



MINUTES of the **ORDINARY MEETING** of the **TOWN COUNCIL** held virtually on **Monday 21 September 2020**

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)

146. OPEN FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

147. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

148. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none

149. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The West Sussex County Council County Local Committees (CLC) meetings had not been held recently due to technical problems with hosting them virtually. Steve Cridland, CEO of Burgess Hill Town Council, was asked to write to WSCC to see if these meetings could be facilitated.

Councillor Andrew Barrett-Miles declared an interest as he was a member of the CLC and WSCC.

A question was asked on how decisions were being made in the absence of these meetings. It was responded that the decisions these CLC meetings made were on traffic regulation orders, and there were none so it would not have an effect. Elsewhere the procedure was that the monitoring officer would make the decision on behalf of the CLC in the absence of meetings.

It was noted that Bensons Fair was due to take place on the coming weekend, and that many of the Councillors had been approached by residents concerned over this going ahead with the Covid-19 situation. Councillor Robert Eggleston had been in contact with the District Solicitor to ask to reconsider the permission given for the fair. They had replied to say that they were satisfied that Bensons had a robust risk assessment in place. MSDC were the landowner for the site so were responsible for making the decision. They had recently held a fair in Lindfield and Haywards Heath and weren't any issues. It was noted that there was an uptick in Coronavirus cases across the county, however West Sussex was a lower risk area. MSDC's current position was that they would not withdraw permission, as the current guidelines said that it could go ahead.

It was suggested that the Town Council could contact MSDC to express reservations about allowing the funfair in the town given the present situation with Covid-19.

It was noted that as the fair was due to start on Thursday 24 September, by the time a letter was written and in the public domain it would likely be too late.

It was also stated that the Town Council were due to have the next open market in October, so should be careful with how a letter was worded. It was responded that a funfair was not comparable to an open market, which was being run with Covid safety measures in place.

It was commented that the operators of the funfair were aware of the current restrictions and were operating in a Covid safe way. It would be mainly children attending the fair, and they were already mixing in schools.

There was a vote on writing a letter expressing reservations to MSDC. This was agreed, with 8 votes in favour and 2 against.

A point of order was raised that it had been agreed that Councillors must have their camera switched on during meetings, and not all did. The Councillors who did not have their cameras switched on were asked to do so.

150. COUNCIL MINUTES

A correction was requested to minute 140, for the word 'artwork' to be replaced with the word 'contract'.

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Monday 3 August 2020 with this correction were **AGREED** and signed as a correct record.

151. PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Councillor Janice Henwood, Chair of the Planning Committee, presented the minutes of the meetings. She noted that additional there had been two working group meetings, on 24 August and 14 September to consider the Committee's response to two consultation documents from central government – 'Changes to the Current Planning System' and 'Planning for the Future'. On Tuesday 1 September the Committee had also considered their response to the MSDC Site allocations DPD.

The Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on Monday 3 August and Tuesday 1 September 2020 were **AGREED**.

152. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT KEY AREA GROUP NOTES OF MEETING

Councillor Kathleen Willis, Chair of the Community Engagement Key Area Group presented the notes of the meeting. Just under £5000 had been awarded to groups affected by Covid, and there was just over £2000 left in the pot for future grants. The KAG had also discussed the town Christmas event and how it could be made covid-secure.

Clarification was sought on the notes of the meeting, under minute 51 on the Covid-19 Community Grants, which stated that the remaining balance of £2147.80 would be added to the Grants Fund – was the money being added to the main Grants Fund or would it still be kept separately in the Covid-19 fund.

It was clarified that the residual funds would be ring-fenced for

supporting groups affected by Covid-19, and that this was separate from the minor grants. Groups had been asked to put in an application by the end of September, to be considered at the next meeting.

It was asked whether members needed to contact groups to apply for the grant. It was responded that this was an officer responsibility and members were only involved in the process once the applications were received, to decide how to allocate the funds.

The Notes of the meeting of the Community Engagement Key Area Group held on Tuesday 25 August 2020 were **AGREED**.

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

The Notes of the meeting of the Customer Services Key Area Group held on Thursday 10 September 2020 were **AGREED**.

Councillor Robert Duggan, Chair of the Customer Services KAG presented the notes of the meeting. The group had discussed the painting of the Virgin Media boxes, which would be done by local artists, once agreed by Virgin. They had also discussed the Batchelors Farm management plans, including considering making the site a Nature Reserve, and setting up a Friends of Batchelors Farm group, which had both been supported by the Friends of Burgess Hill Green Circle Network.

It was asked what progress had been made on declaring Batchelors Farm a Nature Reserve, and on establishing the group? Steve Cridland, provided an update that the Chair of the Friends of Burgess Hill Green Circle Network had been informed and was supportive, and would supply details for making the area a Nature Reserve. The project was currently with Sarah Hughes.

Councillors Sylvia Neumann and Janice Henwood confirmed that they were willing to help with this project, and to have their names put forward as a contact point.

It was asked when this would be publicised, and responded that this could start straight away.

It was noted that an advertisement had been placed on the Virgin Media box in Worlds End rec, at the Junction Road entrance as well as on the lid of a bin. Steve Cridland would ask the Town Council Maintenance Team to investigate this.

Councillor Robert Duggan thanked Councillors Sylvia Neumann and Janice Henwood for volunteering, and welcomed any other Councillors to be involved, as well as members of the public.

It was asked what the timescale for setting up the group would be, and it was responded that this depended on the public response.

154. **DIARY DATES**

Council received a schedule of forthcoming events as set out in Agenda Item 9 dated 21 September 2020.

It was asked whether the time given for the Finance KAG was correct, as it was listed as 19.00, but these meetings normally started at 18.30. This would be checked.

RESOLVED that:

The content of the report was noted.

155. Meeting ended 19.35