

## Cultural and Economic Services Committee

**Date:** 12 December 2022

**Title:** General Service Updates

**Purpose of the Report:** To inform Committee of service work activity (outside specific services of Events, TACTIC, Markets & 55UP).

**Contact Officer:** Mark Saccoccio, Town Clerk  
Sarah Sandiford, Deputy Town Clerk

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|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Corporate Objective/s</b>        | <b>LLTC Five Year Plan – Aim 3.</b><br>Vibrancy and Vitality of town and town centre |
| <b>Implications:</b>                |  |
| <b>Financial</b>                    | Within revenue budgets and allocated reserves  |
| <b>Human Resources</b>              |  |
| <b>Operational/Service delivery</b> |  |
| <b>Procedural/Legal</b>             |  |
| <b>Risk/Health and Safety</b>       |  |
| <b>Environmental Aims</b>           |  |

### 1 RECOMMENDATIONS

Should members be minded, the recommendations are:

- 1.1 To note the report.

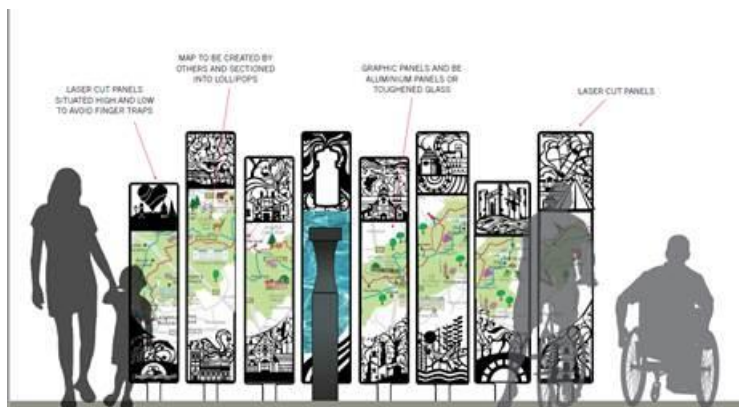
### 2 SERVICE UPDATES

#### 2.1 Greensand Ridge Walk and Cycleway Gateway Feature

- 2.1.1 The Greensand Country Gateway Feature project, led by The Greensand Trust, (TGT), is now nearing the final stages.
- 2.1.2 In its planning capacity, Central Bedfordshire Council has granted a lawful development certificate for the installation.
- 2.1.3 Anglian Water has given consent for the installation of a water bottle filling station in accordance with a town council objective.

2.1.4 The water bottle filling station has now been procured and the gateway feature itself is under construction.

2.1.5 TGT is now in the process of sourcing a contractor/contractors to install both the feature and the water bottle filling station. The contractor must be an approved contractor authorised by the local authority to undertake highways works. Installation will be undertaken as soon as practicable to complete this longstanding project.



## 2.2 Black History Month (see also separate report from organisers)

2.2.1 The Council has been pleased to liaise with residents leading on this activity to create a programme for this second year of marking Black History Month in the town.

- 2.2.2 The month of activity launched on Saturday 1 October in the Library Theatre, led by speaker Patrick Vernon OBE who discussed “Why Black History Month is important for everyone”, followed by a talk by Guyanese-born resident Ken Breinburg.
- 2.2.3 A display from the Movement for Justice & Reconciliation of Colonial Slavery was available in the White House from 1 – 8 October, explaining links to the colonial past and how this affects daily life in Britain. The exhibition received positive feedback from those who visited.
- 2.2.4 Local resident and facilitator Christine Sheppard ran a number of workshops on “Understanding how white racism affects white people”.
- 2.2.5 Additional activity during the month included Fairtrade chocolate treasure hunts, displays of black literature and live music events in some of the town centre venues.
- 2.2.6 Looking ahead to the future, interested residents are encouraged to formalise a steering group or similar arrangement which would then allow them to take forward future projects more independently, for example by applying for appropriate community grant funding.



## 2.3 Buzzard Trails

- 2.3.1 The temporary Trail in the Trees in Linslade Recreation Ground has survived the autumn weather and is due to be removed by the end of December.
- 2.3.2 Officers have been working with The Greensand Trust on re-invigorating the Sands of Time project. The Greensand Trust is currently updating its website with the complete Sands of Time trail and officers will then work towards creation of publicity for this trail.
- 2.3.3 As agreed by Committee in September, the Council has been working with “High Street Safari” to run two town centre based augmented reality trails – one for Halloween and one for Christmas, which launches alongside the Christmas Festival on 25 November.
- 2.3.4 Resource permitting, it is anticipated that work could commence in early 2023 on future trail ideas for Autumn/winter 2023 and 2024.



## 2.4 Town centre

- 2.4.1 This year’s Jubilee bunting and flags have now been removed, with options for next year under consideration.
- 2.4.2 A newsletter created for town centre businesses using Welcome Back funds will now continue until March 2023, funded through the revenue budget.
- 2.4.3 The Town Centre map and shopping directory is being updated for 2023 with a print order due to be placed shortly.

- 2.4.4 In December 2021, Committee received updated costs for a proposed two week trial of recorded music in the High Street. A total of £6,928.60 has been allocated to this project. Issues including the provision of electricity supply stopped this project being realised for Christmas 2022 but funds remain ringfenced and further work will be undertaken on the viability of this project.
- 2.4.5 At its meeting held 14 November 2022, Policy & Finance Committee agreed to fund from general reserves the offer of free car parking at the Duncombe Drive and Hockliffe Street car parks on five Saturdays during December.

### **3 STAFFING**

- 3.1 The new Head of Cultural & Economic Services will join the Council on 4 January 2023.
- 3.2 Following a resignation in October, the team currently has a vacancy for a part-time Cultural & Economic Support Officer (20 hours/week). The Head of Service will be reviewing resources and capacity and giving consideration to the work currently allocated to that position (Buzzard Trails, signage & wayfinding).

**End.**