

Dunstable Town Council
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Paul Hodson Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Date: 23 August 2024

Dear Councillors

A meeting of the Community Services Committee will be held on **Monday 2 September 2024** in the **Council Chamber at Grove House, High Street North, Dunstable at 7.00 pm**. To view the meeting live or afterwards please 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 or 01582 513000 by 4 pm on Friday 30 August 2024.

Please scan the below code to view the full Agenda:



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.

Paul Hodson
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Members are reminded when making decisions that the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010 requires Members to have due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who don't, and to foster good relations between people who share a characteristic and those who don't.

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Public Question Time
4. To agree the minutes of the meetings of 3 June 2024 as a true record (see page 3)
5. Town Centre Services - information report (see page 6)
6. Grove Corner and Community Engagement - information report (see page 10)
7. Older People's Services - information report (see page 15)
8. Events - information and decision report (see page 17)
9. Priory House - information report (see page 22)
10. 40th Anniversary Town Celebrations - information and decision report (see page 24)
11. Reports from Outside Bodies:
South Beds Dial-a-Ride Management Committee – Cllr Peter Hollick
Dunstable Town Band – Cllr Robert Blennerhassett
Men in Sheds – Cllr Richard Attwell
12. Date of the next meeting – Monday 4 November 2024 at 7.00 pm.

To: All Members of the Community Services Committee:
Louise O'Riordan (Town Mayor), Sally Kimondo (Deputy Town Mayor), Liz Jones (Chair),
Matthew Neall (Vice-Chair), Trevor Adams, Gregory Alderman, Wendy Bater, John Gurney,
Peter Hollick, Nicholas Kotarski, Mark Davis, Robert Blennerhassett, and other Members of the
Council for information.

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

HELD ON MONDAY 3 JUNE 2024 FROM 7:00 pm

Present: Councillors Louise O’Riordan (Town Mayor), Sally Kimondo (Deputy Mayor), Liz Jones (Chair), Matthew Neall (Vice-Chair), Trevor Adams, Robert Blennerhassett, Peter Hollick, Gregory Alderman, Mark Davis, John Gurney, and Nicholas Kotarski.

In Attendance: Gina Thanky (Events Officer), Gill Peck (Youth and Community Manager), Georgia Pearson (Democratic Services Manager) and Paul Hodson (Town Clerk and Chief Executive)

In Attendance: Annette Clynes (Town Centre Manager), Becky Wisbey (Head of Community Services), and Michelle Collings (HSHAZ Manager)
(Remotely)

Apologies: Councillor Wendy Bater

Public: Nil

108/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Jones declared an interest in Agenda item 11, Peter Newton Centre due to the centre being named after her late father.

109/24 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings of the Community Services Committee held on 4 March 2024 and 7 May 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

110/24 GROVE CORNER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Youth and Community Manager summarised the report provided to members.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: to accept the UKSPF Pilot and Test funding, should the application submitted by the Head of Community Services and the Events Officer be successful, for a youth festival.

111/24 YOUTH WORKER APPRENTICE

The Youth and Community Manager summarised the report provided to members and highlighted the importance that a Youth Worker Apprentice would bring to the Council and wider community.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: to approve the hourly rate of £12 for the new Apprentice Youth Worker and the additional budget required for the Apprentice

112/24 OLDER PEOPLES' SERVICES

Members noted the report provided which was summarised by the Youth and Community Manager.

113/24 TOWN CENTRE SERVICES

The Town Centre Manager highlighted the key points of the report to members.

Unfortunately, it was noted that the Ashton Square toilets were vandalised on the previous Thursday and as a result of this it may be necessary to close the men's toilets for one day to re-seal and mend the toilets.

The Town Centre Manager advised that on Thursday coming new bunting was to be put up in Middle Row and that the hats will be coming down and anyone who wishes to collect their hats to please do so.

114/24 EVENTS

The Events Officer summarised the key points in the report. The Events Officer updated members that for the Dunstable Classic Motor Rally on Saturday 8 June 2024, since writing the report, 250 cars have now entered.

16,000 events leaflets which include the Classic Motor Rally, Dunstable Live, Sunday Concerts, Party in the Park, Around the World and Priory Pictures, will be trialled as a leaflet drop to be delivered to households in Dunstable which will commence this week, with the remaining 2,000 being placed throughout the town centre.

115/24 PRIORY HOUSE

The Head of Community Services summarised the report provided to members and highlighted key information.

116/24 UKSPF COMMUNITY FUNDING SECOND ROUND

The HSHAZ Programme Manager summarised the key elements of the report to members.

Since the report was prepared the Cultural Services Manager and the HSHAZ Programme Manager had attended 2 meetings with contractors who provide the technology for the smartphone applications being used at outdoor sites, with avatar based storytelling and quizzes and have also been provided with a ballpark costing from a third contractor.

It was also mentioned that since the report was prepared, 2 contractors have advised that there would be some ongoing charges. One provider has advised that there would be no maintenance charge for the first year however for the ongoing years there would be a cost of £750 per annum. One of the other providers have also advised that there will be an annual charge for hosting and software updates for a cost of £2,000.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: to apply for, accept and spend a UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) community grant should the application be successful.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: to fund the necessary £8,000 match funding for a UKSPF community grant from existing budgets should the application be successful.

117/24 **BEDFORDSHIRE FA, PETER NEWTON CENTRE**

The Head of Community Services summarised key points of the report.

118/24 **REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

South Beds Dial-a-Ride Management Committee – Councillor Peter Hollick

Councillor Hollick advised members that some new local bus services have been taken on very recently.

Dunstable Town Band – Councillor Robert Blennerhassett

No Update.

Men in Sheds – Councillor Richard Attwell

Councillor Jones updated members on behalf of Councillor Attwell that he has not been successful in obtaining any update from the organisation. Councillor John Gurney advised as a trustee of the organisation that he has written to the chairman asking them to explain to Councillor Attwell what they would like him to do as their representative and to also provide him with a summary of their recent trustee meeting.

The meeting closed at 8:17 pm

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2024****DUNSTABLE TOWN CENTRE SERVICES**

Purpose of Report:	For information.
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1. MIDDLE ROW MARKETS

- 1.1. Middle Row Market stall bookings for event markets have been positive with an average stall booking of 31 stalls for the last eight event markets. Two more event markets will be added to the Markets Calander in September and October as the Town Centre Manager is supporting local businesses to hold event days in The Square.
- 1.2. The first Youth Market, which took place on Saturday 6 July, supported traders 16 to 30 years of age with a free stall sponsored by Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce. Thirteen traders took part in the NMTF young traders' campaign for a chance to trade at Portobello Road Market at the regional finals. The Town Mayor and Chair of Community services judged all thirteen traders on the 6 July. Three young traders won a place at Portobello Road Market. Skye Alefounder from Country House Treats was the overall winner for Dunstable, winning a free weekend at the Twilight Markets in December. Skye went to the finals in Portobello Road and won her category of General Retail, and out of 70 traders was named the winner of the London and Southeast Young trader. Skye will be attending the finals in Stratford Upon Avon on the 23/24 August to Compete for the title of National Young Trader of the Year 2024.
- 1.3. Market bookings to date.

6 July	33 booked
20 July	23 booked
10 Aug	20 booked (cancelled)
17 Aug	43 booked
14 Sep	24 booked
21 Sep	19 booked

2. ASHTON SQUARE TOILETS

- 2.1. Ashton Square toilets have been entered into Loo of the Year for 2024/2025. Officers are optimistic that the toilets can gain a Platinum Plus award for the 2025 awards. Judging is anytime from July to September; results will be announced in October.

- 2.2. New family toilet seats have been installed and children's stickers placed in both the family toilets and sink areas.

3. TOWN CENTRE

Events on The Square

- 3.1. Ashton Square Day on Saturday 17 August was the biggest summer event to date with 43 stalls booked. The community stage had eight local groups/performers using the stage on the day. Street Food Heroes joined for the first time during a market event. The day had a great community feel with people enjoying the 'chill' area and street food in The Square. It was evident to see the growth in the young traders who joined the event for a second time. Octave was a great support on the day and provided instruments for some of those just starting on their music journey. Bookings are now being taken for the Twilight stage on Friday 13 Dec, Saturday 14 Dec and Sunday 15 Dec.
- 3.2. Street Food Heroes takes place on the second Thursday of the month, April to September. The last Street Food evening market is Thursday 12 September. An activity is being looked at for the final Street Food Heroes of the summer. A Christmas Street Food special will take place on Saturday 21 December in The Square from 9.30 am to 3.30 pm.
- 3.3. The Town Centre Manager has been working with Balance Fit from Maypole Yard for a joint event as part of Middle Row Markets and a lifestyle and Active Day. Details are still under discussion but will take place in October.
- 3.4. A Charities United Day is being organised alongside Middle Row Markets on Saturday 21 September. The event will highlight local charities alongside Middle Row Market and will have entertainment on the day. A former councillor is working alongside the Town Centre Manger to book charities for the day.
- 3.5. Heritage Open Day on Saturday 14 September will take place along Middle Row Markets and The Square. Entertainment booked for this event will include Myalpyper, Roman arts and crafts, traditional games, Wheelie good trail, assault course and selfie boards.
- 3.6. Entertainment and stall bookings are now being looked at for Twilight, which will be held on Friday 13 December, 3 pm to 8 pm, Saturday 14 December, 3 pm to 8 pm and Sunday 15 December, 10 am to 3 pm.

Partnership Working

- 3.7. Shop Watch continues to take place every six weeks. The next meeting is still to be arranged due to the summer holidays. Pub Watch was cancelled in July; officers are waiting for a new date. The Town Centre Manager will be attending court in October as a witness following an incident in the town back in April.
- 3.8. The Dino Day event took place on Saturday 27 July with a new Dinosaur provider and experience. The updated event went extremely well with positive feedback on the day from shops who saw a 30 to 50 % increase in sales. Arts and crafts from Grove Corner had 300 plus crafts and all completed by 1 pm. The Town Centre Assistant attended the event which was extremely successful; the public loved the new dinosaurs!

- 3.9. The Town Centre Manager is working with the Quadrant to arrange a Halloween event on Thursday 31 October. Pumpkin Day 2023 was an enormous success with the Pumpkin show and free activities.
- 3.10. The Town Centre Manager has begun to plan for 2025 events with the Events Officer. Middle Row Markets will join Party in the Park on Saturday 19 July 2025.

4. TOWN CENTRE VACANCY RATES

- 4.1. The vacancy rates to the end of July 2024 are provided below. The count will be undertaken again at the start of October 2024.
- 4.2. 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.
- 4.3. 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.
- 4.4. These figures have been shared with Central Bedfordshire Council:

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
253	29 vacant	11.46%	12.25% count end of April 24.

- 4.5. 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 vacant	12.38%	12.86% count end of April 24.

- 4.6. The following figures relate to the Quadrant Shopping Centre only.

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
43	3 vacant	6.97%	9.30% count end of April 24

- 4.7. Units in Grove Park area and Asda.

No. Units	No. Vacant Units	% Vacant Units	Previous %
6	0 vacant	0%	0% count from April 24

5. TOWN CENTRE BUSINESS PLAN

- 5.1. The Town Centre Manager is delivering the business plan with the support of the Town Centre Assistant. Event markets are bringing in positive trader numbers, so work will

continue on these. Delivery of the Young Traders Market had a positive impact on the markets especially with Skye winning the Regional Finals and taking part in the National Finals. The Town Centre Manager and Town Centre Assistant are engaging with other community groups to look at external groups/markets joining Middle Row Markets or using The Square on Saturdays when Middle Row Market is not operating.

6. UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

- 6.1. Three new water refill stations are now in operation around the town, at Grove House Gardens, Priory Gardens and Ashton Square. Free refillable water bottles have been given out to the public at events. Signs are being prepared to be placed next to each station.
- 6.2. Highways have given permission for the old benches in The Square to be removed and replaced with one solar bench. Grounds have confirmed the locations for the benches in Priory and Grove House Gardens. The order has been placed and we are waiting for a delivery date.
- 6.3. Two sites have been identified for the living pillars; stress tests are due to be carried out on the identified lamp posts with results due in September.
- 6.4. A potential pop-up shop unit has been identified. Officers have had talks with Estama (The Quadrant management company) to agree a three-month contract, details and costs are still to be confirmed. The Town Centre Manager has contacted Middle Row Traders to gauge interest in trading in the pop-up shop.
- 6.5. Officers are liaising with CBC over the location and installation of the wooden sculpture trail. All the sculptures have been delivered and will be installed before the end of the year.
- 6.6. Once the above projects have been completed the remaining budget will be reviewed to see whether there is enough left for power points can be installed in Grove House Gardens or whether an alternative project needs to be considered.

7. AUTHOR

Annette Clynes - Town Centre Manager
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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****MONDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2024****GROVE CORNER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Purpose of Report:	For information
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1. GROVE CORNER FIGURES

- 1.1. Grove Corner received 371 visits from young people between 14 May 2024 and 12 August 2024.

Grove Corner received 612 visits from young people between 5 May 2023 and 14 August 2023.

- 1.2. Pokémon sessions received 165 visits from young people between 21 May 2024 and 16 July 2024.

Pokémon sessions received 292 visits from young people between 9 May 2023 and 18 July 2023.

2. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

- 2.1. Officers are aware that sessions are currently quieter and have been discussing with young people the barriers for them to attend Grove Corner. Officers have received feedback from those aged 16 to 18 years that the session timings are too late; therefore, for the next term officers will be trialling new session times. For some young people this will enable them to attend sessions after school, which they are more likely to go to than sessions that would require them to go home and then go out again.

Monday 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm for those aged 13 to 18 years old
Tuesday 5.00 pm to 6.30 pm Pokémon for those aged 8 to 13 years old
Tuesday 6.45 pm to 8.15 pm Pokémon for those aged 14 to 18 years old (up to 25 SEND)
Wednesday 3.30 pm to 5.00 pm for those aged 16 to 18 years old
Wednesday 5.15pm to 6.45 pm for those aged 13 to 15 years old
Friday 4.00 pm to 5.30 pm for those aged 14 to 18 years old
Friday 6.00 pm to 7.45 pm for those aged 10 to 13 years old

Detached sessions will run on Fridays from 6.00 pm to 9.00 pm so young people aged 11 to 19 will continue to have access to youth workers on Friday evenings. After the first term of trialling the change of times, officers will gather feedback from Central Bedfordshire Council community safety and Bedfordshire Police to ensure there is no impact on Anti-Social Behaviour. These sessions may use Grove Corner once it gets dark sooner if that is appropriate to the young people.

- 2.2. Officers are working with the Town Centre Manager to run a Youth Business Awards. Young people will be visiting local businesses over the coming weeks with the support of youth workers to score businesses on their customer service, cost of items, value for money etc.

3. DETACHED YOUTH WORK

- 3.1. Between 15 May 2024 and 14 August 2024 officers have delivered 26 Detached activities and engagement sessions across Dunstable (excluding Dunstable East). The areas covered include:
- Downside - Blow Downs, Mayfield Shops, Recreational Grounds
 - High Street (North and South)
 - Priory House Gardens
 - Ashton Square
 - Brewers Hill Recreation Ground
 - Beecroft Shopping area
 - MaidenBower area
 - Spoodell estate
 - Drovers Way
 - West Street
 - French's Avenue Recreation Ground
 - BMX Park
 - Bennett Memorial Recreation Ground
- 3.2. Since 15 May 2024 and 14 August 2024, officers have been delivering nine hours per week detached youth work in Dunstable East. The following locations in Dunstable East have been visited:
- Grove Skate Park/ Leisure Centre area
 - Grove House Gardens
 - Quadrant Shopping Centre
 - Kingsbury Recreation Park
 - Peter Newton Recreation Ground
 - Ridgeway Recreation Ground
 - Katherine Drive area
 - White Lion Retail Park
 - McDonalds/ KFC/ Starbucks outdoor area
 - The Dunstable Centre
- 3.3. Officers continue to liaise with the Dunstable Centre to explore partnership working for detached youth work in Dunstable East. The team are currently waiting to hear back from the team at the Dunstable Centre regarding a funding application being submitted to enable the centre to work in partnership with the Town Council.
- 3.4. Throughout the summer officers delivered the Council's summer activities programme including the additional activities made possible by the budget increase this year. This has been well received by young people and parents/carers. Young people have stated how grateful they are for the activities specific for their age group. Figures have been recorded by headcount.

- 3.5. Between 15 May 2024 and 14 August 2024 officers engaged with 1,269 young people by headcount. 559 of these young people have been in Dunstable East and the remaining 710 have been in the rest of the town. Over the next few weeks, officers plan to deliver detached youth work in:
- Olma Road Recreation Ground
 - Mentmore Recreation Ground
 - Langdale shops
 - Priory Gardens
 - Spoodell estate

Officers will continue to visit existing areas they have worked in over the last three months and will also respond to need from

- 3.6. Officers continue to deliver monthly weekend sessions as part of the detached youth work provision. In May, June and July - Officers have delivered four weekend sessions in the following areas:
- Kingsbury Recreation Ground
 - Grove House Gardens
 - Grove Corner
 - Ashton Square

- 3.7. Officers continue to liaise with the Dunstable Centre to explore partnership working for detached youth work in Dunstable East. The team are currently waiting to hear back from the team at the Dunstable Centre regarding a funding application they were submitting to do partnership work with Dunstable Town Council.

Activity	Number of attendees 2024
School's out party	50
Inflatable Day	63
Sports Spectacular	60
Obstacle course and Human Table Football	40
Climbing wall and outdoor games	36
Sports Extravaganza	19
Skate Jam	Verbal update will be provided at committee
Chill and Thrill	Verbal update will be provided at committee

- 3.8. Officers have been delivering the summer activities programme. This has been well received by young people and parents. Young people have commented they are thankful to have dedicated activities specifically for their age. Figures have been recorded by head count.
- 3.9. Officers plan to encourage young people to sign up to a WhatsApp communication group. Officers will be able to message young people via a broadcast where they will be for each session, but young people will not be able to respond on the chat.

4. SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1. Officers will be visiting local schools in the new academic year to promote Grove Corner and detached sessions. Officers will be pitching these are those in year five and above.
- 4.2. Officers have invited Mary Seacole to attend assemblies or provide their resources for officers to be able to discuss with young people concerns they may have around hate crime.
- 4.3. Officers will be attending a walk with St Augustine’s Academy on 12 September, and this will include a litter pick. The walk is part of Bedfordshire Walking Festival and will be ran in partnership with Wildlife Trust.
- 4.4. Officers have planned to run a litter pick with Ashton St Peter on 26 September.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1. Officers are currently working on creating a sensory space outside Grove Corner where the wheelbarrows are currently placed. This area will be used by the community groups that hire Grove Corner to create a space that people will enjoy sitting in. Dunstable Men in Sheds have made planters and a seated area and over the coming weeks; officers will work on this space.
- 5.2. Officers have had a busy summer delivering the summer activities programme for those aged 3 to 10 years old. Details of attendance can be found below:

Activity	Date	Number of attendees 2023	Number of attendees 2024
School’s out party	Friday 19 July	Did not run in 2023	Over 400 people attended
Inflatable Day	Friday 26 July	555	624
Dance Workshop	Monday 29 July	76	28* Less places were offered this year
Skateboarding	Thursday 1 August	53	38 *Less places were offered this year
Let’s Play	Wednesday 7 August	80	150

Seaside Day	Tuesday 13 August	800	746
Zorb Football	Monday 19 August	107	130
Olympics Arts, Crafts and Obstacles	Thursday 29 August	74	Verbal update will be provided at committee

- 5.3. Officers have visited all who have taken part in Wheelie Fantastic with judges from Dunstable in Bloom. An awards evening will take place in September and the winners will be announced. This year 38 participants took part.
- 5.4. The Senior Neighbourhood Development Officer continues to work with the Parks and Open Spaces Officer to put a defibrillator in the old red phone box opposite Priory Church, on Church Street. This is currently in the planning stages. A local individual is organising a fundraiser to raise the necessary funds to install a defibrillator in memory of her son for the adopted telephone box.

6. SEEDCORN GRANTS

- 6.1. An online application was received in August from St. Augustine's Church for £500 to cover the equipment/startup costs for a youth badminton club. The Head of Services and Chair of Community Services considered the application and agreed that this meets all the requirements of the fund and awarded a grant to the church. This will be promoted on social media, website and with a press release.
- 6.2. There is still £500 remaining the seedcorn budget for this financial year. This will be promoted to community groups through the communications of the grant awarded e.g. social media and press release.

7. UKSPF – CULTURAL PROJECT

- 7.1. NGYT BBB Group have been working with the Voluntary and Community Sector performing arts organisations throughout the summer on this project and feedback to date has been very positive. The Head of Community Services will provide a verbal update at committee.

8. AUTHORS

Gill Peck – Youth and Community Manager

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Jack Adams-Rimmer – Senior Neighbourhood Development Officer

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Becky Wisbey – Head of Community Services

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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
MONDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2024
OLDER PEOPLE'S SERVICES

Purpose of report: For information

1. GOOD COMPANIONS CLUB

- 1.1. The Good Companions Club currently has 20 members. Officers advertised Good Companions Club in Talk of the Town. There have been several phone calls of interest, and officers have invited people to visit a session to see if they wish to join. Officers also contacted the doctor's surgeries again and have asked them to continue to promote the club.
- 1.2. Since the last report, Good Companions have had several speakers and activities. Teaching Talons attended, which was a successful and very popular with members, with them commenting how much they enjoyed meeting and interacting with various animals. Some of the other activities the group have engaged with include a summer party, a talk on bees, went on a boat trip and visiting Wardown Park.
- 1.3. Over the next few weeks, officers have planned for the COOP funeral estates to visit Good Companions, along with a visit to the zoo, a charity morning for Appledown Rescue, a craft session and a visit from the Mayor.

2. CREASEY PARK COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CENTRE LUNCH CLUB

- 2.1. Creasey Park Community Football Centre Lunch Club for the over 55s currently has 34 members, with an average of 28 attending. There is a waiting list of 12 people. Officers continue to keep in touch with those on the waiting list and invite them to other events for the older community.
- 2.2. CPCFC lunch club members have had various speakers attend. Again, Teaching Talons were very popular with CPCFC lunch club – with some commenting it had been their favourite activity so far this year. Other activities have included a day trip to the Cotswolds, Bedfordshire Police, Weatherfield Academy, music bingo, baby pictures quiz and a summer party.
- 2.3. Officers have planned several activities over the upcoming weeks, including a visit to the pantomime, a talk on bees, a trip to bowling, bingo and the Mayor attending.

3. COFFEE MORNINGS

- 3.1. Officers continue to facilitate coffee mornings and have received positive feedback from those who have attended. The last coffee morning saw over 40 people attend and some said this was due to knowing which providers would be present. Therefore, going forwards, officers will advertise providers attending alongside the dates and

locations for each coffee morning. The following coffee mornings are planned to take place, over the next few months.

- Tuesday 10 September – St Mary’s Church
- Tuesday 8 October – Splashside Cafe
- Tuesday 12 November – Beecroft Community Centre
- Tuesday 10 December – Furness Avenue

4. ROCK AND ROLL

- 4.1. Officers will be running the next Rock and Roll event on 1 October for those aged 55+. Officers are going to trial running this at the Peter Newton Pavilion. The theme will be a classic Rock and Roll, with an afternoon picnic style tea and music from Joe Corrigan.

5. AUTHORS

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Gill Peck, Youth and Community Manager
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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
MONDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2024

EVENTS

<p>Purpose of report: For information and to consider the proposed free uses of Grove Theatre in 2025/26.</p>
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1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1. It is recommended that from the Dunstable Musical Theatre Company are allocated one of the free uses of Grove Theatre in 2025/26 and that that the request from the Veteran's Foundation be declined.

2. EVENTS PROGRAMME 2024, REVIEW

2.1. St George's Day – Saturday 20 April

The St George's Day celebrations took place in April and were well attended by an estimated 1,500 people. The event has received fantastic feedback via Survey Monkey and Facebook.

2.2. Priory Pictures – Saturday 25 May

The first of the year's Priory Pictures took place in May; the event was attended with an estimated number of over 1,250 across the day. The second screening of *Wonka* had the highest audience figure of 600 for the film. Feedback has been positive from those that attended.

2.3. Motor Rally – Saturday 8 June

The event was very well received, with an estimated attendance of over 5,000 across the day. A total of 208 vehicle owners displayed their vehicles out of the 250 that applied to enter, which is the largest number of participants and applicants to date. Event sponsor Regtransfers displayed two smart cars and awarded a Sponsor's trophy at the event. Public feedback via Facebook and Survey Monkey has been extremely positive. Stall holders and caterers reported that they traded well throughout the day and enjoyed engaging with the public at the event. Additional attractions booked included singers: '*The Barn-Ettes*' and '*Jazz the 2 Of Us*', Unbound Theatre Roman storytelling, Special Operations Challenge, History Alive, crazy golf and children's arts and crafts. The History Alive WWII interactive trail reported that over 200 children took part in the trail. The event was marketed alongside Middle Row Market which also had additional activities on The Square to commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-Day. There was a good atmosphere across the whole of the town centre, with stalls and shops across The Square and Middle

Row, The Quadrant and along the High Street reporting that they traded well and were busy on the day of the event.

2.4. Dunstable Live – Saturday 22 June

Dunstable Live took place in June, with the largest audience attendance for the event to date at an estimated 5,000 across the day. There was a good atmosphere, with feedback on the day via Facebook and on Survey Monkey being incredibly positive, with comments over the variety and quality of the performances on stage and how well the tribute theme of ‘*Soul and Motown*’ was enjoyed. All caterers reported that they traded very well with the Caribbean food caterer selling out of stock on the day.

2.5. Party in the Park – Saturday 13 July

This was a well-attended event with consistent footfall on the day leading up to the finale with headliner Shaun Williamson’s ‘*Barrioke*.’ Lots of families attending throughout the day enjoyed the wide range of attractions across the site watching the entertainment on stage with the community groups, local artists, the free KidZone area and the children’s activities. The large TV screen positioned next to the stage was positively received by the public, allowing those sitting down or who were at a distance from the stage to see the stage performances.

This is the second year that the accessible viewing platform has been made possible through this year’s event sponsor, Alexander & Co. It was encouraging to see the platform in use throughout the day, despite the fact that no advance bookings were made via the Town Council’s website. Feedback received has been that users of the platform may not know until the day whether they are able to attend, depending on personal health and factors such as the weather forecast. Next year it is proposed that the platform will be available at the event on a first-come, first-served basis, in response to feedback from attendees.

There was a Councillors’ stall at Party in the Park where the ‘*Does Dunstable need a Neighbourhood Plan?*’ consultation took place. The stall was busy across the duration, with many surveys undertaken by the public. Free water bottles were given away from the Councillors’ stall and positively received by the public for use at the new water refill station next to Grove Corner.

2.6. Around the World – Saturday 3 August

The Around the World event went well, with an estimated attendance of 2,000 across the day. Despite the adverse weather warning of high gusts of wind and the inability to erect gazebos due to health and safety, most of the stall holders booked attended on the day, and all activities booked went ahead as planned. Feedback via Survey Monkey and on Facebook has been positive, with comments on the enjoyable range of free activities, performances, and wide variety of facilitators on site.

2.7. Priory Pictures – Saturday 10 August

The attendance at the second Priory Pictures of the year was estimated at over 1,000 across the day. *Kung Fu Panda 4* had the highest audience number of over 500 for the screening. Feedback has been positive from those that attended.

2.8. Sunday Concerts Attendance

	Band	Attendance (2024)	Attendance (2023)
Sunday 30 June	Dunstable Town Band	65	62
	Dunstable Salvation Army Band	94	82
Sunday 21 July	Beati Vocal Ensemble	82	75
	Last of The Summer Ukuleles	98	45
18 August	Welwyn Garden City Band	85	54
	Shambles Big Band	140	82

This year, six Sunday Concerts took place over the summer, with two performances taking place per day. The format of this year's programme has been expanded to include different genres and styles of music on stage alongside brass bands. This year, *Beati Vocal Ensemble* choir, *Last of the Summer Ukuleles* (a voluntary band raising funds for their local charity), and the *Shambles Big Band* (a swing band) performed. The diversity of the programme has been received very well through comments on the day and through feedback on Facebook and Survey Monkey.

2.9. HSHAZ Legacy

The HSHAZ programme ended in March 2024. As agreed by members, £10,000 was allocated to continue the delivery of activities related to heritage, history, and culture within the events programme. Past participants were invited to take part in this year's events. In addition, to celebrate the 80th anniversary of D-Day, a range of wartime themed activities, displays, and entertainment were booked where appropriate across the events programme. These included: 1940s games, walkabout entertainers, 1940s music, have a go dance workshops, an interactive character trail, an army assault course, themed children's arts and crafts, and the Home Guard display stands. The allocated budget has been used at the following events this year:

- St George's Day Celebrations
- Dunstable Classic Motor Rally
- Party in the Park
- Around the World

3. **EVENTS PROGRAMME 2024 – FORTHCOMING**

3.1. Priory Proms in the Park – Saturday 14 September

Priory Proms in the Park will take place in Priory Gardens on Saturday 14 September from 6.00 pm until 10.30 pm (BBC to confirm finish time). The evening starts off with Dunstable Town Band followed by Fiona Harrison who will be performing before the main broadcast takes place at 7.00 pm and during the interval. The BBC broadcast will be shown live via a giant screen with a fireworks finale. Priory Church will also feature lighting effects. There will also be an outdoor

bar and food concessions, alongside a VIP area and a glow products stall managed by Priory House.

3.2. Christmas Carols and Torchlight Procession – Friday 29 November

This event will take place on Friday 29 November. Officers are currently planning this event. A letter will be sent to all schools inviting the children to take part in the Torchlight procession in September. The road closure has been submitted which allows the A5183 to be fully closed during the whole event.

It is also hoped that the Grove Theatre can participate with some of the pantomime cast, and a Santa has been booked. Dunstable Ladies' Choir will once again be invited to support the children as they sing on The Square. The contractor BBB Group will be providing the light show finale.

4. **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR 2025**

- 4.1. The table below details the event dates for 2025. The date of the Dunstable Classic Motor Rally and Dunstable Live has been changed. The Dunstable Classic Motor Rally has now been moved from Saturday 7 June to Saturday 14 June. As confirmed with the organisers of the Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard Truck Convoy, the convoy date cannot be moved due to family commitments and has always fallen on the second Saturday in June to ensure it does not coincide with other Truck Convoy events. The new date set now aligns with the Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard Truck Convoy and Middle Row Markets planned for 2025. Dunstable Live has also been moved to allow for a two-week gap between the two large events. It is proposed that there are no significant changes to the timing of any of the established events.

Event and venue	Date 2025
St George's Day (PG)	Saturday 26 April 11.00 am to 4.00 pm
Around the World (PG)	Saturday 17 May 10.30 am 4.30 pm
Dunstable Classic Motor Rally (PG)	Saturday 14 June 10.00 am to 4.00 pm
Dunstable Live (GHG)	Saturday 28 June 3 pm to 8 pm
Sunday Concerts (GHG)	Sunday 29 June, 27 July & 17 August 12.00 noon & 2.30 pm
Priory Pictures (PG)	Saturday 5 July From 12.00 noon
Party in the Park (GHG)	Saturday 19 July 12.00 noon to 8.00 pm
Priory Pictures (PG)	Saturday 9 August From 12.00 noon
Priory Proms in the Park (PG)	Date and Times TBC from BBC
Christmas Carols and Torchlight Procession (TS)	Friday 28 November From 7.00 pm

(PG) Priory Gardens, (GHG) Grove House Gardens, (TS) The Square

5. FREE USE OF GROVE THEATRE

- 5.1. Dunstable has two free uses a year of Grove Theatre per year, from April to March. These opportunities are usually offered to the community and voluntary sector and are promoted through social media pages and the Town Council's website.
- 5.2. The first free use for 2024/25 has already been allocated to the Dunstable Musical Theatre Company for their performance of Joseph and the Technicolour Dreamcoat. The second free use has been allocated to the Next Generation Youth Theatre (NGYT) and BBB Group who were awarded the funding through the UKSPF for a community capacity-building project within the performing arts sector. As part of the Town Council's UKSPF culture bid, a 'scratch card' style event will be held at the Grove Theatre as a finale in January 2025.
- 5.3. Recently, the Town Council was approached by two organisations both requesting uses in 2025/26.
- 5.4. **The Veterans' Foundation** are seeking a venue to host a benefit concert in April 2025. The funds raised from the concert would go towards helping the injured, the homeless, and veterans with PTSD. It is believed that the organiser is not local and beneficiaries of the funds raised will be from outside of Dunstable.
- 5.5. **The Dunstable Musical Theatre Company** have requested use for another production next year, October 2025. They are yet to pick the performance, but once again it will involve adults and children/young people from in and around Dunstable both on stage and backstage. The company recently celebrated their 60th anniversary and previously were based at the Queensway Hall until it was demolished. They had always been promised Grove Theatre as their new home, however, this never transpired and they now need to raise funds to enable them to host performances in their local theatre.
- 5.6. Members are reminded that currently the Town Council are working on a capacity-building project with the performing arts sector in Dunstable. Findings are not expected until early next year, but access to performing spaces and requests to use Grove Theatre for free are anticipated. Therefore, if members are to agree both of these requests it would mean that groups would need to wait until April 2026 to access a Town Council free use, even though the capacity building project for local groups finishes in March 2025. It is therefore recommended that Members agree to the request from the Dunstable Musical Theatre Company but decline the request from the Veteran's Foundation.

6. AUTHORS

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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2024

PRIORY HOUSE

Purpose of Report: For information

1. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

- 1.1. The previous holder of the 6 hour post contracted to Saturdays has left to go to university. A recruitment process has taken place, and a verbal update will be given to the committee.
- 1.2. The new menu, including the brunch menu has proved very popular with customers and this has seen an increase in food orders.

2. SHOP

- 2.1. The shop sales have been going well over the summer, with showcasing shelving fully booked for the rest of the year.
- 2.2. Two new showcase shelvers have also come on board following officers advertising the benefits of showcase shelving through leaflets and actively meeting traders on the market, especially the young traders' market.
- 2.3. New autumnal stock has been ordered which will go on display at the beginning of September.

3. EVENTS

- 3.1. The G & T event was extremely successful. £1,300 was taken from 6 pm to 9 pm and every table and chair was full all evening.
- 3.2. The next G & T night is planned for 23 August, weather permitting, and an update will be given to the committee.
- 3.3. Around the World event was again a very successful day for Priory House, with the tables and chairs in use and most of the sales via the window hatch.
- 3.4. Officers are working on what potentially can be delivered in terms of workshops over Christmas.

4. PRIORY HOUSE REFURBISHMENT

- 4.1. The additional grant applications have now been submitted to the Lottery and Historic England and The Council should hear in September on the outcome.

- 4.2. Work has been continuing successfully within the house and Messenger are pleased with the progress of repairs so far.

5. FINANCE

- 5.1. Priory House Shop taking comparison excluding VAT:
- 5.2. As members will see the shop sales are doing very well and the effects of the seating in the shop along with the coffee machine has increased sales significantly.

	2023/24	2024/25	Variation 2023/24 to 2024/25
April	£1,871.88	£1,759.75	-£112.12
May	£2,013.57	£2,426.56	£412.99
June	£1,402.17	£2,667.56	£1,265.39
July	£1,098.91	£1,596.00	£497.09
TOTAL TO DATE	£6,386.53	£8,449.87	£2,063.34

- 5.3. Priory House Tea Rooms taking comparison excluding VAT.
- 5.4. Income for the tea rooms has increased over the summer, June was very wet, but July has seen the tables and chairs outside nearly every day which has increase footfall.
- 5.5. Officers will keep the chairs and tables out for as long as possible over the autumn.

	2023/24	2024/25	Variation 2023/24 to 2024/25
April	£9,647.09	£1,697.99	-£7,949.10
May	£10,612.85	£2,418.64	-£8,194.21
June	£11,802.63	£1,990.93	-£9,811.70
July	£11,188.56	£2,932.83	-£8,255.74
TOTAL TO DATE	£43,251.13	£9,040.39	-£34,210.74

6. AUTHOR

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DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

MONDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2024

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL 40TH ANNIVERSARY – COMMUNITY SERVICES

<p>Purpose of Report: For members to consider and agree options for this Committee to mark the Town Council's 40th year, 2025/26.</p>

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1. It is recommended that Members agree that officers proceed with plans for the following events immediately to enable planning timescales to be met:
 - 1.1.1. Fortnight of Fun (additional activities) - £10,000
 - 1.1.2. Soap Box Derby - £10,000
- 1.2. It is recommended that Members identify which of the following options should also be included in the draft budget for 2025/26, to be considered at the next Committee meeting:
 - 1.2.1. Chalk art - £11,000
 - 1.2.2. Shop decorating kits - £5,000
 - 1.2.3. Youth Festival - £10,000
 - 1.2.4. Drone photograph - £475

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. May 2025 will mark 40 years since the establishment of Dunstable town Council in its current form. 2025 will also make 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.

- 2.3. In 2019 Dunstable Town Council were successfully awarded £10,000 National Lottery Awards for All Community Fund to hold a two-day cultural event. The event was called 'Weird and Wonderful' which took place on Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 September on The Square. The event was delivered in seven different zones, on The Square and Middle Row alongside stall holders and involved over 30 different acts, demonstrations and performances. The aim of the event was to portray a similar concept and feel to that of Covent Garden, with street performers, music, acts, and entertainment. The Youth and Community team also supported facilitating a free 'drop in' games workshop, alongside providing free arts and crafts. The event was received extremely positively by the public and all partners involved. Throughout the two-day event, the Council received positive feedback verbally from attendees and providers. After the event, social media portrayed positive feedback from those who had attended. Some of the local performers who took part included 10 community groups performing over the two-day event on a community stage, along with local artists and businesses. If a similar approach was taken during 2025, it would provide an opportunity for local groups currently involved in the performing arts UKSPF capacity building project to take part.

3. FORTNIGHT OF FUN

- 3.1. It is proposed that the Council runs a Fortnight of Fun for the Town Council's 40th anniversary running from 12 July to 26 July 2025. During the fortnight there are already pre planned activities that can have a 40th twist, along with additional activities to enhance the fortnight. This includes the market, Party in the Park and the summer activities programme. The concept of a fortnight of fun enables the Council to rebadge events and activities that are already funded and, in the calendar, as celebratory events. It means that a wider proportion of the community will find something that appeals to them and that they would like to participate in.
- 3.2. It creates a whole Council approach with teams from grounds, democratic and the Splashside Café coming together, and whilst the example of the 'Weird and the Wonderful' helps to explain the concept of lots of activities and events taking place, what would be different is that rather than these all taking place in The Square, they would take place across the town centre, thus benefiting the town centre and local businesses as a whole.
- 3.3. **Summary of the Fortnight of Fun**
- Street activities
 - 40th themed Street Food heroes on 17 July.
 - 40th Themed Party in the Park and Middle Row Market on 19 July.
 - Dino Day at The Quadrant on 27 July.
 - Big Lunch to take place on 15 July.
 - Priory House G & T event on 25 July.
 - 40th anniversary themed summer activity which would fall into the second week of the fortnight of fun, possibly the School's Out parties.
 - Youth Festival to take place during the school holidays if funding is secured/agreed.

4. SOAPBOX DERBY

- 4.1. The Town Council created a new event, Party in the Park, to mark the Council's 25th anniversary in 2010. This proved so successful that it has continued ever since. It is proposed to create a new event to mark the 40th anniversary. A new event needs to be something completely different to any existing town council event, one that is not similar to anything delivered by immediately neighbouring towns and one which involves the community as much as possible. It is proposed that the new event would be a soapbox derby, which would be combined with the planned Priory Pictures on 9 August 2025.
- 4.2. Officers have attended a soapbox derby event in Aylesbury and are meeting the events team to learn about organising a soapbox derby event and to understand the costs and health and safety protocols.
- 4.3. The anniversary is also a great reason to trial something new and if it is unsuccessful, it would not go into the following year's events programme.
- 4.4. A soapbox derby is a karting event, in which individuals, communities, charities and businesses make a go-kart to compete in the soapbox derby. All karts are pushed down a hill; there are no engines involved. Priory Gardens has enough gradients and slopes to make this event work, however officers are in the process of assessing this and making enquiries on ramps that can be hired for this occasion if required. The track would mostly use the concrete path to minimise damage to the grounds and would be lined with barriers and hay bales.
- 4.5. The format of the derby is where teams have timed runs down the track, the teams score points for animation/dress up as well as points for the timed runs. There can also be adult and children's teams.
- 4.6. The proposed format of the derby would include using the screen to show a family film in the morning, and then use the screen to capture the soapbox derby race throughout the day, ending with a film at the event of the event. There would also be stalls, children's activities, food and music throughout the day. The main additional costs involved would be the hire of hay bales, additional security, St John's Ambulance and an increase for insurances.
- 4.7. Currently the second Priory Pictures in August costs £8,000. It is estimated that an additional £10,000 is needed to add a soapbox derby event into Priory Pictures. The additional £10,000 would include additional infrastructure costs, such as security, toilets, barrier hire, timing devices, as well as potentially hiring experts to ensure the correct health and safety procedures are in place for building and racing go-karts. This costs also includes a hire of a ramp if the gradient of the slopes in Priory Gardens are not steep enough. The Council already receives income from

concessions sold for Priory Pictures; it may be possible to achieve a modest increase by expanding the event.

5. Additional Proposals

5.1. Options for consideration:

- Chalk word art in the town centre. Engaging the public to colour with key words and inspiring phrases to mark the 40th year.
- Shop decorating kits with the 40th anniversary logo on, with shops being encouraged to add to the basic kit and enter a competition.
- Drone photograph of Town Council staff and councillors (in the shape of 40) in a park.
- Street dressing (note this comes under corporate marketing and will be reported to Finance and General Purposes).

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1. Some of the suggestions and ideas will be delivered within existing budgets, but the following ideas will require members to approve additional funding as part of the 2025/26 budget setting process.

6.2. Ideas that require additional funding include:

- Fortnight of Fun, additional activities - £10,000
- Soap Box Derby - £10,000
- Chalk art - £11,000
- Shop decorating kits - £5,000
- Youth Festival - £10,000
- Drone photograph - £475

6.3. Two items would require officers to begin planning now, so for these Members are asked to agree them now, on the understanding that they will be included in the budget for 2025/26. These are:

- Fortnight of Fun, additional activities - £10,000
- Soap Box Derby - £10,000

7. POLICY AND CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

7.1. Whilst these suggestions do not deliver on one individual specific corporate plan action, they all help to enhance the town's identity, creating a sense of pride in Dunstable.

8. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

8.1. All of the options presented, if chosen to be delivered, will be done within the Council's current health and safety processes and risk assessments, and any events will be passed through the safety Advisory Group.

9. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. All of the options presented can be delivered within the Council's current staffing structure for Community Services.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. None.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

- 11.1. Officers will always consider the environmental impact of their service area, e.g. taking into account the materials used or the distance provider's travel.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1. Officers will give consideration to ensuring that services and projects delivered as part of the 40th anniversary celebrations will be as accessible as possible to a wider section of Dunstable residents regardless of all protected characteristics. The Soapbox Derby is designed to be of interest to a wide range of residents from different backgrounds.

13. APPENDICES

- 13.1. None

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 14.1. None

15. CONCLUSION

- 15.1. Officers believe that it is really important to mark the Town Council's 40th year and to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements made. It helps to foster a sense of place and pride and general positivity about the town. Whilst some of the items could be delayed for decision as part of the budget setting process others require a decision at committee in order to provide officers with enough time to plan. The fortnight of fun and the soap box derby both need a decision this month.
- 15.2. The fortnight of fun provides a chance for a town wide celebration, to do something a bit different than what was offered in 2010 and allows the whole council to get involved and to rebadge events and activities that are already budgeted for. This seems an effective way of marking the occasion.

15.3. There is also an opportunity to do some things differently and to add something new (within an existing activity and in the form of a new event), with some of these suggestions there are budget implications as detailed in section 4.2 with the first two items requiring an immediate decision, the remain items can wait until budget setting.

16. AUTHOR

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