

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

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

ON MONDAY 8 JANUARY 2018

Present: Councillors Gloria Martin (Town Mayor), John Kane (Deputy Town Mayor), Pat Staples (Chairman), Lisa Bird, John Chatterley, Jeannette Freeman, Eugene Ghent and Claire Meakins

In Attendance: Councillor Peter Hollick; David Ashlee (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), Becky Wisbey (Head of Community Services), Kelley Hallam (Office Administrator) and Lisa Vincent (Events and Marketing Officer)

Apologies: Councillor Jessica Castle, Terry Colbourne, Anne Kennedy, Patricia Russell and Emma Simmons

Public: Three

1 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: that Councillor Eugene Ghent be appointed as Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the Municipal Year

2 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 6 November 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor	Interest	Agenda Item
Councillor Lisa Bird	Pecuniary interest – Dunstable Market	Item 7
Councillor Pat Staples	Pecuniary interest – Dunstable Market	Item 7

4 BUDGET PROPOSALS 2018/2019

The Committee considered the comprehensive report of the Town Clerk and Chief Executive which provided detailed proposals for the Community Services budget for 2018/19 and proposed fees and charges.

Excluding staff costs, the overall Community Services budget had decreased by £20,474. This was mainly due to no longer managing the market.

RESOLVED: i) that the Committee recommend the draft Community Services budget as presented with no amendments or further recommendations, to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

ii) that the Committee recommend to Finance and General Purposes Committee that £5,000 from the Town Centre Management budget for 2018/19 be allocated to the Dunstable Joint Committee

5 **EVENTS AND MARKETING**

The Events and Marketing Officer presented an update report on the Christmas Torchlight Procession and Carols event.

The Torchlight event had been very successful with the number of children attending and the audience capacity at maximum. Due to this, the contractor who delivered the light show had made some suggestions and given some feedback on both the event as a whole and his health and safety concerns.

Members agreed that this would need to be looked into further before this year's event.

Members were updated on the Council's website and social media usage.

The Committee noted that the Royal Wedding would be taking place on Saturday 19 May, which was the same day as the planned WWI event. They were asked if they wished to bring the event forward by one week to avoid the clash.

RESOLVED: that the WWI Commemoration Day event be held on Saturday 12 May.

6 **DUNSTABLE TOWN CENTRE SERVICES**

The Head of Community Services updated the Committee on the Market and Ashton Square Toilets including the market trader figures for November and December 2017 which included casual traders, permanent traders and themed and craft market trader figures.

Members noted the income and expenditure figures.

The Committee were informed that one of the Market Porters has accepted the alternative position of Town Centre Janitor and would be starting on 1 February.

Officers were due to hold a meeting with CBC Officers to discuss the schedule of works for the on-going maintenance issues at Ashton Square Toilets and hopefully a new licence would also be drawn up.

A defibrillator had been donated by a charity called Wayne's Fund and was situated at Priory House.

The Committee were updated on the skating rink that was held on the Square in December. It had not been as popular this year with half the amount of people attending compared to last year. Officers would recommend to the Dunstable Joint Committee not to hold it again.

7 **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 Priory House Manager continued to be on long term sick leave and the Assistant Manager ceased working for the Town Council from the New Year, as a result, interim arrangements had been put in place where existing staff were acting up, taking on additional responsibilities and hours.

Due to the anti-social behaviour both at Priory House and throughout the town, the Committee requested that a representative from Bedfordshire Constabulary and / or a representative from CBC's Community safety Team be asked to attend the next meeting of the Committee to report on what action was being taken.

Action: Head of Community Services

Christmas had been very successful all round for Priory House. Mistletoe Magic had been well received, Christmas stock in the shop had sold very well, all four Pudding Nights held were fully booked and over 150 people had booked an Afternoon Christmas Tea. The Chairman thanked officers at Priory House for their hard work over Christmas and was very pleased with the trading figures.

8 GROVE CORNER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Head of Community Services reported on recent attendance figures and activities at Grove Corner and reported on recent community engagement activities.

Senior numbers had dropped off dramatically as most of the previous users were too old to attend but Junior Youth Club still remained very popular with an average of 35 attending every session.

Dunstable Men in Sheds held its first AGM in December and had attended the Dunstable Craft Market where they had sold items for donations. Officers were due to meet with the group to discuss issues regarding space and toilet facilities.

9 OLDER PEOPLE'S DAY CARE SERVICE

The Head of Community Services reported on attendances, activities and outings for the Good Companions Club and the Creasey Park Community Football Centre Over 55s Lunch Club.

Users had attended a Christmas lunch in Pulloxhill. Transport that enabled the less mobile users as well was organised by Officers.

10 HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND FOR PRIORY HOUSE

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive presented a detailed report on the submission of a bid to the Heritage Lottery Townscape Fund by Central Bedfordshire Council which sought to restore the historic fabric of many of the country's town centres. In summary the bid was for funding to:

- Target improvements to properties along Middle Row in a similar way to the existing MTRF High Street Improvement Scheme.
- Redevelop Ashton Square into a more useable and vibrant area
- Contribute to remedial and conservation works to Priory House
- Carry out a range of associated community based projects

The total bid application was for approximately £1.77 million with a total project cost of

approximately £3.77 million. Of the £1.77 million requested, £500,000 was earmarked for Priory House.

In order to evidence match funding and maximise the likelihood of being awarded a grant, the bid reflected a financial contribution of £250,000 from DTC.

RESOLVED: that this Committee recommend to Finance and General Purposes Committee that £250,000 be provisionally allocated from the Building Maintenance Reserve as part funding for remedial and conservation work to Priory House, subject to the successful bid for Heritage Lottery Townscape Funding.

11 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

South Bedfordshire Dial-a-Ride:

Councillor Hollick reported that Dial-a-Ride had now moved into a cabin on the site of the Sea Cadets. They had also bought a new 16 seater bus with two more to be delivered in April. A tender bid for the contract in the Leighton Buzzard and Linslade area was due to be submitted.

Dunstable Town Band:

Councillor Sparrow reported that the Town Band had enjoyed playing at the Quadrant over Christmas and thanked DTC for the loan of the chairs. They already had 5 events booked in for 2018.

12 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: that, in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

13 STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS AT PRIORY HOUSE

The Head of Community Services gave a verbal report to the Committee on current staffing matters at Priory House. As the Assistant Manager post was currently vacant, it gave officers the opportunity to review the staffing structure. Members considered an alternative structure that allowed more flexibility and cover.

RESOLVED: that the new structure be recommended to the Finance and General Purposes Committee