



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD IN THE GREENACRE CENTRE, VALERIAN WAY, STOTFOLD SG5 4HG ON WEDNESDAY 16 JULY 2025 AT 19:00

Present: Cllr N Venneear (Vice Chair), Cllr S Buck, Cllr L Miller, Cllr S Dhaliwal, Cllr J Bendell, Cllr J Smith, Cllr B Woods

Joined Remotely:
Cllr J Headington (joined 19:04)

Also Present:
Susan Riley – Public Realm Manager
Cllr M Cooper

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from: Cllr J Headington (Chair)

Decision: It was **RESOLVED** to accept apologies

2. DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no disclosures of interest.

3. PUBLIC SECTION

There were no Members of the Public present.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 May were received. There were no amendments.

Decision: It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 May 2025 as a correct record.

5. CLERK'S REPORT AND ACTION TRACKER

The Clerk presented the report on matters arising and noted the Action Tracker. There were no additional comments or questions from the members, and the report was accepted without further discussion.

6. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

6.1. Christmas Light Switch On

The committee discussed various options for the layout of the Christmas Light Switch On event. Three proposals were considered: keeping the stage on the High Street, reversing the layout to have the stage in Grange Drive, or reverting to the setup from two years ago with the stage in front of local estate agent. Members debated the pros and cons of each option, including visibility issues and the size of fairground rides. The idea of adding a theatrical element with a



Grinch character was proposed and accepted. Ultimately, the committee decided to place the stage in Grange Drive, with the potential addition of a relay system to enhance the atmosphere..

Decision: It was **RESOLVED** to relocate the stage for the Christmas Light Switch on Event to Grange Drive.

6.2. In Bloom Competition

The committee considered the implementation of an In Bloom Competition. Members expressed support for the idea, recognising its potential to enhance the town's appearance and engage the community. The discussion highlighted the need for someone knowledgeable in gardening to oversee the competition. It was noted that there are already community gardening groups, such as those at the Haven, who could be involved.

Decision: It was **RESOLVED** to

- a) **Approve the development and delivery of a Stotfold In Bloom competition from Spring 2026.**
- b) **Establish a small working group of officers and interested councillors/residents to oversee planning.**
- c) **Approve an indicative budget of up to £1,200 to support officer time, promotion, prizes and an awards ceremony to be met from existing Community Engagement budget.**
- d) **Seek local sponsorship from garden centres and businesses to offset costs.**
- e) **Promote the competition through local schools, voluntary groups, and council communications.**

Action: To develop the Stotfold in Bloom Competition

6.3. Outdoor Cinema

The committee discussed the outdoor cinema event, noting that the location was The Green due to licensing issues. The public had voted for films including The Lion King, The Greatest Showman (possibly a sing-along version), and Jurassic Park. Members discussed potential running times, although Officers would need to go away and confirm these. The event would include food vendors and a bar. There was also a decision to move £2000 from the youth engagement budget to cover the costs of the event.

Decision: It was **RESOLVED** to:

- a) **Change the location to The Green.**
- b) **Vire £2000 from the Youth Engagement budget (63/644) to General Events (63/643)**

Action: Town Clerk to organise virement

6.4. Summer Holiday and other Children's Events

The Clerk outlined the arrangements for various children's events during the summer holidays. These included a litter pick, National Play Day activities, a Teddy Bear's Picnic, bug hotel making, and kite making. Each event was detailed, including locations and activities planned. The committee expressed approval of the arrangements, noting the importance of engaging children in outdoor activities. The walking market was also discussed, with members



agreeing to produce a map and noting that food and drink would be available from various vendors.

Decision: It was **RESOLVED** to note the events proposed to take place in addition to the Youth provision activities supplied by Amplius for the duration of the summer holidays.

6.5. Citizen's Advice

The committee received an update on the activities of Citizen's Advice at the Greenacre Centre. The report indicated that the service was getting busier. Members acknowledged the importance of the service and expressed satisfaction with the report.

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

7. WORK PROGRAMME

The committee reviewed the work programme and found it satisfactory. There were no additional comments or changes proposed, and the programme was accepted as presented.

8. DELEGATED DECISIONS

The Town Clerk's delegated decisions were noted without further discussion.

9. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, 17 September 2025.

The meeting closed at 19:34

SIGNED BY CHAIR:

MINUTES APPROVED (date):