

Dunstable Town Council  
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**Paul Hodson** Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Notice of a Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Date: 6 September 2024

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **Finance and General Purposes Committee** will be held on **Monday 16 September 2024** at **Grove House in the Council Chamber** at 7 pm. To view the meeting live or afterwards use this link: [livestream](#). Members of the public and press are also welcome to attend in person. Members of the public may ask a question during the public session, either in person or online via MS Teams. Where possible, we ask that anyone who wishes to ask a question contacts the Council beforehand to enable a response to be prepared, via [democratic@dunstable.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@dunstable.gov.uk) or 01582 513000 by 4 pm on Friday 13 September.

*This meeting will be filmed by the Council and broadcast live and will be capable of repeated viewing. If you are seated in the Council Chamber it is likely that the cameras will capture your image. By your presence you are deemed to consent to be filmed, and to the use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting or training purposes.*

*If you address the committee in person or via Teams, your contribution will be recorded and broadcast, unless this is during a private session, as permitted by the Access to Information provisions.*

Please see the below QR code to access the full agenda:



## A G E N D A

1. Apologies for absence
2. Public question time
3. To approve as an accurate record the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 17 June 2024 (see page 4)
4. Declarations of interest
5. Finance Report - (see page 9)
6. Compliance and Facilities Report – (see page 17)
7. Marketing and Communications Report - (see page 19)
8. 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations Report - (see page 25)
9. Honorary Freeman and Freewoman Report - (see page 28)
10. Flag Flying - Report (see page 35)
11. To consider the Town Council becoming a corporate member of Rotary Dunstable at a cost of £180 per year
12. Neighbourhood Plan Development Working Group – to receive a verbal update from the meeting held on 12 September 2024
13. Representatives on Outside Organisations - to receive reports from representatives on the following outside organisations:
  - Citizen’s Advice Management Committee – Councillor Attwell
  - Dunstable International Town Twinning Association – Town Mayor and Councillors Hollick and Kenson Gurney
  - Hospice at Home Management Committee – Councillor Bater
  - Ashton Almshouses Charity – Councillors O’Riordan and Alderman
  - Ashton Schools Foundation – Councillors Hollick and Alderman
  - Chew’s Foundation – Councillors Brennan and Kenson Gurney
  - Poor’s Land Charity – Councillors Kenson Gurney and Jones
  - Lockington Charity and Marshe Charity – Councillors Kenson Gurney and Jones
  - Dunstable and District Scout Council Executive – Councillor Kotarski

**NB: Those Members who are not members of this Committee but are representatives of organisations reporting to it are reminded to provide a report in time for the meeting.**

14. RECOMMENDED In terms of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, the following items will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment and contractual matters and it is, therefore, RECOMMENDED that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

15. New website - Report (report to follow)

16. New Town Council Brand - Report (report to follow)

17. Date of the next meeting – Monday 18 November 2024 at 7.00 pm

To: All Members of Finance and General Purposes Committee:  
Councillors Louise O’Riordan (Town Mayor), Sally Kimondo (Deputy Town Mayor), Gregory Alderman (Chair), Nicholas Kotarski (Vice-Chair), Kenson Gurney, Liz Jones, Richard Attwell, Wendy Bater, Peter Hollick, Matthew Brennan, John Gurney, Phillip Crawley, Michelle Henderson, Johnson Tamara, and other Members of the Council for information.

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

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

**ON MONDAY 17 JUNE 2024 FROM 7 pm**

Present: Councillors Louise O’Riordan (Town Mayor), Sally Kimondo (Deputy Town Mayor), Gregory Alderman (Chair), Nicholas Kotarski (Vice-Chair), Kenson Gurney, Liz Jones, Richard Attwell, Wendy Bater, Peter Hollick, John Gurney, Phillip Crawley, and Johnson Tamara.

In Attendance: Councillor Robert Blennerhassett with Paul Hodson (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), Georgia Pearson (Democratic Services Manager), Lisa Scheder (Head of Corporate Services) James Slack (Corporate Compliance and Performance Manager) and Rachel Connor (Marketing and Communications Officer).

Apologies: Councillors Matthew Brennan and Michelle Henderson

Public: Nil

**131/24 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 18 March 2024 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

**132/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no specific declarations of interest.

**133/24 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Members received the report provided.

**134/24 MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Councillor Crawley entered the chamber at 7:06 pm.

The Communications and Marketing Officer summarised the report provided to members.

Councillor O’Riordan mentioned that Town, the Talk of the Town had not been issued to certain newer estates and asked officers to double check that this would be resolved in the future.

ACTION: Marketing and Communications Officer

Councillor Jones asked if it would be possible for the Councillor Open Public Meetings (Surgeries) to be advertised earlier in advance to encourage attendance.

### **135/24 FINANCE**

The Head of Corporate Services summarised the reports to members.

The Head of Corporate Services updated Members that following a budgetary forecast carried out in light of the ongoing works at Priory House, it was now estimated that the services would achieve an underspend of approximately £100,000 in the current year, mainly due to the reduction in staffing during works. Although it is too early in this financial year to be certain, it was noted that this underspend may enable the Council to use towards maintaining the required minimum general reserve which had been depleted.

It was proposed, seconded and

#### **RESOLVED:**

- i. To note the revenue budgetary control report for the financial year ending 31 March 2024
- ii. To note detail of the Council's year end balances and earmarked reserves as of 31 March 2024
- iii. To note and accept the final Internal Audit Report for financial year 2023/24
- iv. To recommend to Full Council to appoint the Internal Auditor for 2024/25
- v. To approve the updated Treasury Management Policy
- vi. To note the current investments

### **136/24 COMPLIANCE AND FACILITIES**

The Corporate Compliance and Performance Manager summarised the report to Members.

### **137/24 GROVE HOUSE BUILDING WORKS**

The Corporate Compliance and Performance Manager summarised the report and pointed out the key parts.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED:** The defer this agenda item into the confidential section of tonight's meeting in light of commercial considerations.

## 138/24 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

- Citizen's Advice Management Committee – Councillor Richard Attwell

No update

- Dunstable International Town Twinning Association – Councillors Louise O’Riordan, Peter Hollick and Kenson Gurney

Councillor Hollick advised members from their last meeting that it would be good to have more Councillors involved and more members to be a part of the association.

- Hospice at Home Management Committee - Councillor Wendy Bater

Councillor Bater advised members she has not yet attended a meeting however the AGM is on 2 July 2024. Councillor Jones advised that the trustees are all getting together next week to have a discussion regarding finding more funding to continue to deliver the services.

- Ashton Almshouses Charity – Councillors Louise O’Riordan and Gregory Alderman

Councillor O’Riordan advised there was a meeting in May which approved the quote for some new furniture for residents to enjoy the garden more. They are currently at full capacity.

- Ashton Schools Foundation - Councillors Peter Hollick and Gregory Alderman

Works are continuing to be done by both Manshead and Ashton St Peters Primary schools..

- Chew’s Foundation - Councillors Matthew Brennan and Kenson Gurney

No update

- Poor’s Land Charity - Councillors Kenson Gurney and Liz Jones

Councillor Jones advised that the Maundy Thursday distribution had been carried out successfully.

- Lockington Charity and Marshe Charity - Councillors Kenson Gurney and Liz Jones

Councillor Kenson Gurney updated members that one of the properties is empty and requires various works.

- Dunstable and District Scout Council Executive - Councillor Nicholas Kotarski

Councillor Kotarski updated Members that the AGM is this Wednesday where a new leader will be elected.

### **139/24 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED:** in terms of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, the following items will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment and contractual matters and therefore, pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

### **140/24 GROVE HOUSE BUILDING WORKS REPORT**

Members further discussed the report and requested detailed information be circulated before a decision was made.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED:** To defer this matter to Full Council following the circulation of additional information.

### **141/24 REFERRAL REPORTS – SPENDING RESERVE FROM GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive summarised the reports to members.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED:** To release £214,337 from the following reserves:

(a) Vehicle and Equipment Reserve	£ 92,337
(b) Developers Contributions Reserve	£ 11,723
(c) Open Spaces Improvement Plan Reserve	£ 10,277
(d) Grounds Depot Extension Reserve	£100,000
Total	£214,337.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED:** To release the monies proposed from the Open Spaces Improvement Plan Reserve as per the report circulated.

### **142/24 STAFFING REPORT FOR DECISION**

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive summarised the report.

It was proposed, seconded and

**RESOLVED:** to agree the report recommendation.

**The meeting closed at 8:28 pm.**



**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

**FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2024**

**FINANCE REPORT**

<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To: 1) provide a revenue budgetary control report for the financial year until 31 July 2024 1.2) provide detail of the Council's earmarked reserves as of 31 July 2024 1.3) provide detail on current investments 1.4) provide detail on current Direct Debits
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**1. ACTIONS RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1. For Members to note the revenue budget position for the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 July 2024.
- 1.2. For Members to note the current balance of the Council's earmarked reserves as at 31 July 2024.
- 1.3. For Members to note the current investments.
- 1.4. For Members to confirm the current Direct Debits as at August 2024.

**2. INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1. This budgetary control report summarises the net expenditure against the budget for each service area as at 31 July 2024. This forms the basis for the projected outturn at the end of this financial year taking account off current known variances.
- 2.2. Members should note that this early in the year we are still faced with substantial unknowns, including the national pay agreement being finalised, together with the planned pay review and impact on service due to the ongoing works at Priory House. The Splash Park 'out of season' business is also still unknown.

**3. REVENUE BUDGETARY REPORT**

- 3.1. The summary at Appendix 1 shows the net expenditure at 31 July 2024 per service area and an indication of the anticipated outturn against budget, taking account of seasonal variances and known commitments for the remainder of the financial year.
- 3.2. The summary shows an overall net revenue forecast at the end of the financial year of **£120,629**.

- 3.3. At the previous meeting of this Committee, the Head of Corporate Services reported that the balance at year end 2023/24 left a shortfall on the recommended base level in the general reserve of £102,375. However, a forecast carried out in light of the ongoing works at Priory House in June, predicted an underspend of approximately £100,000 in the current financial year which could be used towards maintaining the required minimum general reserve.
- 3.4. Within **Corporate Services** the overall variance is forecast to be £22,758 underspent. Significant variances to the budget are as follows:
- *Central Services* is forecast to be overspent by £16,088. This is largely due to £10,359 budgeted income for service charges from the Creasey Park budget, had we have continued management of the facility. Overspends are also forecasted on increased payroll costs and IT support predicted due to the crossover of companies as a result of the IT Tender in June 2024.
  - *Grove House* to underachieve by £5,163, mainly due to the predicted loss of rent.
  - *Corporate Management* income is due to overachieve by £42,393 due to an increase in investment and bank interest received to date and forecast to achieve throughout the year.
  - *Democratic Management* is due to be underspent by 1,616 due to a forecast underspend on Civic Hospitality.
- 3.5. Within **Grounds and Environmental Services** the overall variance is forecast to be £15,153 overspent. Significant variances in the budget are as follows:
- *Cemetery* is forecast to overachieve by £15,863 due to income received to date together with forecasted income throughout the year.
  - *Recreation Grounds* is forecast to be overspend by £17,085, mainly due to the depot costs not budgeted and increases security costs, offset by additional income secured for additional external maintenance contracts and football pitch bookings.
  - *Bennett Memorial Recreation Ground Splash Park* is due to overspend by £14,171, this is mainly due to salary of the Splash Manager not budgeted, offset by forecasted increase in use of the facility out of season.
- 3.6. **Community Services** the overall variance is forecast to be £113,024 underspent. Significant variances to budget are as follows:
- *Older People's Service* is forecasting an underspend of £3,975; this is due to an underspend on hall hire, catering and transport costs, offset by reduced members fees in the first quarter of the year.
  - *Priory House* is due to underspend by £109,396; this is mainly due to reduced staffing during the building works.

#### 4. RESERVES

- 4.1. The schedule enclosed at Appendix 2 provides detail of actual contributions to, and expenditure from, reserve funds as at 31 July 2024.
- 4.2. The schedule also details commitments from the reserves to date, approved by previous committees, for planned works within this financial year.

#### 5. INVESTMENTS UPDATE

- 5.1. Dunstable Town Council's current bank and investment account balances as 31 July 2024 were as follows:

<b>Account</b>	<b>Balance</b>	<b>Interest earned in month</b>
Current Account	£10,000.00	-
Business Reserve Account	£351,915.09	£339.57
CCLA Deposit Account 1	£98,601.29	£419.68
CCLA Deposit Account 2	£2,297,625.03	£12,559.49

## **6. FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE**

- 6.1. Councillors should, as a minimum, view and audit the Councils accounts on a quarterly basis.
- 6.2. The last quarterly financial Councillor audit took place virtually and was completed on 28 August 2024 with the Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee, Councillor Alderman, Vice Chair Councillor Kotarski and Councillor Jones taking part. The Councillors carried out a 'mini audit' which included requests of financial information on various purchase ledger invoices paid, together with verifying all the bank statements and bank reconciliations of the accounts against the Accounts Software relating to April, May and June 2024.
- 6.3. No issues or discrepancies, material or otherwise, were raised.
- 6.4. Further quarterly meetings will be arranged, and all Councillors on Finance and General Purposed Committee have been invited to attend any future Financial Governance Audit meetings they can make.

## **7. DIRECT DEBITS**

- 7.1. Members are asked to note and confirm the direct debits currently set up as 'active' through our bankers as at August 2024, listed at Appendix 3 of this report.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. These are inherent within the content of this report.

## **9. APPENDICES**

- 9.1. Appendix 1 – Summary of Net Revenue Budgets at 31 July 2024  
 Appendix 2 – Summary of Earmarked Reserves at 31 July 2024  
 Appendix 3 – Direct Debits – August 2024

## **10. AUTHOR**

Lisa Scheder – Head of Corporate Services and Responsible Financial Officer  
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## Dunstable Town Council

## Summary of Actuals vs Budget

31 July 2024

## Corporate Services

	Service Area	Budget 2024/25	Actuals to Date	Year-end Forecast	Year-end Variance
100	Staff Costs	-505,964	-164,151	-505,964	0
101	Central Services	-101,561	-63,068	-117,649	-16,088
102	Grove House	-34,616	-22,015	-39,779	-5,163
106	Corporate Management	-73,085	23,378	-30,692	42,393
107	Democratic Management	-24,600	-6,386	-22,984	1,616
110	Capital & Projects (inc loan charges)	-104,582	-82,416	-104,582	0
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>-844,408</b>	<b>-314,658</b>	<b>-821,650</b>	<b>22,758</b>

## Grounds and Environmental Services

	Service Area	Budget 2024/25	Actuals to Date	Year-end Forecast	Year-end Variance
200	Staff Costs	-906,293	-273,711	-906,293	0
201	Allotments	2,425	-2,183	3,000	575
202	Cemetery	54,280	58,750	70,143	15,863
205	Recreation Grounds	-74,565	-20,780	-91,650	-17,085
403	Town Centre and Gardens	-32,195	6,767	-32,530	-335
206	Town Ranger Service	-12,760	-3,732	-12,760	0
210	Capital & Projects	-139,950	-118,638	-139,950	0
	Creasey Park Community Football Centre	0	-284	0	0
115	Bennett Memorial RG Splash Park	-37,919	-21,169	-52,090	-14,171
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>-1,146,977</b>	<b>-374,980</b>	<b>-1,162,130</b>	<b>-15,153</b>

## Community Services

	Service Area	Budget 2024/25	Actuals to Date	Year-end Forecast	Year-end Variance
300	Staff Costs	-310,818	-18,581	-310,600	218
209	Older People's Support Service	-27,840	2,814	-23,865	3,975
303	Community Engagement (inc Grants)	-31,207	-12,736	-31,207	0
304	Grove Corner	-20,340	-9,339	-20,677	-337
401	Events Programme	-162,931	-61,709	-163,118	-187
402	Priority House	-329,774	-64,114	-220,378	109,396
405	Town Centre Services (inc Special Markets)	-131,906	-28,293	-131,386	520
407	Public Conveniences (Ashton Square)	-6,775	-2,099	-6,775	0
306	High Street Heritage Action Zone	-13,688	-23,641	-14,249	-561
310	Capital & Projects	-99,436	-65,135	-99,436	0
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>-1,134,715</b>	<b>-282,833</b>	<b>-1,021,691</b>	<b>113,024</b>

<b>DTC Grand Total</b>	<b>-3,126,100</b>	<b>-972,471</b>	<b>-3,005,471</b>	<b>120,629</b>
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192,631

Precept -2,933,469

Dunstable Town Council - Reserves Summary 2024/25

	Description	Officer	Balance as at 01.04.24	Contributions Revenue/ Other	Expenditure in year	Bal as at 31.07.24	Commitments/Programme of works, etc	Committed Amount	Bal after committed
310	General Reserve	TC&CE / HofCorp	£757,573			£757,573	Council 05.02.24- Minute XX/24- £192,631 contribution to 24/25 budget & contributions to reserves totalling £145,112	-£337,743	£419,830
311	Corporate Plan Development Reserve	TC&CE / HofCorp	£5,000			£5,000	FGP 12.06.23- Minute 141/23- £5,000 for development of 4 year corporate plan	-£5,000	£0
312	Vehicles Reserve	HofGES	£80,017	£15,000	£-36,850	£58,167	FGP 17.06.24- Minute 141/24- bal of £55,487 for 2 replacement vehicles & 1 additional ride on mower (of £92,337 approved)	-£55,487	£2,680
313	CPCFC Reserve	TC&CE	£33,965			£33,965	Bal of £3,798 - 4 years sponsorship 22/23-25/26 (from £7,596) Council 15.04.24- Minute 99/24= release of £30,167 for finalising CP contract end with CBC	-£33,965	£0
314	Christmas Lights Reserve	HofCS	£2,094	£8,434	£0	£10,529	5 year replacement lighting plan 21/22-25/26 ; Council 15.04.24- Minute 99/24= release of £8,731 for replacement and repairs of lights	-£9,095	£1,434
315	Street Dressing Reserve	HofCS	£5,427	£5,000	£-2,960	£7,467	FGP 12.06.23- Minute 141/23= bal of £2,467 for streeting dressing (of £18,000 approved)	-£2,467	£5,000
316	Downside Building Maintenance Res	HofCS	£53,002	£3,000	£-2,735	£53,267	FGP 12.06.23- Minute 141/23= £36,679 & £8,792.55- for 2nd phase roof repairs	-£45,472	£7,795
317	Grove Corner Building Maint Reserve	HofCS	£34,565	£4,000		£38,565	Chairmans Approval 17.04.23= bal of £2,000 roof survey & development plans (of £5,000 approved)	-£2,000	£36,565
318	Building Security Systems	HofCorp	£5,357			£5,357	Council 15.04.24- Minute 99/24= £5,357 for improved security for Grove House	-£5,357	£0
319	Cemetery Memorial Safety	HofGES	£1,500	£1,575		£3,075	Council 15.04.24- Minute 99/24= £3,075 for periodic inspections and subsequent works	-£3,075	£0
320	Priory House Tearooms Equipment	HofCS	£7,434	£3,000	£-1,434	£9,000	Council 15.04.24- Minute 99/24= £9,000 for replacement of kitchen/catering equipment	-£9,000	£0
321	IT/Equipment Reserve	TC&CE / HofCorp	£55,902	£20,000	£-74,533	£1,370	FGP 18.03.24- Minute 84/24= bal of £3,254 for one off capital cost of the proposed new IT Contract (of £75,902 approved)	-£1,369	£0
322	Older People's Day Care Svce	HofCS	£12,325			£12,325	Revenue budget committed= £1,200	-£1,200	£11,125
323	Election Reserve	TC&CE / HofCorp	£0	£20,000		£20,000	Council 15.04.24- Minute 99/24= £20,000 for future election costs due to CBC	-£20,000	£0
324	Grove House Building Reserve	HofCorp	£177,550	£49,000		£226,550	Council 24.06.24- Minute 165/24= £226,550 for essential repair and maintenance works	-£226,550	£0
325	Priory House Works Contingency	HofCS	£29,864			£29,864	FGP 12.06.23- Minute 141/23= £29,864- for Priory House contingency	-£29,864	£0
326	Mayoral Reserve	HofCorp	£3,000			£3,000	FGP 19.01.15-Minute 24 - to be retained for transport/allowance as required	-£3,000	£0
327	Priory House Exhibition	HofCS	£11,149			£11,149	Council 15.04.24- Minute 99/24= £11,149 for programme of future exhibitions	-£11,149	£0
329	Performance Area Reserve	HofCS	£609			£609			£609
330	Town Twinning Reserve	TC&CE / HofCorp	£8,739			£8,739	Retained for twinning activities to be determined		£8,739
331	Tree Reserve	HofGES	£4,448	£15,000	£-2,980	£16,468	FGP 12.06.23- Minute 141/23- Bal of £980 for 23/24 work requirements (from £17,090 agreed) Council 15.04.24- Minute 99/24= £15,488 for programme of tree inspections and subsequent works	-£16,468	£0

332	Open Spaces Improvement Plan	HofGES	£59,089	£30,000	-£5,700	£83,389	FGP 20.01.20- Minute 8- Bal of £4,723 for improvement works (from £26,668 agreed); Council 29.06.20- Minute 85- £15,000 agreed for Priory Gardens Pergola Repairs; FGP 17.06.24- Minute 141/24- £10,277 agreed for Frenchs Avenue Open Space works; FGP 17.06.24- Minute 141/24- £35,600 agreed for Pergola and Kneerail project in Priory Gardens	-£65,600	£17,789
333	Priory House Building Reserve	HofCS	£235,646	£29,357		£265,003	Chairmans Approval 08.07.22= bal of £9,446 - lease of bean machine (£10,000 approved); FGP Minute 41/23 23.01.23- £21,200- drainage, infill and electrical works; FGP Minute 41/23 23.01.23- £205,000- tendering process for additional works	-£235,646	£29,357
334	Pavilion Buildings Maintenance Res	HofGES	£23,644	£15,000	-£750	£37,894	FGP Minute 147 26.09.22- Bal of £2,262 for Meadway Store Refurbishment (from £9,908 agreed)	-£2,262	£35,632
335	Church Street Phone Box Maintenance	HofGES	£5,000			£5,000	FGP 15.04.24- Minute 99/24= £5,000 for Church Street phone box maintenance	-£5,000	£0
336	NEW Personnel Reserve	TC&CE / HofCorp	£0	£25,000		£25,000	Council 24.06.24- Minute 165/24= £25,000 for Staff Pay Review	-£25,000	£0
337	Member Training Reserve	TC&CE / HofCorp	£1,000			£1,000	Council 15.04.24- Minute 99/24= £1,000 for future requirements	-£1,000	£0
338	Allotments Reserve	HofGES	£23,300	£5,000	-£1,180	£27,120	FGP Minute 107 20.06.22= bal of £10,751- 5 year infrastructure improvement programme (upto £42,800 approved) (includes £5,000 pa contributions to 26/27)	-£10,751	£16,370
339	Investment Account Interest	TC&CE	£13,261	£1,700		£14,961	Interest accrued on ringfenced deposit		£14,961
341	Outdoor Leisure (non play) Reserve	TC&CE / HofGES	£10,319	£12,000	-£2,913	£19,406			£19,406
342	Memorial Kerbs Reserve	HofGES	£461			£461	Council 15.04.24- Minute 99/24= £300 for purchase of memorial kerbs	-£300	£161
343	Cemetery Building Maintenance Res	HofGES	£12,281	£5,000		£17,281			£17,281
344	Fencing Maintenance Reserve	HofGES	£0	£7,000		£7,000			£7,000
346	HSHAZ/Priory House HAR	HofCS	£3,341	£220,670	-£233,229	-£9,218	HSHAZ scheme programme / HAR 1 Priory House works programme- to future claim	£9,218	£0
348	Unfulfilled Orders	HofCorp	£3,351			£3,351	Unfulfilled orders committed in previous year/s	-£3,351	£0
353	Neighbourhood Development	TC&CE / HofCorp	£10,888	£9,112	-£36	£19,965	Council 15.04.24- Minute 100/24= £6,965 for scoping exercise for a Neighbourhood Plan (from £7,000 agreed)	-£6,965	£13,000
<b>Earmarked Reserves Total</b>			<b>£1,691,105</b>	<b>£503,848</b>	<b>-£365,300</b>	<b>£1,829,653</b>		<b>-£1,164,918</b>	<b>£664,735</b>

Capital Receipt - Sale of Land at Meadway

Description	Officer	Balance as at 01.04.24	Contributions Revenue/ Other	Expenditure in year	Bal as at 31.07.24	Commitments/Programme of works, etc	Committed Amount	Bal after committed
371 White Lion Land Landscaping	HofGES	£10,000			£10,000	Council 05.12.22 Minute 210- creation of new reserve from capital receipt received July 2022	£10,000	£0
372 New Cemetery Development	HofGES	£36,776	£116,000	£2,125	£150,651	FGP 18.09.23- Minute 187/23= balance of £34,650 for development of the new cemetery (of £36,775 approved)	£34,651	£116,000
373 Grounds Depot Extension	HofGES	£100,000			£100,000	FGP 17.06.24- Minute 141/24= Depot Extension	£100,000	£0
374 Luton Road MUGA	HofGES	£1,873			£1,873	Council 05.12.22 Minute 210- bal of £1,873 for a MUGA at Kingsbury Recreation Ground (previously known as Luton Road) (of £100,000 approved)	£1,873	£0
375 NEW - Priory House Furniture	HofCS	£26,000			£26,000	Council 17.04.23 Minute 104/23- creation of new reserve from capital receipt received July 2022	£26,000	£0
376 NEW - Kingsbury Pavilion Refurbishment	HofGES	£170,000			£170,000	Council 17.04.23 Minute 104/23- creation of new reserve from capital receipt received July 2022	£170,000	£0
377 NEW - Splash Canopies	TC&CE	£2,873		£2,816	£57	FGP 12.06.23- Minute 141/23- bal of £57 for purchase and installation of Splash Canopies, benches and parasols (from £18,000 approved)	£57	£0
<b>Capital Receipts Total</b>		<b>£347,522</b>	<b>£116,000</b>	<b>£4,941</b>	<b>£458,581</b>		<b>£458,581</b>	<b>£0</b>

S106/External Funding/Ringfenced Expenditure specified by funding body

350 Developers Contributions- CAP	HofGES	£11,723			£11,723	FGP 17.06.24- Minute 141/24- £10,277 agreed for Frenchs Avenue Open Space works	£11,723	£0
351 CPCFC Capital	TC&CE	£83,641			£83,641	CBC Funds relating to CPCFC to return		£83,641
352 Development Contributions- REV	HofGES	£34,316			£34,316	£8,000 committed in 23/24 revenue budget from Bal of £22,129 for Willoughy (from S106 £47,645) Bal of £4,038 for Court Drive Landscaping (from CBC £15,000)	£12,038	£22,278
570 Joint Committee Fund	HofCS	£50,021	£38		£50,059	Bal in holding code as committed Joint Committees fund only = not DTC	£50,059	£0
<b>S106/External Funding Total</b>		<b>£179,701</b>	<b>£38</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£179,739</b>		<b>£73,819</b>	<b>£105,919</b>
		<b>£2,218,327</b>	<b>£619,886</b>	<b>£370,241</b>	<b>£2,467,972</b>		<b>£1,697,318</b>	<b>£770,654</b>

Key:

= Finance and General Purposes Committee

= Grounds and Environmental Services Committee

= Community Services Committee

Originator name	Status	Last payment amount	Last payment date	Frequency	Detail
ABAX UK LTD	Active	£16.80	05/08/2024	Monthly	
BABBLE CLOUD LIMITED	Active	£463.43	27/08/2024	Monthly	Mobile phone contract
BARTON PETROLEUM	Active	£2,206.80	09/08/2024	Quarterly	White diesel
BIG BOX STORAGE CO	Active	£160.33	05/08/2024	Monthly	Priory House exhibition storage
BOOKER LTD	Active	£307.82	06/08/2024	Monthly	Priory House catering stock
BOOKER LTD	Active	£1,387.88	22/08/2024	Fortnightly	Splash Café catering stock
BRIGHTHR	Active	£144.00	30/07/2024	Monthly	HR management software
BT GROUP PLC	Active	£132.97	15/08/2024	Monthly	Grove Corner WIFI rental
BT GROUP PLC	Active	£150.66	19/08/2024	Quarterly	Priory House WIFI rental
BT GROUP PLC	Active	£50.22	15/08/2024	Monthly	Priory House PDQ line rental
CASTLE WATER LTD	Active	£733.62	16/04/2024	Yearly	Cemetery building water supply
CATHEDRAL HYGIENE	Active	£187.20	02/10/2023	Yearly	Grove Corner sanitary service
CATHEDRAL HYGIENE	Active	£104.00	19/08/2024	Monthly	Priory House sanitary service
CENTRAL BEDS CNCL	Active	£738.00	19/08/2024	Monthly	Business Rates - Cemetery
CENTRAL BEDS CNCL	Active	£207.00	19/08/2024	Monthly	Business Rates - Grove Corner
CENTRAL BEDS CNCL	Active	£582.00	19/08/2024	Monthly	Business Rates - Priory House
CENTRAL BEDS CNCL	Active	£121.00	19/08/2024	Monthly	Business Rates - Grove Stores
CENTRAL BEDS CNCL	Active	£83.00	20/11/2023	Monthly	Business Rates - Priory House suite 1
CENTRAL BEDS CNCL	Active	£1,362.00	19/08/2024	Monthly	Business Rates - Grove House
CENTRAL BEDS CNCL	Active	£216.00	19/08/2024	Monthly	Business Rates - Splash Café
CHEEKY MUNKEY LTD	Active	£986.69	01/08/2024	Monthly	IT licences
CONTROL PRINT SOL	Active	£420.43	30/07/2024	Quarterly	Photocopier usage charges - Grove & Priory House
CORONA ENERGY	Active	£63.36	14/08/2024	Monthly	Electricity Supply - Market Clock
EE LIMITED	Active	£144.00	27/08/2024	Monthly	Tablets sim card data contract
EMAP PUBLISHING LTD	Active	£385.00	29/06/2023	Yearly	Local Government Chronicle subscription
EMS	Active	£92.27	20/08/2024	Monthly	Card Transaction charges - Splash Café
EMS	Active	£20.99	20/08/2024	Monthly	Card Transaction charges - Priory House Shop
EMS	Active	£43.94	20/08/2024	Monthly	Card Transaction charges - Priory House Tearooms
EVERFLOW LIMITED	Active	£1,128.75	23/07/2024	Monthly	Water supply - All sites
FIDELITY GROUP	Active	£477.18	17/07/2024	Daily	Landline phone contract
FRANCOTYP POSTALIA	Active	£100.00	09/07/2024	Fortnightly	Franking machine credit
FRANCOTYP POSTALIA	Active	£68.40	17/06/2024	Quarterly	Franking machine rental
FUELMATE LIMITED	Active	£224.31	15/08/2024	Monthly	Grounds vehicles fuel cards
GROUNDNS MANAGEMENT	Active	£157.50	01/02/2024	Yearly	Annual membership subscription
ICO	Active	£55.00	22/09/2023	Yearly	GDPR Data Protection annual certificate
NATWEST ONECARD	Active	£2,406.37	07/08/2024	Monthly	Procurement cards expenditure
OCTOPUS ELECTRIC	Active	£846.75	08/08/2024	Monthly	Employee electric car scheme
O2	Active	£1,080.16	19/08/2024	Monthly	Mobile phone contract
PAYROLL OPTIONS	Active	£438.41	31/07/2024	Monthly	Payroll support
PUBLIC WORKS LOANS	Active	£50,902.97	20/05/2024	Monthly	Loan repayments
SHIRE LEASING PLC	Active	£769.20	01/08/2024	Quarterly	Coffee machine rental - Priory House shop
STRIPE	Active	£270.00	05/08/2024	Monthly	Pitch booking software
STRIPE	Active	£75.60	02/08/2024	Monthly	Employee benefit scheme
TOWERLEASING	Active	£1,174.78	27/08/2024	Quarterly	CPCFC Coffee machine rentals
TOWERLEASING	Active	£2,148.00	12/07/2024	Quarterly	Photocopier lease - Grove & Priory House
TV LICENCE DDA	Active	£169.50	02/04/2024	Yearly	Grove Corner TV Licence
TV LICENCE DDA	Active	£169.50	02/04/2024	Yearly	Priory House TV Licence
UCHECK	Active	£59.30	15/08/2024	Two Monthly	DBS checks
WORLDPAY	Active	£31.77	20/08/2024	Monthly	Online/virtual card transaction charges
WORLDPAY	Active	£11.94	20/08/2024	Monthly	Online/virtual card terminal rental
YU ENERGY	Active	£976.96	08/08/2024	Monthly	Electricity supplier - Town Centre store/mess room
YU ENERGY	Active	£2,533.06	08/08/2024	Monthly	Electricity supplier - Bennett Pavilion
YU ENERGY	Active	£263.47	08/08/2024	Monthly	Electricity supplier - Meadway allotment hut
YU ENERGY	Active	£222.37	09/08/2024	Monthly	Electricity supplier - Performance Area/Bandstand
YU ENERGY	Active	£363.49	08/08/2024	Two Monthly	Electricity supplier - Kingsbury Pavilion
YU ENERGY	Active	£1,900.20	09/08/2024	Monthly	Electricity supplier - Priory House
YU ENERGY	Active	£711.31	08/08/2024	Monthly	Electricity supplier - Cemetery
YU ENERGY	Active	£426.27	08/08/2024	Monthly	Electricity supplier - Grove Corner
YU ENERGY	Active	£189.41	08/08/2024	Monthly	Electricity supplier - Grove House (groundfloor/tenants)
YU ENERGY	Active	£1,156.92	08/08/2024	Monthly	Electricity supplier - Grove House (main)
YU ENERGY	Active	£31.53	12/08/2024	Monthly	Gas supplier - Grove House (groundfloor/tenants)
YU ENERGY	Active	£87.00	12/08/2024	Monthly	Gas supplier - Grove Corner
YU ENERGY	Active	£566.11	11/07/2024	Monthly	Gas supplier - Grove House (main)
YU ENERGY	Active	£74.16	12/08/2024	Monthly	Gas supplier - Cemetery
YU ENERGY	Active	£86.31	12/08/2024	Monthly	Gas supplier - Priory House



**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

**FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2024**

**CORPORATE COMPLIANCE AND FACILITIES**

**Purpose of Report:**

- i. To update Members on progress with the Council's Corporate Compliance and Facilities Management

**1. ACTION RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1. To note the report.

**2. COMPLIANCE**

- 2.1. Fire Risk Assessments have been completed across all council buildings, where any recommendations will be actioned.
- 2.2. Annual Emergency Lighting inspections have been completed across all council buildings; any replacement bulbs will be with LEDs.
- 2.3. The Town Council is in the final stages of achieving Cyber Essentials certification in accordance with the new IT contract.
- 2.4. Officers have undertaken the biannual safeguarding audit which includes the Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adult policies. Only minor amends were made which do not affect any current operations within the council

**3. FACILITIES**

- 3.1. Grove House
- 3.2. The new boiler has been installed. The new boiler ensures Grove House heating is compliant, safe and meets requirements. This boiler also future proofs any potential changes in use within the building. Further improvements added also protect the boiler against any risks of water damage.
- 3.3. Brasier Freeth (the Councils appointed Building Surveyors) are now working with Caroe Conservation and Heritage Architects to plan a schedule of works as reported at the last committee meeting.

**4. Downside Community Centre (DCC)**

- 4.1. The cesspit issue reported at the last committee has now been resolved. The Council re-imbursed Ringcraft Boxing Ltd for costs incurred during the investigation period.

## **5. PROJECTS & PROCUREMENT**

- 5.1. New tablets devices have been installed at each site. These will act as electronic sign in/out for visitors and contractors to ensure fire safety compliance is met. The tablets will also service to improve customer service, such as easy access to websites and the councils Compliment, Comment, Complaint form and feedback surveys.

## **6. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

- 6.1 The Council will undergo a full Health & Safety audit in late September which will be conducted by WorkNest, the Council's appointed Health & Safety advisors.

## **7. ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIODIVERSITY**

- 7.1 The Town Council's Environmental Working Group has recommissioned a new Carbon Baseline Assessment. The current assessment, now 4 years old, included Creasey Park Community Football Centre, at the time the Council's largest carbon producer. Along with other environmental improvements the Council has made in the last 4 years the Working Group felt it prudent a reassessment was conducted.
- 7.2 The Corporate Performance & Compliance Manager is now working with the Carbon Baseline Assessment contractor to determine the Council's new carbon level and associated objectives to reduce the Council's carbon impact.

## **8. AUTHOR**

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**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**  
**MONDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2024**  
**MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS**

**Purpose of Report:** To update Members on current marketing and communications.

**1. SOCIAL MEDIA**

- 1.1 The Corporate Marketing and Communications Officer has increased the use of Instagram Stories, which are also shared on Facebook Stories to enhance follower engagement. Stories often receive greater exposure since users typically view them before scrolling through their social media feeds. Each story remains visible for 24 hours. Instagram profiles also feature Story Highlights, which are linked to specific events and showcase key moments of the day. The on-going use of both stories and posts appears to be effectively engaging our followers.
- 1.2 We are currently testing the use of Facebook's '@followers' feature for selective posts. This feature automatically tags followers and notifies them when a new post is published, ensuring they are aware of the update. To avoid overwhelming our followers, we will use this feature sparingly and only when necessary, mainly to notify them once of the upcoming event or if something is important. Below shows the impact on reach when @followers is applied.

*Dunstable Town Council Insights:*

*Facebook post for Proms in the Park **with @followers**: interactions (likes, love..) 59, shares 20, comments 10, impressions 6.1k, reach 5.8k*

*Facebook post for Proms in the Park without @followers: interactions (likes, love..) 30, shares 10, comments 6, impressions 4.1k, reach 4k.*

- 1.3 Dunstable Town Council's Facebook account has reached over 12,000 followers and has seen good engagement with officers utilising both video and picture content. Bennett's Splash Park has this season also launched an Instagram account.

**Facebook page followers:**

Dunstable Town Council	12,876 (+595)
Bennett's Splash Park	4,759 (+157)
Town Ranger Services	1,447 (+12)
Grove Corner	1,342 (+70)
Priory House	1,377 (+50)

**Instagram followers:**

Dunstable Town Council	645 (+80)
Grove Corner	475 (+28)
Bennett's Splash Park	11

**LinkedIn followers:**

Dunstable Town Council

253 (+8)

**TikTok followers:**




Dunstable Town Council

58 (+14)

These figures are accurate as of 30 August 2024 and shows how many gained followers since the previous report date.

- 1.4 *Dunstable Town Council insights:*  
*Top three social media **Facebook posts** over the last two months (July to August) by interactions: Dunstable retains its Green Flags again in 2024, The sun is out and Priory Pictures is underway in Priory Gardens and Dino Day – The Quadrant Shopping Centre*

 **Top posts by interactions**

		
<b>Dunstable retains its Green Flags again in...</b>	<b>The sun is out and Priory Pictures is...</b>	<b>DINO DAY!</b> 🦖🦖🦖 🦖🦖🦖🦖🦖🦖🦖...
17 July 01:49	10 August 06:06	22 July 03:00
↗️ 163      ❤️ 200	↗️ 124      ❤️ 144	↗️ 122      ❤️ 70
💬 18      ➡️ 12	💬 21      ➡️ 8	💬 59      ➡️ 33

*Top three social media **Facebook stories** over the last two months (July to August) by interactions: Video of Annette at Middle Row Market Ashton Square Day, Wish lots of luck today at the final (picture of Skye) and Image of Viking promoting Heritage Open Days.*

**f Top stories by interactions**

<p><b>Your video</b> 17 August 01:33 ↶ 27    ♥ 27 💬 0    ➦ 0</p>	<p><b>Your video</b> 24 August 08:11 ↶ 22    ♥ 22 💬 0    ➦ 0</p>	<p><b>Your video</b> 27 August 09:30 ↶ 16    ♥ 16 💬 0    ➦ 0</p>

1.5 **Top three social media *Instagram* posts over the last two months (July to August) by interactions: Street Food Heroes, Youth and Community vacancy and Heritage Open Day Market**

**📷 Top posts by interactions**

<p><b>Join us on The Square on the 12 September...</b> 29 August 05:00 ↶ --    ♥ 7 💬 0    ➦ 0</p>	<p><b>Exciting opportunity! We are hiring two pa...</b> 28 August 03:34 ↶ --    ♥ 4 💬 0    ➦ 0</p>	<p><b>Join us on Saturday 14 September for...</b> 24 August 00:39 ↶ --    ♥ 2 💬 0    ➦ 0</p>

**Top three social media *Instagram* stories over the last two months (July to August) by reach: Around the World and Young Trader**

 **Top stories by reach**



1.6 The September councillor surgery had a different approach, using a different graphic, accompanied by an event page created on Facebook in advance of surgery, supported by multiple social media posts. An introductory video featuring councillors was produced and was well received on social media with over 2,000 video plays. For respective surgeries going forward, a video will be produced.

**2. INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS**

2.1 Monthly staff newsletters are produced to keep employees regularly informed and updated with relevant information to ensure employees are advocates for the Council

**3. EMAIL MARKETING**

3.1 Monthly Councillor newsletters are sent with all relevant information which includes bulletins and Dunstable Town Council events. Officers would welcome feedback or suggestions on the Councillor newsletters.

3.2 The Corporate Marketing & Communications Officer is planning to produce a Dunstable Town Council public email newsletter in the future once technical challenges have been resolved and the new website is up and running.

**4. WEBSITE**

4.1 The figures below show the number of hits the most popular Town Council website pages between July and August 2024.

**Top web pages**

Party in the	3,004
Park Bennetts	1,717
Splash What's	1,403
on Priory	884
House	

4.2 The figures below show where those who visit the town council website in July and August 2024 have originated from.

Organic search (google, Bing etc.)	16,679
Organic social (from social)	2,557
Direct	3,895

4.3 Over the two months (July and August 2024) there were 16,000 website visitors, visiting 14,245 pages.

4.4 Figures for July and August 2024 saw the continuing trend of people accessing the town council website via a mobile device (69.2%) as opposed to other methods.

Desktop users	27.5%
Tablet users	3.3%

4.5 At the time of writing, the website tender process is on-going, with a full report to follow.

## **5. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS**

5.1 Noticeboards across the wards are regularly updated showcasing a range of local services and events. The Corporate Marketing and Communications Officer ensures the information showcased is in date with a preferred uniform design (A4 size). The noticeboards continue to be regularly updated with the help of the Town Rangers.

5.2 The Corporate Marketing and Communications Officer is working on updating the Town Council's communication and branding style guide to ensure consistency across the council services.

5.3 The Corporate and Marketing Communications Officer is currently working on a communications style guide and a corporate Marketing and Communications Strategy.

## **6. WHAT'S ON WINDOW**

6.1 Many local organisations and community groups are making use of the What's on Window with a range of submission requests every month. The window is updated on the first working week of the month. Various social media posts will be going out to encourage more submissions. The Corporate Marketing and Communications Officer regularly updates the design and content for the presentation to be displayed on the screen. The Town Centre Manager makes sure the latest version is uploaded on the screen.

## **7. TALK OF THE TOWN**

7.1 The upcoming edition of *Talk of the Town* is scheduled for October, with an expected delivery date from 5 October. An additional 600 copies have been distributed through the distribution company, with no issues reported. Going forward, to meet growing demand, an additional 200 copies will be printed.

7.2 Broccoli marketing is advertising in Talk of the Town for their client Everyone Theatres who are promoting the pantomime at the Grove Theatre. Officers continue to seek other advertisers and were approached by businesses in Ashton Square for four extra pages in a future edition. The costs have been supplied and officers are awaiting further instruction from the businesses.

## **8. MEDIA AND PUBLIC RELATIONS**

8.1 The Corporate Marketing and Communications Officer continues to produce and circulate press releases to a dedicated distribution list after every event or achievement. These include the SLCC, Luton News and Dunstable Gazette, The Vine, Clerks & Councils Direct. Whether the press release gets featured, is a solely down the to the discretion of the press. Nine press release were issue in July to August. Nine were published on Luton News and Dunstable Gazette.

## **9. AUTHOR**

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**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**  
**MONDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2024**  
**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

**Purpose of Report:** For members to consider and agree upon the options to mark the Town Council's 40<sup>th</sup> year, 2025/26.

**1. ACTION RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 It is recommended that Members approve all of the options detailed within this report, subject to setting a 2025/26 budget in line with the already agreed 5-year budget forecast.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 May 2025 will mark 40 years since the establishment of Dunstable Town Council in its current form. 2025 will also mark 160 years since the establishment of Dunstable as a "body corporate and politic" along with the office of Town Mayor. To mark the Council's 25th anniversary in 2010 the Council created a new event (Party in the Park) and created some community public art (sculptures in Grove House Gardens).
- 2.2 It is proposed to do something different to mark this new milestone. Each Committee is receiving a report in this round with relevant options to ensure the celebrations are shared across services. A series of activities and actions to celebrate the anniversary are being suggested to each committee. These will include celebrating the Council's past achievements, providing a range of events which make reference to the anniversary, and promoting the Council's new Corporate Plan and new brand.

**3. CORPORATE MARKETING**

- 3.1 It is proposed to provide street dressing to highlight the diverse range of services provided by The Council, incorporating a specially designed 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Icon.
- 3.2 Bunting would be placed in Middle Row, The Square, and key town centre parks and green spaces such as Bennetts Memorial Recreation Ground, Priory Gardens and Grove House Gardens.
- 3.3 Estimated costs are as follows:
- Lamppost banners design and installation £6,700
  - Branding £1,000
  - Bunting and installation £6,000
- Total estimated cost £13,700

- 3.4 Funding for the above can be met with:
- Street dressing budget and reserve balance in the current financial year £7,467
  - 2025/26 general marketing budget £4,600
  - 2025/26 street dressing reserve contribution £5,000
- Total £17,067
- 3.5 This total will not only cover the proposed street dressing costs and also cover any unforeseen costs, such as damages, installation difficulties etc.
- 3.6 Should Members also wish, Officers could also create 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary merchandise within the funding highlighted at 3.4.

#### **4. CIVIC AND DEMOCRATIC**

- 4.1 Officers, together with the Town Mayor, are keen to explore the possibility of holding a 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary Mayor's Valentine's Ball on 15 February 2024, to 'kick start' the anniversary year.
- 4.2 The Dunstable Conference Centre has been approached and is available and keen to work with The Council to assist in marking this milestone.
- 4.3 The theme of the Ball would be a celebration of Dunstable Town Council and its impact in the town over the last 40 years, as well as long into the future.
- 4.4 The Ball would be run as a civic mayoral event.
- 4.5 The Ball would have no budgetary implications for the Town Council beyond some use of the Mayoral allowance in the usual way.

#### **5. BOOK**

- 5.1 Councillor Hollick is carrying out considerable research using the Council's minute books to put together a summary of the Council's achievements over the last 40 years. It is proposed to carry out a small print run to make the history widely available. There will be a modest initial cost, which will be in part offset by sales income.

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 If Members are minded to agree to continue to allocate £5,000 to the street dressing reserve and £5,000 to the general marketing revenue budget in 2025/26, in line with the 5 year budget forecast, there will be no additional cost implications on the 2025/26 budget setting process.
- 6.2 The cost of preparing social media articles linked to the 40th anniversary can be covered in-house using existing officer resources.

## **7. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Whilst these suggested initiatives do not deliver on one individual specific corporate plan action, they will all contribute to the Council's corporate priorities to further improve and develop the provision of green and open space in the town and also help to enhance the identity of the town, creating a sense of pride in Dunstable.

## **8. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 All of the suggested initiatives can be undertaken within the Council's current health and safety processes and risk assessments.

## **9. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 All of the initiatives can be delivered within the Council's current staffing structure for Corporate Services.

## **10. LEGAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIODIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 None.

## **11. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 Officers will give consideration to ensuring that services and projects delivered as part of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations will be as accessible as possible to as wider section of Dunstable residents regardless of all protected characteristics.

## **12. AUTHORS**

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**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**  
**MONDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2024**  
**HONORARY FREEMEN AND FREEWOMEN**

**Purpose of Report:** For members to approve the recommendations outlined within the report.

**1. ACTIONS RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1. To agree to consider awarding the honour of Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of Dunstable during the Town Council's 40<sup>th</sup> year in 2025 /26.
- 1.2. To agree to the purchase of an Honour Board to commemorate past and future Freemen and Freewomen of the town.
- 1.3. To agree to adopt the proposed approach described in considering future Freemen or Freewomen.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1. Dunstable became a Municipal Borough in 1864, incorporated by Royal Charter. The Honorary Freedom of the Boroughs Act 1885 (later replaced by the Local Government Act 1972) permitted Councils to give the title of Honorary Freemen to "persons of distinction and any persons who have rendered eminent services to the Borough". The freedom itself carried no privilege but was the highest honour a council could confer.
- 2.2. Various awards of the honour were made by the Council between 1902 and 1966. The recipients are described in Appendix 1, which was compiled by Elisabeth Pynn for the Historical Dunstable Facebook Page.

**3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. The Local Government Act 1972 as amended by 2009 Section 249 (5) and (6) allows all Local Councils to exercise powers to confer the title of "honorary freeman" or "honorary freewoman" to persons of distinction and those who, in the Council's opinion, have rendered eminent services to the Council's area. Section 249(8) of the 1972 Act as amended provides that the administration of an honorary freeman or honorary freewoman must be by resolution made at a meeting of the full Council specially convened for such purpose and passed by no fewer than two-thirds of the Members of the Council.
- 3.2. The regulations also state that the Clerk of the Council must make the Notice of the Meeting to show that a decision needs to be taken to "Confer the title of Honorary

Freeman or Freewoman of the Town of Dunstable". Section 249(9) of the 1972 Act (as amended) provides that a local council may spend a reasonable sum as it thinks fit for the purpose of presenting an address or a casket containing an address to a person on whom it has conferred the title of honorary freeman or freewoman.

#### **4. PROPOSED NOMINATION CRITERIA**

4.1. The following will be taken into account when consideration is given to granting the honour of Honorary Freeman Freewoman of the Town:

4.1.1. Preference will be given to a person who performs in a voluntary capacity, but this should not preclude the honour being awarded to a person whose dedication and contribution is significantly above that expected from their occupation.

4.1.2. Nominees need not necessarily be residents of Dunstable.

4.1.3. Any nominated Town Councillor should have retired from the post.

4.1.4. The contribution to the wellbeing of the community must involve one or more of the following factors: -

(a) A significant allocation of the person's time in serving members of the community for the improvement of their wellbeing.

(b) The promotion, achievement and/or delivery of community services in which a real personal contribution has been made.

(c) The contribution must be outstanding in that it can be seen to stand above the contributions of most other persons.

(d) Someone who has excelled in a specific role or work area that brings respect to the Town and acts as a role model for the young people/adults of the Town of Dunstable.

(e) Someone who champions Dunstable and is a credit to the town.

#### **5. PROPOSED NOMINATION PROCEDURE**

5.1. Nominations must be made in the strictest confidence without the nominee's knowledge. Any resident or elector of the Town of Dunstable may make a nomination, but it must be sponsored by a Town Councillor.

- 5.2. Nominations must be made in writing to the Town Clerk. The submission should be evidence-based by outlining the voluntary service provided by the individual to the community and any other examples of 'community spirit' to justify the honour. On receipt of a nomination, it will be circulated to all Councillors for confidential consideration. The relaunch of the scheme in 2025 will include a press release explaining the honour and inviting nominations from residents of Dunstable.
- 5.3. If Councillors are in agreement that the nominee should be made an Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of the Town, the nominee will be invited to accept the honour. If agreed, the nomination will then be put before Council and a formal vote taken.
- 5.4. No fewer than two-thirds of the Town Councillors must agree the nomination.

## **6. PROPOSED ENTITLEMENTS**

- 6.1. Any person declared an Honorary Freeman (or Honorary Freewoman) of the Town may designate himself/herself 'Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of the Town of Dunstable'.
- 6.2. The award shall be made at a formal event, which may be part of a Council function.
- 6.3. A scroll will be presented to the recipient.

## **7. PROPOSED LIMITATION ON HOLDERS OF AWARD**

- 7.1. At any one time, a maximum of four people, unless otherwise decided by the Council, may hold the title 'Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of the Town of Dunstable'.

## **8. HONOUR BOARDS**

- 8.1. It is proposed to purchase an Honour Board to accompany those for Mayors and Town Clerks. This would record past and future recipients.

## **9. PROPOSED FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. The estimated cost of the honour boards would be £1,000 which would be funded from the projected underspend within the Democratic Services cost centre budget.

## **10. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1. The proposal would contribute to the Council's corporate priorities to preserve and enhance the history and identity of the town, creating a sense of pride in Dunstable.

**11. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

11.1. None

**12. HEALTH AND SAFETY, LEGAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIODIVERSITY  
POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

12.1. None.

**13. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

13.1. None

**14. AUTHOR**

Paul Hodson - Town Clerk & Chief Executive

## **Appendix 1: HONORARY FREEMEN OF THE BOROUGH OF DUNSTABLE**

### **Elisabeth Pynn**

**21 February 2021**

The first person to be awarded the Honorary Freedom of the Borough of Dunstable was Worthington George Smith. On leaving school he was apprenticed to an architect and became an expert draughtsman and a member of the Architectural Association. In 1861 Worthington left the Architectural Association to become a freelance illustrator. His interest in natural history and gardening led to him becoming a botanical and horticultural illustrator. Worthington Smith and his family moved to Dunstable in 1885. He became heavily involved in the archaeology and local history of Dunstable and the area generally. He carried out excavations at Maiden Bower, Luton, and Dunstable Downs.

Worthington took an interest in local affairs and his skills as an artist and illustrator were well used when, on a number of occasions, he prepared illuminated addresses for presentation to local dignitaries, such as to the Duke of Bedford when he visited Dunstable in 1894. In 1897 he became the local secretary of the Society of Antiquities.

In 1899, during a visit to the Record Office, Worthington found the ancient charter granted to the Borough of Dunstable by Henry I. He translated and transcribed it and gave a copy to the Town Council.

In 1903 his contribution to Dunstable was recognised when he was made the first Freeman of the Borough. The following year his extensive work on the town 'Dunstable – its History and Surroundings' was published.

In 1921 Fred Turner Garrett was awarded the Honorary Freedom of the Borough.

Fred was a clock and watch maker and jeweller. In 1887 he was elected onto the Town Council and served as a councillor between 1887 – 1895 and again from 1901 – 1919. In the intervening years he was an alderman. He was elected as Mayor of Dunstable from 1897 – 1899, 1905 – 1906, 1913 – 1916 and again 1918 – 1919.

In 1897, during his first mayoralty, Fred Garrett introduced electric light into business premises. In 1898 he presented the Council with the Mayoral Chain of Office which is still worn by mayors today. In 1907 Fred was appointed as a JP. He was the council's representative on several local charities, including the Ashton Almshouses, Dunstable Grammar School and the Ashton Elementary School. He was a Dunstable representative on Bedfordshire County Council and was chairman of the managers of the Dunstable group of County Council schools. He was a stalwart member of the Liberal Party.



In 1921 Fred Turner Garrett was awarded the Honorary Freedom of Dunstable in recognition of his many years of service, both as Mayor, and also as a magistrate, county councillor, school governor, charity trustee and holder of numerous other offices. Garrett Close in Dunstable was named after him.

Next to receive the honour was Charles Frederick Boskett, a plumber and house decorator by trade.

Charles was elected onto the Town Council in 1895 and served as a councillor until 1901, then an alderman until 1907 and then a councillor again, serving continuously on the Town Council for twenty-eight years until he retired in 1923. Alderman Boskett was elected Mayor in 1902 and served in this position until 1905.

He took an active part in the municipal, educational and social life of the town. He was on the District Joint Hospital Committee from its formation in 1905 until 1923. From 1896 to 1911 he was on the Luton Board of Guardians, then acted as overseer for Dunstable for fourteen years. He was a governor of the Grammar School, a trustee of the Ashton Almshouses, a member of the Evening Institute Management Committee and Manager of the Dunstable Group of Council Schools. He was also a Sunday School Superintendent for forty years.

Charles served in the local volunteers and was a member of the Excelsior Band. During the War he was a special constable and initiated the Soldiers' and Sailors' Welfare Fund. He was appointed a magistrate in 1921. He is also remembered for 'Boskett's Breezy Battlements', roofless public toilets built near the crossroads in West Street in 1911.

Charles Boskett received the Freedom of the Borough in recognition of his life of service in 1924.

Also honoured in 1924 was Sir Henry Herbert Hambling, the son of William James Hambling, Headmaster of Chew's School and Mayor of Dunstable. Herbert was a bank manager and became deputy chairman of Barclays Bank. During World War I he was a financial member of the Ministry of Munitions. In 1917 he was knighted for his services to Barclays Bank. At the beginning of World War I Herbert bought Rookery Park in Yoxford, Suffolk.

In the early 1920s British air services were struggling to compete with subsidised European airlines. In January 1923 the Civil Air Transport Subsidies Committee was appointed under Sir Herbert Hambling. The government followed their advice that small airlines should merge and in March 1924 Imperial Airways was incorporated (which, after another merger, became BOAC). Herbert was awarded a baronetcy for his work on the development of civil aviation. Herbert was the first Hambling Baronet, Yoxford.

Another former Mayor became the next Freeman, Alfred William Webb, a builder, carpenter and joiner. Alfred was elected to the Council in 1908 and served alternately as councillor and alderman. After seventeen years' service he was elected Mayor of Dunstable (1926 – 28). He served on Dunstable Borough Council for a total of thirty years.

During his years of service to his town he was also an Overseer of the Poor, Church Warden at Priory Church, Manager of Ashton Elementary Schools, and Governor of Chew's Foundation. He retired in 1938, when he was made a Freeman of the Borough.

In 1959 Harold William Parrott was created a Freeman of the Borough. Harold first stood for election to Dunstable Borough Council in 1925 as an Independent. He was elected as an alderman in 1932, a position he held for six years, and served on a number of committees. He keenly supported the Council's work to attract new industries to the town, such as AC-Sphinx in 1934.

With the prospect of war, Harold, who was known for his organisational skills, was made Chairman of the Emergency Committee and in 1943 he was elected Mayor of Dunstable, a position he held for three years. When peace came he gave the victory speech from the Town Hall. He was then in charge of organising the celebrations.

He became a JP in 1948 and was also a member of the Rotary Club.

He was elected as an alderman again in 1951. In 1959 he was awarded the Freedom of the Borough and commented that "I love my town as I love my country, and whatever I have done has been a pleasure for me to do." \*

Harold Parrott retired from the council in 1966, having served for forty years. He received the title of 'Alderman Emeritus', which effectively made him a member of the council for life. He was the last of the Honorary Freemen of Dunstable.

Two regiments were awarded the Freedom of Entry to the Borough of Dunstable. The 3rd East Anglian Regiment received this honour in 1964, followed by the 201 (Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Yeomanry) Medium Battery, Royal Artillery (Volunteers) in 1968. This awarded them the honour and distinction of exercising all customary regimental privileges when parading in or proceeding through the streets of Dunstable on ceremonial occasions.

\*Quoted from 'Made in Dunstable – Growing up in the 50s and 60s' by Roger Parrott

Sources: British Newspaper Archive on Findmypast.co.uk; 'Made in Dunstable – Growing up in the 50s and 60s' by Roger Parrott; 'They Came to the Crossroads – the People Who Made Dunstable' edited by Elisabeth Pynn.

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**  
**MONDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2024**  
**FLAG FLYING**

**Purpose of Report:** For members to approve the recommendations outlined within the report.

**1. ACTION RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1. To approve the proposed revised flag flying schedule.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1. The Town Council has flown flags on days of particular interest for many years. In 2022 the Council purchased a more robust town flag and so the town flag is now flown permanently except for specific days where others are required. This has meant that the previous policy – which for example specified that the town flag be flown on the day of the Annual Council Meeting and then be taken down again – was no longer relevant. Following the accession of King Charles III, the dates for royal commemoration also needed updating. National guidance and planning requirements have been taken into account in the following revised recommendation:
- 2.2. Flags are traditionally flown by the Town Council for a variety of reasons; to show allegiance, support, respect or to celebrate. As from Summer 2021 government guidance states that UK Government building flagpoles should not remain empty – the default should be flying the Union Flag if no other flag is being flown. This guidance is aimed at UK Government buildings, however they encourage local authorities and other local organisations to follow suit where they wish to fly flags. The Town Flag will be flown from the Town Council’s main flagpole next to Grove House all year round unless another flag is being flown.
- 2.3. Other Flags will be flown on recognised days and will be flown for one day unless agreed otherwise. The Town Rangers will raise the appropriate flag at 8.00 am on a recognised flag flying day. When a flag flying day falls on a Sunday the flag will be raised at 4.00 pm on a Friday and lowered at 8.00 am on a Monday.
- 2.4. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive in consultation with the Mayor has discretion to fly the union flag at other times: To celebrate & support sporting events of significance. In recognition of a royal visit in consultation with the Lord Lieutenant. In respect of a formal visit by another significant dignitary. A special event of success in the town. Formal Town Council Civic occasions.

- 2.5. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive in consultation with the Mayor has discretion to fly the union flag at half-mast on national occasions such as the announcement of the death of the sovereign and other occasions commanded by the sovereign. The Town Council is permitted to fly the Union Flag at half-mast to mark local as well as national commemorations or losses, including the death of present councillors or past Mayors, on the death/funeral of a serving officer in the Armed Forces from the town, or on the death/funeral of a serving Town Councillor, local Unitary Councillor, or local Member of Parliament.
- 2.6. The amended Flag Flying dates recommended are as follows:

<b>Second Monday in March</b>	Commonwealth Day	Flag of Commonwealth of Nations
<b>23 April</b>	St George's Day	St George's Flag
<b>1 June</b>	LGBTQAI+ and Pride month start	New Pride Progressive flag
<b>Second Sat in June</b>	HM King's Official Birthday	Union flag
<b>Last Saturday in June</b>	Armed Forces Day	Armed Forces flag
<b>30 June</b>	LGBTQ+ and Pride month end	New Pride Progressive flag
<b>17 July</b>	Birthday of HM the Queen Consort	Union flag
<b>8 September</b>	His Majesty's accession	Union flag
<b>11 November</b>	Armistice Day	Union flag
<b>Second Sunday in November</b>	Remembrance Day	Union flag, second Sunday November
<b>14 November</b>	Birthday of HM King Charles III	Union flag
<b>28 November</b>	Bedfordshire Day	Bedfordshire flag

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. The purchase of the additional flags required can be covered within the revenue budget for civic regalia.

### **4. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. Flags are emotive symbols, and this contributes to the Council's corporate priorities to preserve and enhance the history and identity of the town, creating a sense of pride in Dunstable.

### **5. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. The flying of flags is undertaken by the Town Ranger service within its existing resources.

### **6. HEALTH AND SAFETY, LEGAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIODIVERSITY POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. None.

### **7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. Members should note that the list of flag flying dates includes flying the LGBTQ+ flag and supports the Council being an inclusive organisation.

### **8. AUTHOR**

Paul Hodson - Town Clerk & Chief Executive