

**Minutes of the Community Services Committee Meeting held at Corsham Town Hall  
on Wednesday 15 March 2023**

**Present** Councillor N Farmer (Chair)  
Councillors A Brown, T Bush, D Jarman, A White and R Williams

**In Attendance** Councillor S Abbott  
Ms S Leigh (Community Services Officer (Arts))  
Mrs S Thomas (Head of Community Services)  
Mrs T Walpole (Community Services Officer (Tourism and Events))

**CS 26/22 Apologies**

There were none.

**CS 27/22 Public Question Time and Petitions**

There were none.

**CS 28/22 Declarations of Interest**

To receive any Declaration(s) of Interest under Corsham Town Council's Code of Conduct issued in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.

Cllr D Jarman declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 7 – Public Art Projects, given his links to the Peacock Arts Trail, as his wife is one of the organisers.

Cllr Abbott declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 9 – Business Support Update, given his links to the High Street where his wife rents a retail unit.

**CS 29/22 Matters arising from the Minutes of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 11 January 2023**

There were none.

**CS 30/22 Community Wellbeing Update (*Minute CS 19/22*)**

The Committee was updated, via a report, on the recent work undertaken by the Community Services Officer (Health and Wellbeing) and the Town Council's Community Wellbeing Working Group, focussing on families, older/vulnerable people and young people. Upcoming work would concentrate on social prescribing and the impact of this on local health initiatives.

During the discussion that followed points raised included: Wiltshire Council's FUEL holiday clubs, with Springfield Campus hosting FUEL for SEND children on 3 and 4 April; Cllr

Jarman running teamwork training for Corsham Youth Zone; Cllr Bush relaunching her Creative Writing Lab, which could link to social prescribing; activities for young people and creating a directory of what is available in town; sports clubs being over-subscribed and the lack of coaches to help alleviate this with the possibility of trained coaching staff at MOD Corsham being able to help.

The report was noted.

**We Are The People Update** – Cllr Bush updated the Committee on the We Are The People project and the plans to set up a Disabled People’s Organisation (DPO) in Corsham, that would be supported by the Town Council. An in-person event was due to be held at the Town Hall on 30 March, with an online meeting on 3 April for anyone unable to attend the earlier meeting. The hope was that, in the longer term, the DPO would play a part in the Town Council’s decision-making process.

The Head of Community Services was asked to try and arrange a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter for the Thursday event.

The update was noted.

### **CS 31/22 Defibrillator Update**

The Head of Community Services updated the Committee on the work being done by the Town Council’s Technical Assistant to install a defibrillator on the High Street. This would mean emergency aid would potentially be available at both ends of the town centre, with the Town Council’s current defibrillator already in place on the Newlands Road Car Park toilets. Following discussions, The Royal Oak pub’s landlord and brewery had agreed to a defibrillator on the outside wall of the building, making it available to the public at all times. Consent would be required from Wiltshire Council’s Conservation Officer and it was hoped a decision would be made by the end of March. The Town Council would fund both the frost-free cabinet and the defibrillator itself, with the small costs incurred from powering the cabinet covered by The Royal Oak. A defibrillator would also be installed inside the Town Hall for public use during office hours, and the use of hirers of the Methuen Hall.

St Bartholomew’s Parish Church Council was looking at the potential for a defibrillator within the church’s ground and discussion had begun with the Diocese. Following a social media post regarding the town’s defibrillator locations on the defibfinder.uk website (part of The Circuit, the national defibrillator network), Aurora Dental Practice had commented regarding the defibrillator they have in their premises, which was available for anyone to use during opening hours. The Technical Assistant had also been in discussions with those behind the installation of a defibrillator on the Broadmead estate, sharing information on setting up a constituted group to support the continued governance of the defibrillator.

The update was noted.

### **CS 32/22 Public Art Projects (*Minute CS 20/22, CS 5/22 and others*)**

The Community Services Officer (Arts) updated the Committee on:

- i) **The Potley Community Arts Project**  
Caroline Rudge and Rachel Heard, the two artists commissioned to undertake the Potley Community Arts Project would be running two community engagement events in the area in the coming weeks, on 25 March and 1 April, followed by a free Family Workshop at The Pound on 15 April. The artists would be giving a presentation on the outcomes and next steps of the project at the next Community Services Committee meeting in May.

**ii) Plinth Proposal for Cross Keys**

A 45cm high, 2.5m diameter circular plinth (2m base, with additional stonework and secure fixings) had been approved by Wiltshire Council's Highways Engineer and would be installed at Cross Keys as a base for loaned/commissioned public art. It was hoped the work would begin in May. The Town Council's Public Art Task Group had met for initial discussions on how the process of organising the artworks would be run.

**iii) The Peacock Arts Trail (7-15 October 2023)**

The Town Council would be supporting the event again, with the Town Hall hosting the Youth Art competition displays and, potentially, artists looking for an exhibition space although this aspect was yet to be finalised. Cllr Bush explained that she had been approached by a disabled artist asking whether concessions and support would be available to them. Contact had been made with the organisers and would be followed up.

**iv) Plans for *The Prayer* by Iain Cotton**

The Prayer sculpture had been rediscovered at Springfield Community Campus, where it had been stored following its removal from Corsham Library ahead of the Digital Mansion Corsham building works.

The Chief Executive had been in contact with the artwork's sculptor, Iain Cotton, about the piece and its relocation. Following consultation with the Arts Officer and Public Arts Task Group, and agreement from Wiltshire Council, The Pound and Corsham Climate Action, it had been decided to site the work in the new Community Garden, although this would not happen immediately as the piece needed some conservation work and a plinth ahead of installation. A quote had also been given for carving an inscription on the plinth. The Committee was asked for its thoughts on the costs and while Councillors were happy with those for the conservation, plinth and installation, they felt the £2,500 quoted for the inscription could be better used for another Arts-based project, and a plaque would work equally well alongside the sculpture.

**Agreed:** That the Chief Executive contact Iain Cotton to discuss the costs and see whether any alternative arrangements could be made for the inscription or plaque.

**v) StoryTown 2023**

Cllr Farmer, the Chief Executive, Head of Community Services and Community Services Officer (Arts) had met to carry out a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) on the StoryTown concept and how it might develop in the future. It was felt that StoryTown had a definite role to play in delivering the Town Council's Strategic Plan, via community engagement, and a further meeting would be held to discuss this in more detail.

The update was noted.

**CS 33/22 Draft Creative Corsham Strategy (2022-2027)**

The Head of Community Services had prepared a draft Creative Corsham Strategy for approval. The Strategy outlined the Town Council's creative and cultural ambitions for 2022-2027 and how they would be achieved, particularly in connection with the Strategic Plan (2022-2026). An Action Plan, based on the objectives in the Strategy, would be produced for the meeting in May.

Comments and suggestions on the Strategy included expanding the meaning to include creative thinking; adding The Royal Oak as a cultural asset for its live music performances;

including mention of the Community Garden and environmental projects and highlighting the community wellbeing work that took place prior to the pandemic.

**Resolved:**

That, subject to the amends discussed being included, the Creative Corsham Strategy (2022-2027) be approved. A revised Strategy, with its associated Action Plan, would be produced for consideration by the Committee at its next meeting.

**CS 34/22 Business Support Update (*Minute CS 22/22 and others*)**

**i) Business Breakfast – 28 February 2023**

The Community Services Officer (Tourism and Events) updated the Committee on the business support work recently undertaken. The Town Council's second Business Breakfast had taken place at Digital Mansion Corsham (DMC) on 28 February. The event had a Sustainable/Plastic Free Corsham theme, with four presentations from Action Net Zero, the Federation of Small Businesses' Sustainability Hub, the SWLEP Growth Hub and Andrew Hall talking about his sustainable hotel plans for the old Lloyds Bank building. Approximately 40 people attended, with only around 30-40% of those having attended the previous Business Breakfast. There was a positive gender balance and lots of smaller (one-two people) businesses. To engage with a different audience again, the next meeting would be a lunch, again at DMC, on 9 June with a possible Wellbeing in the Workplace theme. This could include mental health, mentoring, Access to Work etc, which could then link to a follow-up event in the autumn that would link to civic challenges, working with the Town Council and volunteering.

An online **Business Health Survey** had been sent to those businesses who had attended the first two Business Breakfasts and this would be more widely circulated over the next few weeks, with an end of April deadline.

**ii) FiverFest (11-25 March)**

FiverFest was running in the town, from 11-25 March, with 17 businesses participating, with £5 offers and discounts. The variety of offers was different to the previous FiverFest, with The Pound taking part for the first time, offering £5 tickets for four different performances; life coaching sessions available for £5, and estate agent fees discounted by £500. BBC Wiltshire had picked up on FiverFest: a pre-recorded interview with the Tourism and Events Officer had been repeated on the radio a number of times between 11-13 March.

**iii) Retail Map**

The new retail map, designed by artist Susie Brooks, was now ready to go to print, ahead of going in the town centre noticeboards, once these had been repainted.

The update was noted.

**CS 35/22 Events Update (*Minute CS 23/22 and others*)**

The Community Services Officer (Tourism and Events) explained the plans for upcoming Town Council events.

**i) Kids' Clean Up (1 April 2023)**

In conjunction with Corsham Climate Action, the Tourism and Events Officer would be leading a family litter-pick at Springfield, from 9am, on 1 April as part of Keep Britain Tidy's Great British Spring Clean initiative. The litter collected would be sorted, with recyclable materials going to the Corsham Recycling Hub, and the rest being collected by the Town Council's contractors as part of their Great British Spring Clean objectives.

- ii) **Easter Trail (1-26 April 2023)**  
This year's Easter Holiday trail would be a Bug Trail, with 10 wooden bugs hidden in shop windows. Completed forms would receive a packet of sunflower seeds and instructions on how to make a bee hotel, as well as sweets. The Trail was being sponsored by Nature Nurture Kids, a stallholder at the Eco Fair.
- iii) **Eco Fair (22 April 2023)**  
The Eco Fair, being organised together with the Environmental Project Officer, had 26 stalls booked – with a mix of craft, information and trading stalls in the High Street (pedestrian area only) and at DMC, including Corsham Climate Action/Fairtrade. The event was being sponsored by Martingate. The Town Council would use the Fair as an opportunity to promote the Plastic Free Corsham campaign. A Recycling Quiz/Trail would encourage visitors to all the stalls, as well as the activities taking place at The Three Brewers and The Pound.
- iv) **Summer Busking Saturdays (6 May-30 September)**  
The planning for this year's Summer Busking Saturdays was going well, with only a few dates left to fill. The initiative would launch with three buskers, as part of the Coronation celebrations: guitarist Ben Powell, vocalist Tracey Kelly and saxophonist Sam Bernald-Ross.
- v) **Taste of Corsham (17 June 2023)**  
Twenty-two stalls had already booked for the food festival, including newcomers Siam Street Food and The Greatest Little Coffee Box on Earth. The musical entertainment was being sourced by The Pound as part of their Blue Sky Festival. Councillors would be emailed regarding their availability to help nearer the time.

The update was noted.

## **CS 36/22 Coronation of King Charles III (*Minute CS 24/22 and others*)**

As previously discussed, the Arts-based activities (Poem for Corsham, Portrait of the King, Design a Flag) to mark the Coronation were being widely promoted, with details sent to all the schools, and promoted in the noticeboards and on the Town Council website and social media. The Pound Arts Centre would be funding a live screening of the event, part-funded by the Town Council. The Summer Busking Saturdays would launch with three musicians playing 'for the King' and there would be a Crown Trail (1-10 May) for children, with wooden crowns to spot in shop windows.

On 5 May, in a joint initiative between Wiltshire Council, Celebrating Age and the Town Council, there would be a free Big Coronation Tea Party for seniors in the Corsham community area, held at Springfield Campus, 1.30-4pm. It was estimated that around 120 older/vulnerable people could be accommodated, with 'afternoon tea' style food, the North Swindon Big Band and poet Jonny Fluffypunk to enjoy, and Deputy Lord-Lieutenant, and Paralympian, Stephanie Millward MBE on hand to open the event. It was also hoped that local schoolchildren would be able to help serve the tea and perhaps perform in a choir. Transport would be available via the local Link schemes. The Tea Party was being promoted via groups and organisations working with older people as well as to the wider public. Alongside this, Celebrating Age was holding a free Coronation Art Workshop for Older People, on 25 April, to make decorations for the Tea Party.

On 8 May, the Coronation weekend would see The Great Big Help Out, promoting volunteering within local communities. Corsham Climate Action had already announced a litter pick and an event at the Community Garden. Information on these, and other

opportunities, would be collated and promoted on social media. A new Volunteering section would also be created on the Town Council's website.

**CS 37/22 Tourism Update (*Minute CS 12/22 and others*)**

The Community Services Officer (Tourism and Events) updated the Committee on the recent tourism work undertaken. Adverts had been placed in, among others, the WI's magazine, Coach Tours UK and Group Travel World to promote group travel to Corsham. Two groups would be visiting the town in the coming weeks, including a group of 20 ladies from Swindon who would be given a tour of the town.

Corsham had been included in Visit Wiltshire's new Sustainable Travel Map.

Cllr Brown explained that the Caravan and Motorhome Club would be holding an event at Corsham Rugby Club. This would be investigated further.

The Canine Corsham campaign would launch in April, with a new page on the Visit Corsham website and associated promotion to encourage dog owners to the town for walks and the services on offer (dog friendly shops, eating places, etc). Garden Vets and Hale Vets had agreed to sponsor pooh bags/dispensers. It was also hoped that the new dog grooming business could be included as part of the promotion. Cllr White suggested that the Dog Show, to raise funds for Wiltshire Air Ambulance, could be included on the website.

The update was noted.

**CS 38/22 Corsham Town Council Grants**

Following the Finance and Administration Committee's meeting on 22 February 2023 (*Minute F&A 16/22*), the Town Council's grants system had been revised for 2023/24 to formally allow the Community Services Committee to consider grant applications over £750 when they were for community wellbeing projects and youth activities. The F&A Committee had also agreed to transfer the Corsham Youth Zone budget to Community Services from the 2024/25 financial year.

As part of the new arrangements, it was:

**Agreed:** That there should be a grant allocation ring-fenced within each of the Community Wellbeing and Youth Activities budgets and a maximum grant level (eg £2,000) set. Applications over this would need to be considered separately by the Chief Executive and, potentially, factored into the following year's budgets.

The Head of Community Services would discuss the allocation of funds in more detail with the Chief Executive and share the findings with Committee members via email.

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm and closed at 9.30pm. There were no members of the public present.

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CHAIRMAN

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DATE

