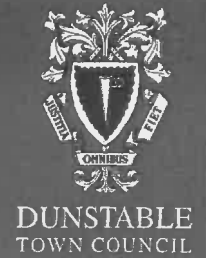


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David Ashlee Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Our Ref: DA/

Date: 24 August 2018

Dear Councillor

Could you please note that a meeting of the Community Services Committee will be held in the Council Chamber, Grove House, High Street North, Dunstable on **Monday 3 September 2018** at **7.00 pm** when the following business will be transacted.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 4 June 2018 (copies previously circulated).
3. Specific Declarations of Interest.
4. Events and Marketing – information report (see page 1).
5. Priory House – information report (see page 6).
6. Grove Corner and Community Engagement – information report (see page 9).
7. Older People's Day Care Service – information report (see page 13).
8. Dunstable Town Centre Services - information report (see page 15).

Cont'd ...

DA/BW
24 August 2018

9. Reports from outside bodies:

South Bedfordshire Dial-a-Ride – Cllr Hollick
Dunstable Town Band – Cllr Sparrow

Yours faithfully

David Ashlee
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

To: All Members of the Community Services Committee
John Kane (Town Mayor), Nigel Warren (Deputy Town Mayor), Pat Staples (Chairman),
Eugene Ghent (Vice-Chairman), Lisa Bird, John Chatterley, Terry Colbourne, Jeannette
Freeman, Claire Meakins, Mike Mullany, Patricia Russell, Emma Simmons, Johnson
Tamara, Jessica Woodward and other Members of the Council for information.

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
MONDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2018
EVENTS AND MARKETING

Purpose of report: This report provides information on progress with the 2018/19 events programme and requests members to determine the programme for 2019/20.

1. ACTION RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 That members determine the events programme for 2019/20 as proposed at paragraph 5.

2. EVENTS PROGRAMME 2018 REVIEW

2.1 St George's Day

The opening event of the 2018 season was very well received and attendance numbers were significantly higher than previous years. This event is improving year on year and is becoming a well established event.

2.2 WWI

This event was very successful, and attendance was considerably higher than the 2014 WWI Event.

2.3 Dunstable Live

The busiest Dunstable Live with record crowds and it was completely trouble free. The theme of 'The Late Greats' was certainly very popular with those attending. A Facebook poll will be set up to choose the theme for Dunstable Live and to choose the acts performing as this seems a very successful way of improving community engagement and interaction with the public.

2.4 Party in the Park

A very well attended event. The initiative to change the line up to create a more family friendly atmosphere over the past two years, and to involve more local groups has certainly contributed to the zero level of incidents this year. The crowds were more family gatherings and it was noted by security the change in audience demographics.

This will be carried forward into the planning for 2019 to encourage more families and further improve the atmosphere.

2.5 Band Concerts

The band concerts have all gone well, below is the attendance at each Sunday.

Band	Attendance
Dunstable Town Band	85
Dunstable Salvation Army Band	82
The Woburn Sands Band	86
Challney Concert Band	82
Watford Town Band	17 (bad weather)
Welwyn Garden City	76
Milton Keynes Brass Band	64

It was noted by the Events Officer, that the audience attending each Sunday were mainly the same people.

Charities will be invited again to apply to run the tea and coffee concession at the Sunday Band concerts.

2.6 Priory Pictures

Attendance over the two dates was estimated at 3,500 people which is considerably higher than last year. For the second Priory Pictures we changed the layout, to accommodate more people and to introduce a smoking area which is one of main points taken from the feedback. This worked well and will be introduced at every Priory Pictures event. The concessions also did considerably better with the new layout.

2.8 Priory Proms in the Park

Priory Proms in the Park will take place in Priory Gardens on Saturday 9 September from 6.00 pm until 10.30 pm (BBC to confirm finish time). The evening will commence with the Dunstable Town Band and Fiona Harris and the main broadcast will take place at 7.30 pm. The BBC broadcast will be shown live via a giant screen. In the interval Fiona Harris will do another set. During the big finale to the proms the gardens will come to life with dancing lights, fire and more. A spectacular firework finale will take place immediately after the live broadcast has finished.

The screen will be closer to the church, and the church will feature more in the lighting effects show. Glow sticks will be on sale by Priory House plus hot drinks and cream teas, and a licensed bar will also be available to purchase drinks and there is also food concessions.

2.9 Fireworks

This event takes place on Monday 5 November, at Creasey Park Community Football Centre. The layout and plan for the event will be the same as last year. Due to the massive growth in audience figures in 2017, a new gate will be installed and an additional of 20 security staff have been put in place.

2.10 Christmas Carols and Torchlight Procession

A decision was taken at the June committee to apply for a road closure to close the A5183 to allow the audience to spill into the road to accommodate the growth in audience attendance.

Confirmation has now been given that the road closure can go ahead. Plans are now well underway on planning the event and a letter has already been sent to the schools inviting them to attend with a cap of 30 children from each school to adhere to the Health and Safety regulations.

Grove Theatre have also confirmed their participation with the pantomime cast and Santa has been booked. BBB will be providing the lights show finale.

3. GREEN FLAG AWARDS

The Event Officer has worked closely with Head of Grounds and Environmental Services to help towards the Green Flag Awards. The events programme as detailed above plays a crucial role in showcasing the wider uses and community engagement and development of the parks and open spaces, thus helping obtain the Green Flags.

4. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK AND REVIEW OF 2018 EVENTS

- 4.1 The Council has received an increase in the public filling in the questionnaire; so far 347 people have filled in the questionnaire compared to 331 in 2017. Currently 99% are satisfied or very satisfied with the events programme. The results are very positive, with some good and valuable ideas and feedback going forward on the events that have taken place so far.

The creation of separate event pages on the web site has been a successful way of reaching directly those who are attending or are interested in the events. There has been a notable increase in interaction with the public at all events via Facebook, which has seen a much more positive effect on the events.

5. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR 2018

- 5.1 The table below shows the proposed dates for 2019. It is proposed that there are no significant changes to the timings/dates for any of the events.

5.2 2018/19 PROPOSED DATES

PG – Priory Gardens, GHG – Grove House Gardens, CPCFC – Creasey Park Community Football Centre.

Table.1

Event and venue	Date and times
St Georges Day (PG)	Saturday 20 April 11 am to 4 pm
Classic Motor Rally (PG) (Priory House managed event)	Saturday 8 June 10 am to 4 pm
Around The World (PG)	Saturday 18 May 10 am to 4 pm
Dunstable Live (GHG)	Saturday 15 June 3 pm to 8 pm
Sunday Band Concerts (GHG)	30 June, 7, 14, 28 July, 4, & 11, 18 August 2.30 pm to 4.15 pm
Party in the Park (GHG)	Saturday 20 July 12 noon to 8 pm
Priory Pictures (PG)	Saturday 22 June & Saturday 10 August (Times TBC)
Priory Proms in the Park (PG)	Saturday 7/14 September (Date TBC by BBC)
Dunstable Fireworks Display (CPCFC)	Tuesday 5 November 7 pm
Christmas Carols and Torchlight Procession (Ashton Square)	Friday 6 December From 7 pm
Mistletoe Magic (Priory House managed event)	Saturday 7 December 10 am to 4 pm

6. EQUALITIES

- 6.1 For the 2019 event programme, the Events Officer is going to look into the issue of equalities and specifically disabled access and engagement with all events. As a Local Council the 2010 Equalities Act requires the town council to make reasonable adjustments, and officers believe that there could be some changes to the events programme which could make them more accessible to all. A planned focus group with local charities who represent people with a range of disability and specific needs will take place to try and identify ways to grow the events to allow access to everyone. Members will be kept up to date with any improvements with the 2019 events.

7. SPONSORSHIP

- 7.1 The Events and Marketing Officer has been in talks with a local business regarding possible sponsorship of the full events programme for 2019. A verbal update will be given at committee.

8. WEBSITE

- 8.1 The website is performing well, the new features of online booking of Afternoon Tea booking are going really well, and since the launch of the website, 9 online bookings have been placed and 6 Afternoon Tea vouchers have been ordered.
- 8.2 The Summer Activities has also seen 30 people book and pay online for the events.

8.3 There are also new features where enquiries of venue hire at Creasey Park Community Football Centre and Grove Corner are proving beneficial.

8.4 The website also has a shop and event ticket feature. Currently the Mayors charity golf day is available to purchase and book online and there are selected items from the Priory House gift shop available online.

9. SOCIAL MEDIA

9.1 The Facebook and Twitter accounts are progressing well with increased interaction and growing numbers of Followers/Likes. These social media platforms continue to be a successful way to quickly get information out to the public, and they have become an established part of the Councils events marketing campaign.

9.2	Dunstable Town Council Facebook	5,006 likes.
	Creasey Park Community Football Centre's	339 likes
	Grove Corner Facebook page	428 likes.
	Town Ranger Services	640 likes

9.3 The Twitter account followers are:

DTC	1,989
Creasey Park CFC	631
Dunstable Town Centre	1,908
Dunstable Events	1,897
Priory House	407

9.4 Grove Corner Instagram account has 136 followers.

10. AUTHOR

10.1 Lisa Vincent - Events and Marketing Officer
Email - Lisa.vincent@dunstable.gov.uk

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2018

PRIORY HOUSE

Purpose of Report: For Information only.

1. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 1.1 The Priory House Manager is now back working full time.
- 1.2 Priory House Tea Rooms have recently had another vacancy arise and have advertised for 12 hours as a Kitchen/Waiting post. It is hoped this will be appointed by the end of August.

2. TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE AND RETAIL OUTLET

- 2.1 Christmas stock is now being sourced and will be on sale by 5 November at the latest.
- 2.2 Showcase Shelving is already fully booked for December.
- 2.3 New brochures have been ordered in advance of the summer.

3. UNDERCROFT AND OTHER MAINTENANCE

- 3.1 There is now a completed Statement of Justification for Priory House, which will be required when applying for full planning permission for the works. Officers are still liaising with the relevant professionals to begin work on the Construction Impact Study which will be required by Historic England for any further works.
- 3.2 The warm weather has made it very difficult to keep within the agreed temperatures for the Undercroft, and when the temperature drops back down to within the agreed limits there is then stone fall. Officers have taken advice from the professionals involved in the feasibility study. It has been agreed that windows and doors are to be kept closed, apart from an hour first thing just to let some of the cooler outside air to circulate. To make it a more pleasant environment for staff and customers for the rest of the time fans are then to be in operation to circulate the air whilst not destabilising it. Officers are currently awaiting advice from the stone specialist regarding any intermediary repairs including a sheltering coat of lime wash or mortar repairs at corners of loose stone.

4. THE MEETING ROOM

- 4.1 Officers are currently obtaining quotes to refurbish the meeting room to include:
 - New seating and tables
 - Repainting
 - Fitting of a new cupboard
 - New flooring
 - New IT equipment

- 4.2 Whilst quotes are being obtained, officers are also working on an application to license the room for small weddings. At the time of writing, officers have met with an officer from CBC, all the necessary paperwork is in place and officers are just waiting to hear back from CBC planning before submitting the application. There is a cost of £1,466 for a license that will last 3 years.
- 4.3 The Priory House Team are now developing packages to then market, and have also chosen the wall paintings as the theme for the now Jacobean Room. Packages will range from:
 Hire of Jacobean Room for wedding only
 Hire of Jacobean Room for wedding, and drinks and canapés in the Exhibition Galleries
 Hire of the Jacobean Room for wedding, drinks and canapés in the Exhibition Galleries and afternoon tea/high tea in the Jacobean Room.
- 4.4 As well as being available for weddings the room will also act as an additional afternoon tea lounge. This will increase the capacity of the tea rooms, but also provide an excellent space for private function e.g. baby showers and special events e.g. themed afternoon teas.
- 4.5 It is anticipated that this will be completed by November 2018, and will be in full use for Christmas afternoon teas. It is undecided as to when Priory House will be available for its first wedding, but it is likely to be in the New Year.

5. EVENTS

- 5.1 The reindeer have been booked ready for this year's Mistletoe Magic on Saturday 8 December and planning for the rest of the event is well in hand.
- 5.2 A new Santa has been found for Tea/Breakfast with Santa.
- 5.3 The Priory House Manager is working in conjunction with colleagues across the Community Services Team to deliver a cohesive Christmas weekend with events from Thursday 6 December to Sunday 9 December.

6. PRIORY HOUSE TEA ROOMS

- 6.1. Following the success of the Royal Wedding Afternoon Tea other similar events are planned for Halloween and Christmas, the Priory House Manager is looking at the possibility of getting film licences to go with these.
- 6.2 Two children's events are being planned for half term along the same lines with a film showing and themed lunchbox.
- 6.3 Priory House Tea Rooms continues to receive excellent reviews on Tripadvisor, and now has over 200 reviews. There has been increased traffic to the Town Council's website, as well as telephone bookings as a result of the Tripadvisor page. The online bookings for afternoon tea have also proven popular with 9 bookings online since the function became available.
- 6.4 Facebook advertising is also proving very successful with a marked uptake in Afternoon Teas following the promotion of Afternoon Tea Fortnight.

7. FINANCE

Priory House Profiled Income and Expenditure Report as at end of July 2018

	April	May	June	July
Budgeted Expenditure	£50,185	£27,785	£29,434	£29,185
Actual Expenditure	£43,241	£29,587	£30,775	£34,221
Variance	£6,944	-£1,802	-£1,341	-£5,036
Budgeted Income	£11,300	£11,300	£12,839	£13,300
Actual Income	£13,033	£16,176	£17,593	£12,518
Variance	£1,733	£4,876	£4,754	-£782
Total Variance	£8,677	£3,074	£3,413	-£5,818
Overall Variance	£9,346			

7.2 The increase in income in the Tea Rooms for April to June accounts for much of this positive variance.

7.3 This has been partially offset by higher than normal expenditure, especially within the salary budget for the Tea Rooms which has been higher due to more staff required at very busy times and some additional cover for sickness and training of new staff.

8. AUTHOR

8.1 Helen Walker-Sygrove, Priory House Manager, email: helen.sygrove@dunstable.gov.uk

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2018****GROVE CORNER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

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

- 1.1 Grove Corner has received 450 visits from young people with 19 new sign ups since the last report up to and including 16 August 2018. Numbers are recorded through a head count by officers and staff.
- 1.2 Junior youth club still remains popular with an average of 20 attending the Friday evening sessions. The numbers over the school holidays has fallen, as young people are away on holidays.
- 1.3 The Senior Community and Young People's Services Officer has worked in partnership with Groundwork Trust to provide Drop-in Hang-out sessions on Monday evenings aimed at the senior age group. These sessions have been successful. They have allowed us to engage with the large groups of young people that hang out in the Band Stand area. Some of the young people engage in anti-social behaviour and refuse to come into the club, and this partnership work has allowed us to start building relationships with the young people.
- 1.4 There have been 41 drop-in sessions since the last report to this Committee.
- 1.5 Grove Corner now has 430 Facebook 'Likes' and Grove Corner's Instagram now has 135 followers. Both remain an excellent tool for communicating with young people.
- 1.6 The Pokémon Club sessions were intermittent in June and July leading up to the summer holiday closures. This was due to losing one volunteer and another having additional commitments. A meeting has been arranged with the volunteers for September. This will review support needs for this activity in order to make it sustainable.
- 1.7 SORTED Counselling Services continue to be in high demand. They have reduced their offer over August due to volunteer councillors' holidays and clients being unavailable for the same reason.
- 1.8 Junior and Senior youth club members enjoyed participating in a Wheelie Fantastic Project. They designed two Wheel Barrows on this year's theme of Peace and Remembrance. They also enjoyed a barbeque and an assault course challenge as part of the Love Park Week activities in July.

2. TRAINING

- 2.1 Members of the Community and Young People's Team attended the following training:
- Basic and Advanced Website Training in June 2018
 - Fire Marshal Training
 - CSC Training in June 2018

3. SUMMER ACTIVITIES

- 3.1 National Play Day, delivered in partnership with Dunstable South Children Centre, attracted 1,519 attendees. This continues to be one of the most popular free events delivered as part of the Summer Activities programme.
- 3.2 Inflatable Day had to be postponed on 10 August due to bad weather. It took place on 14 August but was not anywhere near as busy as last year. Approximately 200 children enjoyed the inflatables accompanied by their families.
- 3.3 Skate Jam also had to be postponed for a week but over 60 young people took part in the event on Sunday 19 August.
- 3.4 It's a Knock Out took place on 20 August and 90 people took part in this fun event. Many teams were supported by families and friends which also had a positive impact on the Splash Side Café.
- 3.5 B- Fest again was postponed due to bad weather and took place on Tuesday 21 August. This was a partnership activity with Beehive Children Centre. The weather was kind and over 700 people attended. This was a new event for this year and one that the Children Centre are keen to repeat.
- 3.6 Art Attack Day took place in Priory Gardens on Thursday 23 August. The children and young people had 10 different activities to try and plenty to make and take home.
- 3.7 Other activities and partnerships included photography on Blows Downs with the Wildlife Trust and thanks must go to Groundwork Trust who came to every activity this year and lent a helping hand.
- 3.8 Overall attendance figures will be given verbally

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

4.1 Love Parks Week

For the second year, Dunstable Town Council took part in the national Love Parks Week initiative. The parent and tots 'Pirate Picnic' was supported by the Library Service and Beehive Children Centre. The event was well attended and the feedback was very positive.

Other activities provided during 13 to 20 July included a Wellness event held by and at Caddington Grove, Croquet and Boules taster sessions, BBQ for 10 to 18 year olds, Over 55's exercise and family army assault course challenge, held in various park and garden locations. Photography in Dunstable Cemetery and Mini Tennis at Bennett Memorial Recreation Ground courts.

342 people took part in this year's Love Parks activities. This initiative is growing in popularity and ideas for partnership working for next year have already been received.

4.2 Dunstable Men in Sheds

Dunstable Men in Sheds now have a temporary toilet located outside their 'shed'. Members enjoyed the challenge in building this structure, which will allow them to plan longer working sessions as and when needed.

Members have attended DTC craft markets and other local events, such as B-Fest, displaying their goods and receiving both donations and requests for goods and services. They have also made a large tepee and raised planters for Beecroft Academy.

4.3 St. Augustine's Junior Wardens

The current volunteers have expressed their wish to take over this group entirely and a meeting will take place to support them in the transition.

4.4 Bunhill Close

Officers will support residents in October half term to redecorate their wheelbarrow and plant up for the winter. Activities in this location are gaining in popularity and are generally well attended.

4.5 Friends of Dunstable Cemetery

The 'Friends' group enjoyed a guided walk of the cemetery in June, delivered by a group member who is also a Town Guide. The group also held their second clean up activity in July and were once again supported by Signpost volunteers. Plans are underway to recruit more 'Friends' and different ways of engagement. They are planning a 'virtual' tour and presentation in the Cemetery Chapel on 30 October.

4.6 Beecroft Residents Association (B.R.A)

The Neighbourhood Development Officer is supporting B.R.A to update their constitution in order to reflect their community engagement activities. They will be attending a DTC run coffee morning at Beecroft Community Centre on 9 October to sell cakes as a fundraiser for the Alzheimer Society. This will also give them the opportunity to engage with more local residents.

4.7 Partnership working

The Downside community coffee mornings will start 7 September. They will be held in St Augustin's Church hall and at the Children's Centre on different days to enable more residents to attend.

4.8 Family Fun Workshop

Officers will provide a free Halloween themed family fun event at Creasey Park Community Football Centre on Tuesday 23 October 2018.

5 WW1 SCHOOL PROJECT

- 5.1 Officers submitted a successful grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund – First World War: then and now. The project will be undertaken with pupils from Queensbury School and focus on Dunstable women, how life changed during and just after WW1. As part of the project, the participants will be supported by a professional film company, in order to create a visual record of their findings. The project will also be supported by Dunstable and District History Society, Dunstable Town Guides and Friends of Dunstable Cemetery.

6. AUTHORS

Edward King – Senior Community and Young Peoples Officer
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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2018****OLDER PEOPLE'S DAY CARE SERVICES**

Purpose of report: For information

1. PROJECT MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

- 1.1 The Good Companions Club (GCC) has 25 members. One new person has joined since the last report.

2. GENERAL UPDATE – Good Companions Club**Improved Quality of Life**

- 2.1 Following a visit from Sahira Ward, the founder of Dunstable Incredible Edible, one of the members of the Good Companions Club was invited to play his keyboard at their annual Big Lunch event. The gentleman in question previously played keyboard in a band in his younger days and was very pleased to be asked to play for them. Since this event he has been invited to play at other venues which he said has given him a new lease of life and just as importantly, a social life.

Dignity & Respect

- 2.2 In July, Christopher Clelland the Senior Community Support worker for the Deaf and Impairment Team at Bedford Borough Council visited the Good Companions Club to offer support and advice to those who are hard of hearing. Many of the group find it a little embarrassing being unable to hear properly, despite having hearing aids. However, they were offered good sound advice regarding their hearing aids and how to use them correctly which has now made their quality of hearing much improved. One person has since completed a self-referral to the team to see if they can assist her in other ways enabling her to maintain her independence at home.

Health & Emotional Wellbeing

- 2.3 Officers have been trying to arrange for members to have sight tests whilst at the Good Companions Club as in previous years, but unfortunately this is no longer possible. In order to ensure everyone still maintains regular eye health & sight checks, officers arranged for a representative of a local optician to come in and explain about the Homecare service that they provide where full sight and eye health checks can be carried out at home. Should a prescription be required that will also be delivered to their home address ensuring they are comfortable and completely satisfactory. This is a free service to anyone over 60 and is unable to make their own way to the opticians due to poor health/mobility. During the visit, four members booked an appointment to have a sight/eye health check. These will all take place in August.

Making a Positive Contribution

- 2.4 Following on from a visit from a representative from Hearing Dogs for the Deaf, two members of the Good Companions have requested further information about this very worthwhile charity with a view to being able to have a hearing dog themselves.

3. CREASEY PARK COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CENTRE OVER 55s LUNCH CLUB

- 3.1 Creasey Park Community Football Centre Lunch Club now has 34 members with an average of 25 members attending each week. A short waiting list remains in place.

Improved Quality of Life

- 3.2 In July, 20 members took part in an armchair based keep fit session. Personal advice was also given to those who required it so that they could continue the exercises at home. Since the session, three members have signed up to a weekly exercise group.

Dignity & Respect

- 3.3 One member recently stated that since joining the Creasey Park Lunch Club, her life has opened up. She has been able to obtain help and support with her sight and hearing impairment through speakers that have attended assisting her to maintain her dignity and self-respect.

Health & Emotional Wellbeing

- 3.4 Officers were recently able to support and advise a regular member of the Creasey Park Community Football Centre Lunch Club. Because she attends regularly and officers know her well, it was noted that her eyes were very yellow. Officers advised that she seek medical advice urgently. She was later admitted to hospital and currently remains an in-patient.

4. COFFEE MORNINGS

- 4.1 Coffee mornings held at Dunstable Cemetery chapel and Holts Court communal lounge attracted some new faces as well as some regular attendees. Officers were hoping to have a representative from SSAFA support the coffee morning at Dunstable Cemetery, but unfortunately they were unable to attend, they have however, agreed to attend the majority of the remaining coffee mornings. Bedfordshire Police supported the event at Holt's Court. Numbers attending appear to be growing slowly.

5. AUTHORS

Elaine McGarrigle, Older People's Support Services Officer

Email - elaine.mcgarrigle@dunstable.gov.uk

Sandy Coyle, Community and Young People's Services Manager

Email - Sandy.coyle@dunstable.gov.uk

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
MONDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2018
DUNSTABLE TOWN CENTRE SERVICES

Purpose of Report:	For information only
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1. MARKETS

1.1 Themed Markets

From the last report, the themed markets have increased in size. This could be due to the work that officers have put into the theme markets or due to the theme itself.

Date	Theme	Confirmed Traders
14 July	Lifestyle and crafts	10
11 August	Children's market	8
8 September	Charity Day	4 so far

1.2 Farmers and Craft

This market is becoming very popular and has increased in size over the last few months. Last minute bookings in June led to the biggest market to date with 19 traders attending. Officers are still trying to attract new food sellers for the market and hope to see this grow over the next few months. The farmers and Craft market has at least three or four traders selling food on each market day.

Date	Confirmed traders
21 July	13
18 August	17
15 September	13 so far

2. ASHTON SQUARE TOILETS

- 2.1 Improvements to the toilets have taken place with new toilet roll holders in all the toilets and new lighting in the Men's toilets. Officers are still working with Central Bedfordshire Council to look at some further refurbishments to the toilets which would be funded by the Market Town Regeneration Fund budget. A stock condition survey has now been completed detailing £70k worth of works. This is currently being sent to the MTRF board for consideration, there is £65k available so some works may need to be taken out or the shortfall be found from other sources e.g. the Joint Committee or CBC Assets.

- 2.2 The judging for the toilet awards has taken place, officers will know the outcome in October.
- 2.3 Staffing has become an issue again in the toilets with agency staff currently being used some days to undertake twice daily cleans. Priors House staff, the Head of Service and Town Centre Services Manager have been opening and closing the toilets on agency days.
- 2.4 Janitors and agency staff have been helping clean the toilets at the Splash Park during the busy school holiday period, with a visit in the middle of the day.

3. COMMUNITY TOILET SCHEME

- 3.1 The town now has two community toilets with the Town Centre Services Manager looking into a third for next year. Café Nostalgia and Kazmicks have joined the scheme, which provides the town with two extra public toilets. Both Cafes have the new window sticker displayed in their shop windows

4. TOWN CENTRE VACANCY RATES

- 4.1 The vacancy rates to the end of July 2018 are provided below. The count will be undertaken again at the start October 2018. These figures have been shared with Central Bedfordshire Council officers.

Eleanor's Cross, Ashton Square, Albion Street, The Quadrant and Grove Park (including Asda) have been included, but rates can be calculated with or without these properties

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
253	33 vacant	13.04%	14.44% from end of April 2018.

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

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
210	25 vacant	11.90%	13.33 % last count end of April 2018.

The following figures relate to the Quadrant Shopping Centre only.

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
43	8	18.60%	18.60 % Count from April 2018

Note: the vacancy figures do not include those businesses currently closed but not vacant as they are not currently on the market to let or purchase.

5. TOWN PROMOTIONS

5.1 Notice boards in town have now been organized into community boards or corporate boards. The new community boards have room for 3 A3 posters and 3 A4 posters with 6 boards in total around the neighbourhood shops and the town centre. The Town Centre Services Manager is overseeing the management of the boards with the removal of old posters and keeping the boards up to date.

5.2 Talk of the Town July bumper edition included a centre spread of the improvements that are taking place in the town. This was a positive promotion for the town with colorful pictures and articles from traders and shoppers.

6. THE GREAT BRITISH HIGH STREET AWARDS

6.1 Officers have entered Dunstable into the Rising Star Category of the Great British High Street Awards, which is a government backed initiative. Visa, who sponsor the award, visited Dunstable in July to promote the awards by distributing 'Visa packs' that are available for all the independent shops in the High Street. Ashton Square traders are particularly interested due to a high concentration of independents in the area.

6.2 Unknown to officers, Dunstable was the first to apply for this award and as a result the town was given some good media coverage.

6.3 The next step is a shortlisting process. If Dunstable makes it through to this stage there will be another visit in September where further activities and promotions will take place.

7. CHRISTMAS

7.1 The Christmas lights and trees have been ordered through Lamps and Tubes this year with a slight decrease in price this year.

7.2 Plans are underway for a Christmas weekend in Dunstable with cross department working to provide a Christmas leaflet and entertainment during the weekend from Thursday 6 December to Sunday 9 December 2018 in the Priory, The Square and Middle Row areas of the town centre.

8. AUTHOR

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