

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

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

ON MONDAY 29 OCTOBER 2018

Present: Councillors John Kane (Town Mayor – left during item 5), Pat Staples (Chairman), Eugene Ghent (Vice Chairman), Lisa Bird, John Chatterley, Jeannette Freeman, Patricia Russell and Johnson Tamara (arrived at item 5)

In Attendance: Councillors David Ashlee (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), Becky Wisbey (Head of Community Services), Lisa Vincent (Events and Marketing Officer), Ed King (Senior Community and Young People's Services Officer)

Apologies: Councillors Nigel Warren (Deputy Town Mayor), Terry Colbourne, Claire Meakins, Mike Mullany,

Public: 2

175 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 3 September 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

176 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no specific declarations of interest.

177 GROVE CORNER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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

A free family fun arts and crafts workshop with a Halloween theme took place at Creasey Park community football Centre over half term with 63 children attending.

Dunstable Men in Sheds won first prize in the Health and Wellbeing category of the Living Countryside Awards. They received a plaque and certificate from HM Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire at an awards evening in Bedford.

Unfortunately, Queensbury School pulled out of the WW1 school project at the last minute so it could not go ahead. The money was subsequently returned to the Heritage Lottery Funders. Thanks were given to the Dunstable and District History Society and Friends of Dunstable Cemetery who had already undertaken research for the project.

Members noted their disappointment that the WW1 school project could not go ahead. Officers explained that although this particular project would not be taking place they were working with Manshead School to see about the delivery of a different project.

178 EVENTS AND MARKETING

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

Councillors had a discussion regarding the possibility of bringing back a charge for fireworks, but all agreed that to reintroduce a charge would not be well received. The discussion continued looking at the possibility of collecting for the Mayor's charities, this is something that could be looked at for future fireworks should there be volunteers from the individual charities who wish to collect the donations.

It was brought to Members' attention that the date previously agreed to hold the St George's Day event (20 April 2019) fell on Easter Bank Holiday weekend. Past events held on a bank holiday have had very poor attendance so it was recommended that the event be moved one week later to Saturday 27 April.

RESOLVED: that the 2019 St George's Day event take place on Saturday 27 April.

In line with most other town 'Switch On' events, it was recommended that future Christmas Tree Carols and Torchlight Procession event be held on the last Friday of November to enable a longer build up for the town towards Christmas.

RESOLVED: that all future Christmas Tree Carols and Torchlight Procession events be held on the last Friday of November starting from 2019.

179 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. In regards to the works to the Undercroft and the front of the building, Officers were waiting for Historic England to release their 2019 grant scheme before any further updates could be given. This means that the front of the building cannot be repaired until all funds are in place. Members asked if officers could write an article in a future edition of Talk of The Town explaining the required works at Priory House and why work has not yet started

The refurbishment of the Jacobean Room was now underway, with a verbal update from the Head of Community Services in regards to the 21 day notice that the registration service would now issue following a meeting that day regarding the wedding venue licence. New LED lighting had been fitted and orders had been placed for the decorating, flooring and new furnishings as well as a range of cutlery, crockery and tablecloths. It was anticipated that all improvements would be completed by November and would be in full use for Christmas Afternoon Teas and Christmas Pudding Nights.

The Committee wished to say a 'well done' to everyone at Priory House for their efforts, especially with service changes and during their busy summer as evidenced by their positive trading figures.

180 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.

Eight sixth form students from Weatherfield Academy visited as part of their Health and Social Care course. Both the students and members found it an enjoyable experience, so much so, that this would now become a regular visit.

The last coffee morning held at St Mary's Social Club was a great success with over 40 people attending. The event was supported by Age UK, SAFFA and Edward Costello, Community Wellbeing Champion. Four people also requested application forms for the CPCFC over 55's lunch club.

181 DUNSTABLE TOWN CENTRE SERVICES

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

The MTRF had agreed to spend £70,000 on the Ashton Square toilets. Work would start by Christmas with major works being undertaken in the men's toilets including new flooring and new urinal system. The Head of Community Services was also able to update the Committee on the Town Council's recent success in the Loo of the Year Awards with the Ashton Square Toilets gaining a Gold Award. The Committee were also updated on the operational changes that would be taking place with the toilets at the end of November.

Members noted the current vacancy rates for the Town Centre.

The Shop Front Accreditation Scheme had 31 shops/businesses take part this year, which was the highest number to date. 17 golds were awarded.

As well as Mistletoe Magic and the Christmas themed market being held on 8 December, there would also be a Snow Globe on The Square for the weekend. The free event would enable families to have their photograph taken in the globe. Market stalls would surround the area to enhance the snow globe's appeal.

Members were keen to explore the use of The Square more once the highways improvements were complete. Officers explained that some of the issue had been the lack of footfall in the area, but that the new crossing point might improve things. Officers would continue to explore the use of this area for events and activities.

182 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

South Bedfordshire Dial-a-Ride:

Cllr Hollick reported that all was well with Dial-a-Ride, despite some concerns regarding a recent tendering process.

Dunstable Town Band:

No report.