



MINUTES of the **ORDINARY MEETING** of the **TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber on **Monday 25 November 2019**

Present: Roger Cartwright Town Mayor
Anne Eves Deputy Town Mayor

Graham Allen
Andrew Barrett-Miles
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)

64. OPEN FORUM

A member of the public voiced her concern about the proposed 11 storey block of flats that New River wanted to build. She felt that this would destroy the town centre which in her opinion needed a revival. She had spoken to some elderly and disabled who indicated that they did not know about it and felt that there are too few shops in the centre. Other towns are revitalising their centres and Burgess Hill should be bringing back things for the public to do.

Cllr Henwood responded saying that she had taken a motion to the Planning Committee to object to the 11 storey building but that the committee had voted against the motion. Cllr Eves expressed her

opposition to the eleven storeys and described it as completely inappropriate.

Cllr Eggleston explained that the Council is a consultee and as such can only make recommendations. It is not a decision making body. A private sector developer is redeveloping the Martlets shopping centre and the town council has no control over the tenants that they might attract. Many high street shops had gone to the wall. Neither the Council nor MSDC can determine what comes. Our role is to ensure that it is lawful.

Another member of the public agreed with the previous speaker saying that the building would be out of character and would change the profile of the town. Other buildings in town did not exceed 6 storeys.

The matter is not yet settled and councillors who are on the District Council planning committee could not comment at this stage. It is not a settled issue as yet. The Town Council has raised concerns about traffic congestion and has asked whether the building could be reconfigured to accommodate the same number of flats proposed but over a lower area.

Cllr Foster explained that we cannot object in part – only in regards to the entire development. The development is important for the town and if the number of flats is reduced the development may come to a stop.

65. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Matthew Cornish and Lee Gibbs

66. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Nil

67. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor felt that one of the expectations of a Mayor is to raise money for good causes. He will consider this in the New Year.

Cllr Chapman thanked all councillors who had supported the Christmas event and in particular praised Emily Bryant who had organised most of the day's activities especially as it was her first event. He thanked Judy Pointing for her efforts as well as the rest of the staff who had contributed to the success of the day.

68. COUNCIL MINUTES

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 16 September 2019 and the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on

8 November 2019 were **AGREED** and signed as a correct record.

69. **PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Chairman, in presenting the minutes, noted that the committee had responded to two consultations. These were the Draft Site Allocations DPD and the Draft Design Guide. She felt that comments submitted by the Town Council were considered by the Planning Authority and taken seriously. She mentioned that the Help Point was now open on Saturdays between 10am and 12pm to enable members of the public to access consultation documents and discuss concerns.

The Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on Monday 30 September, Monday 21 October, Monday 11 November and Monday 18 November 2019 were **AGREED**.

70. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT KEY AREA GROUP NOTES OF MEETING**

The Chairman highlighted VE day preparations and confirmed the recommendations taken by the committee in this regard.

The Notes of the meeting of the Community Engagement Key Area Group held on Monday 28 October 2019 were **AGREED**.

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

The Chairman summarised the Notes briefly.

The Notes of the meeting of the Customer Services Key Area Group held on Thursday 7 November 2019 were **AGREED**.

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

The Chairman mentioned that music had been played in the bandstand on 16 November and that it was hoped that a performer would appear every fortnight until Christmas. The Town Council will support traders wherever possible. The Leader of the Town Council was making headway with establishing his Group of 9 which would involve representatives from the key players.

He mentioned that the Beehive was progressing and that the Finance committee had been asked to study the viability and running costs once a report had been received from a consultant.

He further summarised the Notes of the meeting.

The Notes of the meeting of the Strategic Development Key Area Group held on Friday 8 November 2019 were **AGREED**.

73. **FINANCE KEY AREA GROUP NOTES OF MEETING**

The Chairman mentioned that a concept budget and charges had been considered.

The Notes of the meeting of the Finance Engagement Key Area Group held on Thursday 14 November 2019 were **AGREED**.

74. **SIDNEY WEST CENTRE CHARITY REPRESENTATIVE**

Cllr Eggleston mentioned that appointments such as this would not be done on a political basis and nominated Chris Thomas Atkin to serve a further 3 year term of office.

Resolved:

That Chris Thomas Atkin be appointed as Trustee at the Sidney West Centre for a 3 year term.

75. **RESIDENTS FORUM**

Cllr Chapman reported that he and Cllr Willis representing the Community Engagement KAG had interviewed 17 applicants. He suggested that a working group be convened and that an informal meeting be held with the applicants where after the final 18 will be decided. He felt that the first meeting of the Residents Forum should take place in January in order to maintain the enthusiasm and momentum.

Resolved:

That a working party of councillors be convened to consider the nominees for the residents forum, make appointments and inform applicants of the result and that a first meeting of the Residents Forum be held in January 2020.

76. **DIARY DATES**

Council received a schedule of forthcoming events as set out in Agenda Item 13 dated 20 November 2019.

RESOLVED that:

The contents of the report were noted.

77. Meeting terminated at 19.30 hours.