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Wednesday 17 November 2021

To: MEMBERS OF BURGESS HILL TOWN COUNCIL

A MEETING of the Council will be held in the Council Chamber on Monday 22 November 2021 at 19.00 hours, when your attendance is required.

Steven Cridland
CEO

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

FILMING, RECORDING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS AND USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

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.

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 (during 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. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In respect of any matter on the agenda.

4. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

5. **COUNCIL MINUTES**

To consider the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on Monday 20 September 2021(copy herewith).

6. **PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES**

To consider the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held Monday 27 September, Monday 18 October and Monday 8 November. (minutes previously circulated)

We have considered 58 applications for planning permission under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Our decisions and recommendations within our terms of reference are set out in the Minutes.

Janice Henwood
Chairman

7. **MOTION TO COUNCIL: PREMISES LICENCE** (Sale of alcohol)

Cllr Henwood , seconded by Cllr Barrett-Miles has submitted the following motion for consideration by the Council:

"The Town Council should not sell alcohol in the Help Point"

Cllr Henwood has requested a recorded vote.

8. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT KEY AREA GROUP: NOTES OF MEETING**

To consider the Notes of the meeting of the Customer services KAG held on 21 October 2021 (previously circulated).

Our decisions and recommendations within our terms of reference are set out in the Notes.

Peter Chapman
Chairman

9. **CULTURAL QUARTER : NOTES OF MEETING**

The Notes of the Cultural Quarter Meeting held on 4 November are attached for consideration.

For Noting

10. **TOWN TWINNING**

The CEO received a call from a member of the Town Twinning Association asking whether the Town Council would be willing to take control of the association's finances. It appears that membership has dwindled for a variety of reasons. It also appears that the Schmallerberg association is facing a similar plight. To date no funds have been received. Of concern is how this project is taken forward. Rather than let it fade away it is suggested that a small subcommittee be formed of councillors and interested parties to try to ensure that the twinning continues.

RECOMMENDED:

That a twinning committee comprised of councillors and interested persons be formed to take the twinning with Schmallerberg and Abbeyville forward.

11. **BOLLARD LEASE**

Following a break in at the Council's Cyprus Car Park store, an assessment was made of security arrangements. It was decided that the installation of a bollard in front of the doors would be a good deterrent. The permission of MSDC was sought and they have provided the attached lease for consideration and signature by Council.

RECOMMENDED:

That the lease from MSDC for a bollard at the Cyprus Road Carpark store be approved and entered into.

12. ABOUT TOWN REVIEW

The Community Engagement team oversees communication on behalf of the Council and has set out a clear communication strategy considered at the Community Engagement Key Area Group meeting held on 21 October 2021 (Minute 76 refers). As part of this a review will be held on how to proceed with About Town in the future to include the following:

- A consultation with the public to ask them what they like about the magazine and any suggestions to include distribution channels;
- The consultation will consist of a pull out section in the next issue of About Town (to be distributed in March 2022, copy deadline 12 January 2022);
- Blank copies will be available in the Help Point to collect;
- The survey will be promoted via our social media channels and be available on our website.

The responses will be collated and brought back to Council during 2022.

RECOMMENDED:

Council is asked to note the report.

13. REGENERATION OF MARTLETS CENTRE

MSDC submitted an application to the Levelling Up Fund for £14 million some of which was to kick start the Martlets development. Unfortunately, the bid was unsuccessful. A further bid will probably be submitted in the spring next year when the government opens the fund again. Mid Sussex is in priority area 3 (the lowest) and so there is no guarantee of success. In the meantime, the Martlets Shopping Centre is in poor shape and a blight on the town in aesthetic and environmental terms. There is no certainty of redevelopment happening if a second bid is unsuccessful. If it is successful then the earliest any redevelopment will start, under the consented planning application (“the consented scheme”), is likely to be mid-2023.

The Town Council has taken the initiative to bring some life back into the area and has managed to negotiate deals with New River on the former William Hill Interiors unit thereby creating for 4 new businesses. We have also used our influence to support the take up of other units in this estate. This has had some success along with the new library but until the remaining area is improved this success will remain limited.

While New River has a long lease for the area, MSDC holds the

freehold. Some tangible improvements need to be made to counter the negative impressions of the town that this area has left. Some of the empty shops are in a poor condition making them impossible to let. It is difficult to understand why either the lessee (New River) or the freeholder (MSDC) would have allowed this to happen.

In addition to the poor state of many of the empty shops, the site of the old Library and Martlets Hall is an eyesore. Appeals to MSDC to better conceal this area by at least replacing the metal fencing with wooden hoarding have fallen on deaf ears. It appears that MSDC feel that the metal fencing enables a view of the area thereby discouraging anti-social behaviour. However, the way it has been left exposed has created a bleak and uninviting prospect for the town.

The Town Council has approached MSDC requesting it consider a 'Meanwhile Lease' on this site and they have said that they will reconsider this (this may be more complicated should ITV return in 2022 for more filming).

Given the current economic situation there must be serious doubt that some of the promised elements of the consented scheme will not materialise (even if redevelopment starts). Whilst we hope that this is not the case, if this fear is realised, it would mean that Burgess Hill will have lost the Martlets Hall without seeing all the benefits of the consented scheme. With the benefit of hindsight, that is a sacrifice the town should not have been expected to make.

Whilst we cannot blame New River or MSDC for the economic situation, Burgess Hill does deserve better.

We propose inviting MSDC with New River to a meeting with the Town Council to discuss:

- (i) a Meanwhile Lease on the Martlets Hall and Library site;
- (ii) an urgent programme of aesthetic and environmental improvements to the Martlets Shopping Centre to support trading in the area generally and also creating more lettable units;
- (iii) as the retail environment in Burgess Hill is undermined by the condition of the Martlets Shopping Centre, a financial grant to support the Town Council's Bridge-the-Gap programme;
- (iv) how the town might be financially compensated for the loss of the Martlets Hall if the full consented scheme cannot be delivered, or if it can, only after further considerable delay.

For Consideration

14. [ESCAPE YOUTH CLUB DONATION](#)

WSSC has given the Escape Youth Club notice to vacate the Park Centre where it currently holds its meetings. The move will cost £500 and they would need to use the funds they have earmarked for a Christmas function to do this. It is suggested that the Council donate £500 to the Escape Youth Club to cover their removal costs.

For consideration

15. **DIARY DATES**

Finance Key Area Group: Wednesday 1 December 18.30 hours
(zoom)

Planning Committee: Monday 29 November 19.00 hours

Planning Committee: Monday 20 December 19.00 hours

Planning Committee: Monday 10 January 19.00 hours

FOR NOTING

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION

16. **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

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

17. **STAFF MATTER**