



MINUTES of the **ORDINARY MEETING** of the **TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber on **Monday 16 September 2019**

Present: Roger Cartwright Town Mayor
Anne Eves Deputy Town Mayor

Graham Allen
Andrew Barrett-Miles (19.10)
Emma Coe-Gunnell White
Matthew Cornish
Peter Chapman
Robert Duggan
Robert Eggleston
Lee Gibbs*
Janice Henwood
Simon Hicks
Tofojjul Hussain
Joseph Foster
Sarah Lawrence*
Sylvia Neumann
Max Nielsen
Kathleen Willis*

* *Denotes non-attendance.*

(19.00)

46. **OPEN FORUM**

A member of the public addressed the council and expressed surprise that the Site Allocation document received from Mid Sussex District Council was not on the Agenda. The document allocated 600-700 more houses in Burgess Hill, where Haywards Heath was only allocated 25. They questioned why this was not on the agenda. They asked a number of questions: Who said the houses were needed, what target was it meant to meet? What other sites were considered? Who considered the sites, and what criteria were used? Who was consulted, did this include communities, councils, developers? Who was on the committee that made decision, what wards did they represent? Were there representatives from the areas affected? Was the decision still to

be agreed at the full Mid Sussex District Council meeting?

Councillor Robert Eggleston responded to the resident, explaining that the debate about the site allocation would be fully discussed and consulted on around the town, and this would be further explained in Agenda item 4. Mid Sussex District Council set up a working party of councillors last year, before the May elections, to go through 242 potential sites. The composition of the Council at that time was noted. There was a broad spectrum of Councillors from across the district, including Councillor Sue Hatton from Hassocks who was an opposition member. Through this working party, the sites were reduced to the current proposal, which was to go out for a 6 week consultation in October. The final decision had not yet been made on the sites. The reason it was not a formal item on the Agenda was that the report and discussion on the options only came to the Housing Planning and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee at Mid Sussex District Council on 13 September, which gave insufficient time for it to be on the Burgess Hill Town Council Agenda. The Town Council was a statutory consultee and would be consulted. There would also be a public consultation. There were no developers on the working party as they had an interest. The Housing Planning and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee abstained on reporting when it came forward for recommendation to go to full council. This would be discussed in the full Mid Sussex District Council meeting. Some of the proposed sites would raise concern. The Town Council would address those concerns and work with residents of the town so they were informed to make their representations.

Councillor Anne Eves stated that there were 3 options when the sites were looked at. The first option was the 20 shortlisted sites; the second option was the 20 sites plus 2 sites in Burgess Hill; the third option was the 20 sites plus Haywards Heath. She was not surprised by which option was chosen. The site allocation was overkill as it was more than was needed. The 20 sites on their own would have met the numbers. She thanked the member of the public for the pertinent question.

Councillor Robert Eggleston stated that it was a complex issue. This was a challenge under the district plan requirement for a 5 year land supply as this was not fixed. Instead it was a rolling 5 year land supply. The District Council, whether this was Mid Sussex or any other District Council would always be looking at how they could ensure a 5 year land supply. The District Council was proposing that they build more into the 5 year land supply, due to the possibility that some land previously included in the supply suddenly reduced. This was a problem for every District Council. The Town Council had to ensure that Burgess Hill took its share of the load in the right places and gave informed feedback to the District Council, expressing why some sites were not appropriate.

A second resident addressed the Council, questioning whether anyone cared about the children in Burgess Hill. They referenced the new slide in the playground at Worlds End - the construction had taken a long time and a couple of weeks later it was out of order. The slide was the main highlight of the playground and was still out of limits.

The resident also stated that pupils of St Paul's Catholic College were waiting for buses for 45 minutes due to a timetable change. The buses were run by Heritage and Compass. It was okay now as the weather was still warm, but in a couple of weeks the pupils would be waiting in bad weather. The resident noted that there was a bag of cement split on the footpath at Mill Road. They asked the Town Council to improve, and focus on children.

Councillor Mathew Cornish responded regarding the park. He had raised it with Mid Sussex District Council at their last meeting, and expressed his concerns. The answer given was that it was being looked at. He would be raising it again at the next Council Meeting. He asked the resident to send him more details. He noted that the children at Manor Field School had been involved with the design, and that a lot of effort had been put into the park.

Councillor Anne Eves responded regarding the buses. She was the Chair of the Bus Forum, and would raise it with them.

47. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lee Gibbs, Councillor Sarah Lawrence and Councillor Kathleen Willis.

48. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Robert Eggleston declared an interest in Agenda Item 11 as he was Chair and Trustee of Burgess Hill Fairtrade.

Councillor Roger Cartwright declared an interest in Agenda Item 11 as he was Treasurer and Trustee of Burgess Hill Fairtrade.

Councillor Andrew Barrett-Miles declared an interest in Item 6 as he was a member of West Sussex County Council and a supporter of The Shed, and in Item 12 as he was a member of West Sussex County Council and this was a Highways issue, and in anything to do with subsidies of buses, as he was a member of West Sussex County Council.

49. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor Janice Henwood raised 3 points about items that were in the pipeline. Firstly, there was a Parking Strategy put forward by Mid Sussex District Council which had a Members Working Group meeting in early October. Secondly there was a Supplementary Planning document, which was the Design Guide put forward by Mid Sussex. Thirdly, there was going to be a consultation on the Site Allocations Development Plan put forward by Mid Sussex District Council which would begin in October.

Councillor Janice Henwood proposed a public meeting to provide a forum for residents to be consulted on the Site Allocation Development Plan. This was seconded by Councillor Andrew Barrett-Miles.

Councillor Andrew Barrett-Miles stated that this document was appalling for Burgess Hill, which was already undergoing a massive development. He was amazed that none of the District Councillors voted against it at the Scrutiny Committee. He fully supported consulting the public. Prior to the election, the area south of Folder's Lane was not even considered, and it had now been added in.

A member of the public asked the Council whether a consultation meeting could happen in St Wilfrid's Church hall or St Wilfrid's school hall so parents and students could raise their views.

RESOLVED that:

CEO Steve Cridland to organise a public meeting.

50. **ERIC PALMER ADDRESSED THE COUNCIL ON "THE SHED"**

The Shed had produced a video highlighting the key message of The Shed, which was to be shared with the Councillors.

He stated that the project was beginning to hit a brick wall. The Shed had been started 3.5 years ago as a community workshop for people to come and work together. It was started in a Scout Hut, and they were currently based at Burnside, a West Sussex County Council day centre, which had a workshop. The first 18 months were rent free. The lease should have been renewed 18 months ago, but it wasn't. They had no security of tenure. West Sussex County Council wanted backdated rent and £5000 per annum for 6 hours per day, 5 days per week. The Shed covered a large area – not just Burgess Hill. The community nature of the centre was noted. Need a new lease. They wanted to:

1. Broaden the range of opportunities they offered
2. Extend their opening hours to encourage more members
3. Help other groups, including NHS agencies, Alzheimers Society,
4. Sussex Oakleaf, Signpost and Schools

5. Open 5 days a week, with the possibility of opening evenings and weekends

They had offered to pay £2000 per annum.

He compared The Shed with the Age UK Cherry Tree Centre, which received financial support through Local Authorities. The Cherry Tree Centre cost the Local Authorities +£650 per member, whereas The Shed cost -£50 per member per annum. He stated that this did not seem fair, and questioned the disparity.

Crawley Men's Shed had been set up by Borough Council, and was operated and financed by them. They did not charge their members. He stated that The Shed saved money from people going into social care. The Burgess Hill Shed was a cost effective solution, and it deserved a permanent place in the social care programme. They wanted the Local Authorities to provide premises, and the members would run the facility.

West Sussex County Councillor Anne Jones then spoke, stating that the Burnside site was unusual and that it was built for the kind of work the Shed were doing. The members had repaired the equipment in the workshop. The initiative was unique and should be supported. Burnside was an important building for Burgess Hill, and we had to show why this building was needed. Burgess Hill Town Council should write to West Sussex County Council. Burnside was too important to lose, and the cost savings from The Shed were insurmountable.

Councillor Janice Henwood noted that Burnside was in the Site Allocation Development Plan, but there was no mention of The Shed in the description. When discussed this needed to be corrected. She also noted that The Shed provided shelving in the red telephone boxes around the town.

51. **MOTION: THE SHED**

A motion had been proposed by Councillor Ann Eves and seconded by Councillor Janice Henwood, as set out in Agenda Item 6.

Councillor Anne Eves asked that the clause on restrictions on numbers be removed from the motion.

Councillor Joe Foster proposed an amendment to the motion, that CEO Steve Cridland would write to West Sussex County Council asking for them to extend the lease in alignment with The Shed's requests in order to give them greater security of tenure, and to increase their opening hours. Councillor Janice Henwood seconded this proposal.

Councillor Andrew Barret-Miles and West Sussex County Councillor Anne Jones would take it up with the relevant people in West Sussex

County Council.

Councillor Andrew Barret-Miles stated that the concept of The Shed was the most important thing and should be embedded in social service thinking. If Burnside was closed a modern building should be provided.

RESOLVED that:

Burgess Hill Town Council recognises and pays tribute to The Shed as an organisation which not only carries out excellent woodwork, but fosters wellbeing in the community, promotes community spirit, combats loneliness and enhances mental health.

The Council would like to see The Shed granted a lease to enable them to plan for the future.

The Council welcomes their plans to set up a pottery studio, their desire to open more days a week than the current two, and their wish to attract wider sectors of the community into their activities.

The Council believes that The Shed is a great asset to this town and an organisation of which our town can be very proud.

CEO Steve Cridland to write to West Sussex County Council asking for them to extend the lease in alignment with The Shed's requests in order to give them greater security of tenure, and to increase their opening hours.

52. **COUNCIL MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 15 July 2019 were **AGREED** and signed as a correct record.

53. **PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on Monday 29 July, Monday 19 August and Monday 9 September 2019 were **AGREED**.

54. **CUSTOMER SERVICES KEY AREA GROUP NOTES OF MEETING**

Councillor Janice Henwood spoke on the proposal for Church Walk Improvements. She and Councillor Anne Eves had spoken to Ricard Speller of West Sussex County Council regarding replacing trees. The Space and Connectivity Project included plans for the area. There had been many comments on the previous removal of four birch trees with no consultation. This was also raised in the Traders Meeting on Friday 13 September.

Councillor Janice Henwood proposed that the Town Council go forward with replacing the trees, although they had been advised by Space and Connectivity that they had plans and it might interfere with their future development. She recommended that the Town Council write to Richard Speller who had agreed that West Sussex County Council would move forward, and that they would remove the roots left in the spots of the previous trees. She suggested that four appropriate urban trees be planted into the empty spots with the proviso that if there were a grand scheme in a year's time, these trees could be lifted and transplanted into another area so the cost would not be lost.

Councillor Anne Eves supported Councillor Janice Henwood, and stated that trees need to be planted in Autumn, so if the Town Council were to wait it would be another year gone.

Councillor Robert Eggleston supported the recommendation, and noted that the Town Council would need to obtain permission from West Sussex County Council as this was Highway's land.

Councillor Andrew Barret-Miles noted that Richard Speller had been overruled by higher authorities at West Sussex County Council. This would be discussed on 17 September at the Growth Board or Members Steering Group. There was £21 million to spend by April 2021, which included a substantial amount being spent on Church Walk. This could include the trees. Councillors Robert Eggleston and Andrew Barrett-Miles would do their best to ensure this. He recommended to temper the letter given plans, to state that Burgess Hill Town Council and members of the public would 'like', rather than 'insist' to see these trees to be reinstated.

A member of the public asked for the trees to be attractive and not to follow Haywards Heath with the use of wooden pots.

Councillor Simon Hicks requested that a correction be made to the minutes to correct the spelling of Freeks Lane.

The Notes of the meeting of the Customer Services Key Area Group held on Monday 2 September 2019 were **AGREED**.

54. **STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT KEY AREA GROUP NOTES OF MEETING**

Councillor Janice Henwood noted that at the Traders Meeting on 13 September some of the trader's greatest anxieties were over communication with New River Retail.

The Notes of the meeting of the Strategic Development Key Area Group held on Tuesday 3 September 2019 were **AGREED**.

55. **MOTION: CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF THE FAIRTRADE MARK**

A motion was proposed by Councillor Robert Eggleston and seconded by Councillor Janice Henwood as set out in Agenda Item 11 dated 16 September 2019.

Councillor Robert Eggleston proposed that the motion was amended to replace the word 'considers' with the word 'resolves'. This was seconded by Councillor Janice Henwood.

Councillor Janice Henwood noted that there would be a Fairtrade party on 5 October at St Andrews church.

Councillor Roger Cartwright expressed gratitude to Councillor Robert Eggleston for the work he had put into Fairtrade within the town.

RESOLVED that:

This council:

- Renew its commitment to 'Fairtrade Community' status.
- Actively promote Fairtrade locally, through support for Burgess Hill Fairtrade and Fairtrade West Sussex, in the media including social media, and events, including during Fairtrade Fortnight.
- Support local Fairtrade initiatives in schools, faith groups, businesses and other organisations in the town.

56. **LICENSING OF TABLES AND CHAIRS ON THE HIGHWAY**

A letter had been received from West Sussex County Council as set out in Agenda Item 12 dated 16 September 2019.

Councillor Joe Foster summarised the letter, and stated that the Town Council was not pleased with the pressure this would add onto local traders. He proposed that CEO Steve Cridland write back to West Sussex County Council asking them to reconsider. This was seconded by Councillor Anne Eves.

Councillor Anne Eves questioned where was the democracy, and stated that the Town Councils should make decisions for their own towns.

Councillor Andrew Barrett-Miles stated that it was highways property and that they did have the right to charge, however he did oppose the fee. He stated that the fee should reflect the size of the business. Larger businesses it was appropriate to pay, but for smaller businesses it was not.

Councillor Robert Duggan supported a proportional contribution, including an exemption for charities.

RESOLVED that:

That the decision by WSCC to charge businesses a licence fee of £500 to place tables and chairs on the pavement outside their business be opposed on the grounds that it was exorbitant, unnecessary and would have a detrimental effect on especially smaller businesses while destroying the cafe ambience created by people enjoying open air dining.

CEO Steve Cridland to write to West Sussex County Council asking them to reconsider.

57. **DIARY DATES**

Council received a schedule of forthcoming events as set out in Agenda Item 13 dated 16 September 2019.

RESOLVED that:

The contents of the report were noted.

58. **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

In view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was proposed that, in the public interest, the public and press be temporarily excluded and they were requested to withdraw from the meeting.

59. Meeting terminated at 20.13 hours.