



**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE, VALERIAN WAY, STOTFOLD, SG5 4HG, ON WEDNESDAY 15 JANUARY 2025 AT 19:00.**

**Present:**

Cllr J Headington (Chair), Cllr J Smith (Vice-Chair), Cllr J Bendell, Cllr S Buck, Cllr S Dhaliwal, Cllr L Miller, Cllr B Saunders, Cllr B Woods.

**In attendance:** Cllr M Cooper (non-Committee Member)

**Also present:**

E. Payne – Town Clerk (virtually)

S. Hossack – Community Engagement Officer

S. van der Merwe – Democratic Services Manager

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

All members were present.

**2. DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

There were no disclosures of interest.

**3. PUBLIC SECTION (MAX. 15 MINUTES)**

There were no members of the public present.

**4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Members received the Minutes of the Community Engagement Committee meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

**DECISION:** It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the Minutes as a true record of the meeting.

**5. CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES, FOR INFORMATION**

Members received additional updates on the following items:

**5.1 The Resident's Survey 2024 - 2025**

This Survey is currently underway with 98 responses received to date. The QR codes have been put up in various locations around town and collection boxes are listed on the front of the paper survey.

**5.2 Older Person's Engagement Programme**

The Community Engagement Officer advised members she will attend a future Stotfold Good Neighbour Group meeting to get additional suggestions for events those citizens may be interested in attending.



### 5.3 Lego League

The Democratic Services Manager advised that the Heads of both Roecroft and St Mary's Church of England Academy have expressed interest in the Lego League pack for the 6-to-9-year age category only. Those packs will be purchased as agreed at the Town Council meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

Cllr Cooper asked for an update on the Lego League which she received.

### 5.4 Stotfest

Members were advised that 52 expressions of interest have been received responses from a variety of people and organisations interested in participating in Stotfest 2025. The first advert has been placed in the February edition of the Stotfold News Magazine.

## 6. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

### 6.1. Programme of Community Engagement

Members received a proposed programme of events for the period April 2025 to March 2026 with an indicative budget spend.

**DECISION:** It was **RESOLVED:**

- a) To proceed with the schedule of events for 2025 – 2026 with the budget spend as indicated in the report
- b) That the Town Clerk has delegated powers of decision over vendors and suppliers for Community Engagement events as approved by this Committee to be reported under Delegated Decisions report.

**ACTION:** The Community Engagement Officer to proceed with scheduling the event and the associated social media and advertisement planning for those events and providing quotes for supporting services to the Town Clerk for final approval.

Members noted that there will be a report at the March 2025 Community Engagement meeting to discuss sponsorship or advertising programmes for Stotfold events.

#### 6.1.1 Augmented Reality Walking Trail

The Community Engagement Officer advised Members this type of event would require families to download an app and do a walking tour with "check in" points where families would have the opportunity to take a photo with an online character. This type of event has recently been hosted by Houghton Regis Town Council and Ipswich Town Council with large numbers of attendees joining those events.

**DECISION:** It was **RESOLVED** to purchase an augmented reality game for Stotfold from High Street Safari at a cost of £599 from the Community Engagement budget, to be held starting end of March 2025 for a six-week period.

#### 6.1.2 Outdoor Cinema

Members discussed the quotes for an outdoor cinema event, with the proposed date being early September 2025.



**DECISION:** It was RESOLVED to:

- a) Implement an outdoor cinema experience with associated film and premises licence costs;
- b) book the large 15m<sup>2</sup> cinema screen from Sundown Cinema at £1,940, with a 25% deposit payable on booking with the balance to be paid in the 2025 – 2026 financial year;
- c) host this as a free to attend event at the Greenacre Recreation Ground in September 2025.

**ACTION:** The Community Engagement Officer to proceed with scheduling the outdoor cinema event, paying the deposit for the 15m<sup>2</sup> screen and the associated social media and advertisement planning for those events and providing quotes for supporting services to the Town Clerk for final approval.

### 6.1.3 VE Day

Members received an update from the Community Engagement Officer regarding logistics for hosting a traditional fish and chip supper at the Memorial Hall, the Con Club or at one of the open-air recreational spaces. Members noted it made sense to host this indoors due to weather conditions and hosting a fish and chip supper at the Conservative Club would appeal to all ages.

Members discussed the supplier used by the Stotfold Bowls Club for their fish and chip supper. Cllr Headington declared an interest at this point as he is a member of the Stotfold Bowls Committee.

**DECISION:** It was RESOLVED for the Community Engagement Officer to work with the Conservative Club to arrange a ticketed Conservative Club VE Day event with fish and chip vans to operate from the Conservative Club parking lot and the Green.

**DECISION:** It was RESOLVED to light the Beacon at the Green at 21:30 in commemoration of VE Day.

**ACTION:** For the Community Engagement Officer to:

- a) arrange a ticketed entry event at the Conservative Club for VE Day 2025; and
- b) book Fish & Chip vans to serve traditional Fish & Chips from the car park at the Conservative Club and on The Green.

### 6.2. New Website Proposal

Members reviewed a report regarding the Town Council's current website and noted it is not compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines ("WCAG 2.2") which were updated and passed into legislation in October 2024 in order to ensure that websites and website contents can be accessible by people of all abilities. Members reviewed three quotes for a new Town Council website and members discussed the merits of content by copywriters.

**DECISION:** It was RESOLVED to draft a specification matrix for additional requirements and send this to Suppliers A and B for their definitive costings.



**DECISION:** It was RESOLVED to obtain three quotes for copywriting fees for our new website content.

### **6.3. Councillor Branded Clothing**

Members considered the issue of Councillors having branded Town Council clothing for events and resident engagement purposes. Members discussed how this would create a sense of professionalism and help residents easily identify the Councillors at events.

The Town Clerk reiterated that the colours for Councillors should be different to branded items the staff already has.

**DECISION:** It was RESOLVED to obtain STC branded clothing for Councillors, with a winter and summer option, to be funded from the Community Engagement budget.

### **6.4. Stotfest 28 June 2025**

Members were asked to decide on the location for Stotfest 2025. Members debated the locations between The Green, Arlesey Recreation Ground, Greenacres Recreation Ground, Hitchin Recreation Ground and Riverside Recreation Ground.

**DECISION:** It was RESOLVED to host this year's Stotfest event at Arlesey Recreation Ground.

**ACTION:** The Community Engagement Officer to update social media with the decision of this Committee to host Stotfest at the Arlesey Recreation Ground and to start the planning process for this site.

### **6.5. Alternative High Street Engagement**

Members considered the installation of a Valentine's Day feature piece for two weeks in February to engage with residents.

**DECISION:** It was RESOLVED not to proceed with a Valentine's Day feature piece for February.

## **7. WORK PROGRAMME**

Members received this Committee's Work Programme.

**DECISION:** It was RESOLVED to note the Work Programme.

## **8. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY**

### **8.1 The Mill Event – May 2025**

Members asked if The Mill had agreed to a change in location for the Town Council at the Mill event in May this year. Members also discussed ordering a trailer for the event based on the success of last year's engagement.

Members requested the Community Engagement Officer to obtain quotes for a trailer for The Mill event and liaise with The Mill regarding placement in a more prominent position.



## 8.2 Citizen's Award 2025

Members asked if progress had been made on the Citizen's Awards for this year. Cllr Buck reminded Members that consultation should be had with the Stotfold News Magazine and Satchell's, who jointly sponsor the current Citizen's Award and that this is on the work programme for Officers in the near future.

## 9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

The meeting closed at 20:16.

**SIGNED BY CHAIR:** .....

**MINUTES APPROVED (date):** .....