



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD IN THE GREENACRE CENTRE, VALERIAN WAY, STOTFOLD SG5 4HG ON WEDNESDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 19:00**

**Present:**

Cllr J Headington (Chair), Cllr N Venneear (Vice Chair), Cllr J Bendell, Cllr S Buck, Cllr J Smith, Cllr S Dhaliwal, Cllr Lisa Miller, Cllr Nigel Venneear,

**Apologies:**

Cllr B Woods

**Also Present:**

Cllr Mary Cooper  
E Payne, Town Clerk  
S Hossack, Community Engagement Officer

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr Woods.

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

**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 were advised that the final film for the outdoor cinema had changed from Jurassic Park to the original Top Gun due to licensing issues. The Chair asked if everyone was happy with the amendment and the rest of the minutes, to which all members agreed. The minutes were then approved with the noted amendment.

**Decision:** It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 July 2025 were approved with the amendment changing the final film for the outdoor cinema from Jurassic Park to the original Top Gun.

**5. CLERK'S REPORT**

There were no updates to this item. Members commented how well the summer programme of events had been received.

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



## 6. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

### 6.1. Proposed Events Programme 2026-27

The proposed events programme for 2026-27 was discussed. Members had reviewed the distributed budget and were asked for feedback. The Chair sought opinions on the events listed and whether any changes were needed. Members agreed that the events programme was well planned out and approved the proposed events for 2026-27 and associated budget.

**Decision: It was RESOLVED to adopt the proposed events programme for 2026-27.**

### 6.2. Community Engagement Budget 2026-27

The community engagement budget for 2026-27 was presented, with an amendment noted in the youth engagement budget, which was set at £10,000, and the community engagement budget was adjusted down to £10,000 from the previous £15,000. Members discussed the amendments and agreed to recommend the budget to the Governance and Resources Committee for adoption. The revised budget was approved by the members.

**Decision: It was RESOLVED to recommend to Governance and Resources Committee that the community engagement budget for 2026-27 is approved.**

### 6.3. Stall Hire Charges 2026-27

The stall hire charges for 2026-27 were considered. Members discussed the proposed charges, including the increase for food traders from £50 to £250, reflecting market rates. Concerns were raised about the steep increase, but it was justified by the need to generate more revenue. The flexibility of charges based on event size and duration was also discussed. A proposal to set craft stall charges at £25 instead of £30 was made and seconded, but the vote resulted in maintaining the recommended charges. The stall hire charges were approved as per the recommendations in the report.

**Decision: It was RESOLVED that the stall hire charges for 2026-27 were approved as per the recommendations in the report.**

### 6.4. Christmas Lights Switch On Update

Members were updated on the Christmas Lights Switch On event. The stage lineup was confirmed, and additional food vendors were noted. The need for a Santa was discussed, with suggestions for potential candidates. Cllr Cooper volunteered her husband and will confirm if he is able to assist. Members debated whether to continue certain activities, such as selling mulled wine, due to the onerous nature of the task. It was suggested to professionalise the event by letting external vendors handle certain aspects. The Christmas Lights Switch On update was noted, and plans were agreed upon.

There was a further discussion highlighted selling advertising space to sponsors, which could help in reducing the financial burden on taxpayers and potentially help with covering the event's costs. There was a mention of changing the stage supply and enhancing the event with a larger screen, better quality sound, and a more substantial structure for the band. The improvements are expected to make the event more successful and provide a compelling sales pitch for future events. The committee aims to explore various revenue avenues to ensure the event's financial viability.

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



**6.5. Stotfest Feedback**

Feedback from Stotfest was reviewed. Stall holder feedback indicated general satisfaction with the event, although some suggested improvements like risk assessment templates and clearer pitch markings. The positioning of stalls and noise from generators were noted as areas for improvement. Members discussed the possibility of extending the event to two days to better utilise the security costs and involve local schools in organising activities. Cllr Venneear suggested a car boot sale on the Sunday which was well received. A working group was proposed to further explore these suggestions and improve future events.

**Decision:** It was **RESOLVED** to

- a) **Note the report.**
- b) **Form a Task and Finish Group to investigate further explore the event’s organisation comprising of Cllrs Headington, Miller, Smith and Venneear.**

**Task:** **Convene a working group meeting to explore suggestions for improving future Stotfest events.**

**7. WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee’s Work Programme was presented.

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

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

8.1 Screen on the Green.  
 Members sought confirmation on sponsorship for the Screen on the Green event and noted that it was approximately £1500 in sponsorship and advertising revenue. Invoices for advertising had recently been sent out, and more payments were expected. Members discussed strategies to increase sponsorship, including reaching out to local businesses. The information was noted, and members agreed to continue efforts to secure sponsorship.

**9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 19 November 2025

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

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