Tree Planting/Surgery	-1,700	-1,751	-1,804	-1,858	-1,913
4043	Bedding Plants and Baskets	-30,875	-31,801	-32,755	-33,738	-34,750
4047	Green Flag	-800	-800	-800	-800	-800
4075	Skateboard Park	-3,000	-3,000	-3,000	-3,000	-3,000
4540	Parks Development	-2,122	-2,186	-2,252	-2,319	-2,389
		-70,619	-72,473	-74,383	-76,501	-78,682
	Total Net Expenditure:	**-29,721**	**-30,438**	**-31,087**	**-31,906**	**-32,749**

GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

TOWN RANGER SERVICE - 206

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Income:					
1024	Maintenance / Contracts	8,240	8,487	8,742	9,004	9,274
		8,240	8,487	8,742	9,004	9,274
	Expenditure:					
4017	Waste Disposal	-1,337	-1,377	-1,418	-1,461	-1,505
4036	Maintenance Contracts	-637	-656	-676	-696	-717
4038	Repairs and Maintenance (inc Town Centre)	-4,668	-4,808	-4,952	-5,101	-5,254
4040	Tools and Equipment	-3,183	-3,278	-3,376	-3,478	-3,582
4045	Vehicle Fuel	-3,000	-3,090	-3,183	-3,278	-3,377
4145	Vehicle Maintenance Costs	-6,695	-6,896	-7,103	-7,316	-7,535
		-19,520	-20,105	-20,708	-21,329	-21,969
	Total Net Expenditure:	**-11,280**	**-11,618**	**-11,967**	**-12,326**	**-12,695**

GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

CAPITAL AND PROJECTS - 210

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Expenditure:					
4051	Loan Interest Payable	-9,285	-8,473	-7,708	-6,991	-6,274
4052	Loan Capital Repaid	-16,062	-15,531	-15,000	-15,000	-15,000
4712	Cont. to Vehicles Reserve	-60,000	-94,000	-95,550	-92,500	-76,000
4719	Cont. to Cem Memorial Safety	-1,738	-1,825	-1,880	-1,936	-1,994
4728	Cont. to Priory Churchyard	-5,000	-10,000	-10,300	-10,609	-10,927
4731	Cont. to Tree Reserve	-15,000	-15,000	-15,450	-15,914	-16,391
4732	Cont. to Open Spaces Improvement Plan	-30,000	-30,000	-35,000	-40,000	-45,000
4734	Cont. to Pavilions Building Maintenance Reserve	-15,000	-15,000	-15,450	-15,914	-16,391
4738	Cont. to Allotment Reserve	-5,000	-5,000	-5,150	-5,305	-5,464
4741	Cont. to Outdoor Leisure (non play) Reserve	-12,000	-14,500	-14,935	-15,383	-15,845
4743	Cont. to Cemetery Building	-10,000	-10,000	-15,000	-20,000	-20,600
4747	Cont. to Play Area Reserve	0	-70,000	-72,100	-74,263	-76,491
4744	Cont. to Fencing Renewal	-7,000	-7,000	-7,210	-7,426	-7,649
		-186,085	**-296,329**	**-310,733**	**-321,240**	**-314,025**
	GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	**-1,338,766**	**-1,491,591**	**-1,591,112**	**-1,708,265**	**-1,734,123**

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
SUMMARY OF NET EXPENDITURE

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
Staff Costs	-369,323	-310,899	-364,254	-375,182	-386,437
Older People's Day Care Services	-25,823	-26,575	-36,150	-39,982	-41,182
Community Engagement	-27,505	-31,277	-32,083	-32,912	-33,766
Grove Corner	-20,929	-24,348	-24,958	-25,756	-26,579
Bennett Memorial Recreation Ground					
Splash Park	-74,164	-73,677	-75,942	-78,383	-80,901
Events Programme	-191,685	-303,099	-312,111	-321,474	-331,116
Priory House	-270,408	-333,551	-343,122	-353,675	-364,558
Town Centre Services	-125,773	-174,645	-163,707	-167,892	-172,206
Public Conveniences (Ashton Square)	-7,802	-8,037	-8,277	-8,527	-8,782
Capital and Projects	-120,287	-84,273	-128,221	-127,187	-126,171
	-1,233,699	**-1,370,381**	**-1,488,825**	**-1,530,971**	**-1,571,698**

STAFF COSTS - 300

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Expenditure					
4001	Community Services Staff	-369,323	-310,899	-364,254	-375,182	-386,437
		-369,323	**-310,899**	**-364,254**	**-375,182**	**-386,437**
	Total Net Expenditure	**-369,323**	**-310,899**	**-364,254**	**-375,182**	**-386,437**

OLDER PEOPLE'S DAY CARE SERVICE - 209

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Income					
1004	Activities Income	2,520	3,000	3,090	3,183	3,278
1006	Central Bedfordshire Council (Contract)	9,656	0	0	0	0
1007	Fees	16,000	25,403	26,165	26,950	27,759
4822	Tfr from Older People's Service reserve	0	9,656	2,669	0	0
		28,176	**38,059**	**31,924**	**30,133**	**31,037**
	Expenditure					
4001	Staff Costs	-27,362	-29,433	-30,316	-31,225	-32,162
4036	Maintenance Contracts	-100	-120	-124	-127	-131
4064	Hall Hire	-3,500	-3,605	-5,213	-5,370	-5,531
4065	Lunch Club Catering	-13,837	-22,000	-22,660	-23,340	-24,040
4066	Entertainment	-4,200	-4,326	-4,456	-4,589	-4,727
4313	Transport	-5,000	-5,150	-5,305	-5,464	-5,628
		-53,999	**-64,634**	**-68,074**	**-70,115**	**-72,219**
	Total Net Expenditure	**-25,823**	**-26,575**	**-36,150**	**-39,982**	**-41,182**

COMMUNITY SERVICES

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - 303

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Income					
1001	INC- Lettings/Facilities hire (Downside)	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000
1004	Activities	2,200	2,266	2,334	2,404	2,476
1013	Community Lottery	2,500	2,058	2,058	2,058	2,058
1071	*Rev Grant Rec'd (detached)	31,000	30,000	30,900	31,827	32,782
		42,700	**41,324**	**42,292**	**43,289**	**44,316**
	Expenditure					
4001	Salaries (detached)	-31,000	-32,597	-33,575	-34,582	-35,620
4032	Marketing	-300	-309	-318	-328	-338
4038	Repairs and Maintenance (Downside)	-1,000	-1,030	-1,061	-1,093	-1,126
4040	Equipment	-1,030	-1,061	-1,093	-1,126	-1,159
4066	Activities Programme (Young People)	-8,500	-8,755	-9,018	-9,288	-9,567
4067	Community Projects (inc Big Lunch)	-10,125	-10,429	-10,742	-11,064	-11,396
4068	Community Lottery (licence costs)	-750	-800	-824	-849	-874
4069	Activities - Detached	-4,000	-4,120	-4,244	-4,371	-4,502
4321	Grants to Voluntary Community Organisations	-13,500	-13,500	-13,500	-13,500	-13,500
		-70,205	**-72,601**	**-74,375**	**-76,201**	**-78,082**
	Total Net Expenditure	**-27,505**	**-31,277**	**-32,083**	**-32,912**	**-33,766**

*Grant through Central Bedfordshire Council shown as projection to maintain service - not confirmed at this stage

GROVE CORNER - 304 (AND OUTREACH WORK)

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Income					
1001	Room Hire	11,330	8,580	8,837	9,103	9,376
		11,330	**8,580**	**8,837**	**9,103**	**9,376**
	Expenditure					
4001	Staff Costs	-9,263	-9,814	-10,108	-10,412	-10,724
4002	Wages	-3,772	-3,854	-3,970	-4,089	-4,211
4011	Rates	-2,811	-2,388	-2,507	-2,633	-2,764
4012	Utilities-Water	-1,236	-1,273	-1,311	-1,351	-1,391
4014	Utilities-Electricity	-2,500	-2,500	-2,500	-2,575	-2,652
4015	Utilities-Gas	-3,125	-3,125	-3,125	-3,219	-3,315
4016	Cleaning	-637	-700	-721	-743	-765
4027	Licences	-700	-820	-845	-870	-896
4032	Marketing	-250	-250	-258	-265	-273
4036	Maintenance Contracts	-3,487	-3,592	-3,700	-3,811	-3,925
4038	Repairs and Maintenance	-1,470	-1,514	-1,559	-1,606	-1,654
4040	Equipment	-1,008	-1,038	-1,069	-1,101	-1,134
4066	Entertainment/Activities	-2,000	-2,060	-2,122	-2,185	-2,251
		-32,259	**-32,928**	**-33,795**	**-34,859**	**-35,955**
	Total Net Expenditure	**-20,929**	**-24,348**	**-24,958**	**-25,756**	**-26,579**

COMMUNITY SERVICES

BENNETT MEMORIAL RECREATION GROUND SPLASH PARK - 115

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Income:					
1001	Lettings/Facility Hire	3,500	2,550	2,627	2,705	2,786
1004	Activities	1,800	1,800	1,854	1,910	1,967
1032	Catering Sales	45,000	39,838	41,033	42,264	43,532
1092	Concessions	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500
		55,800	49,688	51,014	52,379	53,785
	Expenditure:					
4001	Salaries	-43,530	-45,533	-46,899	-48,306	-49,755
4002	Wages	-38,745	-32,954	-33,943	-34,961	-36,010
4011	Rates	-2,990	-2,552	-2,680	-2,760	-2,843
4012	Utilities-Water	-1,250	-1,313	-1,379	-1,420	-1,463
4014	Utilities-Electricity	-6,300	-6,300	-6,300	-6,489	-6,684
4016	Cleaning	-2,652	-2,732	-2,814	-2,898	-2,985
4017	Waste Disposal	-3,090	-2,453	-2,527	-2,602	-2,680
4027	Licences	-420	-433	-446	-459	-473
4032	Publicity/Marketing	-300	-300	-309	-318	-328
4036	Maintenance Contracts	-8,912	-9,179	-9,454	-9,738	-10,030
4038	Repairs and Maintenance	-1,545	-1,591	-1,639	-1,688	-1,739
4040	Equipment/Materials/Tools	-1,030	-1,061	-1,093	-1,126	-1,159
4059	Catering Expenses	-2,000	-1,400	-1,442	-1,485	-1,530
4060	Catering stock	-16,000	-14,400	-14,832	-15,277	-15,735
4066	Entertainment/Activities	-1,200	-1,164	-1,199	-1,235	-1,272
		-129,964	-123,365	-126,956	-130,762	-134,686
	Total Net Expenditure:	**-74,164**	**-73,677**	**-75,942**	**-78,383**	**-80,901**

EVENTS PROGRAMME - 401

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Income					
1092	Concessions	11,979	13,979	14,398	14,830	15,275
		11,979	**13,979**	**14,398**	**14,830**	**15,275**
	Expenditure					
4001	*Salaries	-46,807	-144,129	-148,453	-152,906	-157,494
4002	Events staffing	-4,411	-4,367	-4,498	-4,633	-4,772
4014	Electricity (Perf Area & GHGdns)	-2,750	-2,750	-2,750	-2,833	-2,917
4017	Events infrastructure (waste mgmt, etc)	-17,884	-18,421	-18,974	-19,543	-20,129
4032	Marketing	-6,000	-6,180	-6,365	-6,556	-6,753
4035	History/Cultural Event	-11,242	-11,579	-11,926	-12,284	-12,653
4036	Maintenance Contracts	-309	-318	-328	-337	-347
4040	Equipment	-1,061	-1,093	-1,126	-1,160	-1,194
4055	External Contracts	-7,348	-8,568	-8,825	-9,090	-9,362
4511	St George's Day	-6,497	-6,692	-6,893	-7,100	-7,313
4512	Party in the Park	-26,361	-30,067	-30,969	-31,898	-32,855
4514	Torchlight Carols Event	-12,568	-15,860	-16,336	-16,826	-17,331
4518	Band Concerts	-3,569	-3,676	-3,786	-3,900	-4,017
4522	Dunstable Live	-11,242	-14,494	-14,929	-15,377	-15,838
4523	Proms in the Park	-12,492	-12,867	-13,253	-13,651	-14,060
4527	Soapbox Derby	-20,000	-22,500	-23,175	-23,870	-24,586
4525	Events	-10,000	-10,300	-10,609	-10,927	-11,255
4526	Motor Rally	-3,123	-3,217	-3,314	-3,413	-3,515
		-203,664	**-317,078**	**-326,509**	**-336,304**	**-346,391**
	Total Net Expenditure	**-191,685**	**-303,099**	**-312,111**	**-321,474**	**-331,116**

*Salaries include Cultural Services Manager and Assistant from 27/28 Budget

COMMUNITY SERVICES

PRIORY HOUSE - 402

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Income					
1001	Letting/Facility Hire	1,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
1004	INC - Activities	1,200	1,700	1,751	1,804	1,858
1030	Shop Sales	20,600	21,218	21,855	22,510	23,185
1032	Tea Rooms Sales	45,000	147,000	151,410	155,952	160,631
		67,800	**175,918**	**181,016**	**186,266**	**191,674**
	Expenditure					
4001	Staff Costs	-177,520	-301,429	-310,472	-319,786	-329,380
4005	Overtime/Additional hours	-14,751	-26,149	-26,933	-27,741	-28,574
4011	Rates	-17,250	-17,250	-18,113	-19,018	-19,969
4012	Utilities-Water	-2,500	-5,000	-5,150	-5,305	-5,464
4014	Utilities-Electricity	-17,000	-17,000	-17,000	-17,510	-18,035
4015	Utilities-Gas	-5,500	-5,500	-5,500	-5,665	-5,835
4016	Cleaning	-10,000	-16,275	-16,763	-17,266	-17,784
4017	Waste Disposal	-2,369	-2,440	-2,513	-2,589	-2,666
4020	Sundries and Office Costs	-3,543	-1,500	-1,545	-1,591	-1,639
4027	Licences	-3,000	-3,000	-3,000	-3,000	-3,000
4032	Marketing	-7,500	-2,500	-2,500	-2,500	-2,500
4036	Maintenance Contracts	-14,200	-14,626	-15,065	-15,517	-15,982
4038	Repairs and Maintenance	-7,500	-7,725	-7,957	-8,195	-8,441
4039	Equipment Hire	-4,700	-4,700	-4,841	-4,986	-5,136
4040	Equipment/Materials/Tools	-3,500	-3,605	-3,713	-3,825	-3,939
4059	Kitchen/Catering Expenses	-4,375	-8,500	-8,755	-9,018	-9,288
4060	Catering Stock	-30,000	-59,000	-60,770	-62,593	-64,471
4601	Shop Retail Stock	-9,000	-9,270	-9,548	-9,835	-10,130
4611	Education/Events	-4,000	-4,000	-4,000	-4,000	-4,000
		-338,208	**-509,469**	**-524,138**	**-539,941**	**-556,232**
	Total Net Expenditure	**-270,408**	**-333,551**	**-343,122**	**-353,675**	**-364,558**

TOWN CENTRE SERVICES - 405

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Income					
1011	Hire of stalls and pitches	12,360	15360	15,821	16,295	16,784
1093	INC - Advertising/Sponsorship	800	800	800	800	800
1094	INC - Licences	1,030	1,061	1,093	1,126	1,159
		14,190	**17,221**	**17,714**	**18,221**	**18,743**
	Expenditure					
4001	Staff Costs	-71,749	-95,705	-98,576	-101,533	-104,579
4002	Staff Costs - Themed Markets Portering	-4,590	-10,198	-10,504	-10,819	-11,144
4027	Licences	-500	-515	-530	-546	-563
4032	Town Centre Marketing & Initiatives	-1,000	-1,030	-1,061	-1,093	-1,126
4040	Equipment/Materials/Tools	-5,220	-5,377	-5,538	-5,704	-5,876
4066	Town centre events	-30,900	-31,827	-32,782	-33,765	-34,778
4520	Christmas Lights and Decorations	-19,000	-25,000	-25,000	-25,000	-25,000
4530	NEW - Town App	0	-15,000	0	0	0
4715	Street Dressing	-7,004	-7,214	-7,430	-7,653	-7,883
		-139,963	**-191,866**	**-181,421**	**-186,113**	**-190,949**
	Total Net Expenditure	**-125,773**	**-174,645**	**-163,707**	**-167,892**	**-172,206**

COMMUNITY SERVICES

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES (ASHTON SQUARE) - 407

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Expenditure					
4016	Cleaning	-3,090	-3,183	-3,278	-3,377	-3,478
4036	Maintenance Contracts	-1,622	-1,671	-1,721	-1,773	-1,826
4038	Repairs and Maintenance	-3,090	-3,183	-3,278	-3,377	-3,478
	Total Net Expenditure	**-7,802**	**-8,037**	**-8,277**	**-8,527**	**-8,782**

CAPITAL AND PROJECTS - 310

Nominal Code	Nominal Description	Budget 2026/27	Proposed Budget 2027/28	Proposed Budget 2028/29	Proposed Budget 2029/30	Proposed Budget 2030/31
	Expenditure					
4714	Contribution to Christmas Lights Reserve	-7,000	-7,000	-7,210	-7,426	-7,649
4716	Cont. to Downside Building Maint Reserve	-5,000	-5,000	-5,150	-5,305	-5,464
4717	Contribution to Grove Corner Reserve	-4,000	-4,000	-4,120	-4,244	-4,371
4720	Cont to Tea Rooms Equipment Reserve	-3,000	-3,000	-3,090	-3,183	-3,278
4733	Cont. to Priory House Building Maintenance Reserve	-50,000	-15,000	-60,000	-60,000	-60,000
4740	Cont to Community Lottery Reserve	-1,750	-2,058	-2,058	-2,058	-2,058
4051	Loan Charges (Priory House)	-17,745	-16,423	-14,801	-13,180	-11,559
4052	Loan Capital Repaid (Priory House)	-31,792	-31,792	-31,792	-31,792	-31,792
	Total Net Expenditure	**-120,287**	**-84,273**	**-128,221**	**-127,187**	**-126,171**
	COMMUNITY SERVICES	**-1,233,699**	**-1,370,381**	**-1,488,825**	**-1,530,971**	**-1,571,698**

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2026

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Purpose of report: For information

1. **SOCIAL MEDIA**

1.1. The Marketing and Communications Officer, supported by other officers, continues to use social media as a key communications tool to engage with residents, promote Town Council services and events, and provide timely updates to the community

1.2. A coordinated approach is taken before, during and after events, including pre-event promotion to build awareness and attendance, live updates and photography during events to increase engagement, and post-event content such as highlight videos, photographs, thank you messages and surveys to showcase success and gather feedback from attendees.

1.3. Social media continues to be an effective way of reaching a wide audience, with regular posts, stories, videos and event content generating strong engagement and helping to increase awareness of Town Council activities across multiple platforms.

1.4. The main Dunstable Town Council Facebook page recorded the largest overall audience, reaching 17,609 followers, an increase of 427. TikTok also experienced particularly strong growth, increasing by 237 followers to 937, demonstrating the continued value of short-form video content in reaching and engaging audiences.

1.5. Service-specific Facebook pages also recorded growth. Priory House saw the strongest increase, gaining 61 followers, while Bennett's Café & Splash Park increased by 44, Grove Corner by 11, and Town Ranger Services by 3.

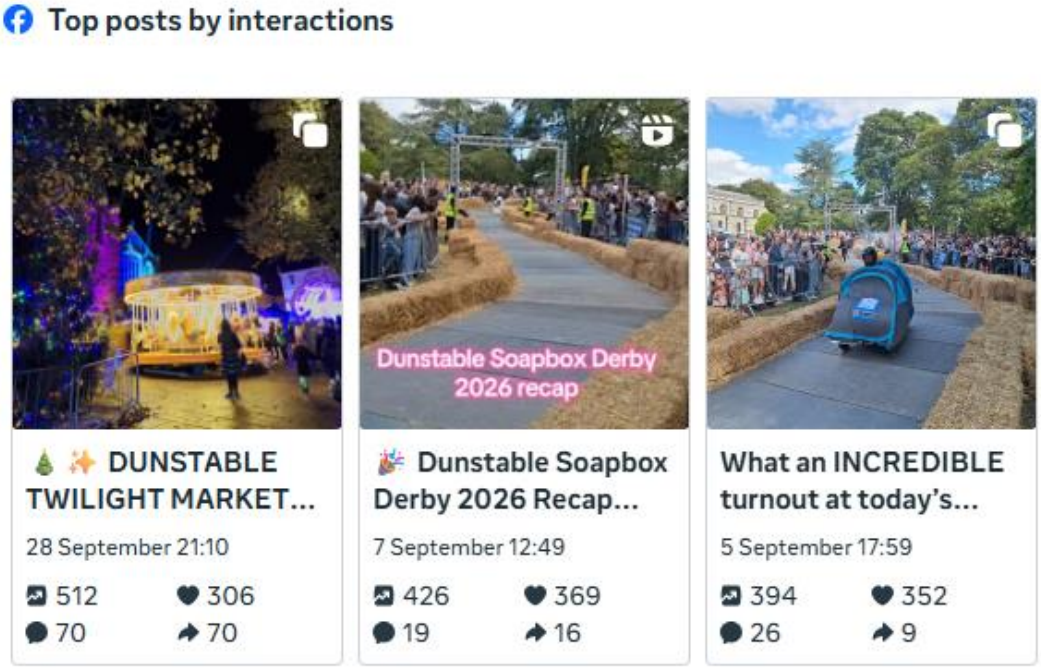
1.6. Overall, the figures demonstrate continued growth across the Council's social media presence, with the summer period appearing to generate the strongest uplift in followers. Continued use of engaging event content, short-form video and service-specific updates will support further audience growth and awareness of Town Council services and activities.

1.7. Facebook has recently introduced changes that restrict the number of external links that can be included within posts, unless users subscribe to its paid service, Meta One. As an interim solution, external links are being added within the comments section of posts. The Marketing and Communications Officer is monitoring the effectiveness of this approach, particularly in relation to driving traffic to the Council's website for activity bookings and further information.

1.8. The following figures are accurate as of 9 November and show how many followers have been gained since the previous report:

Platform	Entity	Followers	Change
Facebook	Dunstable Town Council	17,609	+ 427
	Bennett's Café & Splash Park	6,039	+ 44
	Town Ranger Services	1,562	+3
	Grove Corner	1,592	+11
	Priory House	1,761	+61
Instagram	Dunstable Town Council	1,404	+77
	Bennett's Café & Splash Park	87	+1
	Grove Corner	533	+6
LinkedIn	Dunstable Town Council	446	+8
TikTok	Dunstable Town Council	967	+237

1.9. **Dunstable Town Council Facebook insights.**
Top three social media Facebook posts from 1 September to 9 November 2026 by interactions:
1. Advertising Dunstable Twilight Markets
2. Soapbox Derby recap video
3. Soapbox Derby photos



1.10. **Top three social media Facebook stories from 1 September to 9 November 2026 by views:**
1. Bites on The Square video
2. Middle Row Market
3. Bites on The Square

Top stories by views



1.11. **Top three social media Instagram posts from 1 September to 9 November 2026 by interactions:**

1. Remembrance Day video
2. Advertising Twilight Markets
3. Promoting Torchlight

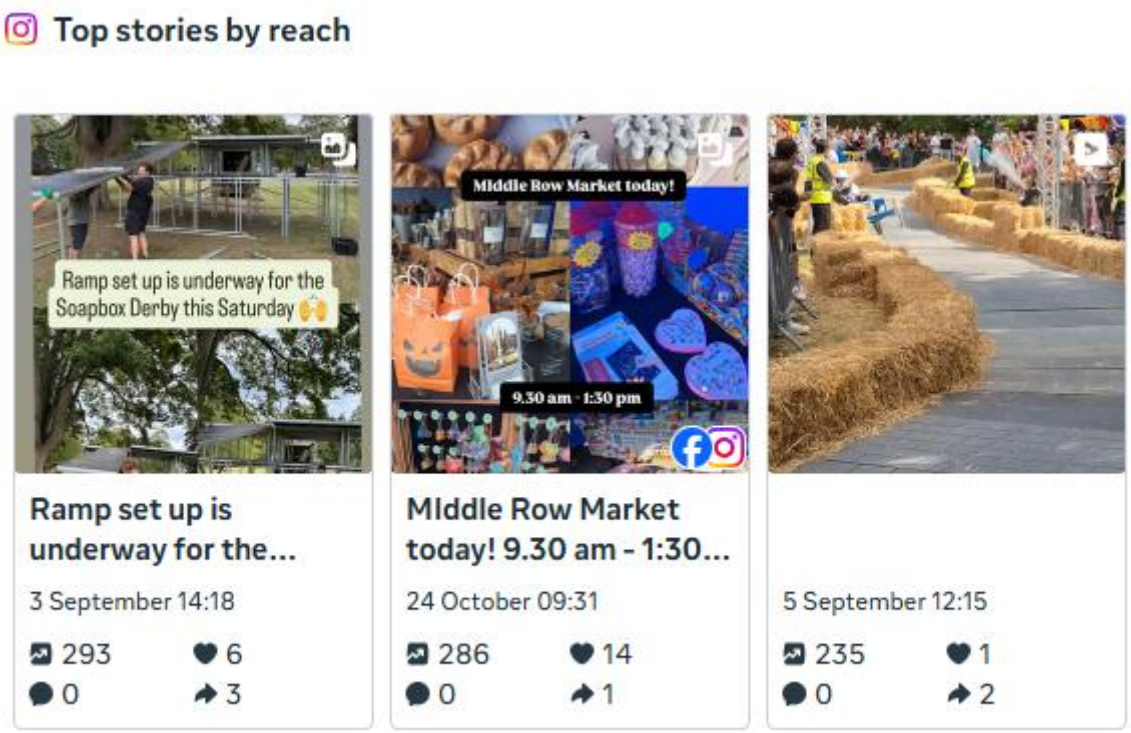
Top posts by interactions



1.12. **Top three social media Instagram stories from 1 September to 9 November 2026 by reach:**

1. Set up of Soapbox Derby
2. Middle Row Market

3. Soapbox Derby video



2. EMAIL MARKETING

2.1. The staff and councillor newsletter continues to be produced by the Marketing and Communications Officer, providing regular updates to support effective internal communication across the organisation.

3. WEBSITE

3.1. There have been no new issues reported with the website during this period. Planning is now underway for the development of new and updated website pages to support the reopening of Priory House in 2027, ensuring visitors have access to relevant and up-to-date information ahead of the reopening.

3.2. The current website contract is due to expire in September 2027. Officers will review the available options, including extending the existing contract for a further two years or undertaking a new procurement exercise. Discussions and a review of these options will commence in early 2027, ahead of a decision on the preferred approach.

Recite Me

3.3. Between 1 September and 9 November, the Recite Me accessibility toolbar was launched 45 times. The majority of access was via mobile devices, with 38 users accessing the toolbar on mobile and 8 via desktop. Pages viewed while the toolbar was active included Your Basket, Pay Invoice and Checkout, indicating its use during key transactional journeys on the website. The most frequently used accessibility features were translation, focus audio and text-to-speech, with Polish and Arabic among the languages used. Overall, the data demonstrates that Recite Me continues to support improved accessibility to the Council's online services, particularly through mobile access, translation and audio functionality.

3.4. The figures below show how users have visited the Town Council website from 1 September to 9 November 2026:

Organic search (google, Bing etc.)	6,157
Direct:	13,957
Organic social (Facebook, Instagram)	1,861
Mobile:	35.5%
Desktop:	63.3%
Tablet:	1.1%

4. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

4.1. The VMS screen, Community Ward noticeboards, and the What's on screen continue to be used regularly by the Town Council and other community groups.

4.2. No issues with the Mobile VMS as occurred since the last report.

5. TALK OF THE TOWN

5.1. The October/Christmas edition of *Talk of the Town* experienced an unexpected production delay due to a malfunction with the printer's bindery line during the stitching process. This subsequently impacted the planned distribution schedule, as the distribution company was required to reschedule household deliveries. At the time of writing, distribution is underway; however, due to the delay, some time-sensitive content within the magazine, including information relating to Remembrance Day, will be out of date by the time some residents receive their copy. Communications were issued through the Council's social media channels to advise residents of the delay and manage expectations around delivery.

6. COMMUNITY LOTTERY

6.1. The Marketing and Communications Officer continues to promote the Dunstable Community Lottery through regular social media activity, encouraging both new players and local good causes to get involved.

7. AUTHOR

7.1 Rachel Connor – Corporate Marketing & Communications Officer
communications@dunstable.gov.uk

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2026

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL CHARTER

Purpose of report: To consider the draft Central Bedfordshire Town and Parish Council Charter and determine whether the Council should provide a formal response to CBC

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1. That the Council support the principles and spirit behind the policy, whilst encouraging CBC to ensure that

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Central Bedfordshire Council have developed a draft Central Bedfordshire Town and Parish Council Charter to provide a framework for collaborative working between the unitary authority and Town and Parish Councils across Central Bedfordshire.

2.2. The Charter has been prepared to establish a shared understanding of how councils will work together with mutual respect and cooperation, strengthening community leadership, communication, engagement and local decision-making.

2.3. The Charter is intended to be jointly owned by participating Town and Parish Councils and sets out shared principles and commitments for future partnership working.

3. MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

3.1. The Charter recognises Town and Parish Councils as the tier of local government closest to residents and seeks to support improved communication and partnership working for the benefit of local communities.

3.2. The document establishes a number of shared principles, including respect, openness, early engagement, community leadership, equality and inclusion, sustainability, value for money and meeting local needs.

3.3. The Charter also sets out expectations regarding communication, consultation and partnership working between councils and aims to ensure that Town and Parish Councils have opportunities to contribute to matters affecting their communities.

3.4. Adoption of the Charter would demonstrate the Council's commitment to collaborative working and strengthening local democratic engagement across Central Bedfordshire.

3.5. Adoption would support stronger engagement with and other Town and Parish Councils and help ensure the interests of Dunstable residents are represented in future discussions relating to local services and community priorities.

3.6. Failure to adopt the Charter could result in missed opportunities to participate in an agreed framework for engagement, consultation and collaborative working across Central Bedfordshire.

3.7. The Charter was only provided to the Council for review on 3 November 2026. Whilst slides with some of the content were shared at a town and parish council forum meeting on 29 September, these did not include the full content. This is the first opportunity Town Councillors have had to view the document. CBC's Executive are considering the document on 2 December 2026. Given that many town and parish councils only meet five or six times a year, two months, and ideally 12 weeks, would be a reasonable period to enable formal responses – Members may want to encourage CBC to consider how they will ensure the spirit and nature of the draft charter is upheld and championed by CBC in the future.

4. FINANCIAL IMPACT – none

5. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

5.1. The Charter supports the Council's objectives relating to community engagement, partnership working and effective local governance. Once adopted, the Charter may enable and encourage CBC to further consider devolving services or assets to the Town Council; the charter does not a all oblige CBC or the Town Council to enter into any particular future arrangements.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. The Charter includes commitments to equality and inclusion and aims to ensure that all communities have opportunities to participate in decision-making and influence local services.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS- none

8. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS- none

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS- none

10. ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIODIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

10.1. The Charter promotes sustainability, environmental stewardship and climate resilience as shared principles and encourages collaborative environmental improvement initiatives.

11. CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IMPLICATIONS - None

12. APPENDICES

12.1. Draft Central Bedfordshire Town and Parish Council Charter – Appendix 1

13. AUTHOR

Paul Hodson, Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Paul.hodson@dunstable.gov.uk

(Assisted by Co-Pilot)

Central Bedfordshire Council

03 November 2026

Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Draft Central Bedfordshire Town and Parish Council Charter

Report of:

Cllr John Baker, Executive Member for Finance and Highways

Cllr Russ Goodchild, Deputy Executive Member for Town and Parish Councils and Town Centres.

Responsible Director:
Robert Ling, Director of Resources and Organisation Change

Kim Sawyer, Monitoring Officer

The following sections of this report are exempt:
None.

Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to present the draft Central Bedfordshire Town and Parish Charter to the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration and comment prior to submission to Executive and subsequently Full Council for adoption. The report seeks feedback and recommendations from Members to strengthen the Charter before it progresses through the Council's decision-making process.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

1. Consider the content of the draft Central Bedfordshire Town and Parish Charter attached as Appendix A.
2. Comment on the proposed principles, commitments and framework for partnership working between Central Bedfordshire Council and Town and Parish Councils.
3. Note the proposed programme of engagement with Town and Parish Councils and other stakeholders as part of the Charter's development and implementation

Executive Summary

1. The draft Central Bedfordshire Town and Parish Charter has been developed to establish a clear framework for collaborative working between Central Bedfordshire Council and the Town and Parish Councils across the authority's area.
2. The Charter recognises the important role of Town and Parish Councils as the tier of local government closest to residents and seeks to strengthen communication, engagement and partnership working for the benefit of local communities.
3. The Charter has been developed in the context of increasing national emphasis on community empowerment, local democratic engagement and opportunities for greater local involvement in service delivery and management of community assets.
4. The document establishes shared principles for mutual respect and co-operation, partnership working and outlines expectations regarding communication and consultation, and introduces a framework for Town and Parish Council involvement in different levels of local service delivery and community leadership activities.
5. Whilst CBC has been the principal author the document is to be jointly owned, and all members and officers will be encouraged to buy into the Charter and make it work
6. Members are invited to scrutinise the draft Charter and provide comments and recommendations before it is presented to Executive.

Background

7. Town and Parish Councils play a significant role within Central Bedfordshire, providing local democratic representation and community leadership across towns, villages and rural communities. Central Bedfordshire currently comprises 79 Town and Parish Councils and Meetings working alongside the unitary authority to serve residents.
8. The draft Charter has been prepared to establish a shared understanding of how Central Bedfordshire Council and Town and Parish Councils will work together with mutual respect and co-operation to strengthen community leadership, improve communication, support local decision-making and encourage innovation and local solutions.
9. The Charter reflects the growing importance of community empowerment and prepares both tiers of local government to respond to emerging opportunities associated with national devolution and community governance reforms.
10. The benefit of having a charter with our town and parish councils is to demonstrate a mutual understanding and respect for each other's roles and responsibilities. It establishes a shared commitment to strengthen partnership working, improve communication, and support local democratic leadership setting out clear and shared principles for collaboration. Through these shared principles the Charter provides a framework for delivering better outcomes for residents and communities across Central Bedfordshire.

11. The process of endorsement and adoption of the Charter upholds the mutual relationship and a way of working together.

Content of the Charter

Shared Principles

12. The Charter establishes eight shared principles to guide partnership working:
    - Respect
    - Openness
    - Early Engagement
    - Community Leadership
    - Equality and Inclusion
    - Sustainability
    - Value for Money
    - Meeting Local Needs
13. These principles are intended to provide a foundation for constructive and collaborative relationships across both tiers of local government.

Communication and Engagement

14. The Charter sets out commitments regarding communication and engagement. Central Bedfordshire Council commits to maintaining regular engagement through existing forums and communication channels, sharing information on significant projects and service changes, and providing opportunities for Town and Parish Councils to contribute to consultations and policy development.
15. Town and Parish Councils are similarly encouraged to share local intelligence, represent community views and engage constructively in partnership opportunities.

Community Leadership and Place Shaping

16. The Charter recognises the role of Town and Parish Councils in community leadership through activities such as neighbourhood planning, community resilience, health and wellbeing initiatives, climate action projects and local environmental improvements.

Local Service Delivery Framework

17. A distinctive element of the Charter is the introduction of a four-level service delivery framework which recognises that different councils have varying capacity, priorities and resources. The framework ranges from:
    - Influence and monitoring of services
    - Joint delivery and enhancement of services
    - Delegation of services
    - Transfer of services and assets where appropriate
18. This graduated approach allows Town and Parish Councils to participate at a level appropriate to their ambitions and capabilities whilst maintaining flexibility for future partnership opportunities.

19. A clearly defined and managed process is being developed to set out how the service delivery framework will work, including what services could be in scope and how proposals or requests from town and parish councils will be considered. This is informed by processes already in place regarding requests for e.g. Community Asset transfers and e.g. road safety schemes

Engagement Undertaken

20. The draft Charter has been developed through engagement with internal and external stakeholders, including senior officers, elected members and representatives from the town and parish council sector. Feedback suggests the draft Charter is pitched correctly and addresses key points in the working relationship with town and parish councils. Discussion has highlighted a desire for mutual respect and co-operation and improved engagement with town and parish councils when responding to local issues and this is a shared principle and included in the draft Charter. A programme of further engagement is planned with Town and Parish Council representatives at the Town and parish Council Forum on 2nd November and with the Bedfordshire Association of Town and Parish Councils prior to formal adoption.

Next Steps

21. Following consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the draft Charter will be revised as appropriate before being presented to Executive for approval and recommendation to Full Council for adoption. The Charter is intended to be a living document which will be reviewed periodically with Town and Parish Council representatives to ensure it remains relevant and effective.

Reasons for decision

22. The Charter provides an opportunity to strengthen relationships between Central Bedfordshire Council and Town and Parish Councils and establish a consistent framework for collaboration, engagement and local service delivery.

23. The proposed approach supports stronger community leadership, local democratic participation and improved outcomes for residents

Council priorities

24. The Charter contributes to the Council's strategic aims by providing a formal framework for partnership working between Central Bedfordshire Council and Town and Parish Councils. Through good communication, collaboration and mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities, the Charter supports local leadership, stronger communities and improved outcomes for residents across Central Bedfordshire.

Legal Implications

25. The Charter is a non-statutory statement of intent and partnership principles between Central Bedfordshire Council and Town and Parish Councils. It does not alter the statutory responsibilities, decision-making powers or legal duties of either tier of local government.

26. Any services which are transferred or devolved to a town or parish council will be supported by a legally binding service level agreement.

Financial and Risk Implications

27. There are no direct financial implications arising from adoption of the Charter itself.
28. The Charter provides a framework for future discussions concerning service delivery, devolution opportunities, asset transfers and partnership working. Any proposals with financial implications would be subject to separate consideration, business case development and approval through the Council's established governance processes.
29. The principal risk associated with not adopting the Charter is the potential loss of an agreed framework for engagement and collaborative working between both tiers of local government.

Procurement Implications

30. There are no procurement implications arising directly from the adoption of the Charter.
31. Any future service delivery arrangements resulting from the Charter would be considered and procured in accordance with relevant procurement legislation, Council procedures and financial regulations where applicable.

Equalities and Fairness Implications

32. Central Bedfordshire Council has a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
33. The duty requires public authorities to demonstrate that they are making financial decisions in a fair, transparent and accountable way, considering the needs and the rights of different members of their community.
34. The Charter includes a commitment to equality and inclusion and seeks to ensure all communities have opportunities to participate in decision-making and influence services affecting their areas.
35. An Equality Impact Assessment Relevance Test is attached in Appendix B.
36. Proposals received from town and parish councils for involvement in service delivery will be required to set out their approach to fairness, equality and diversity and officers will complete an Equality Impact Assessment on any proposals to transfer or delegate a service.

Biodiversity and Sustainability Implications

37. The Charter promotes sustainability, environmental stewardship and climate resilience as shared principles for partnership working. It also recognises opportunities for collaborative environmental improvement and climate action initiatives.

Other Corporate Implications

38. The Charter supports stronger engagement between the Council and local councils, contributing to community resilience, local democratic participation and effective place shaping across Central Bedfordshire.

39. The increased emphasis on collaborative working with our town and parish councils may require us to work in a different way such as early engagement with them at a formative stage of a project or proposal.

Conclusion and next steps

40. The draft Central Bedfordshire Town and Parish Charter provides a framework for strengthening relationships between Central Bedfordshire Council and Town and Parish Councils and establishes shared expectations for partnership working communication and community leadership.

41. Whilst CBC has been the principal author the document is to be jointly owned, and all members and officers will be encouraged to buy into the Charter and make it work.

42. The Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee is invited to review the draft Charter and provide recommendations to Executive.

43. Subject to consideration of comments received, the Charter will progress through the Council's governance process to seek approval and adoption at Executive on 1st December and Full Council on 27th January 2027. The BATPC will advise on the approach to adoption by the town and parish councils.

44. We envisage discussions with Town and Parish Councils starting in late Spring regarding the process for delegation or transfer of services.

45. Review of the Charter and its stated aims will take place at Forum meetings with town and parish councils and the creation of a Charter Working Group.

Appendices

Appendix A: Draft Central Bedfordshire Town and Parish Charter (including timeline)

Appendix B : Equality Screening Assessment

The following Appendix is attached/ provided through an electronic link.

Report author(s):

Sarah Hughes Community Engagement Manager,
sarah.hughes@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2026

REFERRAL REPORT FROM PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE

Purpose of Report:	For Members to approve the following recommendations made by the Members at the meeting of the Personnel Sub-Committee held on 12 November 2026.

1. POLICY UPDATE

Members considered a detailed report that recommended the acceptance of the amendments made to the reviewed policies:

- Annual Leave
- Special Leave
- Maternity Leave
- Maternity Support Leave
- Paternity Leave
- Sickness
- TOIL
- Overtime
- Adverse Weather
- Volunteer Day
- Carer's Leave

RESOLVED: that the acceptance of the reviewed policy amendments be recommended to the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Minute Number (302/26)

2. APPENDICES

None

3. BACKGROUND PAPERS

3.1 Personnel Sub-Committee Agenda for 12 November 2026. Item 4 – Policy Updates

4. AUTHOR

Kelley Hallam
HR& Payroll Manager
kelley.hallam@dunstable.gov.uk