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4 September 2020

To: **MEMBERS OF THE CUSTOMER SERVICES KEY AREA GROUP,  
BURGESS HILL TOWN COUNCIL**

A **MEETING** of the **CUSTOMER SERVICES KEY AREA GROUP** will be held online on **10 September 2020** at **19:00** hours, when your attendance is required.

Steve Cridland  
Chief Executive Officer

**Following government advice on social distancing, essential Council Meetings will be held virtually during the Covid-19 period. All papers will be published on our website as usual. Members of the public can attend the meeting by using the Zoom link that will be placed on the town council's website and social media shortly before the meeting takes place.**

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE THE START TIME OF THE MEETING\*\***

Filming, recording of Council meetings and use of social media:  
During this meeting members of the public may film or record the Committee and officers from the public area only providing it does not disrupt the meeting. The Confidential section of the meeting may not be filmed or recorded. If a member of the public objects to being recorded, the person(s) filming must stop doing so until that member of the public has finished speaking.

The use of social media is permitted but members of the public are requested to switch their mobile devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.

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## **A G E N D A**

### **1. OPEN FORUM**

Members of the public are invited to put questions or to draw relevant matters to the Council's attention. Each member of the public is allowed to speak once only in respect of a business item on the agenda (in the Open Forum) and shall not speak for more than three minutes at the discretion of the Chairman.

If it appears that the number of speakers is likely to unreasonably delay the disposal of business items on the agenda the Chairman may direct that a member of the public submits a question or comment in writing which shall be answered in due course.

### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

### **3. SUBSTITUTES**

### **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In respect of any matter on the agenda.

### **5. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

To consider the Notes of the Meeting of the Customer Services Key Area Group held on 28 July 2020 (previously distributed).

### **6. PAINTING OF VIRGIN MEDIA CABINETS**

Cllr Eves has suggested that local artists be asked to paint suitable designs on the Virgin Media cabinets around town in order to brighten them up as well as the town. Designs would reflect a significant aspect of the community eg its history or activities in the area.

The memorandum of agreement attached as appendix 1 has been received from Virgin Media. Cllr Egglestone has rewritten the agreement as Appendix 2. The agreement appears reasonable; however it is for a period of three years only (and therefore the suggested amendment). If the agreement is not renewed then the Council will have to reinstate the cabinets to their original colour. This will involve spraying the cabinets and in all probability a professional will need to be employed to do this. It is unknown what the cost of this might be. Other than that, there does not appear to be anything which could be a significant cost.

Local artists have been approached on the basis that the council will provide the paints for any artwork approved. There has been an enquiry

as to whether the Council would consider paying artists for their work. At present just 3 boxes have been identified for painting.

**RECOMMENDED:**

1. That the memorandum of agreement as amended between the Town Council and Virgin Media for the decoration of Virgin Media cabinets around town be agreed and the CEO be authorised to sign the agreement.
2. That the cost of providing paint for approved designs be borne by the Council.
3. That a small committee be appointed to approve designs prior to submitting them to Virgin Media for approval.
4. That consideration be given to paying artists for their effort.

7. **BATCHELORS FARM MANAGEMENT PLANS**

The council commissioned a consultant to examine existing management plans for the management of Batchelors Farm. The plans are attached. The Town Council has made good progress towards meeting the management objectives of the last plan. Here are some areas that need to be worked on over the coming 5 years:

- The impact of the new bridleway will need to be monitored over time.
- We have not been too successful in leaving wide unmown margins around the meadows to increase the tall grass habitat adjacent to hedgerows and around the edges of all the fields to mitigate the impact on grassland invertebrates. This needs more work.
- In the 2010 plan it was suggested to plant a new hedgerow/shaw along a seepage line on the eastern slope below the water tower but this was not taken forward and has now been dropped from the 2020 plan as the seepage and consequent soil erosion has now stopped and the hedgerows surrounding the field have become more dense and increased in value as habitats.
- The Black Poplars have grown vigorously and are now rather crowded so approx. one third will need coppicing or pollarding to introduce variety to their height and growth forms. This could be repeated with a further third in 2-3 years.
- Hedge rotational cutting was introduced in 2018 but needs to be better managed as this has not been entirely successful with the contractor cutting the wrong areas in 2019. It has been recommended in the 2020 plan that rotational cutting of the tall unmown margins be combined with cutting the adjacent hedgerows within their own 3 year rotation.
- It is mentioned in the new report that hedges should ideally be cut in January-February but this is not likely to be possible as the ground conditions would be too wet for the tractor to access the site without

causing damage to the ground. This happened last year when the hedge cutting was left later in the year and we received complaints from visitors about the track marks.

- Carrying out annual Brown Hairstreak egg counts in winter to ensure the hedgerow management is being successful.
- It is suggested that gaps in the hedgerow around the Water Tower be planted up and also along the southern boundary of the western slope where vegetation was cleared to install a new fence.
- Wildlife surveys were suggested in the 2010 plan but resources have not allowed for paid surveys although volunteers have recorded butterflies.
- A new suggestion from the plan is to carry out a small-scale trial enhancement project using green hay from the orchard area's flowery grassland to promote spread of wildflowers in the main meadows. The grass in the orchard area should be cut in 2 halves i.e. on a two year rotation.
- To enable the existing orchard to remain quiet and wildlife-rich it is recommended that a new community orchard be created to the north of the water tower that has easy access for visitors. It should be fenced to create an enclosed, dog free zone. An interpretive board is suggested for the new orchard.
- There are many Oak and broadleaved trees that have self-seeded in the orchard area but these need removing and many will be relocated to Oak Avenue within the site. This will give more room for the fruit trees.
- It would be useful to compile an inventory of the veteran and mature trees, this could potentially be carried out by volunteers.
- If possible a Friends of Batchelors Farm Group should be set up, perhaps with the help of FoBHGC.
- The plan should be reviewed and updated in 2025.
- It is strongly recommended that BHTC should give Batchelors Farm formal recognition as a Local Nature Reserve. Need to look at the implications of this.

### **For Noting**