

**Minutes of the Community Services Committee Meeting held at Corsham Town Hall
on Wednesday 19 March 2025**

Present Councillor A Brown (in the Chair)
Councillors D Jarman, R Munn, A White and R Williams

In Attendance Ms S Leigh (Community Services Officer – Arts)
Mrs S Thomas (Head of Community Services)

In Attendance Online Mrs D Blake (Corsham Youth Zone/The Rise Trust)
Cllr T Bush (Committee Member)
Ms H Westall (Corsham Youth Zone/The Rise Trust)

In the absence of the Committee Chair and Vice-Chair, Councillor Brown was elected to Chair the meeting.

CS 67/24 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Councillors N Farmer and A Thomas.

CS 68/24 Public Question Time and Petitions

There were none.

CS 69/24 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

**CS 70/24 Matters arising from the Minutes of the Community Services Committee
meeting held on 15 January 2025**

There were none.

CS 71/24 Grant Applications

There were none for this meeting.

CS 72/24 Community Wellbeing Update (*Minute CS 61/24 and others*)

The Committee was updated on the Town Council's latest community wellbeing activities including:

- Visits to, and support for, a wide range of local groups and organisations. The most recent visits, undertaken by the Community Wellbeing Officer, had been to Corsham Foodbank, Citizens Advice, Creative Lunch, Dancing Through Time and the Corsham Community Club. The Community Wellbeing Officer also attended the Why Sports Conference in London.
- More free training from the Good Practice Mentor Programme for Councillors and officers and other local community groups. The training built upon the

previous street outreach training and focused on door-knocking and contacting harder to reach older people within the local sheltered accommodation.

- A second free concert with tea and cake, organised by Corsham Town Council and Celebrating Age Wiltshire, took place at the Town Hall on 13 March 2025. It was very well-attended and received excellent feedback from audience members.
- Ild had successfully gained funding from the Town Council, Area Board and the Centre for Ageing Better to run an 'Age Without Limits' Day on 11 June 2025. More information on this would be shared at May's Committee meeting.

The update was noted.

CS 73/24 Corsham Town Council – Youth Activities

Danielle Blake, from The Rise Trust, which now runs Corsham Youth Zone (CYZ), and Heidi Westall, CYZ Youth Worker, attended the meeting to give Councillors an update on their work with young people.

The Rise Trust had taken on the management of CYZ in January, meaning that its youth workers were now employed by Rise, with the support and training that offered. The takeover had gone very smoothly, thanks to everyone involved and their commitment to ensuring CYZ's long-term future. On a Friday night, between 30-60 young people were attending CYZ at Springfield Community Campus and enjoying the programme of activities available.

There had been an issue involving a knife, which had been quickly resolved and highlighted to Corsham Police. Follow-up work around this had included a talk on knife crime by PCSO Redmond. Other upcoming talks would include information about Guide Dogs, and disabilities/hidden disabilities.

The outreach work run by The Rise Trust on Fridays and Wednesdays was now in its third year in Corsham and the results were being seen in the trust and confidence young people showed in the youth work team. Areas visited included Martingate, around the Co-op, Londis, the town centre, Potley, and Springfield Rec (particularly the youth shelter and skatepark). Wednesdays also saw visits from the Open Blue Bus, parked at Springfield Campus. Around 15 more vulnerable young people, who would find CYZ overwhelming, attended regularly.

The Rise Trust was also now working in The Corsham School on one day a week, meaning the town's young people had wraparound help and support should they need it. Danielle Blake reported that there was a key group of students they saw at CYZ, via outreach work and in school who they were able to support.

In the future, The Rise Trust, with CYZ, would like to be able to offer youth sessions/youth clubs for young people with disabilities. The organisation would also like to have a youth worker based at The Corsham School for a day a week who could offer one-to-one support for students. Funding was being sought for these and other potential projects in Corsham.

The Committee passed on their grateful thanks to Danielle Blake and Heidi Westall for the work they were doing in support of Corsham's young people.

CS 74/24 Corsham – An Age-friendly Community (*Minute 62/24 and others*)

Cllr Brown and the Head of Community Services reported on the Age-friendly Corsham survey that was running until 28 March. It was hoped that over 200 responses would be received, which would be used to guide the Town Council's age-friendly work moving forward. A report on the outcomes, an Age-friendly Corsham Strategy and a Year One Action Plan would be presented to the Community Services Committee in due course.

The update was noted.

CS 75/24 StoryTown (*Minute CS 63/24 and others*)

The Committee was updated on the progress of the 'Story of the High Street' work with local businesses. Jenny Hulme, the project organiser, continued to work on the text for the new sub-section on the Town Council's website. Although the Bath Spa University-led project was officially at an end, Jenny Hulme was still happy to be involved and interview any local businesses who might want to be included at a later date.

The Committee was also updated on the StoryTown/25th Anniversary projects taking place in local schools. A series of workshops would be run at the Town Hall for local schools by Marnie Forbes Eldridge and local author Emma Randall-Jones. The StoryTown Short Story Competition, based around Corsham in 2050 and coordinated by Matthew Tett, was at the judging stage (26 entries had been received) with a presentation event due to take place on 3 April. BBC Wiltshire had picked up on the competition and run a feature about it, with a plan to do a follow-up piece once the winners had been chosen.

The update was noted.

CS 76/24 Public Art Projects (*Minute CS 64/24 and others*)

The Committee was updated on the progress of the Town Council's public art projects, including the Cross Keys sheep, the Potley and Portland Rise Art Community Project (PACT), the Peacock Arts Trail and a display of the work of sculptor Michael Pennie.

The Corsham School sheep had been painted and was at the varnishing stage. It was hoped there would be an update on a completion date soon. Neston Primary School had run a competition to choose the design for their sheep and work was progressing. The next sheep model would be ordered in the new financial year, with a decision on which school should receive it still to be made.

Jonny Sanders, the sheep's designer, was planning to run a project with another sheep model that, for a donation, could be painted with a poppy in celebration of VE Day 80. This project was being run in conjunction with the Corsham 10k and 2k Committee.

The plinth for the PACT project was being redesigned and revised costs were awaited. The two choices for the final design would be voted on by the

Potley/Corsham Rise communities. The Land Transfer licence from Wiltshire Council had still not been received.

Pound Arts had been commissioned to carry out the Michael Pennie public art curation project and this was progressing well. The report by The Pound's Visual Arts Officer, Claire Todd on how the project could work, and potential sites around the town, was due imminently and would be discussed in more detail with the Town Council's Public Arts Task Group. Smaller pieces of Michael Pennie's work would be offered to local schools to support their art projects. St Patrick's Primary School was already in receipt of models around the theme of 'shape'.

The Community Services Officer – Arts was working with the Peacock Arts Trail (PAT) Committee. There had been good sign-up to date for this year's event, with four artists booked to display their work in the Town Hall alongside the Youth Art Competition. The community workshop element of this year's PAT would see artists working with young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The update was noted.

CS 77/24 Creative Corsham Strategy 2022-2027 Action Plan – Year Three (2025)

The Committee was presented with a report on the work completed during Year Two (2024) of the Creative Corsham Strategy. A Year Three Action Plan had been drafted for consideration and approval. The Committee felt that, for subsequent years (and for all Community Services Action Plans and reports), the format should be changed to make it easier to understand the monitoring and evaluation and to see how the aims and objectives had been achieved.

Resolved

That, with subsequent Action Plans and reports being presented in a different format, the Creative Corsham Strategy Year Three Action Plan be approved.

CS 78/24 Events Update (*Minute CS 65/24 and others*)

An update was given on recent and planned community events in Corsham. This included:

- Eco Fair – The Eco Fair would take place in the town centre (pedestrian area only), in the Digital Mansion Corsham car park and at The Pound on 26 April 2025, from 10am-2pm. Community Services Officers were helping the Town Council's Environmental Project Officer with the event. All the logistics (toilets, first aid, etc) had been arranged and, so far, 18 stalls were booked to take part. The Pound would run family craft activities, with the Town Council's Craft Stall also based there. The monthly Repair Café would be taking place at The Pound on the same day. The annual Easter Trail would link to the Eco Fair, with 10 knitted hedgehogs hiding in shop windows.
- Taste of Corsham – The Town Council's annual food festival would take place on Saturday 17 May, from 11am-4pm. Toilets, first-aid support, deckchairs, etc, were all arranged, and an application had been submitted for the road closure. Twenty-six stalls were booked to attend. Pound Arts would be asked to source performers/entertainers for the day, with the stage at the rear of Digital Mansion Corsham as in previous years.

- Middlewick House Open Garden – The Town Council was planning to have a Visit Corsham stall at this event again, following on from a successful attendance in 2024. The event, which would take place on the 7 and 8 June 2025, was likely to attract a high number of visitors - 11,000 people had visited last year. The organisers were hopeful that traffic congestion would be eased this year as a local landowner had agreed to grant access to traffic coming to and from Chippenham, thus avoiding the issues on the A4 at the Hare and Hounds.

The update was noted.

CS 79/24 Destination Marketing and Management Plan 2025-2030

The Chief Executive and Head of Community Services had drawn up a new Destination Marketing and Management Plan for Corsham to cover the period 2025-2030. Following approval, a Year One Action Plan would be drafted for consideration by the Committee.

Resolved

That the Destination Marketing and Management Plan 2025-2030 be approved.

CS 80/24 Business Support Update (*Minute CS 66/24 and others*)

The Business Breakfast, with a theme of 'Future Thinking' held at Digital Mansion Corsham on 29 January 2025 had been very well received, with approximately 40 people in attendance. The Breakfast had been followed by a free Storytelling for Business workshop by Cllr D Jarman alongside 'Story Associate' Jenny Hulme which had also been well received. The next Business Breakfast would take place at The Greenhouse at Wadswick Green on 14 May.

Some smaller business events were being planned, starting with a Business Leaders Lunch to encourage invited local business leaders to discuss issues relevant to them (eg needing space to grow in Corsham). An event for those who worked from home was also being investigated.

The update was noted.

CS 81/24 Corsham in Bloom

As the long-standing Corsham in Bloom judges had stepped down after 2024's event, it seemed a good time to look at the Town Council's Corsham in Bloom competitions to see whether any changes should be made. Consideration was given to community value; the work involved; the fact that the town centre would still have its hanging baskets and planters whether the competition element took place or not and whether resting the event for a period of time would provoke new interest and ideas. It was felt that the Environmental Task Group could look to work with local schools and still run the Eco School initiative.

Resolved

That Corsham in Bloom be rested for 2025, with a review of its future to be made in early 2026.

The meeting commenced at 7pm and closed at 8.35pm. There were no members of the public present.

CHAIR

DATE