



**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING OF 20 NOVEMBER 2024 HELD AT THE STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE, VALERIAN WAY, STOTFOLD, SG5 4HG AT 19:00**

**Present:**

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

**In attendance:**

Cllr S Hayes – *Ex-Officio Member*

**Also Present:**

S. Hossack – Community Engagement Officer  
S. van der Merwe – Democratic Services Manager

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr Buck offered his apologies and arrived at 19:15.

**DECISION:** It was **RESOLVED** to accept apologies.

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

Members were reminded that, if at any time during the meeting they have an interest in an item being discussed, they should declare it at that point.

There were no declarations 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 Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

**DECISION:** It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Community Engagement Committee meeting held on 18 October 2024 are a correct record of the meeting.

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

**5.1 Christmas Light Switch On**

Members received an update on parking and road closure matters for the event on 30<sup>th</sup> November, and that there are ongoing discussions related to the lighting for the event.

**5.2 Youth Engagement**

Members noted the extensive Youth Programme provided by Grand Union and Nicola King.



**DECISION:** It was **RESOLVED** to write a letter of thanks to Grand Union and to Nicola King thanking them for their efforts.

**ACTION:** The Town Clerk to write a letter on behalf of the Town Council.

### 5.3 Citizens Advice

Members noted the first Citizens Advice clinic was well attended and the email from CAB thanking the Town Council.

### 5.4 Older Residents Engagement

The Community Engagement Officer attended the Stotfold Good Neighbour Group Committee meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2024. The SGNG Committee wanted to poll its members for their suggestions on what activities older residents would like to see provided in the community and would write to the Town Council with the outcome.

## 6. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

### 6.1. The Mill Engagement

Members noted the circumstances around cancellation of the Town Council's attendance at the Mill's Steam Fair event in October 2024. The Chair noted that future engagements with residents need a more targeted approach.

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

- a) Write to The Mill Events Organisation Committee to request an alternative position for the Town Council's stand at future events.
- b) For Officers to prompt Councillors on events four months in advance.

**ACTION:** The Community Engagement Officer to contact the Mill Organisation Committee and request an alternative location for the Town Council stand.

Officers to remind Councillors of events with sufficient lead in time.

*Cllr Steve Buck arrived at 19:15.*

### 6.2. Councillors' Surgeries

Members discussed future dates for Councillor surgeries.

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

- a) Schedule quarterly engagement surgeries, including already-planned events.
- b) Collate a leaflet / flyer for Councillors to present to residents attending surgeries with Town Council contact details, ongoing projects, and Town Councillor profiles.
- c) Create and circulate "SAVE THE DATE" posters for VE Day and Stotfest.

**ACTION:** Community Engagement Officer to devise leaflet and Save the Date posters.



### 6.3. Comparison of Events Budgets

Members received and noted a comparison of other Parish and Town Councils' events budgets.

**DECISION:** It was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

### 6.4. Lego League

Members reviewed a report outlining potential Town Council support of schools to enter the Lego League.

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

- a) Purchase two Lego League sets for £7,311 for a one-year period
- b) Review the progress of the Lego League project in November 2025.

**ACTION:** Community Engagement Officer to liaise with St Mary's and Roecroft Schools to ascertain if there is any interest in this scheme.

### 6.5. Residents' Survey

Members received the specification and quotes for the 2025 Residents' Survey.

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

- a) Agree the release of the Resident's Survey for 24/25 to start after the Christmas Light Switch On and finish at the end of March 2025.
- b) Include a paper survey to be distributed via Stotfold News Magazine in February 2025, with a final submission deadline for those by end of March 2025.
- c) Request samples of other surveys that QRS has completed.
- d) Approve all costs associated with printing, distribution, and local advertising.
- e) Present the interim results to the Community Engagement Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025 and final results at the Annual Town meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

**ACTION:** Community Engagement Officer to action all above.

### 6.6. Q2 Income and Expenditure Report

Members received an income and expenditure report for this committed for expenditure from first two quarters of 2024-25.

**DECISION:** It was **RESOLVED** to note the report.

### 6.7. Citizens Awards

Members discussed the proposal for a Citizens Award for the 24/25 year. There is a current ongoing initiative by Stotfold News Magazine and Satchells for "Christmas Hero 2024".

**DECISION:** It was **RESOLVED** to work in partnership with Satchells and Stotfold News to organise a combined Citizens Award in 2025 with the winner turning on the Christmas Lights in 2025.



**ACTION:** Community Engagement Officer to action the above.

**6.8. Stotfest 2025**

Members considered a report regarding preliminary actions for Stotfest 2025.

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

- a) **Host the Stotfest event on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2025 between 11:00 and 21:00.**
- b) **Host an informal Community Engagement Committee Meeting in January to discuss organization and venue for next year’s Stotfest.**

*Cllr Brian Saunders offered his apologies and left the meeting at 20:13.*

**7. WORK PROGRAMME**

Members noted the Work Programme.

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

There were none.

**9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

The meeting closed at 20:23.

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

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