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DUNSTABLE
TOWN COUNCIL

Your Ref

Our Ref: DA/CB/C22

Date: 22 February 2017

Dear Colleague

Could you please note that a meeting of Dunstable Joint Committee will be held on **Thursday 2 March 2017 at 7.00 pm** at Watling House, High Street North, Dunstable when the following business will be transacted.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. Minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on Thursday 8 December 2016 (previously circulated).
3. Specific Declarations of Interest.
4. Chairman's Announcements.
5. Public Question Time (maximum 15 minutes).
6. Themed discussion – Regeneration (maximum 60 minutes)
 - Regeneration Programme
 - Highways Projects
7. Market Town Regeneration Fund – verbal update from the Town Clerk & Chief Executive.
8. Questions on Dunstable Town Council update report of Town Centre Manager (see page 1).
9. Questions on Central Bedfordshire Council – update on services (see page 9).
10. Reports from co-opted or outside bodies

Yours faithfully

David Ashlee
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

To: **Members of Dunstable Joint Committee**

Central Bedfordshire Council

Councillors John Chatterley, Eugene Ghent, Carole Hegley (Chairman), Nigel Warren and Nigel Young.

Dunstable Town Council

Councillors Liz Jones, Peter Hollick, John Kane, Gloria Martin and Pat Staples.

Co-opted Advisors:

Chairman, Dunstable Licensees Association

Mr H Garrod, Promoting Dunstable

Dunstable Market Representative

Mr R Pepworth, South Beds Friends of the Earth

Business Development Manager, Asda

Mr B Groves, Central Bedfordshire College

Quadrant Shopping Centre Manager

Vacancy Dunstable Business Forum

Grove Theatre

ViViane Vayssieres

Sharon Knott, DLDD Trust

John Gelder, Voluntary and Community Action

Sharon Warboys, Town Centre Champion

Cllr A Sparrow, Dunstable In Bloom

Other attendees:

Bedfordshire Police

Other

Town and Central Bedfordshire Councillors for information

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

DUNSTABLE JOINT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 6 MARCH 2017

TOWN CENTRE SERVICES

Purpose of report: - For Information

1. ACTION RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 That Members of the Committee note progress to date with the implementation of the agreed action plan for 2016/17.

2. 2016/17 BUDGET AND PRIORITISED ACTIONS

- 2.1 Members are reminded that the Committee had an estimated budget available for 2016/17 of £30,155.63 and had allocated £27,100 for projects and initiatives, leaving an anticipated remaining budget of £5,267.36 available (including any project underspend identified).

(Members are reminded that there is an additional £2,000 allocated as a contingency for signage improvements (Dunstable Joint Committee Minute 13, 12 July 2012)).

- 2.2 Following the last meeting of the Committee, the Action Plan has been refreshed and is attached at appendix 1. As is detailed in the Action Plan, the majority of the actions for 2016/17 have now been completed, with the exception of some ongoing projects that are contingent on funding or require revisiting post de-trunking of the A5.

3. UPDATE ON ONGOING TOWN CENTRE ACTIONS

3.1 Christmas Programme

- 3.1.2 As Members will be aware, the Dunstable Joint Committee funded a synthetic ice rink that was installed on The Square from 16 to 22 December as part of the Christmas programme for 2016.

- 3.1.3 Tickets for the rink were sold via Dunstable Town Council's website and from Priory House at a cost of £3.00 per adult and £2.00 per child with a family ticket for two adults and two children at a discounted rate of £8.00.

- 3.1.4 The rink operated from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm each day with an additional evening session until 8.00 pm on the first day. Maximum capacity on the rink was 35 persons at any one time, for a duration of 45 minutes. A total of 1,610 individual tickets were available for the attraction.

- 3.1.5 The rink proved popular with a total of 706 tickets sold, equating to 1,084 individual persons skating during the course of the week and positive feedback was received from users. Income for the rink has gone to offset a small amount of the overall costs of providing the attraction.

- 3.1.6 As part of the Christmas Promotions, a Festive Shop Front Competition was run, encouraging businesses to light and decorate their frontage and with the prize for the winning business being an advert in the spring edition of the Town Council's Talk of the Town magazine. A total of 17 businesses signed up to take part. The judging was done by the Mayor of Dunstable and Chairman of the Dunstable Joint Committee and took place on Wednesday 21 December. The winning business for 2016 was Angliss Carpets in Church Street with Lisa Roberts Catering of Ashton Square and Hair Boutique of High Street South as runners up.
- 3.1.7 Residents were also asked to send in pictures of their external festive decorations with vouchers on offer to spend in the town centre for the winner and two runners up. Unfortunately only two entries were received. However, it is hoped that the lighting festival can be developed for future years.
- 3.1.8 The Dunstable Joint Committee also contributed to the addition of a lighting and pyrotechnic finale for the annual Christmas Tree Carols and Torchlight Procession on 2 December and to the Christmas Themed, Dunstable wide event that took place on Saturday 3 December. Both events were previously discussed at the December meeting of the Committee.

3.2 Programme of Themed Events for 2017

- 3.2.1 Following on from the Party in the Market programme in 2016, Dunstable Town Council will be promoting a series of themed markets for 2017.
- 3.2.2 The themed markets will take place on the second Saturday of each month from April through to December, between 10.00 am to 3.00 pm, beginning with a Health and Beauty theme on 8 April 2017. All traders trading on the themed market days will benefit from the discounted event rate of £15.00 per stall. The full programme is as follows:

Women's Day (Health and Beauty theme)

Saturday 8 April 2017

Fair Trade Market

Saturday 13 May 2017

Youth Event

Saturday 10 June 2017

Family Day

Saturday 8 July 2017

Pre-loved, Bric-a-Brac Market

Saturday 12 August 2017

Charity Day

Saturday 9 September 2017

Halloween/ Autumnal theme

Saturday 14 October 2017

Food & Drink

Saturday 11 November 2017

Christmas

Saturday 9 December 2017

- 3.2.3 Following on from the youth event with Central Bedfordshire College last year, officers are working to develop a youth themed market as part of the programme where services are promoted by organisations who work with and for young people, but also including young people selling goods they have made. To this end, organisations have been identified for direct marketing and an email has been sent out with details of the event, encouraging participation. Members will be kept updated on progress with this and the other themed markets in the programme.
- 3.2.4 In addition to the themed markets there will be a Creative Craft Market with goods handmade in Bedfordshire, on the third Saturday of each month. The craft market will again be taking place from April through to December, following on from the trial in October. November and December 2016. All those trading on the craft market days will also be charged £15.00 per stall and again this includes existing traders and non-craft traders.

4. GENERAL UPDATE

4.1 DUNSTABLE MARKET

4.1.1 Traders

- At the time of writing there were 10 individual, regular traders on Dunstable Market. Officers continue to promote the market through the Dunstable Town Council website, social media and Talk of the Town as well as in local and trade press.
- The following tables detail the number of traders in December and January, on each trading day.

December 2016

	NUMBER OF TRADERS	NUMBER OF PITCHES
Fri 2/12	2	2
Sat 3/12	19 (Event Day)	23
Weds 7/12	10	15
Fri 9/12	4	7
Sat 10/12	10	15
Weds 14/12	12	20
Fri 16/12	4	7
Sat 17/12	10	13
Weds 21/12	9 (1 holiday)	16
Fri 23/12	5	7
Sat 24/12	7 (1 holiday)	11
Weds 28/12	4 (5 holiday)	7
Fri 30/12	2 (1 holiday)	2
Sat 31/12	5 (3 failed to attend)	7

January 2017

	NUMBER OF TRADERS	NUMBER OF PITCHES
Weds 4/01	6 (1 sick, 2 failed to attend)	10
Fri 6/01	3	4
Sat 7/01	7 (1 failed to attend)	12
Wed 11/01	8 (1 holiday)	13
Fri 13/01	1 (1 holiday, 1 failed to attend)	1
Sat 14/01	7 (1 failed to attend)	11
Weds 18/01	8 (1 sick)	14
Fri 20/01	2 (1 failed to attend)	2
Sat 21/01	7	10
Weds 25/01	9	14
Friday 27/01	2 (1 failed to attend)	2
Saturday 28/01	7	12

4.1.2 Dunstable Market Questionnaire

- Following a request from Members of Dunstable Town Council's Community Services Committee, a Dunstable Market questionnaire has been devised to ascertain the views of residents and visitors about the market.
- The survey includes questions about the locations, retail mix and average spend on the market as well as more general information about shopping habits.
- The survey went live on Survey Monkey in January, with hard copies also being made available from Priory House, Grove House, Creasey Park Community Football Centre and Dunstable Market (from traders).
- The survey has been promoted in the Talk of the Town, Town Council website and through social media.
- At the time of writing 12 hard copies of the survey have been returned and there have been 276 responses on Survey Monkey.
- The survey will continue to be promoted and responses collected over the first half of the year and results will be reported back to the September meeting of the Community Services Committee.

5. Town Centre Vacancy Rates

5.1 The vacancy rates to the end of December 2017 are provided below.

5.2 The town centre area used for the survey includes properties in High Street North up to Regent Street, High Street South to Friars Walk (excluding Thames Industrial Estate), Church Street up to and including Aldi and West Street up to the Police Station/St Mary's Gate.

- 5.3 Eleanor's Cross, Ashton Square, Albion Street, The Quadrant and Grove Park (including Asda) have been included but rates can be calculated with or without these properties.
- 5.4 These figures have been shared with Central Bedfordshire Council officers and more detail of the vacancy rates across Central Bedfordshire Council is given at agenda item 9.

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
253	33 vacant (+ 4 are under development for tenant)	13.04%	12.25% (2016/17 figure at September 2017)

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

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
210	26 (+4 are under development for tenant)	12.38%	12.25% (2016/17 figure at September 2017)

The following figures relate to the Quadrant Shopping Centre only.

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
43	7	16.27%	12.25% (2016/17 figure at September 2017)

- 5.5 Members are reminded that the count will be done quarterly and reported back to the corresponding Committee meeting following the end of the quarter as follows:

April-June (count at end June)
 July-September (count at end September)
 October-December (count end December)
 January-March (count at end March)

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 These are inherent to this report.

7. APPENDICES

- 7.1 Appendix 1 –Dunstable Joint Committee Action Plan.

8. AUTHOR

- 8.1 Clare Brett – Town Centre Manager
 E-mail – clare.brett@dunstable.gov.uk

Action	Progress	Responsible Officer/Authority	Funding	Budget update
Special Saturdays	ACTION COMPLETED FOR 2016	Chairman DJC - Central Bedfordshire Council	£3,462 DJC 15/16 Budget £3,000 DJC 16/17 Budget	£4,849.36 anticipated underspend from 2016 across all three initiatives
Party in the Market	ACTION COMPLETED FOR 2016	Market Officer/Town Centre Manager, DTC	£3,000 DJC 16/17 Budget	
Special Tourism Saturday	ACTION COMPLETED FOR 2016.	Chairman DJC - Central Bedfordshire Council	£1,500 DJC 16/17 Budget	
Marketing/Banners/Flags	Funds have been set aside by the Committee to refurbish the existing banners in Court Drive and to investigate extending the scheme into other areas of the town centre. This will be investigated further in conjunction with works on the A5, post detrunking.	DTC/CBC	£1,500 DJC 16/17 Budget	£1,500 allocated
Town Centre Champions	ACTION COMPLETED FOR 2016: The Committee has agreed funds to deliver the Shop Front Accreditation Scheme in 2017.	Town Centre Manager	£1,000 DJC 15/16 Budget	£379.50 spent/£620.50 underspend from hanging baskets £1,000 allocated for 16/17
Work with Town Centre Businesses	Budget/lead officer and organisation to be identified should Members wish to progress this action.	DTC/CBC	No budget currently identified.	N/A

Anti-littering campaign	The group is aiming to deliver 3/4 litter picks, working with various groups between 3-5 March 2017 to tie in with the Great British Spring Clean.	Promoting Dunstable	£500 DJC Budget 16/17 for litter pickers/gloves	£500 spent
Marketing numbers for empty shops (to call to rent a unit)	There is a desire to help property owners and encourage them to improve their shops and market them. Options are being explored via the High Street Improvement Scheme.	CBC Regen and Business / Assets	No budget currently identified.	N/A
Enforcement of untidy shops fronts	No funding has been identified for a S215 officer, but CBC will continue to respond to complaints about specific sites/properties.	CBC Planning/Assets	CBC - to be identified	N/A
Additional lighting in Middle Row	It was previously reported that the project will involve installing a new fuse board, moving it to a new site and installing new LED lights. It also means connecting it to the landlord supply. Funding to be identified.	CBC	To be identified.	N/A
Artwork (on bollards/bins/archway etc)	Designs for the bollard trail have been distributed to Town Team members for comments. Further development to take place and creation of web pages to tie in with the trail before a launch can be set. Location of the trail will also need further investigating dependent on post-detruking works on the A5.	Town Centre Manager, DTC.	£1,300 DJC Budget	£800 spent to date of £1,300 allocated.
Mosaic art in floor, walls	No Update.	To be identified	No budget currently identified.	N/A
Painting/replacing bins	ACTION COMPLETED FOR .	CBC Service manager for Operations Waste Services	CBC Waste Services	N/A
Pay on exit car parking machines	Pay on exit machines and barriers will be installed in Ashton Square in February/March 2017.	CBC	CBC	N/A

Welcome Sign Planting	The scheme has been designed and work is to be scheduled in.	Head of Grounds DTC	£1,500 DJC Budget	£1,500 allocated
Investigate Tourism initiatives/opportunities	Budget/lead officer and organisation to be identified should Members wish to progress this action.	Dependent on initiative.	No budget currently identified.	N/A
Christmas lighting for the trees in the High Street	ACTION COMPLETED FOR 2016	Town Centre Manager, DTC.	£1,000 DJC 16/17 Budget	No remaining funds.
Christmas Promotions	ACTION COMPLETED FOR 2016	Town Centre Manager/Events & Marketing Officer, DTC	£15,000 DJC Budget 16/17	£1,872. Ticket sales income £418 underspend
Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch	Budget/lead officer and organisation to be identified should Members wish to progress this action.	Lead organisation to be identified in order to progress	No budget currently identified.	N/A

DUNSTABLE JOINT COMMITTEE

2 March 2017

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL UPDATE

Purpose of report: - For Information

1. COMMUNITY SAFETY

The ASB & Stat. Nuisance Team have carried out the following work in the Dunstable area from the 1st October – 31st December 2016:

1 successful Injunction gained at Court

1 successful Possession Order gained at Court

1 successful breach of Community Protection Notice

2 Fixed Penalty Notices for small scale fly-tipping were issued, 1 of which was paid in the time frame of this report.

Cases opened:

Dog barking – 1

Dog fouling – 1

Fly-posting - 1

Fly tipping – 14

Nuisance neighbours – 8

Noise – 17

Odour - 4

Side waste offences – 1

Vehicle nuisance - 2

49 cases in total.

Summary of recorded CCTV Incidents

Dunstable

1st October to 31st December 2016

This report contains data gathered by the Council's CCTV Control Room located at Watling House, Dunstable. It includes details of CCTV monitored incidents and arrests by the police in the towns of Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Leighton Buzzard. It does not include details of the police response to any particular incident where an arrest is not made, nor does it include incidents not captured by CCTV; for this reason the data will not reflect the overall picture of crime and disorder in any area. Personal data is excluded to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Date and Time	Type	Location	Description	Arrests
2/10/2016 13:39	Offensives weapons x5	Priory Gardens	5 males seen on CCTV in Priory Gardens with a foot long knife, a machete, various other knives, a large amount of money and a large amount of drugs. CCTV alerted police and all 5 males were arrested.	5
6/10/2016 17:42	Assault on police	Quadrant car park	Male assaults a police officer in The Quadrant car park	1
7/10/2016 19:45	ASB	Queensway	A group of males and females causing trouble in a Nail bar in Queensway	0
10/10/2016 22:06	Robbery	Dunstable	2 males possibly involved in a knife point robbery	0
10/10/2016 22:56	R.T.C	Katherine drive	A car reverses and knocks down a wall at the back of the shops	0
10/10/2016 21:28	Theft	White Lion Retail Park	5,000 worth of items taken from a large metal container at the rear of the shops	0
12/10/2016 21:15	Robbery	Asda	6 youths targeting people on the bus way and robbing them at knife point	0
17/10/2016 15:09	Bicycle theft	Dunstable area	Possible suspect in a bike theft	0
18/10/2016 21:45	Intelligence	Church street	Footage requested by 6168 of vehicles driving through Church street	0
21/10/2016 19:45	Robbery	Dunstable area	Footage provided of males involved in the bus way robberies	0
21/10/2016 15:00	Bicycle Theft	Katherine Drive	Bicycle stolen from outside shops	0
22/10/2016 21:40	Domestic	High Street North	Female in a black Golf being chased by her partner who is in a silver	0

			Corsa	
25/10/2016 23:20	Fly Tipping	Skate Park	3 Travellers drive at the back of the Skate park and fly-tip rubbish	0
26/10/2016 21:00	Serious Assault	Mayfield Road	Serious assault in Downside area	0
27/10/2016 11:11	Theft	Skate Park	Traveller male takes a football off of a 11 y/o boy who is playing football	0
27/10/2016 17:28	Miscellaneous	Dunstable Area	Footage of a male involved in the bus way robberies	0
27/10/2016 15:58	Attempted Theft	Asda	Group of males seen looking at a chained up bicycle by the Leisure centre then same males trying to steal a bicycle from Asda car park	0
28/10/2016 15:12	Intelligence	Mayfield Road	Male lets his dog foul and does not pick it up	0
28/10/2016 03:20	Serious Assault	High street south	Male assaulted in High street South and walks through Priory Gardens	0
29/10/2016 18:39	Offensive weapons	The Quadrant	2 x males seen with knuckle dusters, Police informed and males stopped	2
30/10/2016 14:16	Drugs	Priory Gardens	Female seen with a large bag full of drugs	1
30/10/2016 19:25	Arson	Skate Park	Male seen setting a fire in the Skate Park	1
1/11/2016 11:33	Theft of vehicle	Priory Gardens	Footage of a male seen before and after a theft of a moped	0
2/10/2016 16:53	Traffic Accident	Houghton Road	Police involved in a accident whilst on blues	0
4/11/2016 20:51	Criminal Damage	The Quadrant	Group of youth take a dome off one of the lamp post inside the Quadrant.	0
4/11/2016 16:24	Shoplifting	White Lion Retail; Park	Male runs out of T.K.MAXX with a coat chased by security	
6/11/2016	Affray	Cookies	Fight outside Cookies	0

03:34			police called no arrests made	
14/11/2016 8:31	Traffic Offence		Driver of a van drives into the back of another vehicle then drives off	0
18/11/2016 02:36	Assault	Asda	Male assaults another male in Asda car park Male went out of camera view before police arrived	0
19/11/2016 01:28	Affray	High Street North	Fight outside the Crown PH - Police attended but no arrests were made	0
19/11/2016 02:42	Affray	High Street North	Fight outside the Crown I.P is going to make a complaint against one of the Crown's door staff	0
19/11/2016 10:16	Bicycle Theft	Court Drive	Bicycle seen being stolen from outside The Leisure Centre	0
20/11/2016 04:07	Affray	Court Drive	Group of males and females fighting outside of Gary Coopers	0
21/11/2016 22:02	Theft of vehicle (OP METEOR)	High Street North	Stolen moped seen driving up High Street North	0
22/11/2016 12:10	Shoplifting	The Quadrant	2 Males running from Bon Marche	0
23/11/2016 14:16	Intelligence	High Street North	Police interested in an Audi driving up high street	0
23/11/2016 20:00	Drugs	Skate Park	Drug deal - police informed but left before police arrived	2
24/11/2016 15:43	Attempted Theft	Ashton Square	2 Males found in Wilko's warehouse informed police but males got into a silver Ford and drove off before police arrived	0
25/11/2016 03:55	Criminal Damage	High Street North	Male punches and breaks window of The Crown	1
25/11/2016	Intelligence	High Street	Stolen mopeds seen	0

12:24	(OP METEOR)	North	driving down High Street North	
27/11/2016 01:11	Robbery	High Street North	Someone seen walking into Eclat Hair Fashions on High Street North	0
29/11/2016 09:27	Theft/deception	Duncombe Drive	I.P is a 74 years old female being asked for money by a male	0
30/11/2016 11:38	Theft	High Street North	Unauthorised use of a bank card at Halifax cash machine	0
5/12/2016 09:51	Bicycle Theft	White Lion Retail Park	2 Males take a chained up bicycle from outside T.K.MAXX	0
8/12/2016 12:17	Bicycle Theft	Asda	Bicycle stolen from outside Asda	0
12/12/2016 16:04	Intelligence	Dunstable Area	Suspect looking at bikes outside the Leisure Centre and the in Priory Gardens looking through the glass of the Keepers hut and trying the doors then picking up bolt cutters and riding down High Street South.	0
14/12/2016 17:30	Robbery	High Street North	The Cake shop robbed over night	0
15/12/2016 21:22	R.T.C	High Street South	Footage of a R.T.C	0
16/12/2016 21:19	Assault	High Street North	Female assaulting another female on High Street North	0
18/12/2016 04:25	Arson	Priory Gardens	2 Vehicles set alight - male seen walking away followed by a cloud of smoke	0
21/12/2016 22:07	Miscellaneous	Dog Kennel Walk	5 Males de-camp from vehicle and run down Dog Kennel Walk onto bus link	0
22/12/2016 23:27	Assault	High Street South	Fight on High Street South male with facial injuries	0

29/12/2016 14:44	Miscellaneous	West Street	Footage requested by Pc Allen	0
31/12/2016 23:59	Miscellaneous	High Street North	4 males setting off fireworks in the middle of High street north	4

Notes

There were a total of 17 arrests made as a result of information supplied to the police in the period of this report.

Incidents of driving offences and anti social behaviour continue to be a problem in the area of the Skate Park and Grove Theatre Car Park.

Incidents of littering offences are increasing in the White Lion Retail Park car parks and in the area of the Skate Park. Any incidents recorded are passed to CBC Environmental Protection Officers for investigation and the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices.

2. REGENERATION & BUSINESS

2.1 Dunstable Town Centre Regeneration

Dunstable Town Centre has a number of Central Bedfordshire assets that have the potential to enact positive change and enhance regeneration. Crucial for this is Dunstable High Street's de-trunking and subsequent improvements following the M1-A5 link road opening in Spring 2017 (date to be confirmed). Our goal is to create a safe, active and attractive high street more fitting for Dunstable's important historic character. We already have £1.5m from Highways England as part of their A5-M1 Legacy initiative and an additional £500,000 capital funding committed for this work. However we will continue to secure funding for further development schemes to enhance regeneration even further along the High Street.

CBC continues to support Dunstable Town Council in its delivery of its MTRF bid and its engagement with the HSIS which is due to complete by Spring 2018. New applications are being received from many shop fronts along the high street, which will greatly improve the aesthetics of the town. The partnership with Dunstable Town Council in the Market Town Regeneration Fund is also resulting in a number of tangible positive outcomes in the town centre, such as an improved entrance to Priory Gardens and cleaning equipment.

Alongside this, the redeveloped Leisure Centre will provide state of the art facilities for the community, including a new library. Work will start Summer 2017 and is due to open towards the end of 2018. The new leisure centre will save the tax payer money and will also release an exciting regeneration opportunity for Dunstable. The current Dunstable Library sits at a prominent position in the town centre, but requires redevelopment, and Central Bedfordshire is looking at options for its long term use. In addition, we are currently working on an option to develop Dunstable's former courthouse to introduce new student housing to the town centre, which will make Dunstable an even greater place to study and thrive. A formal decision on the future use of Dunstable's Former Courthouse is expected in Autumn 2017. We are also receiving promising updates from the Quadrant and White Lion Square about new business. All these projects and more form part of Dunstable's exciting new future where there will be a transformation over the next five years. Central Bedfordshire will provide more details on the regeneration projects and the programme to this Joint Committee for discussion as soon as they can be made available.

2.3 Business Support

In the last quarter, there have been 9 enquiries for business support, including advice from our Business TimeBank service. We have worked with new start ups in the area, as well as existing businesses. We continue to offer business support to any business that would like assistance. For full information of how our team can support local businesses, please contact business@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk.

2.4 FEAST

Feast is a part ERDF funded project (total £7million of which £3.5million is ERDF) to offer a range of useful services to food and drinks manufacturers over the next three years, including; grant funding, business mentoring, industry events, technical support and technical apprentices. In order to be eligible to access services through the FEAST project, business must be:

- A food and drink manufacturer
- Based in D2N2, SEMLEP Areas
- An SME Business (Small / Medium Enterprise)

CBC is a delivery partner in the project with the aim of promoting the project in the SEMLEP area and providing a link with the CBC Food Enterprise Zone and Agrifood priority sector.

2.5 Inward Investment

In the last quarter, there have been 9 enquiries for vacant units on the Woodside and Houghton Regis Estates. This takes our total number of Inward Investment enquiries across Central Bedfordshire since April to 181 which is 120% of our target.

2.6 Be Central Bedfordshire website

(www.becentralbedfordshire.co.uk) continues to attract interest from potential investors with 9300 visits to the site and more than 900 property searches since 1st April 2016, with Houghton Regis and Dunstable featuring prominently. The team have launched Twitter and Linked In accounts to further attract website traffic @BeCentralBeds, <https://www.linkedin.com/company/becentralbeds>

2.7 Business Growth and Support Scheme

Funding is available for SME's looking to move into or expand within Central Bedfordshire. The Business Support and Growth Fund is targeted at SME's and aligns with council service priorities of supporting business, jobs growth and increasing skills.

The scheme is offering support in three distinct areas as follows with a maximum award of £5k per business, capped at a maximum of 6 months business rates charges.

- a) Reduced Business Rates Offer
- b) Early Pre-Application Planning Advice
- c) Public Protection Food Hygiene Training and Coaching Programme

For a business to qualify for support from the fund, it will need to demonstrate that it meets with one or more of the criteria below, which will ensure that the support is directed to the key target area.

- 1) Supports an Inward Investment enquiry bringing new jobs in to the area.
- 2) Assists an existing business already based within Central Bedfordshire to expand and create additional jobs in the area.
- 3) Supports an existing business already based in Central Bedfordshire to maintain existing jobs.
- 4) Enables a new business start up and go live.
- 5) Supports a business to increase skills levels within its workforce.
- 6) Enhance compliance levels with statutory Central Bedfordshire Council requirements.

For further details on the 3 specific areas of support available or to make an application, please email jeff.caiger@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

2.8 Employment and Skills

Using money from the Skills Funding Agency, CBC's Bedfordshire Employment & Skills Service (BESS) continues to provide support for local residents to increase their employability.

The BESS 'offer' consists of training courses provided by the in-house Direct Delivery team and five external providers.

The 'offer' is complete by the availability of Information, Advice & Guidance on a 1:1 basis for residents seeking advice on careers and local jobs.

The external providers include:

- Impact Peer Support who continues to provide excellent courses aimed at residents who have mild to moderate mental health difficulties. Feedback from participants has been excellent and for some it has been life changing.
- Noah Enterprise (Luton based) who are delivering courses aimed at those furthest away from the labour market through homelessness or who are recovering from addiction. The courses include ESOL and IT.
- TCHC offer a range of courses including IT, Social Media and Understanding Enterprise. Some of the courses are especially attractive for residents considering self employment.
- Voluntary Community Action (South Beds) deliver a range of Step-Into courses include (amongst others) Customer Service & Retail, Health & Social Care, Warehousing & Distribution. These are short courses and designed to provide a 'taster' into specific sectors.
- SSG are the largest external provider and will be delivering courses in the Dunstable and Houghton Regis area later in the academic year. They deliver generic employability courses which are well regarded and are effective in providing skills such as team work, communication skills, problem solving etc. as skills which are relevant for a wide range of employers.

Course delivery will be increasing over the coming months in Dunstable to ensure there is equitable delivery throughout Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough. Additionally BESS is developing closer links with the Housing Support Team to ensure tenants have an improved access to the training courses and it is hoped this will have positive benefits for those living in deprived areas of the town as they are supported towards employment.

2.9 High Street Vacancy Levels

As part of the ongoing monitoring of the Economic Development Plan the Council is monitoring the level of high street vacancies in 'A' class premises in Central Bedfordshire's town centres. The overall average vacancy rate within town centres that have been monitored to date is 6.1% in February 2017. This has increased from the 4.4% in November 2016, although there are still 3 counts to be made. Biggleswade and Houghton Regis have seen an increase in vacant units, with a decrease being seen in Dunstable. Dunstable still remains the town with the most vacancies, 33 or 13.4% of all premises, but it is good to note that 4 recently vacant units are currently under development for tenants. Central Bedfordshire's vacancy rate is lower than Britain's rate of 12.2% in February 2016 (Source: The Local Data Company).

Town	Feb 16	May 16	Aug 16	Nov 16	Feb 17
Ampthill	2.2	0	1.1	0	-
Arlesey	6.7	6.7	6.7	0	0
Biggleswade	6.9	7.6	6.9	4.8	7.6%
Dunstable	17.7	18.8	15.4	15.4	13.4%
Flitwick	2.6	0	0	0	-
Houghton Regis	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	6.9%
Leighton Buzzard	5.4	6.9	6.4	4.9	4.9%
Sandy	4.5	6	4.5	7.5	7.5%
Shefford	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5%
Stotfold	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	-
Average vacancy rate	5.75%	5.75%	5.25%	4.41%	6.1%

3. LEISURE, LIBRARIES & COUNTRYSIDE

3.1 DUNSTABLE LEISURE CENTRE

The Centre will close in summer 2017 and our team is working hard with all of the clubs to find suitable alternative provision for our customers whilst the work takes place. The new Centre will open in winter 2018.

We are securing suitable alternative locations and activities throughout the Central Bedfordshire area, in the first instance, ensuring as many of the loyal Dunstable Leisure Centre customers retain their healthy lifestyle. Some activities will be relocated at Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre, Houghton Regis Leisure Centre, the swimming pools at Flitwick and Saxon in Biggleswade have capacity, if required, to accommodate more casual swimmers. The Grove Theatre will be hosting some of the dance classes as well as some of the children's activities.

Current Dunstable Leisure Centre

As the centre ages, continued customer enjoyment and commercial success is the key management challenge.

Three big events were hosted in December; the Cali r is a music event of Motown, Soul, Reggae and Jazz Funk from the 60's and 70's. At this year's event the 'stylistics' performed with 900 people enjoying the event. At the end of December a church group held a prayer meeting at the Leisure Centre. People attended nationally from Birmingham, Manchester over 3 days; approx.150 attended each day. New

Year's Eve saw an African music event with over 300 attending. A small wrestling event with 100 attendees was held in the sports hall.

There are five 50+ sessions a week including swimming, badminton, gym, bowls and yoga with over a 100 attendees each week. 50+ also arranged a party for attendees on the Thursday before Christmas with over 30 attending.

A popular Aquatic Youth session runs in the pool; a fun swim session with music and some swim instruction. Two swim teachers take this on a Friday night for 8 to 11yrs and 11yrs to 16yrs. A disabled group teaching session with 8 attendees now runs every Thursday night and was added especially for the disabled children who attended Aquatic Youth.

During term time evenings various children's courses run offering dance, ballet, gymnastics, trampoline, free form gym and cheerleading. All the classes are very popular and there are 156 children attending classes every week. There is a gym tots session in the day time.

Dunstable run a very popular GP referral scheme with over 50 sessions being delivered in the month of December. We also have a COPD class with 21 people attending over the month of December. We host the Lifestyle hub which people attend via GP referral. They may have minor health issues either overweight or some mobility problem, they are seen by the coordinator and are offered sessions with the gym staff or referred to slimming clubs, this is funded by the NHS but the centre give the room free of charge.

Health walks continue every Thursday morning. There are two walks on offer. Newcomers and not so fit can opt for a shorter walk around priory gardens. The longer includes part of Dog Kennel Walk. Afterwards the groups return to the Leisure Centre a coffee and socialising. 28 people attended in December and a Christmas lunch was arranged for the group with 17 attending.

On Saturday 14th January, to celebrate the 100th series of Body Pump, 17,500 health clubs all over the WORLD including Dunstable took part in a one day event. We made it a FREE day to our community and current members, anyone over 16 were welcome to take part. The offer included bring a friend for FREE pass for our three Les Mills classes and free refreshments on the day. The day was a great opportunity for our members, local community and even staff members to experience Les Mills classes and maybe classes in general that they have never done before. It provided a good opportunity to share knowledge and create a friendly positive environment where fitness can be fun.

The Leisure Centre took part in the Best Bar None national scheme aimed at making town centres better, safer and more vibrant places to go out.

Licensed premises in Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Leighton-Linslade signed up for the 2016 scheme. The Leisure Centre was the overall winner for Dunstable / Houghton Regis and was runners up in the People's Vote.

3.2 GROVE THEATRE

The 2016 Pantomime was a huge success. 21,292 people passed through our doors to see 52 performances of Aladdin were transported to Peking on a journey of love and adventure. The genie became a firm favourite with many children and we were able to arrange numerous meet and greets with her and our patrons. The cast embraced Dunstable and the community whilst they were with us, taking part in free workshops for local schools, prize giveaways; charity appearance's and even a light switch on. During the run, we promoted charity bucket collections at the end of each performance, we raised £5,300 for Medical Detection Dogs (our main charity for the run) £250 for Wheelpower (1Life's chosen charity) and £250 for MacMillan. (A local coffee shop was broken into and their charity tin was stolen which was full – we gave our collection to them at their MacMillan Coffee morning to help replace what had been lost.)

In January, we have been able to regroup and put some tender loving care into the theatre after such a busy period. We have had a wonderful Oscar season and seen sold out performances of 'The Girl on the Train', 'Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them' and 'Sully'. We have had a sell-out performance from Ireland's Number One Singer Nathan Carter, a first time in securing this act to come to the Grove.

Our Education Department continues to go from strength to strength, our Grove Academy on a Saturday morning was so successful it has launched an afternoon session also which is getting great attendance. This is an intensive three-hour session concentrating on acting, singing and dance, which works to help young people develop social skills, increase their lung capacity which benefit improves moods and cardio vascular activity which promotes positive body image. Our Mini-Academy programme is aimed at 4-7 year olds and last one and a half hours to prepare them for the progression to the full-blown academy. Our Youth Theatre programme has seen a successful relaunch and now offers the Arts Awards programme where children can earn UCAS points to put towards University applications and support their extra-curricular interests on their CV. We have developed Roald Dahl workshops which we offer out to schools and have been incredibly popular.

Looking to the year ahead we are extremely excited to be planning our 10th Anniversary celebration for April 21st 2017. There will be free education sessions in the morning, High Tea in the afternoon, backstage tours and a party celebration in the evening with a few familiar faces popping up.

The Grove team will also be competing in a Sprint Relay Triathlon, to raise money for Wheelpower and the teams will be competing for a shiny trophy. We are in the process of getting in touch with the Dunstable Rotary as they have strong links with Wheelpower and we will be working hard to fundraise and speak with representatives to come down to the event and adjudicate for us.

We have been lucky enough to be involved with a collaborative project with Central Bedfordshire Council and ROHB – Culture Plus, where 40 vulnerable learners are involved in an Arts Awards programme and alternative routes to express themselves. The Grove are very excited about the exit strategy for the programme, we are looking to be able to assist with setting up to ensure that creative outlets are still available to the young people involved in this project. We are currently investigating what it would involve to host a Fun Palace event in the coming years.

Auditions have taken place for our Grove Production Project this summer, we had a record breaking 97 applicants attend and the call backs have seen a wonderful display of local talent and confirmed the possibility of being able to the double cast this year so that we can offer more chances of a starring role. Join us in August when we follow these talented youngsters down the rabbit hole into 'Alice in Wonderland.'

Our applications for GD1, our in-house dance performance, are now closing and auditions to take part in it will be held in the first week in March. Local schools, groups and troupes will audition and if selected perform in one of the two shows which are hosted at the Grove. This is an amazing event and well supported, we now sell out two nights with this amazing show. Dunstable and the surrounding areas are very lucky to have such amazing talent locally.

- On 21 February, CBC and The Grove Theatre will host 'Inside Out of Mind' - a film based on research in dementia care wards, undertaken by the University of Nottingham.
- This screening is based on the play Inside Out of Mind, written by Tanya Myers and based on research in hospital wards for people with dementia led by Justine Schneider.
- This thought provoking and inspirational film aims to:
 - provide an educational opportunity to enable professionals to reflect on current work practices

- raise awareness of the challenges; identify the good aspects and areas for improvement for care and aims to stimulate interest and participation in dementia friendly communities' initiative
- Following the workshop, we will ask all stakeholders to make a pledge to take forward. Information will also be available on how each organisation can make a commitment to become a member of the Dementia Action Alliance.

Our Afternoon Teas have become increasingly popular over the last 18 months, this year we are trying a few different takes on this classic idea. There will be a standard event for anyone just wishing to enjoy a relaxing afternoon before going to see a matinee performance and we are also hosting children's themed Teas, making all our events accessible to all ages.

The Grove has seen its database increase from 75,000 to 88,000 in this last year and the positive feedback we get from our loyal customers is incredible. Our customer forums are filled with people who regularly attend and who are so pleased to have such an amazing facility in the local area.

3.3 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY UPDATE

Walking 4 Health: Co-ordinated by BRCC, the free led walks programme continues to operate in the Dunstable area with a number of regular sessions. Current programme includes: -

Tuesday

10.30am at Dunstable Leisure Centre, Contact: Lucy, Jo and Devan, 01582 608107
2pm at Travel Choices Hub, Contact: Alister Barclay, 07917 084663

Wednesday

10.30am* at Dunstable Downs Gateway Centre, Contact: Mike Elliot, 07594 577129
(1st and 3rd weeks each month)

Saturday (once per month)

10am at Creasey Park Football Centre, Contact: Alister Barclay, 07917 084663

Walking Football: Walking football has become increasingly popular and is designed to help people keep an active lifestyle, as well as to support getting people back into football who have stopped due to age or injury. Open to all - our regular weekly session in Dunstable takes place each Monday 2-3pm at Beds FA, Skimpot Road, Dunstable.
Price: £1.50 a session.

Priory View 50+ physical activity class: A regular weekly physical activity class now takes place at Priory View every Thursday 2-3pm. Open to the public, the drop in sessions include seated exercise, new age kurling (Kurling is a form of the original curling game, but adapted so that it can be played indoors on any smooth, flat surface, such as a sports hall, rather than on ice) and boccia activities. No need to book, just come along. Sessions cost £2.

3.4 CULTURE PLUS

A project partnering Royal Opera House Bridge to develop a culture and arts project targeting vulnerable learners aged 11 to 18 in Houghton Regis and Dunstable. This two year project will provide a programme of activity for young people referred by social services, schools and partner agencies to provide them with the basic skills and confidence to engage with the arts and cultural provision and gain Arts Award accreditation; boosting self-esteem and providing pathways into other programmes and opportunities. The project will also be used to influence future cultural provision across Central Bedfordshire.

Culture Plus commenced delivery of the pilot stage of the project in October 2016; trialling different artistic and cultural provision with referred young people from Dunstable and Houghton Regis. Pilot workshops are planned to take place in both school and community settings until March. Results of this pilot phase will be used to determine the final format and frequency of the scheme which will commence from April 2017. 30 young people have so far been referred to the programme and many of those will shortly start working towards the Arts Award Bronze certificate.

For more information about the project including criteria for referral, how to refer young people and the dates and locations of workshops please refer to the web page for the Culture Plus project on the [council website](#)

3.5 COUNTRYSIDE SITES

Totternhoe Steering Group – CBC and the National Trust are working on submitting a bid for funding aimed at engaging with surrounding communities to encourage local residents to walk the Totternhoe Green lanes as part of an active lifestyle.

Dunstable Downs - Chilterns Gateway Centre

Conservation Works - The winter has seen scrub clearance taking place on Dunstable and Whipsnade Downs, a total of around 2ha has been cut by contractors, staff and volunteers.

Overflow Car Park - The overflow car park became unusable three weeks before half-term, as an emergency measure the Trust purchased geo-textile (Terram) and 20mm gravel which was laid by the countryside team and volunteers before the half-term holiday.

Staffing - Two new Rangers have been recruited, Anthony and Holly. Staff and volunteers litter pick daily at Dunstable Downs car parks. The Trust is recruiting seasonal staff to start in time for Easter through to October to support their high season.

Events – The year started with the regular ‘50 things’ event that takes children on an educational experience with one of the rangers. At these events, the children participate in an activity to engage in nature and their surroundings. This was followed by the new regular home school craft sessions at the centre where they made kites. Both Stargazing events were a sell out and lots of positive feedback as to the Astronomers and things learnt by all ages. The Planetarium ran over the first weekend in half term and again sold out teaching nearly 900 people all about the stars.

Upcoming Events – Programme

5th March	50 Things	Find some frogspawn/Discover what's in a pond/Run around in the rain/make a mud pie
26th March Mothers day	Centre Craft	Centre Craft
2nd April	50 Things	Tree climbing/hill roll/walk barefoot/Wild art
5th April	Nature Walk	
6th April	Nature Talk	
4th -19th April	Butterfly Trail	Trail on all weather path

Ex 14th – 17th		
7th April	Centre Craft	Easter Craft
10th April	Centre Craft	Easter Craft
14th -17 April	Easter Trail	

3.6 DUNSTABLE LIBRARY

Bear's Reading Adventure:

On the 7th December we launched 'Bear's Reading Adventure', this is a Book Trust initiative where pre-schoolers are given a free sticker book called 'Bear's Reading Adventure', this story book has spaces for little ones to collect 10 stickers from the library. The concept behind the initiative is to encourage family reading and children to visit the library. Each time a child visits they can collect a sticker from a staff member to add to their book. The scheme was also launched at our Library Access Point at the Children's Centre in Downside.

Christmas activities:

Our Christmas activities saw a whole host of events including a special visit from Santa, where the children had the opportunity to read stories with Santa and then receive a special gift. We held a Christmas 'sing-a-long', everyone was invited to come along for a Christmas singsong and enjoy a mince pie too. We had seasonal craft events in the library including: Christmas cracker making, making a snowman, design an Elf and much more.

Chinese New Year

Was celebrated on Saturday 28th January with a special themed day.

Harry Potter Night 2017

2nd February saw us host a Harry Potter Night in the library, this is a national celebration and we hosted our own evening of spells, potion making, cup decorating, owl making and much more. It was a fun magical event.

February half term

A number of events took place including Valentine Card making, asking the children to help us create a display, a fish bowl craft and a superhero craft.

Regular groups:

Our regular groups continue to meet including our Work Club and Coffee Morning Club, and regular information sessions continue including Gateway Housing Support and Smokefree. We have also held a gadget workshop to help customers with new technology such as iPads. Knit and Knatter is ever popular as is our volunteer who helps customers research their family history. Our regular Rhyme times and Crafty Times are continuing, as is our Lego, Mega Blocks and Chatterbooks clubs.

3.7 Looking forward

World Book Day

On Wednesday 1st March we will be hosting a reading of Goldilocks and the Three Bears in conjunction with The Grove Theatre. The event is to celebrate World Book Day (which is 2nd March) and also to promote the library and Theatre. The Grove are kindly sponsoring us with Goody Bags for the children that come along, there will also be craft making and a teddy bear's picnic.

On World Book Day itself we are running a 'hunt the golden ticket' event and children that find the tickets will win a prize.

Dunstable Town Football Club collaboration

As part of its Community School Education and Engagement Project, Dunstable Town will be actively collaborating with local schools and the Library. As part of this initiative, each season the club will select a school to become the DTFC Community School. For 2016-17, this is Totternhoe Lower School. This partnership will take the form of the club providing football training sessions and educational activities for the students. We will be supporting the educational activities and will be running sessions for Totternhoe and other schools during the academic year. Our sessions began this month and we are helping the children to research the history of the football club using the resources that we have available in the library including the Dunstable Gazette that we hold going back to 1883.

We are also hoping to have a community 'call out' to anyone that has memories or memorabilia of the football club that could be brought together to build a permanent exhibition in the library. This project will be ongoing.

4. HIGHWAYS

4.1 Resurfacing Schemes

Parish	Scheme Name	Scheme Length	Start	Finish
Dunstable	Southwood Road	567	Mon 13/02/17	Tue 21/02/17
Dunstable	Worthington Road	409	Wed 22/02/17	Fri 24/02/17

Parish	Scheme Name	Scheme Length	Start	Finish
Dunstable	Spoondell	635	Mon 13/02/17	Fri 31/03/17

4.2 Weight Limits projects

The signage associated with the opening of the A5-M1 Link and Woodside Connection involves changes to more than 500 sign faces across roads within the south of Central Bedfordshire. This programme will take at least two months to complete. The start of works will coincide with the opening of the A5-M1 Link and Woodside Connection as this avoids the costly expense of revisiting sites.

4.3 Woodside Link

The plan is to open the Woodside Link to traffic at the same time as the A5-M1 link. As yet, no opening date has been set by Highways England though the working assumption is that this will happen before the end of March 2017.

4.4 Graham Road

Contractors have been instructed to surface substantial sections of verge along Graham Road. Works are programmed for March 2017. In advance of this CBC, has opened a consultation with local residents to assess the support for making Graham Road one-way. This change would allow the authority to maximise the use of kerb space for on-street parking. A similar consultation on a possible one-way scheme and associated parking improvements is also being considered for Spinney Crescent.

4.5 Guided Busway

The authority is planning to install solar studs along sections of the busway cycleway surfaced in tarmac. Works should take place this Spring. The latest section of the access track to be resurfaced is the one between Duck Bridge and the Station Road access. Should funding permit, this will be followed during March-April 2017 by the section between Station Road and the new Jeans Way bus stop. It is also hoped that the long-promised signage will also be installed along the length of the busway over this period.

4.5 Houghton Road

The recently widened section of footway between Houghton Parade and the entrance to All Saints School will be resurfaced during February-March 2017, resolving issues with ponding and icing.

4.6 High Street Design

A re-design of the public highway within the centre of Dunstable has been commissioned from Ringway Jacobs, taking into account the results of the recent public consultation. As there was support for removing the pedestrian guard railing, it is proposed to arrange this towards the end of the school summer holiday period. This will help minimise the disruption to traffic, albeit cutting into the period of Dunstable's floral displays.

4.7 Prince Regent Area

We have proposals to amend the existing parking restrictions in the Prince Regent area. Objections have been received and these were reported to the Traffic Management Meeting on 28 February 2017 for a decision. If we decide to go ahead the works will take place in late spring/early summer.

4.8 West Parade

We also have proposals to introduce a residents permit parking scheme in West Parade and this is also subject to a decision at the Traffic Management meeting.

4.9 Stuart Street

We are about to start the consultation on a scheme to introduce residents' permit parking in Stuart Street.

5. WASTE

Looking back

We are continuing to work very hard over the last three months clearing up after unauthorised encampments. We have cleared a further 10 encampments from the centre of Dunstable and surrounding areas. The site where a homeless person had been camping in Court Drive has also been cleared.

Key highlights:

We now have some extra street cleansing resource for the centre of Dunstable for a few days each month. They focus on the areas of deeper cleaning which cannot be carried out by the regular operatives.

We are still dealing with very high numbers of suspected abandoned vehicles around Dunstable which we continue to investigate/monitor as necessary.

Key issues:

Dog warden patrols for dog fouling have been carried out in: Bennetts Recreation Ground, Frenches Avenue Recreation Ground, Lancot Drive, Langdale Road, Leighton Court, Spoodell, Staveley Road, West Street and Cemetery and Wingate Road.

Looking forward

The Waste Services Officer for the area continues to monitor recycling collections and educating residents of local flats to increase recycling rates and decrease the proportion of non-recyclable items included.

Garden waste collections resume after the winter suspension the week commencing Monday 27th February or the following week depending on where residents live in Dunstable.

It is our intention to commence urban Grass Cutting as of the week beginning Monday 13th March, weather permitting.

This cutting season Waste Services will be overseeing the highways rural grass cutting contract and queries relating to rural areas can be directed to the team.

Following the success of the 'Clean for the Queen' campaign as part of the Queen's 90th birthday celebrations in March 2016, the Council wants to help mobilise communities across the area once again to take part in 'The Great British Spring Clean' - a nationwide litter pick over 3-5 March 2017.

Hundreds of volunteers helped out at 28 local Clean for the Queen events in Central Bedfordshire, and over 2260kg of rubbish was collected.

This year, all of the UK's litter charities together with local authorities, companies, land managers and other associations have again come together in support of The Great British Spring Clean, which seeks to inspire people to take action and enjoy a few hours together litter-picking to make the places where we live more beautiful.

More information about the GBSC campaign can be found on the national website: www.greatbritishspringclean.org.uk or by emailing: info@greatbritishspringclean.org.uk. The website is packed with lots of useful information, and you can also download posters and logos to help with your local promotion.

For all other queries, please contact the Partnerships and Community Engagement Team at: Partnerships.CommunityEngagementTeam@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

6. SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND HOUSING

6.1 Review of the Day Offer for Older People and Adults with Disabilities

Central Bedfordshire Council would like to improve the day offer for older people and adults with disabilities. The overall aim is to secure better outcomes for our current and future customers whilst delivering better use of Council resources. Since June 2016, the project team have been busy working with customers, family carers, colleagues and external stakeholders to gain feedback and ideas to build up a picture of what good looks like. We have used that feedback to develop proposed overarching key principles and standards which will be used as a foundation for the future day offer across Central Bedfordshire including Dunstable.

The Consultation closed on 23 January 2017. The council are currently reviewing all of the feedback and this paper will form an Appendix to the Executive Report in April. Following final approval the results of the consultation will be made available on the council web page www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations. The project will then move forward to the next phase of implementing the improved day offer across our current services and those the Council commission.

6.2 Adult Social Care Survey

The national Adult Social Care survey has been hitting the door steps of many of our customers through February. A sample of customers across Central Bedfordshire who receive care and support services funded in some way by the Council have been sent the surveys, which will help us to understand the impact our services have on different parts of the person's life. The results will also allow us to measure how satisfied local residents are with services, and the output will inform any changes or improvements to services in the future.

The results will also be shared with the Department of Health to help them to understand the quality of social care services nationally.

Further information about the purpose and use of the survey will be available on the web site soon. We would be glad if you could help by raising awareness of the survey and the value that the data will provide.

If you have any questions about the survey please contact the Partnership Team Partnershipteam@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk, or call Cheryl Stimson on 0300 300 5176.

7. SCHOOLS

7.1 School Organisation

We are making both middle school sites, Brewers Hill and Streetfield, secure and both will have Guardians in place. We continue to monitor and adjust the forecast for school places required in the towns as a result of the development north of Houghton Regis.

7.2 School Admissions

Parents of children transferring to secondary school in September 2017 will be notified of which school their child is offered a place at on 1 March 2017 (national secondary offer day). Parents of children starting school (Reception Year) or transferring to middle school for September 2017 will be notified of which school they will be attending on the national primary offer day (18 April 2017). Allocation information will be published on these days on the School Admissions webpages of Central Bedfordshire Council's website dealing the level of subscription at Central Bedfordshire schools and academies.

8. YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICES

8.1 Annual Activity Survey

The Youth Support Service has just conducted the Annual Activity Survey to establish the destinations of young people who completed year 11 and year 12 in the summer of 2016. This is a Department for Education requirement. Local Authorities have from September to the end of January to identify young people's current destination. Information on the activity status is sought from institutions in the first instance through enrolment lists. Young people not covered by institutional information or where inadequate information has been obtained are contacted directly by post, telephone, email, social media, home visits by the Youth Support Service and 4YP (our commissioned provider of IAG). The Youth Support Service also works closely with other Local Authorities as 40% of young people who are educated post 16 attend institutions outside Central Bedfordshire.

8.2 Update on NEETs within the wider Central Bedfordshire area

The levels of young people reported as being 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (*NEET*) still remains relatively low within Central Bedfordshire. Out of the total Central Bedfordshire school year 12-13 cohort of 5758 young people at the end of January 2017, there were 116 (2.0%) reported to have a NEET status and 5498 (95.4%) recorded as being in 'Education, Employment or Training' (*EET*). The proportion of young people (*School years 12-13*) still 'In Learning' increased slightly and is currently at 93.3%. There is a total of 142 (2.5%) young people whose current situation is not known. The 'Annual Activity Survey' has just been completed where the destinations of all years 12s and year 13s have been confirmed.

8.3 NEET Overview for Dunstable

At the end of January 2017 there were 23 young people with a recorded NEET destination. It is normal that the number of NEETs increase at the end of the school/college term and after the Annual Activity Survey.

The overall % proportion of the Dunstable population aged school years 12-13 who are currently NEET is currently 2.8%.

Dunstable Headline Figures for January 31 st 2017		
Total YPs in area	840	(100%)
EET	804	95.8%
NEET	23	2.7%
Unknown	13	1.6%

8.4 Characteristics of the NEET Group in Dunstable:

The following information provides an overview of the characteristics of the current NEET group in relation to young people aged 16-18 (*school years 12-13*). Where relevant, the tables include the figures for two other areas enabling a comparison to be made if required.

(1) Area

The Dunstable-Central ward is the only ward in Central Bedfordshire having a zero total for the number of recorded NEET young people. Dunstable-Northfields has the highest number of NEET young people living in its area and is currently registering 11 young people with that characteristic.

The following table gives a break down of the NEETs recorded as living within each ward at the end of January 2017.

Ward	Total number of YPs in the Year 12-13 cohort	Total number of YPs recorded as NEET	% of NEET within ward
Dunstable-Central	86	0	0%
Dunstable-Icknield	179	4	2.3%
Dunstable-Manshead	136	6	4.5%
Dunstable-Northfields	234	11	4.8%
Dunstable-Watling	205	2	1%
Total	840	23	(2.7%)

(2) Gender

The gender breakdown of the Dunstable area shows there are more young females who are NEET (15 : 65%) than young males (8 : 35%).

Gender	Houghton Regis		Dunstable		Leighton Buzzard	
Male	6	40%	8	35%	12	60%
Female	9	60%	15	65%	8	40%
Total	15		23		20	

(3) Age

The age breakdown indicates there are more 17 year olds who are NEET within Dunstable as well as in the wider area of Central Bedfordshire.

Actual Age (Year 12 & 13)	Houghton Regis		Dunstable		Leighton Buzzard	
16	1	7%	5	22%	4	20%
17	12	80%	11	48%	14	50%

18	2	13%	7	30%	2	20%
Total	15		23		20	

(4) Time

There is an even spread of numbers over the different time periods but it is generally the '3-6 months' category that is showing the peak in numbers.

Length of Time NEET	Houghton Regis		Dunstable		Leighton Buzzard	
Less than 3 months	5	33%	8	35%	6	30%
3 - 6 months	8	53%	10	44%	10	50%
6+ months	2	13%	5	22%	4	20%
Total	15		23		20	

(5) NEET Status

The number of young people within the Dunstable NEET group currently available to the labour market and actively seeking EET is 14 (61% of the NEET cohort of this area) compared to the 9 (39 % of the NEET cohort of this area) who are currently not available for EET due to their personal circumstances (e.g. Illness, pregnancy, etc.).

Status	Houghton Regis		Dunstable		Leighton Buzzard	
Seeking Employment or Training	14	93%	14	61%	13	65%
Unable to work due to 'Personal Circumstances'	1	7%	9	39%	7	35%
Total	15		23		20	

(6) Unknown Destinations

13 (1.6%) young people in the area have a recorded destination of 'Unknown'. 1 young person was reported to have left the area whilst the remaining 12 could not be contacted using the information held by the service. Destinations are only made 'Cannot be Contacted' when the service has attempted at least 3 telephone calls; including 1 during the evening, letter, email, text message, Facebook search, a home visit during the day, as well as cross referencing with the Tribal, National Learner Records and Mosaic database systems.

The percentages allow comparisons to be made against each area's total population.

Unknown Destinations	Houghton Regis		Dunstable		Leighton Buzzard	
Refused Information	2	0.5%	0	0%	0	0%
Cannot be Contacted	11	2.5%	12	1.5%	15	1.8%
Unknown / Left Area	2	0.5%	1	0.2%	0	0%
Totals	15		13		15	

9. POLLUTION AND LICENSING

Unity Night Club – Premises Licence has now been granted with conditions from Police & Public Protection included. It is currently expected to open at some point in March. There was a recent

fire in the building which has been investigated by the fire service and attributed to third parties unknown.

Prestige Express – Have appealed against the decision of the Licensing Sub-Committee to refuse to grant their application for a 24/7 licence to sell alcohol. The preliminary hearing was on Tuesday 31st January and we are awaiting a date for the full appeal hearing at Luton Magistrate’s Court.

10. PUBLIC HEALTH

Specific Public Health delivered and commissioned interventions taking place in Dunstable include:

10.1 NHS Health Checks

NHS Health Checks are being delivered through 9 of the 10 Chiltern Vale GP Practices to eligible residents, aged 40-74 years. From 1st April 2016 to 31st January 2017, 2,715 Chiltern Vale residents were offered an NHS Health Check and 1,542 were completed. Following the completed Health Checks within this period, 31 people were newly diagnosed with hypertension, 47 were prescribed statins and 6 were newly diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.

10.2 Obesity And Excess Weight

Levels of obesity and excess weight are high across Dunstable compared to other wards within CBC. To support a reduction in child and adult weight levels, and raise levels of physical activity, there have been a number of services commissioned to deliver interventions.

Data

Obesity data shows that the average level of obesity in adults for Dunstable Central, Dunstable Icknield, Dunstable Manshead, Dunstable Northfields, Dunstable Watling, Caddington and Eaton Bray wards is 25.28%. (CB average – 23.7%)

Excess weight data from the National Child Measurement Programme for children age 4-5yrs old within the same wards shows the average level for excess weight is 21.5%. (CB average – 20%)

Excess weight data from the National Child Measurement Programme for children age 10-11yrs old within the same wards shows the average level for excess weight is 26.3%. (CB average – 28.7%)

10.3 Commissioned Services

- **BeeZee Bodies** – Weight Management programmes for young children (HENRY), families (BeeZee Families), men (Gutless) and pregnant women (BeeZee Bumps)
 - In Q2 there were 2 HENRY programmes which ran in Leighton Buzzard and Dunstable. Both these programme included referrals from families who live in Dunstable.
 - 1 BeeZee Families programme ran in Dunstable which included referrals from families who live in Dunstable as well as surrounding wards.
 - BeeZee Bodies also commission Weight Watchers and Slimming World via the GPs. All the GPs in Houghton Regis use this referral programme for adults who are overweight or obese.
 - 2 Gutless programmes have run in Dunstable since April 2016.
 - SWWW (*waiting for BZBs figures*)

- BeeZee Bumps Maternal Obesity programme is working with midwives to refer women who are overweight and deliver at the L&D.
- **Bike It** – 7 schools in Dunstable are engaged with the 'Bike It' programme delivered by Sustrans, to increase physical activity and raise the number of pupils who are able to cycle/scoot to and from school safely. This also includes work with school staff and families.
- **Oral Health Promotion** – As Dunstable is one of the areas within the most deprived in CB, Community Dental Services were commissioned to deliver several programmes from April 2016 – March 2018.
 - Fluoride Varnish application to 3year olds to decrease levels of tooth decay in young children. Working with Childrens Centres and Early Years settings.
 - Healthy Smiles programme for 2 – 4 year olds, - 9 nurseries and Early Years settings were offered the programme and 4 accepted.
 - Life Long Smiles programme for elderly care settings was offered to 6 settings but only 2 showed an interest but they will all be contacted again in 2017.
- **Food Award Scheme** – Funding from Public health has been secured to introduce a Food Award Scheme. Working with Environmental Health, a new officer will contact food businesses to support them to reduce the levels of fat, salt and sugar in food served. The award will initially be offered to Leisure Centre cafes and Hot Food Takeaways in areas of high levels of excess weight.

10.4 Looking forward

Obesity and Excess Weight

- A new Gutless programme began in the Dunstable area in the middle of January 2017.
- The Food Award Scheme will be offered to the café at the Dunstable Downs Visitor Centre as part of the Healthier Options Scheme.
- 'Bike It' funding has been secured until March 2018 and new schools will be offered the chance to engage in the programme.
- Oral Health programme will focus on completing the Fluoride Varnish programme in 2017/18 and delivering a Supervised Toothbrushing Programme to Early Years settings and primary schools in the most 20% deprived areas of CBC which include Dunstable.

11. PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

11.1 Town and Parish Council Conference

The latest Town and Parish Council Conference was held on Wednesday 22 February, at Priory House, Chicksands.

The theme for the event was 'Emergency Planning'. The presentation and post conference report will be available on our website shortly.

11.2 Section 106 Community Facilities grant scheme

Details of the proposed grant scheme- criteria, guidance and an application form are attached with the papers for this meeting.

11.3 Cheering Volunteering

The third annual Cheering Volunteering awards and celebration event will be held during National Volunteers Week, on Tuesday 6 June at the Grove Theatre in Dunstable.

Having grown in success and popularity over the past two years, Cheering Volunteering is organised by the council, working in partnership with volunteer centres as part of Central Bedfordshire Together, to say thank you to those who give their time to help others.

The event is sponsored by Biffa, Aragon Housing, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, ProLogis and Jeakins Weir.

This year there will again be seven awards, six of which you can submit nominations for. There will also be a Panel's Choice Award, where the selection panel will choose a winner and two highly-commended nominees from all of the nominations received.

Nominations are now open and the easiest way to do this is by using the [online nomination form](#) on the council website. Alternatively, you can visit the website to complete a Word or PDF version of the form.

'**Inspiring Volunteering**' is the Cheering Volunteering small grants scheme, set up to assist voluntary and community organisations to encourage volunteering.

A total funding pot of £5,000 has been secured to be spent on local voluntary and community sector community projects. Grant awards will be made from a minimum of £100 to a maximum of £1,000.

Applications for financial assistance can be made by any group or organisation, providing that the project they wish to spend the money on is located within Central Bedfordshire and/or will support primarily the residents of Central Bedfordshire. Deadline 7 April. For more information [click here](#).

You can book your seats at the free event on 6th June at the Grove Theatre, Dunstable. [Click here](#).

If you have any photos of local volunteers in action, please send them to Partnerships.CommunityEngagementTeam@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk so that they can be included in the photo montage during the event.

11 PARKING AND ENFORCEMENT

The following list of works have been commissioned and completed in Dunstable:

	Location	Works carried out
West Street	From Lamppost no 13 to surgery.	SYL sign. (No Waiting 7am-7pm)
Edward Street	Outside houses 25&27.	SYL sign. (No Waiting 7am-7pm)
Princess Street	From outside house no's 54 - 64.	SYL sign. (No Waiting 7am-7pm)
Winfield Street	Outside house no's 42 - 48.	L/W bay sign (Limited Waiting 2hrs No return 2hrs Except Permit Holders)
Regent Street	Outside Becon House/Crown Mews.	SYL repainted and new sign (No Waiting 7am-7pm)
Clifton Road	From High Street North to House no 5.	Both sides of roads DYL repainted

Clifton Road	From outside house no 62 to Victoria St.	DYL repainted
Humphreys Rd Ind estate	Entire length of road	Faded SYLs and DYLs repainted
Church Street	Between First and Last pub and outside flats.	SYL sign placed on lamppost. (No Waiting 7am-7pm)

These works have now been completed and a new list has been put forward for completion and these are as follows:

Location		Works to be carried out
Duncombe Drive	Opposite flats, next to lamppost no. 3	Car size gap in DYL needs filling in.
Hadrian Avenue	Near lamppost no 2 and house no 2	DYL missing and end bar worn out at end, needs refreshing
Dorchester Close	From house no 4 to house no 29	DYL need repainting
Regent St	Hse 3/becon mews	SYL sign (and post) needed (No Waiting 7am-7pm)
Burr St	Outside School	all school markings need repainting
Burr Street	Entire length of road	all SYL's need repainting - missing or very faded. (No Waiting Mon-Fri 7am-7pm)
Princess St	From outside house 54 to house 64.	SYL sign needs replacing again *with anti-tamper fittings*. (No Waiting 7am-7pm)
Princess St	Outside house no 79	SYL sign (and post) needed (No Waiting 7am-7pm)

LW: Limited Waiting Bay

SYL: Single Yellow Line

DYL: Double Yellow Line

D/B: Disabled Bay

Over the last three months:

- 1070 PCNs have been issued in Dunstable
- 2338 visits from officers around Dunstable
- The procurement of new P&D and Pay on Foot machines was completed
- New tariff boards have been designed

Key highlights:

- Installation of new technology
- Installation of new tariff boards

Key issues:

- Sign and line issues that have been prioritised and are being resolved (order has been placed and agreed see table above).
- We are looking to recruit further CEO's which will lead to increased patrols in Dunstable. – We have recruited four new CEO's however need a further 4.

Key Priorities over the next 3 months:

- Ashton Square refit with the latest Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology to be implemented in March.

- New Pay & Display machines to replace the old one in all other remaining car parks to be implemented in w/c 20th February.
- Replace or reline the priority lines and signs across Dunstable as part of a replacement program.
- Development of an improved schools enforcement program. – *This is now in place and records kept of what key priority schools have been visited and what action has been taken.*

Key messages:

- There may be slight disruption to services when the new technology is installed at Ashton Square car park however this will be managed through forward planning. – Ongoing

Grant scheme to support Community facilities in Dunstable

Introduction

Central Bedfordshire Council has secured funding from developers, as a result of new developments in Dunstable, to improve or provide new community facilities in the town. This funding will be distributed as community grants via Dunstable's Joint Committee, which comprises councillors from Central Bedfordshire Council and Dunstable Town Council.

Applications for funding are invited from local community and voluntary organisations to:

- improve their community facility; or
- create new community facilities that will benefit local residents and encourage community cohesion.

The grant needs to be spent in the parish of Dunstable and in accordance with the South Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning document under which the contributions were secured, the details of which can be accessed via the following link:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/planning/obligations/previous.aspx>

Funding Criteria

The total funding pot is £24,895 and can be spent on the following types of projects:

- External improvements such as an extension or new roof.
- Internal refurbishment and improvements, such as a new kitchen / toilet facilities, windows etc.
- Improvements to access and security.
- Installation of a hearing loop or other similar improvements.

Routine maintenance such as painting and decorating cannot be supported.

Application and decision making process.

Applications should be submitted using the application form below and returned to the Project Officer (details below). Applications will be considered on a first come first served basis by the Joint Committee; meeting dates are set out below together with the application submission deadline:

Date of DJC meeting	Application submitted by
4 May 2017	24 April 2017
22 June	12 June 2017
21 September	11 September
23 November	13 November
25 January 2018	15 January 2018
22 March 2018	12 March 2018

Applicants will be informed of the Joint Committee's decision, in writing within a week of their meeting.

Central Bedfordshire Council Community Facilities Application Form		
Application for Release of Developers Contributions		
1.	Applicant: <i>Town/Parish Council, Group or Organisation</i>	
2.	Name of Representative:	
3.	Address:	
	Post Code/Tel No.	
4.	Name of Project	
5.	Address of Project Site:	
6.	Summary of Project: <i>Please give a brief description of the project</i>	
7.	Total Cost of Project:	£
	<i>Please provide a breakdown of the costs involved in the scheme and include copies of quotations from three relevant companies</i>	
8.	<i>How much are you requesting from the Community Facilities Fund?</i>	£
9.	Percentage of total cost	£
10.	Other Sources of Funding	£
	<i>Please give details of other sources of funding for this project. The total cost of the project must be met by the funds identified in parts 8 & 10</i>	

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Detailed Information		
11.	<p>Ownership of Site:</p> <p><i>If the site is not owned by the Applicant please give details of the arrangement by which the site is to be used/leased including length of lease</i></p>	
12.	<p>Full Description of Project:</p> <p><i>Give full details of the proposed scheme and include</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Why it is needed</i> • <i>Who will benefit</i> 	
13.	Anticipated timescale for project:	
14.	Proposed start /end date:	
15.	Project dependencies or constraints	
16.	Plan of Project:	
17.	Building Projects:	
a)	<i>For building projects, has planning permission and building regulations consent been sought?</i>	

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18.	Interim Payments: <i>Do you anticipate any interim claims will be required, if so, how much and for what reason?</i>	
19.	Bank Name & Address: Account Name: Account Number: Sort Code:	
20.	Additional Information:	

Central Bedfordshire Council S106 Community Facilities Fund
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Procedure for Release of Funds:

1. The applicant must complete the above application form and return it to the Project Officer (PO), with a copy of the quotation/s for the works detailed above.
2. The amount requested for payment must match the quotation/s received.
3. Once approved Central Bedfordshire Council will create a Purchase Order with a unique reference number and send to the applicant.
4. The applicant can then place the necessary order/s with contractor/s for the approved works to be started.
5. When works have been completed the applicant must notify the PO accordingly.
6. When the applicant receives contractor invoice/s the original invoice must be sent to the PO, who will copy and return it immediately to the applicant.
7. In addition, the applicant must send a numbered invoice addressed to Central Bedfordshire Council for the amount of the agreed S106 contribution to be released and quoting the Purchase Order number.
8. The Council will pay the applicant's invoice allowing them to pay their contractor/s
9. Once paid, the applicant must send confirmation of payment to the PO.
10. If the payment request was for a staged payment then this process will be repeated until the agreed release amount has been reached.

Please return completed application forms to the Project Officer:

Sarah Hughes
Community Engagement Manager
Central Bedfordshire Council
Priory House
Chicksands
Shefford
SG17 5TQ
Email: sarah.hughes@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
Tel: 0300 300 6166