

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GROVE HOUSE, HIGH STREET NORTH, DUNSTABLE

ON MONDAY 4 JUNE 2018

- Present: Councillors Nigel Warren (Deputy Town Mayor), Pat Staples (Chairman), Eugene Ghent (Vice Chairman), Lisa Bird, John Chatterley, Terry Colbourne, Jeannette Freeman, Mike Mullany, Patricia Russell and Johnson Tamara
- In Attendance: David Ashlee (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), Becky Wisbey (Head of Community Services), Lisa Vincent (Events and Marketing Officer), Sandy Coyle (Community and Young People's Services Officer).
- Apologies: Councillors John Kane (Town Mayor), Claire Meakins and Emma Simmons
- Public: None

102 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 5 March 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

103 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no specific declarations of interest.

104 DUNSTABLE CHRISTMAS TREE CAROLS AND TORCHLIGHT PROCESSION

The Head of Community Services presented a detailed report requesting members to determine which option to deliver whilst ensuring the safe operation of the event.

After having a very successful light show, funded by the Dunstable Joint Committee, in 2016 and 2017, audience levels for this event had doubled. However, this now meant that both officers and the contractor for the light show have raised some serious health and safety concerns. The light show meant that there was now extensive equipment on site which could potentially cause trip hazards or damage to the equipment, impacting on the show, and leading to concerns for the audience being crushed against barriers and other equipment.

Members were informed that if there was to be a light show then changes would need to be made to ensure the safety of everyone involved. Officers suggested three options:

Option A – To hold the Torchlight event without a light show and restrict the number of school children who take part.

Option B – Keep the light show and restrict the amount of children taking part, but close the A5183 (High Street South) so people can spill into the road to increase audience capacity.

Option C – Switch the order of the procession. (To end up in Priory Gardens instead of the Square).

There were pros and cons to all the options, with Option B being the officers preferred choice but there was a risk that the Town Council might not get permission for a road closure.

RESOLVED: i) that Officers plan and deliver option B and submit a funding request to Dunstable Joint Committee to fund the light show. Members understood that if unsuccessful in closing the A5183 then officers would have to resort to option A

ii) that a Members' area be provided at this event and be positioned next to the dais.

105 EVENTS AND MARKETING

The Events and Marketing Officer presented an update report on past events and the planning of future 2018 events. She also updated members on the Council's website and social media usage.

Both the St George's Day and WWI event had been a great success with a record number of families attending the St George's event. Feedback for both events had been very positive.

The seven-week tea and coffee concession for the Sunday Band Concerts was this year offered out to any charity or not for profit organisation. The Sea Cadets applied, as they were trying to raise funds for a new roof, and had been awarded the concession for 2018.

Members thanked all officers who were involved in the two recent events – St George's Day and WWI event.

106 PRIORY HOUSE

The Head of Community Services presented a report on recent operations and activities at Priory House, including trading account figures and Priory House maintenance.

The Royal Wedding Afternoon Tea Party had been fully booked and was very well received with some excellent reviews on TripAdvisor.

The Head of Community Services informed the Committee that Central Bedfordshire Council had been unsuccessful in their Heritage Lottery Bid, which would have seen £500,000 granted to Priory House for its much needed repairs. The Head of Community Services noted that at this point there had been communications with Historic England who were pursuing a possible grant from Highways England and that Members would be updated in due course in regards to the outcome of this. However, at this point Dunstable Town Council does not have the capital funding available to undertake the recommended repairs to Priory House.

107 GROVE CORNER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Community and Young People's Services Manager reported on recent attendance figures and activities at Grove Corner and reported on recent community engagement activities.

As part of the WW1 event, the Community and Young People's team worked in partnership with the Event team, to put on a Peace Party in Priory House. Seventeen young people, who were nominated by local schools for overcoming adversity, attended.

108 OLDER PEOPLE'S DAY CARE SERVICE

The Community and Young People's Services Manager reported on attendances, activities and outings for the Good Companions Club and the Creasey Park Community Football Centre over 55s Lunch Club.

Dates and venues for all of this year's Coffee Mornings had been secured. Attendance was growing with each event. The next event was to take place at Southwood Road community lounge in June.

The Committee were updated on the loss of two long standing volunteers who had recently stopped volunteering for the Town Council's older people's service. The story of one volunteer in particular showed the immense support that had been given by officers in assisting this individual who had now successfully found employment. Members wished to thank all staff who had been involved in the support of this volunteer over the years.

109 DUNSTABLE TOWN CENTRE SERVICES

The Head of Community Services updated the Committee on Town Centre Services including Ashton Square Toilets and the themed and craft market trader figures.

A program of works had taken place in the Ashton Square Toilets by Central Bedfordshire Council. This included the installation of emergency and outside lighting and a drain survey.

Members noted the current vacancy rates for the Town Centre.

As the highways works in relation to the de-trunking of High Street North had not yet started officers sought approval from members to continue with Lamps and Tubes for the installation and maintenance of the 2018 Christmas lighting scheme. The Christmas lighting contract would then be re-tendered once the highway improvements were completed.

RESOLVED: that the contract continue with Lamps and Tubes to install and maintain the 2018 Christmas lighting scheme.

110 PETER NEWTON PAVILION – REPORT FROM BEDFORDSHIRE FA

Members received the annual report on the running and management of the Peter Newton Pavilion by the Bedfordshire Football Association.

111 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

South Bedfordshire Dial-a-Ride: A written report had been submitted by Cllr Hollick which was read out by the Head of Community Services. The Mayor officially opened their new offices on West Street on 18 April, there had been a break-in in May which caused damage in the region of £2,000 and they would be holding their AGM on 13 June.

Dunstable Town Band: Cllr Sparrow updated the committee on the latest from the Town Band. There were a number of performances already planned for the summer, this included kicking off the Town Council's series of Sunday band concerts on 24 June and also performing at the Town Council's Priory Proms in the Park event.