

**Minutes of the Community Services Committee Meeting held at Corsham Town Hall
on Wednesday 11 September 2024**

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

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

In Attendance Online S Gilmartin (iID – My Space Project)
Councillor A White (Committee Member)

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

CS 28/24 Apologies

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

CS 29/24 Public Question Time and Petitions

There were none.

CS 30/24 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

CS 31/24 Matters arising from the Minutes of the Community Services Committee meeting held on 24 July 2024.

There were none.

CS 32/24 Grant Applications

One grant application had been received.

iID My Space – Sarah Gilmartin from iID was seeking £1,867.50 to help fund the ‘My Space’ project that runs at The Corsham School. (Due to payments in kind not having been included in the original application, this figure was amended prior to the meeting, and a new project spreadsheet shared with the Committee – the original figure included on the agenda was £1,250.)

My Space uses Dance Movement Psychotherapy to support young people struggling with their mental health. Having started as a very-effective out-of-school service, the project would now be running in school time, helping Year 7 and Year 8 students identified by school staff. There would be one set of sessions for eight Year 8 students, followed by two for eight Year 7 students each time, each running for 10-weeks.

The Corsham School's support had been invaluable, with two key staff, the Inclusion Officer and Wellbeing Officer, heavily involved by taking on referrals and creating groups that would work well together; offering both the dance studio and a smaller classroom for sessions; communicating with parents and dealing with safeguarding.

It was hoped that, if funding from other sources was granted, that the My Space project could be extended to run further sessions for the group, and also include one-to-one sessions for those young people who would benefit from individual support.

There was a discussion regarding evaluation and a suggestion that those running projects for The Corsham School that had been funded by the Town Council could co-ordinate their evaluation and monitoring, and discuss best practice, at the end of each school year. The Head of Community Services would contact the school, The Rhythm Practice and the Stay Safe Initiative to see whether this would be of interest.

The Committee agreed to the funding request.

Resolved

That iID's application for a grant of £1,867.50 towards delivering its My Space project at The Corsham School be approved.

CS 33/24 Community Wellbeing Update (*Minute CS 21/24 and others*)

The Committee was updated on the Town Council's community wellbeing activities, including the Good Practice Mentor Programme and the recent free training that had been undertaken by Cllr Brown, the Head of Community Services, the Community Services Officer – Community Wellbeing and representatives from Corsham Library, Wiltshire Council's Community Engagement Team, Celebrating Age Wiltshire and The Porch Surgery. The training explained how best to approach people on the street and was linked to encouraging people to attend a drop-in event at Corsham Library the following week. It was felt it would prove very useful for everyone involved, particularly in connection with the Town Council's Age-Friendly Corsham work.

The Committee was also updated on the plans to mark Silver Sunday, the National Day for Older People, with a free concert organised by Celebrating Age Wiltshire being held at the Town Hall on 6 October 2024.

Cllr Brown explained the latest steps to support Corsham Youth Zone (CYZ) with its future governance and that a meeting had been arranged with The Rise Trust to see whether the Trust would be willing to support CYZ with its HR, employment of youth workers and payroll.

The Committee was also asked to approve the draft Community Wellbeing Strategy 2024-2028 produced by the Head of Community Services. A Year One Action Plan would be produced for November's Community Services Committee meeting.

Resolved

That the Town Council's Community Wellbeing Strategy 2024-2028 be approved.

The update was noted.

CS 34/24 Corsham – An Age-friendly Community (*Minute CS 22/24*)

Cllr Brown and the Head of Community Services updated the Committee on the latest steps towards Corsham becoming an Age-friendly Community. An Age-friendly Community sees older residents (age 50+) engaged in shaping the place where they live, meaning that local groups, the Town Council, businesses and residents all work together to identify and make changes in both the physical and social environment.

The Head of Community Services and Community Services Officer – Community Wellbeing would be drawing up a baseline assessment of the relevant work already being done in Corsham ahead of a meeting of the members of the Town Council's Age-Friendly Group on 30 September. Areas for community engagement, such as surveys and stakeholder meetings, would be discussed and timetabled.

The update was noted.

CS 35/24 StoryTown (*Minute CS 23/24 and others*)

The Committee was updated on the progress of the 'Story of the High Street' project, being run for the Town Council by Bath Spa University's Story Associate, Jenny Hulme. This work, funded by Bath Spa University's Story Arcs project, was now at a stage when the stories could be used in various ways to promote the town centre, with discussions underway with the Town Council's web designers regarding a section within the Corsham Town Council website that could host the stories, historical information about the businesses and link to other pages within the site. Additional Story Arcs funding may be available to support this element of the project.

Jenny Hulme's discussions with businesses had also raised ideas and suggestions on how the Town Council could support the local economy and these would be discussed separately and could be used as talking points at upcoming Business Breakfasts.

The update was noted.

CS 36/24 Public Art Projects (*Minute CS 24/24 and others*)

The Community Services Officer - Arts updated the Committee on the Potley and Portland Rise Art Community Project (PACT) and Brunel Shed Shipping Container Project.

PACT – While issues regarding checking the utilities running under the site were now resolved, the £7,000 quote for creating a plinth for the finished artwork meant that the project could not move forward as quickly as planned. Discussions on ways to reduce the cost were underway and it was still hoped that installation would happen in the autumn.

Brunel Shed Shipping Container Project – The Brunel Shed's shipping container had now been painted by graffiti artist Baz Hurlow with excellent feedback from the local community on the finished design featuring local wildlife and the area's connection to the railway.

The Committee was also updated on the second sheep for the Cross Keys junction, which was currently being painted by pupils at The Corsham School, and that a third sheep had been ordered ahead of the next school being selected.

The update was noted.

CS 37/24 Public Art Sites – Priority List (*Minute CS 25/24 and others*)

At the Community Services Committee Meeting on 24 July 2024, it was: *Resolved – That the current Public Art Sites list be circulated to all Councillors for their comments, and these would then be considered by the Public Art Task Group with a new Priority List drawn up for approval by the Community Services Committee.*

The Arts Officer had received no comments on the Priority List from Councillors who were neither members of the Community Services Committee nor the Public Art Task Group. As a result, it was suggested that the Public Art Task Group, on behalf of the Town Council, choose possible sites across the parish and create a new Priority List for approval by the Community Services Committee.

Resolved

That the Public Art Task Group draw up a new Priority List for public art sites for approval by the Community Services Committee.

CS 38/24 The Pound Arts Centre

The second meeting of The Pound Arts Centre Support Working Group had taken place on 5 September. The Head of Community Services explained that Russ Tunney, Pound Arts' Creative Director, had attended the meeting, giving an update on The Pound's financial situation and the issues with the facilities and fabric of the building. Various ideas had been discussed where the Town Council could support Pound Arts financially, ahead of a potential increase in its grant funding in the 2025/26 budget, via commissioning various projects, including a Christmas Trail and funding the organisation to take on next year's Summer Busking Saturdays programme.

The update was noted.

CS 39/24 Events Update (*Minute CS 27/24 and others*)

The Committee was updated on the Town Council's events.

- i) **Summer Busking Saturdays (4 May-28 September 2024)**

With just three Busking Saturday performances left before the end of the 2024 season, the initiative had proved very successful again, with excellent feedback from the performers, local businesses and residents and visitors. Due to the construction work on the old Lloyds Bank building getting underway, and scaffolding being erected, the busking spot had been relocated to outside the empty Boots building, with musicians having to play acoustically, or using their own battery-powered amps due to the lack of power. Only one scheduled musician had been unable to play as a result and they would be given priority when it came to 2025's dates.
- ii) **Summer Holiday Trails (22 July-8 September)**

The 2024 Summer Trails were again sponsored by The Corsham Toy Shop. The two trails: Pokémon – Can You Find Them All and Sylvanian Families – Join the Sylvanians' Summer Shopping Trip had proved highly popular, with around 300 Trails returned to be entered in the colouring competition element (final numbers were still to be assessed). Given that at least 500 trail forms had been printed over the course of the summer for participants, some of whom had come from Swindon, Bath, Devizes and further afield, and businesses had noticed an increase in footfall, the Trails were considered a great success. Further Trails would ask participants to state the town in which they live to help gauge the reach of the promotion undertaken.

iii) **Street Fair (7 September 2024)**

The Street Fair had proved to be another successful event with 38 of the 40 stalls booked attending on the day; free craft and face-painting activities; live music sourced by The Pound; Corsham Police and Wiltshire Police Cadets in attendance and, overall, a vibrant atmosphere in the town centre. All the stallholders were very happy with the interest/sales they received and were keen to attend further Town Council events. As always, there was great support from Town Council staff and the nine Councillors who gave up their time to help.

Cllr Brown asked that the Town Council's Grounds Team be recognised for their hard work on the day.

iv) **Skate Jam (21 September 2024)**

The Head of Community Services explained that while the project to build a new skatepark at Springfield Rec came under the remit of the Property and Amenities Committee, she was working with the Head of Technical Services to support the Corsham Skatepark Project Group with events and community engagement. Following attendances at the Summer Fete and Street Fair to promote the Group's plans and the online raffle they were running, members were now working with Route One, a nationally recognised skateboard company, to bring 'Skate Antics', a Skate Jam, to Corsham. This would see Route One bring their own ramps to the rear car park at Springfield Community Campus, with the offer of free skateboard lessons, competitions and the opportunity to 'free skate'. The Town Council's Officers were supporting the event with help and advice; organising use of the car park; funding first aid provision; sourcing food and drink providers (who would give 10% of their profits on the day) and helping with promotion. They would also be in attendance on the day.

The Committee was also asked for ideas and suggestions for this year's Christmas Lights Switch On event on 6 December 2024. So far the road closure and permission to erect the lights across the highway had been applied for; Father Christmas had been booked; Corsham Windband, the Rock Choir and a Community School Choir, involving children from all the town's primary schools and organised by Heywood Prep, were due to perform on the High Street; local band Pipe Dream would play on the stage at the Town Hall from 6pm onwards, with Pound Arts sourcing an act to perform pre the lights going on; the Christmas Shop Window Competition theme would be 'Pantomime'; schools would be contacted before half-term regarding the Design a Christmas Card Competition, and booking forms for stallholders were ready to go out.

The Christmas lights were due to be installed w/c 18 November. It was hoped that the works at Lloyds Bank would still allow for the lights to be strung from the building, and that the High Street Christmas tree (the Wishing Tree) could still be installed, although it may need to be relocated due to the lack of space at its normal site due to the scaffolding and hoardings at the Bank. If a new site on the High Street could not be found for this year, then the Wishing Tree event on 30 November would be moved to the Christmas tree in the Chapel Garden, between the Co-op and Grounded Café. A further update on the situation would be given at November's Committee meeting.

The update was noted.

CS 40/24 Event Dates for 2025

The Committee was asked to consider and approve the following suggested dates for Town Council events in 2025.

Eco Fair – Saturday 26 April 2025. This date would be later than in previous years due to Easter falling on the weekend of 18-20 April 2025. Earth Day would take place on 22 April, so the Eco Fair could still use that as a theme, should that be required.)

Taste of Corsham – Saturday 17 May 2025. This year's Taste of Corsham, held on 15 June, clashed with various local events (eg Chippenham Pride, Trowbridge's Midsummer Festival) meaning a number of regular stallholders went elsewhere. Various dates were considered, but 17 May 2025 seemed to avoid other local and national events.

Street Fair – Saturday 13 September 2025

Christmas Lights – Friday 5 December 2025

Resolved

That the suggested dates for the Town Council's major events for 2025 be approved.

CS 41/24 Business Support Update (Minute CS 68/23 and others)

The Head of Community Services and Cllr Jarman updated the Committee on the upcoming Business Breakfast, due to be held at Hartham Park on Tuesday 1 October 2024. The presentations would include a welcome from the Hartham Park team; a speech from Sarah Gibson, the new MP for the Chippenham constituency, who would be attending to discover what matters to local businesses, and questions to attendees, based on some of the findings from the 'Story of the High Street' Story Arcs project, on what type of business events they would like to see in the future.

The update was noted.

The meeting commenced at 7pm and closed at 8.29pm. There were no members of the public present.

CHAIR

DATE