

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

HELD ON MONDAY 6 JANUARY 2025 FROM 7:00 PM

Present: Councillors Liz Jones (Chair), Louise O’Riordan (Town Mayor), Sally Kimondo (Deputy Town Mayor), Peter Hollick, Wendy Bater, Gregory Alderman, Robert Blennerhassett,

In Attendance: Paul Hodson (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), Georgia Pearson (Democratic Services Manager), Becky Wisbey (Head of Community Services), Gina Thanky (Events Officer), Lisa Stephens (Cultural Services Manager) and Jack Adams-Rimmer (Senior Neighbourhood Development Officer)

In Attendance: Councillors Nicholas Kotarski, Johnson Tamara and (Remotely) Annette Clynes (Town Centre Manager)

Public: Nil

001/25 - Apologies for Absence

Councillors John Gurney, Matthew Neall, Trevor Adams and Mark Davis

002/25 - Declarations of Interest

There were no specific declarations of interest.

003/25 - Public Question Time

There were no questions from the public.

004/25 - To agree the minutes of the meeting of the meeting of 4 November 2024 as an accurate record

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

005/25 - Action Tracker – to review progress of previously agreed actions

The Action Tracker was noted.

006/25 - Town Centre Services

The Town Centre Manager highlighted the key points of the report to members. Members were advised that the market held on 21 December 2024 had 24 stall holders attend not the 33 outlined within the report, this was due to poor weather.

Councillor Jones passed along her gratitude to all officers involved in making the Christmas market season one of the best Dunstable has seen.

007/25 - Budget 25/26

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive presented the report to members. It has been proposed to remove two events out of those planned which include the Fortnight of Fun and Youth Festival.

Councillor Hollick asked about the Soap Box Derby event for the 40th Anniversary celebrations in regard to the feasibility/health and safety of the event. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive advised that a lot of work has been done and talks are currently being held with contractors and other Councils who have previously done an event like this to ensure that the Council are able to deliver this event confidently and safely.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: It was resolved to recommend to the Finance and General Purposes Committee to reduce the originally proposed Events and Community Engagement budgets by a total of £20,000, by removing the budgets for the Fortnight of Fun and Youth Festival.

008/25 - Priory House

The Cultural Services Manager summarised the report provided to members and highlighted key information.

The Cultural Services Manager advised that unfortunately due to the team being down a Duty Manager, on 11 and 18 January 2025, Priory House will be closed, this will stop any occurring of overtime when footfall and income is low in January.

Members passed along their sincere thanks to officers for all of their continued hard work and support through some challenging times experienced with Priory House at the moment.

009/25 - Events

The Events Officer summarised the key points in the report.

Members praised the Events officer for an amazing year of events and how well the Torchlight Procession was received by residents seeing its biggest crowd yet.

010/25 - Grove Corner and Community Engagement

Members noted the report provided which was summarised by the Senior Neighbourhood Development Officer.

The Christmas activity workshop held on Saturday 22 December 2024 saw 18 young

people attend.

For the February half term activities, as well as the private hire for the swimming pool at the Dunstable Centre on Monday 17 February, there will also be football and giant games on Thursday 20 February at Kingsbury Recreation Ground and on Friday 21 February there will be a movie afternoon at the Splashside Café.

Officers ran a family fun Christmas workshop on Monday 23 December. 64 children attended this event with lots of positive feedback gained especially on this event being free before Christmas.

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive advised that both sources of funding for the Detached Youth Work end in March 2026. There is no current plan to fund this work after however there will be a discussion later on in the year to provide ample time for a decision to be made.

Members recognised the continued hard work and support for young people across Dunstable and thanked all officers for the value they bring to the Town.

011/25 - Older People's Services

The Senior Neighbourhood Development Officer summarised the report provided to members.

Members passed along thanks to all involved in providing these services to the older residents within the community.

Councillor Tamara joined via Teams at 7:39 pm.

012/25 - Reports from Outside Bodies

South Beds Dial-a-Ride Management Committee - Cllr Peter Hollick

Councillor Hollick provided an update to members, at the most recent meeting, South Beds Dial-a-ride are still providing the bus route services which is really positive for those residents who are not able to take advantage of the buses. Members were advised that there has been no current update from Central Bedfordshire Council on the land at Watling House where the buses are currently placed on its future for Dial-a-Ride.

Dunstable Town Band - Cllr Robert Blennerhassett

Councillor Blennerhassett advised that there is currently no update to provide.

Men in Sheds - Cllr Richard Attwell

No update

013/25 - Date of the next meeting - Monday 3 March 2025 at 7.00 pm

The meeting closed at 7:43 pm