

**Notes of the Informal Community Services Committee Meeting Held Remotely  
on Wednesday 16 June 2021**

**Present** Councillor N Farmer (Chair)  
Councillors A Brown, A Crockford, M Jackson, L Jefferson, D Jarman and  
A White

**In Attendance** Councillor S Abbott  
Councillor T Ellis  
Ms S Leigh - (Community Services Officer (Arts))  
Mrs S Thomas (Head of Community Services)

**1. Apologies**

There were none.

**2. 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 Jarman declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Items 5 – Arts Update which included information regarding the Peacock Arts Trail, for which his wife is on the committee.

**3. Matters arising from the Minutes of the online Community Services Committee Meeting held remotely on 24 March 2021.**

There were none.

**4. Health and Wellbeing Update (*Minutes CS 43/20, 38/20 and others*)**

Cllr A Brown, Chair of the Town Council's Health and Wellbeing Working Group updated the Committee on three pieces of work being undertaken by Health and Wellbeing stakeholders.

- i) Antonia Ramsey, Creative Learning Officer at The Pound Arts Centre, was compiling a survey to be taken by the students of The Corsham School to discover what information and activities they would like to see in the Thrive project, which was being created to help them deal with stress and mental health issues. It was hoped that the survey could include additional, wider-based questions from the Health and Wellbeing Group to help them in their fact-finding and project planning.

- ii) The Stay Safe Initiative would be working with students and parents at The Corsham School, starting with Years 7 and 8, running courses on how to stay safe digitally. Other sessions would be rolled out to other year groups in the next academic year. This project had been part-funded by the Town Council.
- iii) Professor Agata Vitale, from Bath Spa University was working with The Pound on a possible project for young people, that would help her research. This was at a very early stage but would look at how young people can use the Arts to improve their lives.

A discussion followed regarding Corsham Youth Zone (CYZ) and how, if required, the Town Council could support the group further. It was agreed to ask the leadership team from CYZ if they would like to meet with the Town Council, which would be represented by Cllrs Abbott, Brown, Crockford, Farmer and Jarman, as well as HoCS. The need to involve young people in any long-term decision-making was also discussed.

The Head of Community Services then updated the Committee on the work being done by the Community Services Officer (Health and Wellbeing) which, in the short-term, was focused on young people and their mental health. Projects included creating a youth group directory; attending a Young People and Mental Health webinar; mapping and partnership work; working with schools on the Healthy Schools initiative; looking at local and national funding options/opportunities and training as a mental health first aider.

The update was noted.

#### **5. Arts Update (*Minutes CS 47/20, CS 24/20 and others*)**

The Community Services Officer (Arts) updated the Committee on the work being done to support local artists. Research into the potential for a pop-up shop/gallery was ongoing, with a survey due to go out to local artists, via the Peacock Arts Trail database and other sources, to gather the level of interest and commitment within the sector. The findings would enable those who had expressed an interest in running the project, with support from the Town Council, to understand its viability. The findings would also be shared with Martingate, following their offer of a potential location for the shop/gallery. Contact details would also be collected, via a GDPR-compliant question, to help with the collation of a Town Council-held database of artists.

The Town Council was also fully supporting the Peacock Arts Trail, which was due to run from 11-19 September and would feature a mix of online work as well as, if feasible, some open studios.

The update was noted.

#### **6. Public Art Update (*Minutes CS 48/20, CS 25/20 and others*)**

Springfield Gates – The new gates at the Valley Road entrance to Springfield, designed and created by artist Anya Beaumont, had been installed on 31 May and had received a great response from local people, as well as good coverage in the local press. There was still more to be done with new panels to replace the chain-link fencing and a barrier to stop children/dogs running into the road. The bin and signage at the entrance would be moved which would enhance the appearance of the artwork.

Cross Keys – This project was now moving forward, following a meeting of those involved in its engineering and construction and it was hoped that the piece would be installed in early autumn.

The update was noted.

The Committee then discussed ideas for a new public artwork in the Potley area, potentially near the railway bridge, which would be funded using the S106 money from the Corsham Rise development. Issues considered included the need for planning permission; a project that would link residents from the established Potley estate and Corsham Rise; the need for community engagement to ensure a sense of ownership; the possibility of the artwork also being used as a form of traffic-calming; using known contacts, ex-Town and Wiltshire Councillor Phil Whalley and Rodney Veazey of the Brunel Shed, which is based in the Potley and Pockeridge Community Centre, to help get in touch with Potley residents, and the need for any work in this location to be very sensitively handled.

An update on progress would be given at the next Committee meeting.

## **7. Town Council Events in 2021/22 (*Minutes 46/20, CS 33/20*)**

*Busking Saturdays (1 May-25 September)* – The Busking Saturdays, established to encourage visitors into town on Saturday mornings and support local musicians, were proving a great success and had received a very positive response. The initiative was a joint one between the Town Council and Martingate and there were plans for Martingate to install power at the busking site which would enable a wider range of musicians to play. It was hoped that the final Busking Saturday, on 25 September, would see a number of buskers play around the town, with a ‘gala performance’ at the end of the day.

*NHS Frontline Day (5 July 2021)* – This was a new, national event to recognise NHS social care and frontline workers on what would be the 73<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the NHS. Plans included the raising of a flag at 10am, a two-minute silence at 11am, a toast to the NHS at 1pm, street and garden parties through the afternoon and a clap for the NHS at 8pm, accompanied by bellringers across the country ringing bells 73 times to mark the occasion. From a Town Council point of view it was planned to raise the flag and mark the two-minute silence. The bellringers at St Bart’s had agreed to take part in the evening’s events.

*StoryTown (15-18 October 2021)* – Plans were underway for this year’s event, with a stakeholder meeting due to be held at the end of the month. The hope was that more events would be able to take place face-to-face this year, but there would still be an element of online sessions to allow for Covid-related issues. Funding had been applied for from various organisations and links had been made with adult-literacy charity Read Easy.

Cllr Farmer invited his fellow Councillors to get involved.

*Street Fair (11 September 2021)* – The Committee was asked to advise on whether work should begin on planning this year’s Street Fair, in the hope that the event could be held in September. As previously discussed, it was proposed that the Town Council’s former Tourism and Events Officer Rachel Avent, who now ran an events and marketing company, would be commissioned to help with the event. The suggestion was supported.

*Queen’s Platinum Jubilee* – The Committee was asked for suggestions of how the Town Council and Corsham could celebrate Her Majesty The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee in 2022. The main focus for national commemorations would be around the four-day bank holiday planned for 2-5 June 2022, but it was envisaged that events would take place all year to mark the occasion. Ideas included making the Summer Fete a commemorative event, but not to hold this over the bank holiday weekend; having a children’s parade that could see local children making costumes, masks, crowns, etc, in the lead-up to the parade which could end at the Fete or at a separate special event; a Jubilee Carnival and ensuring that this historic moment was memorable for children.

## **8. Corsham in Bloom 2021**

The Head of Community Services explained that this year's Corsham in Bloom competition was planned to run as normal, with judges' visits to Best Garden entrants and the return of all the usual in-town competitions. Judging was scheduled to take place w/c 19 July, but it was too early to decide on a date for the Awards Presentation, although it was hoped this would take place as normal in the autumn.

## **9. Tourism Update**

The Head of Community Services gave an update on the tourism work that had been done both during the pandemic and since the easing on travel restrictions. The Town Council – as Visit Corsham - continued to be a member of Visit Wiltshire, Visit Wiltshire's Group Travel Trade section, Great West Way, Great West Way Connections (for group travel) and Visit Bath. Throughout the pandemic all these organisations had continued to promote the destinations they represented, with a message based around encouraging travel once it was safe to do so. The focus had moved away from international visitors and was now focused on the domestic trade, as well as group travel opportunities. Research already indicated that there was an increasing appetite for visits this year.

Membership of the organisations ensured a level of ongoing coverage that would be hard to create ourselves and gave us a presence at a number of tradeshow, most of which had taken place virtually over the past 12 months. Currently Corsham was featured in the Great West Way's Escape the Everyday Summer Campaign, which would run from June-August. This would ensure, among other elements, a mention and link on the Escape the Everyday campaign page with an estimated reach of 1.5m people; inclusion in Great West Way blog and social media posts; and banner adverts on the Great West Way website for three months. Corsham also featured in all Great West Way publications, including the Rough Guide to the Great West Way.

As part of its Visit Wiltshire membership, Corsham featured in the Visit Wiltshire Map and Visitor Guides, as well as the Travel Trade Guide. For Visit Bath, Visit Corsham had a quarter-page advert in the Bath Guide, which had a print run of 300,000.

A group of visitors from Buckinghamshire was due to visit the town on 3 July, and a travel writer on a familiarisation visit to the area was due to spend some time in Corsham on 13/14 September.

The update was noted.

## **10. Community Services Meeting 21 July 2021**

Following the moving of May's Community Services Meeting to June as a result of the Full Council meeting being held a week later than normal due to the local elections, the Committee discussed whether to meet again, as originally scheduled, on 21 July or wait until the next scheduled meeting on 22 September. The Committee agreed they would prefer to meet again on 21 July 2021.

The meeting commenced online at 7.30pm and closed at 9.09pm. There were no members of the public present.

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CHAIRMAN

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DATE