

**MAGHULL TOWN COUNCIL**  
**VIRTUAL COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**HELD 10<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2021 BY ZOOM**

**PRESENT** - Councillor Carragher (In the Chair) and Councillors (Cllrs) Desmond, Doherty, Ferguson, T. Hughes, Mullen, Y. Sayers and Sharp.

**ALSO PRESENT** - P. Dillon (Community Services Manager) and S. Larking (Minutes)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting including members of the public joining the meeting via livestreaming.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies received from Cllr Lloyd.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Doherty declared that he had a relative living in Tree View Court for agenda item 6.

**3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None received. Meeting being recorded and would be available for viewing.

**4. MINUTES OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020 were approved as an accurate record. Note: minutes to be signed at next opportunity.

**5. COMMUNITY SERVICES BUDGET 2021/22**

The Community Services Manager reported that at the last meeting he had presented a draft budget of £16,500 for 2021/22. This was a worst-case scenario. Full Council had agreed a budget of £24,460. Key points:

- Neighbourhood Activities: reduced by £1,000
- Youth Budget: Cut by 50% to reflect no expenditure in 2020/21
- Events: Reduced by £1,540. The Committee would need to consider what activities they want to hold
- Christmas Activities: No reduction. Reflects expenditure on hampers and support for the Food Bank. The Committee may want to host the popular pensioners lunch if Covid restrictions allow for large gatherings
- Community Grants: No reduction. Reflects likely support needed for community groups. The annual grant of £2,000 for Maghull in Bloom (MiB) had been approved by Finance and General Purposes Committee in December 2020

Overall, the budget was higher than expected. There is flexibility to vire between budget headings to support the agreed work programme. Securing external funding would be a key part of the work programme.

#### Key points from Cllrs

- May need to put more money into youth budget when lockdown is lifted to support young people who have been impacted by Covid 19. Should be looking for external funding to support youth activities
- Want to see fun activities on KGV park after lockdown

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

#### **6. COMMUNITY SERVICES WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22**

The Community Services Manager reported that activities had been very limited in 2020/21. Christmas hampers had been a success. Worked in partnership with Hudson Family Centre, Sefton CVS, GPs and Maghull Churches. Over 100 hampers packed and delivered. After school training for young girls at the Parish Hall had started but had closed due to lockdown. Will check when this may be able to start again.

Going forward the work programme will include:

- Young People: Look at the impact of lockdown and how to support young people. Aware that there is a need for laptops and tablets to support home schooling as it is unclear when schools will reopen to all pupils
- Grants: Promote grants to ensure that local groups are aware that funding is available
- Local Services: Consider how to support local services e.g. Food bank. Demand has plateaued but not gone down
- Events: Will not be able to host events e.g. Maghull fest until end of lockdown/restrictions. May want to consider an expanded Awards Evening to reflect the contribution of the community in response to Covid. Could run a garden competition
- Foodbank: Looking at options to become independent to focus on Maghull resident and allow greater flexibility to offer support. Under current arrangements need to be referred and there's a limit on the number of visits to 3. An independent Food Bank would enable provision of weekly food parcels to those most in need in Maghull. Issues about insurance. They may be eligible for an MTC grant
- Christmas Tree: A Christmas tree was approved and installed for 2020 on KGV Park. Cllrs resolved that a living tree should be planted for 2021. Winter is a good time to plant a tree in advance of the growing season. It would cost approximately £100 for a 6ft tree. Cllrs agreed that a living tree should be purchased and planted

## Key points from Cllrs:

- Agreed that keep broad budget headings; welcomed option to vire money between budget heading to support work programme.
- Gardening has been a key feature of lockdown. Crosby and Lydiate run garden competitions. Could look for sponsors e.g. Sefton Meadows Garden Centre, B&M, Tony Almond. Would want to work in partnership with Maghull in Bloom. Would want a range of categories e.g. window box, hanging basket, school, nursery, housing schemes to open competition to all not just those with gardens. Would need to advertise in the Champion as well as Social Media to ensure everyone aware. Officers to develop proposals, including categories and criteria, to present at next meeting
- Hudson Family Centre had identified the need for 200 laptops/tablets. They received 16. Develop proposals with Family Centre and work with Ward Cllrs who may be able to secure other funding. It was noted that the Co-op are working with Portland to get laptops to those in need.
- Issues about mental health in young people. Some age groups are really struggling as there are no/limited services. They want face to face contact rather than online or phone calls. Looking at options for a project. It was proposed that a contact list be developed to set out what services and support is available.
- Tree View Court. Cllr Doherty reported that he was working with residents and the Police to respond to ASB around Tree View Court. People are congregating in the area and there is drug dealing. The Police are aware and have been trying to help. The landlord and a local estate/letting agent are working to improve security, but it is an ongoing issue. Gates to the car park are required to stop access. It was noted that MiB do planting in the area which helps improve the appearance. The Chair noted that as MTC does not own the land there is a limit to what can be done. She reported on work with British Transport Police (BTP) to move on young people that did not live in Maghull. However, BTP resources are limited and stretched. She advised residents to report incidents so the Police could build a picture to help target resources. Cllr Doherty said he would continue to work with residents.

## **RESOLVED THAT:**

- 1. Living Christmas Tree to be purchased and planted at KGV**
- 2. Contact list of support for young people to be developed**
- 3. The report be noted**

## **7. GRANT ADVISOR**

The Community Services Manager reported that Officers had been tasked with securing more external funding. Officers had received a demonstration about the Grant Advisor service run by idox. The cost of the service for 12 months including 2 data sets (Public

Sector and Community) is £1,595 + VAT. The initial payment is for 1 year and the Council are not committed to a long-term contract. Benefits include receiving notifications of grants in real time, this would save time in trawling through websites for funding opportunities. Other options are available but do not offer the range and breadth of funding. Projects would need to be identified and prioritised to make the most of the service. Works to parks have been identified but the Committee would want to consider projects and agree a short list. The proposal is to use underspend from 2020/21 to meet the costs. The Town Clerk has set a target of securing funding of at least £3,000 to ensure VFM.

Key points by Cllrs:

- Keen to maximise funding opportunities
- Proposal for a project to create a natural garden to support mental health
- Concerns raised about idox following a recent press article. Would like Officers to carry out further research and report back before a decision can be made at a further meeting to be held as soon as possible

**RESOLVED THAT:**

- 1. Officers to carry out further research on idox and report back to the Committee so a decision can be made;**
- 2. The report be noted.**

## **8. DIGITAL INCLUSION**

The Community Services Officer reported that the pandemic had highlighted digital exclusion, particularly in older residents. This meant they did not have access to online banking and shopping. Working with Sefton CVS to see how digital skills can be offered to residents as Maghull had missed out on funding for digital inclusion as the area does not have high levels of deprivation. It was noted that U3A have a Silver Surfers group which helps develop digital skills in the elderly. Contact details to be provided.

**RESOLVED THAT:**

- 1. Contact for U3A Silver Surfers to be forwarded to Officers;**
- 2. The report be noted.**

## **9. VOLUNTEERING**

The Community Services Manager reported that he is in regular contact with Sefton CVS and the Community Champion at Morrisons. Morrisons are under pressure with the high demand for home deliveries and need support. They are looking for a part time van driver (16 hours per week). It may be that volunteers who offered to shop earlier in the pandemic

may be able to help with shopping. It was agreed that Cllrs would contact those on the vulnerable list to check if they needed any support. It was noted that some Cllrs were providing ongoing support.

**RESOLVED THAT:**

- 1. Cllrs to contact those on the vulnerable list;**
- 2. The report be noted.**

**10. COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION 2021/22**

It was noted that Finance and General Purposes Committee had approved the annual grant of £2,000 to MiB for 2021/22. This will complement funding secured from the Lottery. New wooden planters will be provided in the Square

Key points made by Cllrs

- Officers to check if the MTC logo will be added to planters
- MiB do a very good job and make Maghull look nice and provide support to isolated people
- It was noted that LCP provide support to water plants at the Square
- Would like to host an afternoon tea for MiB volunteers, when allowed, to say thank you.

**RESOLVED THAT:**

- 1. Officers to check if MTC logo will be added to new planters at the square**
- 2. Afternoon tea to be hosted for MiB volunteers**
- 3. The report be noted.**

**11. CHAIRS REPORT**

The Chair used the opportunity to give the following thanks:

- Officers (Phil Dillon and Siobhan Larking) for supporting the Committee
- Cllr Mullen and Karl Mullen for their help during recent flooding
- Merseyside Police and other emergency services for doing an excellent job. It was noted that a few homes were not secured (e.g. door not locked) which raised concerns about opportunistic crimes
- Cllr Sharp for his work in Bobby's Wood
- Cllrs Thomas Hughes and Josh Burns for clearing up graffiti

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'D' followed by a cursive 'M' and a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**CHAIRMAN**