



**MINUTES** of the **ORDINARY MEETING** of the **TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber on **16 July 2018**

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**Present:** Chris Cherry                      Town Mayor  
                 Colin Holden                      Deputy Town Mayor

Wendy Agate  
Andrew Barrett-Miles  
Cherry Catharine  
Richard Cherry  
Claire Fussell\*  
Steve Hansford  
Diane Heckels  
Janice Henwood  
Anne Jones MBE  
Jacqui Landriani  
John Merrill  
Pru Moore  
Kirsty Page  
Chris Thomas-Atkin  
Mandy Thomas-Atkin  
Julian Thorpe

\* *Denotes non-attendance.*

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(19.00)

**308. OPEN FORUM**

There were several members of the public present.

A resident stated that New River Retail held around £250,000 which was to be given to community groups that had previously used Martlets Hall. Some of this money had already been claimed, however approximately £173,000 was left over and the future use of the money was undecided. The resident asked if the Town Council planned to ask the District Council if they could claim some of this money, otherwise it could be lost to District Council reserves.

Pru Moore confirmed that the funds were available and that the money had been claimed for various things. The History Society had applied for a grant to fund the costly removal and retention of the plaque and mosaic from Martlets Hall building. Mid Sussex District Council would not close the fund until all applications had been considered. Once the fund was closed, the Town Council would enquire about the future of the residual money.

Anne Jones suggested that the Martlets Hall plaque be reinstalled in the town centre after the redevelopment was complete. Pru explained that the History Society would take ownership of the plaque as they had applied for the grant.

Janice Henwood asked what the anticipated amount of residual funds would be. Pru Moore explained that this was a question for the District Council.

309. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Claire Fussell.

310. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Chris Thomas-Atkin declared an interest in Agenda Item 9 as he was a member of the Burgess Hill District Lions Club.

Mandy Thomas-Atkin declared an interest Agenda Item 12 as she was a District Councillor and Street Naming fell under her portfolio.

311. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Town Mayor informed Councillors that Dr Ben Ross had passed away following a long battle with illness. The Town Council had sent flowers and condolences to his wife Heather Ross, who was a former Councillor.

312. **COUNCIL MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Council held on Tuesday 1 May 2018 were **AGREED** and signed as a correct record.

313. **PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on Tuesday 8 May 2018, Tuesday 29 May 2018, Monday 18 June 2018 and Monday 9 July 2018 were **AGREED**.

314. **CUSTOMER SERVICES KEY AREA GROUP MINUTES**

The notes of the meeting of the Customer Services Key Area Group held on Thursday 10 May 2018 were **NOTED**.

315. **FINANCE KEY AREA GROUP MINUTES**

The Notes of the meeting of the Finance Key Area Group held on Thursday 28 June 2018 were **NOTED**.

316. **LICENCE AGREEMENT GREEN CIRCLE INFORMATION BOARDS**

Mid Sussex District Council and Burgess Hill Town Council had recently installed 14 Information Boards along the Green Circle on land which belonged to Mid Sussex District Council. A Licence Agreement for the Information Boards had been provided by Mid Sussex District Council for consideration as set out in Agenda Item 9 dated 16 July 2018.

It was confirmed that the Town Council would be responsible for the maintenance of the Information Boards. The upkeep should not be a financial burden as the project was previously supported by CAE and the Burgess Hill District Lions Club. Chris Thomas-Atkin explained that the Information Boards would be covered under the Town Council's Public Liability Insurance Policy.

Chris Thomas-Atkin declared an interest in this item as he was a member of the Burgess Hill Lions Club.

**RESOLVED** that:

the Council agree and enter into the Licence provided by Mid Sussex District Council for the installation of Information Boards along the Burgess Hill Green Circle on land belonging to Mid Sussex District Council and that the Chief Executive be authorised to affix the seal of the Council and sign the Licence in the presence of two Councillors.

317. **COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Following a public consultation which indicated that the majority of respondents were in favour of a flexible community centre incorporating a theatre but were not in favour of an increase in the precept to pay for it, the Cultural Quarter Steering Group asked the architect for an alternative cheaper option. The architect scaled down the original concept considerably and created a design that could be built on the footprint of the Royal British Legion Building. While it would still be a flexible space with retractable seating it would seat 270 people as opposed to circa 350 in the original design.

The budget provided for the project was £5 million to include construction and professional fees. The bulk of the funding would come from a £3 million Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loan with the remaining £2 million coming from a fund raising exercise. The loan would be for a period of 50 years with fixed repayments of around £114,000 per annum. A suitable fund raiser had been identified through a tender process and who could be appointed provided approval for the loan was received. A Project Manager would also be appointed as they would have the skills required to drive the project forward. Chris Elkin was thanked for his invaluable contribution to the project.

The Town Council wrote to Dame Vera Lynn to ask if she would consider becoming a patron of the new venue. Pru Moore explained that the Town Council had registered an expression of interest for a Government Grant however these were difficult to apply for and had strict criteria. The Government Grant would be essential should the loan application be unsuccessful. The Town Council would launch a new website dedicated to the Community Venue Project to enable residents to follow the progress, in addition to a timeline display in the Help Point.

Anne Jones congratulated Pru Moore and Andrew Barrett-Miles for their hard work in getting the project to this stage. Many residents were surprised at the result of the public consultation. It was important to note that other similar projects in the UK had relied upon volunteer support. Burgess Hill deserved to have an arts and culture facility. Janice Henwood felt that residents were not surprised because of the result of the consultation, but rather because the Town Council did not insist New River contribute towards a replacement venue.

Andrew Barrett-Miles explained that this was a team effort. The Steering Committee was set up with Councillors and members from the community who had made a great contribution to the project. The new building design was similar to the original but it would not include Cyprus Hall. The Town Council would ensure that the foundations were strong enough to support the idea of an atrium, and would work with the Cyprus Hall Association to discuss the benefit of potentially combining the buildings at a later stage.

**RESOLVED** that:

- A) that a community centre incorporating a 270 seat theatre space be designed and built on the land in Cyprus Road currently occupied by the British Legion Building and owned by the Council at a cost not to exceed £5 million including professional fees.
- B) that an application be made to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, who were the government

department responsible for the approval of loans to local authorities, for a loan of £3 million via the Public Works Loan Board, to part fund the project it being noted that fixed repayments of around £114,000 per annum for 50 years will be payable

- C) that Paddy Hunter Murphy be appointed once approval of the loan was received to fund raise at least £2 million plus his costs.
- D) that the Cultural Quarter Steering Committee (CQSC) be given delegated powers to appoint a Project Manager/Quantity Surveyor.
- E) that provided a suitable fee can be negotiated, the CQSC be delegated authority to appoint Aedas Architects and that the need to tender for this professional be waived in terms of Section 26.2(e)(vi) of Standing Orders and on the grounds that they were previously appointed in terms of a tendering process.

**318. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINANCE KEY AREA GROUP MEETING**

Councillors were requested to consider recommendations from the Finance Key Area Group, as set out in Agenda Item 11 dated 16 July 2018.

Chris Thomas-Atkin thanked members of the Finance Key Area Group, the Responsible Finance Officer and the CEO for their hard work in putting the proposal together. The £3 million loan must be funded from within the Council's budget and resources. The base budget would increase over the next 5 years due to the amount of precept generated from additional housing. New housing in Burgess Hill should provide an additional circa £13,000 a year at the current precept rate. At the end of this 5 year period, the base budget should have increased to self-fund the loan repayments in their entirety. Until the level of self-funding was achieved, the funding program would use existing resources and cost-savings to provide the additional funds to repay the loan.

Pru Moore thanked Chris Thomas-Atkin for his hard work with Colin Holden and the Town Council Officers. This was a very sound funding plan. The Northern Arc Scheme would ensure that the houses would be delivered in an orderly time-frame which would guarantee the increase in precept. Burgess Hill was the tenth largest growth area in the UK. The District Council was thanked for financially supporting the Northern Arc Scheme.

It was important to move quickly on this project, in order to get the Public Works Loan Board loan at a good rate. The loan repayments would amount to around £114,000 based on current rates and this would be a fixed rate.

**RESOLVED** that:

- A) council approve the use of revenue generated (£133k) through the growth in the Tax Base over the next 5 years to fund, in-part, the repayments of a £3 million pound loan,
- B) approve the use of cost savings generated and budget amendments, together with the use of Earmarked Reserves, in-total equating to £194k, to provide the additional funding for the proposed loan repayment schedule,
- C) transfer £11,155 to the General Reserve, and
- D) ring fence the monies of £72,386, raised through the venue element of the 2018/19 Precept, for crediting back to the 2019/20 Precept requirement.

**319. TOWN TWINNING - STADT SCHMALLEMBERG - SUMMER FESTIVAL**

The Town Mayor had received an invitation for the Town Council to send a delegation to attend the SchmalleMBERg Woche which would be held from the 29 August to 2 September 2018. Some members of the Burgess Hill Town Twinning Association were planning to attend and a large party from the Mid Sussex Brass Band, who would be performing at several concerts during the Woche.

The Town Council had attended this bi-annual Summer Festival on a number of occasions in the past to promote good relations, tourism and economic development. Council would send a small delegation from the Town Council to attend this event, particularly as this year marked the 30th Anniversary of the Twinning Charter between SchmalleMBERg and Burgess Hill.

Chris Thomas-Atkin suggested that the Northern Arc spine road be named 'SchmalleMBERg Way'. The SchmalleMBERg name should be marked in Burgess Hill. It was noted that there was a plaza situated in SchmalleMBERg named after Burgess Hill. This should be added to the recommendations.

It was important to maintain a good relationship with SchmalleMBERg. Burgess Hill Schools had benefitted from the Town Twinning. It was confirmed that the Town Mayor would be able to claim for travel expenses to attend the event.

Mandy Thomas-Atkin declared an interest in this item as she was a District Councillor and Street Naming fell under her portfolio.

Andrew Barrett-Miles explained that the new spine road would not be in Burgess Hill and therefore the Town Council would not be able to agree on a street name. The new road would fall under the parish of Ansty and Staplefield. At the last Burgess Hill Town Council Planning Committee Meeting, the Committee decided to agree on future Northern Arc street names collectively with other parishes. It was agreed the Council recommend the street be named 'Schmallenberg Way' at this stage.

**RESOLVED** that:

- A) the Mayor and her consort represent the Council at the Schmallenberg Woche as the Councils official delegates.
- B) note that the Deputy Leader and the Councils representative on the Town Twinning Association would be attending and travelling over with the Mayor's party.
- C) That the council recommend the proposed northern arc spine road be named Schmallenberg Way.

320. **DIARY DATES**

Council received a schedule of forthcoming events as set out in Agenda Item 13 dated 16 July 2018.

**RESOLVED** that:

the contents of the report be noted.

321. Meeting terminated at 19.53 hours.