



MINUTES of the **ORDINARY MEETING** of the **TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber on **Monday 30 January 2023**

Present: Peter Chapman Town Mayor
Janice Henwood Deputy Town Mayor

Graham Allen*
Andrew Barrett-Miles
Matthew Cornish
Robert Duggan
Robert Eggleston
Anne Eves
Lee Gibbs*
Janice Henwood
Simon Hicks
Tofojjul Hussain
Joseph Foster*
Sarah Lawrence
Mustak Miah
Sylvia Neumann
Max Nielsen*
Kathleen Willis*

* *Denotes non-attendance.*

383. [PRESENTATION TO JACK BENNETT, BURGESS HILL DISTRICT ROTARY](#)

The Town Mayor presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Jack Bennett thanking him for his contribution to the Burgess Hill community, and detailing Jack's work for Burgess Hill and District Rotary and the Burgess Hill Festival Committee.

384. [MINUTES SILENCE FOR PRU MOORE](#)

A minute's silence was held for the late Pru Moore, former Leader of Burgess Hill Town Council. Ahead of the minute's silence, Councillors

spoke on their memories of Pru and the work that she did for the Burgess Hill community – with Councillors Miah and Hussein giving special mention to the work Pru did for the Muslim community in the town. All Councillors extended their sympathies to Pru’s family.

385. OPEN FORUM

36 members of the public were present at the meeting.

One member of the public asked about Plan B following the Levelling Up Fund bid. She said that she had seen on social media that there would be a meeting between New River Retail, and the local Councils. She asked if it would be possible for there to be a time for residents to get together with Councillors and brainstorm ideas for the town, ahead of this meeting, so that Councillors could understand what the public wanted.

Councillor Eggleston said that he could not speak for the Town Council, but that he would personally be happy to help facilitate a workshop.

A second member of the public asked how much money Burgess Hill Town Council (BHTC) paid to New River Retail each year, including rent.

Council said that they paid no money to New River Retail each year.

A third member of the public asked if it was true that New River Retail had sixty years in which to redevelop the town centre.

Councillor Eggleston explained the background and legalities of the lease, stating that technically New River Retail did not have to do anything, providing that they fulfilled the terms of their lease, and that they were not obligated to redevelop.

A fourth member of the public asked Councillor Eggleston if it was true that he abstained on a previous Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) vote, relating to the Chanctonbury Road allotments.

Councillor Eggleston stated that he voted against the motion, and that Councillors Sam Smith and Emma Coe-Gunnel White abstained.

A fifth member of the public from Burgess Hill Football Club explained that recently the club grounds had suffered a fire, and vandalism of their fences. He asked if there was any Section 106 money available for repairs, and if so, how could he apply for it. He informed Council that the club had written to the leader of MSDC on numerous occasions, but to no response. The seven years that they had remaining on their lease were not sufficient for them to apply for grant funding.

Councillor Cornish suggested that a representative from the football club attend a Mid Sussex District Council Meeting, and submit a question ahead of time to be asked at the meeting.

Councillor Eggleston asked for the club to summarise the history of

what had happened, and to send it to the CEO of Burgess Hill Town Council, so that the Town Council could take up the matter with MSDC directly.

386. PLACE AND CONNECTIVITY

Members of the public attended the meeting to speak on the Place and Connectivity works.

One member of the public asked how much involvement Burgess Hill Town Council Councillors had with the work.

Councillor Eggleston explained that he and Councillor Barrett-Miles had both been members of a steering group. He stated that this steering group did not have a say on policy or decision making, but instead was to oversee and scrutinise work to be done.

Councillor Henwood stated that the Planning Committee at the Town Council was consulted, but their concerns were largely ignored.

Councillor Duggan explained that Burgess Hill Town Council had considered the Place and Connectivity scheme in June 2020 and sent in comments regarding the scheme. He said that these were put into an appendix at the end of the report and were not seen again.

Councillor Miah asked whether the public was invited to consult regarding the scheme.

Councillor Chapman explained that the consultation was emailed to MSDC Councillors, and that there was a form on the burgesshill.net website for feedback, but there were no in person meetings.

Councillor Eggleston stated that in February and March 2020, the steering group participated in two workshops in which they were shown the proposal. He stated that the only time the plan was changed by officers was when they had done extra studies into traffic flow themselves. He stated that the removal of the roundabout was not a sudden decision and had been discussed by West Sussex County Council (WSCC) for at least ten years. He explained that policy was ultimately decided by WSCC and that where officers devised the scheme, Councillors could raise objections, but that scrutiny committees ultimately could not overturn the project.

Councillor Cartwright explained that as a District Councillor, he had seen a full presentation at an MSDC Council meeting and had noted problems with traffic lights then.

A second member of the public asked what could be done to correct the problems that had been caused by the Place and Connectivity works.

Councillor Eggleston stated that he felt he was making progress with officers on the pedestrian crossing lights and the implementation of dotted crossing lines.

A third member of the public questioned when the last audit had been done for traffic flow, stating that since then more houses had been built leading to more cars on the roads.

Councillor Eggleston explained that the last audit was undertaken in 2016, and that the audit used an algorithm that took into consideration new houses and traffic, adding capacity.

A fourth member of the public, and resident of Mill Road, stated that she had never been made aware of public consultations on the Place and Connectivity Project. She explained the detrimental impact it had had on her day-to-day and questioned what could be done by both the Council and the residents to change the situation.

Councillor Eggleston explained that WSCC and MSDC had led the project, and both sent out notices of consultations. He said that the publicization of these consultations was abysmal. He stated that Burgess Hill Town Council had publicised the consultations via its website and social media across several weeks, despite no obligation to do so.

A fifth member of the public questioned how the plans had got through the design plans. He mentioned the pathway outside the train station, and questioned if there were going to be cyclist dismount signs, and if this was the case then would cyclists want to use it.

A sixth member of the public was invited by Councillors to give a presentation on the Place and Connectivity works, owing to his background in the Department of Transport. He explained the shortcomings he had discovered with the works, including inadequate paving, incorrect highway widths, and badly implemented design drawings. He suggested that separate engineering advice should be sought, for a treatise on the work and design inadequacy.

A seventh member of the public asked what could be done for the future of the scheme, as the works were soon to be undertaken at Worlds End. Councillor Richard Cherry, of West Sussex County Council stated that he had been attempting to contact Councillor Joy Dennis with questions, but had received no response. He stated that the Steering Committee notes were commercially confident and so could not be publicized, nor subject to a Freedom of Information (FOI) request.

Councillor Cornish had attended a Mid Sussex District Council meeting the week before, and had asked Councillor Stephen Hillier what assurances could be given to the people of Burgess Hill. He said that Councillor Hillier had said communication regarding the Place and Connectivity scheme would be improved.

An eighth member of the public asked whether it was possible for Burgess Hill Town Council to take those responsible to the scheme to court, should the width of the roads be beneath health and safety standards.

Councillor Eggleston said that whilst the approach may be negligent and careless, there was no criminality. He said that there was no way to take civil action, and that the resources of Burgess Hill Town Council and residents would not be able to cover a barrister's bill.

A ninth member of the public asked whether there was any scrutiny of the scheme at a Government level, due to some of the funding being from central Government.

Councillor Eggleston explained that if there was any room for scrutiny, it would only be through West Sussex County Council, as Burgess Hill Town Council and Mid Sussex District Council didn't have the power to scrutinise West Sussex County Council expenditure of money from the Government or Section 106.

Councillor Henwood expressed her concern over the Keymer Road layby, and suggested that Burgess Hill Town Council employed a specialist engineer to do an independent assessment of what had been undertaken for the Place and Connectivity project. She suggested that Burgess Hill Town Council ringfence up to £10,000 for an assessment.

Councillor Eggleston seconded Councillor Henwood's motion for an amendment to the recommendation.

Councillor Lawrence asked what was being done in the short term to improve the scheme.

Councillor Eggleston said he was trying to arrange another meeting to have a walkthrough of the project, to look at any snags. He said that he would seek to have West Sussex County Council deliver, communicate and consult in a far better way.

Councillor Hicks sought to reassure residents that Councillors were seeking to improve the scheme, and had the same concerns as residents. He urged residents to submit complaints directly to the Places and Connectivity team.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Town Council requested that West Sussex County Council convene a meeting of Burgess Hill residents, in Burgess Hill, to be chaired by the Cabinet Member for Highways, Councillor Joy Dennis, and supported by West Sussex County Council Officers, to explain the Place and Connectivity programme and to answer residents' concerns.

All in favour

2. The Town Council arrange for three quotes to be received expeditiously with a view to appointing a civil engineer to review the delivery of the Place and Connectivity – Western Gateway –

programme. If the quotes were to come in within £10,000, the Town Council would proceed to undertake the work.

12 in favour, 1 abstention.

387. [APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE](#)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lee Gibbs, Max Nielsen and Joseph Foster.

388. [DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST](#)

Councillor Eggleston declared an interest as a Trustee of the Beehive CIO.

Councillor Chapman declared an interest as a volunteer at the Escape Youth Club.

389. [CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS](#)

The Town Mayor thanked officers for their work on the Holocaust Memorial Day Commemorations, and thanked Councillors for attending the service. He said that there had been a good presentation following the service, detailing the journey of Lesley Urbach's mother and aunt as they came to Burgess Hill on the Kindertransport.

The Town Mayor had attended the Burgess Hill Academy Christmas Concert, at the end of 2022, and said he was impressed by the talents of the students involved.

390. [COUNCIL MINUTES](#)

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Council held on Monday 21 November 2022 were **AGREED**.

391. [MID SUSSEX MARATHON](#)

Representatives from Mid Sussex District Council and Places Leisure attended the Council Meeting to give background information on the Mid Sussex Marathon Weekend and answer questions from Councillors.

They explained that the Marathon Weekend had been first held in 2012, and was an Olympic legacy event. They expressed that it was a successful partnership event with the aim on enhancing community sport. The Marathon Weekend had been affected by the pandemic and had been in a recovery phase since. They explained that the marathon also employed a separate company - AHS Wellbeing – to help run sponsorship and marketing.

Councillor Cornish expressed concerns over the rise in costs, and asked what that was due to. He stated that due to the limited budget of the Town Council, they needed to act in the best interests of the public. He asked how they were getting more people to physically participate in the marathon.

Representatives of the marathon explained that they use AHS Wellbeing due to their expertise, and that some increase was due to their employment of an outside agency. The purchase of medals, and other items, alongside shipping also accounted for some of this increase.

Councillor Eggleston asked how much of the 52% increase in costs was due to salaries for AHS Wellbeing. He expressed confidence in the profits of the marathon being used for charitable purposes, but questioned how the event would break even.

It was explained that the business plan came into play on this point, and that the way the event was run was separate from the profit of the event. Representatives from the marathon expressed a want to look into decreasing costs.

Councillor Henwood also expressed interest in how much was being paid to AHS Wellbeing. Representatives of the marathon said they would be able to provide Council with a list of itemised costs, following the meeting.

Councillor Chapman suggested that it would be better to have a local run, organised by a local running group, rather than the marathon.

It was explained that there was a large legacy for the event, as it was created for the 2012 Olympics. The event had also been included in an article in Runners World. Representatives of the marathon firmly believed in the community benefit of the event.

RESOLVED that:

The Town Council deferred consideration of the additional £500 to the Mid Sussex Marathon until the business plan was available to view.

All in favour

392. [PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES](#)

Councillor Henwood expressed satisfaction that an application for two houses to be built in the garden of a house on Keymer Road had been rejected, due to failure to demonstrate an adequate water supply. She said this was the first time this had been a reason for rejection in four years.

RESOLVED that:

The Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on Monday 28 November, Monday 19 December and Monday 9 January were **AGREED**.

393. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Council considered the Summary of Recommendations as set out in Appendix 2, dated Monday 30 January 2023. Each set of recommendations from the Key Area Groups was considered as below:

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT KAG RECOMMENDATIONS

PARK CENTRE UPDATE

1. The Council noted the reports of the structural engineer and surveyor and estimated costs of repairs of around £500,000.
2. The Council and Sussex Clubs for Young People (SCYP) would enter into discussions with WSCC to take over the St John's Institute and establish a new CIO.
3. That a further report be considered regarding funding of repairs, refurbishments and a possible extension once a business plan had been drawn up to reflect an estimate of costs for the extension, refurbishments and bringing the building up to modern environmental standards and agreement had been reached as to how the costs would be divided between SCYP and the Council.
4. That a further report be considered regarding the governance of the CIO e.g., number of trustees and the representation of the Town Council on the new CIO.
5. The Council would consider its financial position with regard to applying for a Public Works Loan Board loan of up to a £600,000 in light of the other projects which the Council wished to be involved in and also subject to consultation with residents.
6. The potential capital requirement referred to in 5 above be referred to the Finance KAG to assist in its development of the Council's forward capital programme.

RESOLVED that:

All in favour

ST JOHN'S PAVILION

1. That the business plan submitted by the Cricket Club be approved.
2. That further discussions be held with Mid Sussex District Council and the Cricket Club to consider the following
 - 2.1 proposed improvements to the Cricket Club;
 - 2.2 become a trustee of the charity and representation thereon
 - 2.3 funding of the extension
3. That, subject to the satisfactory conclusion of discussions with and clear commitments from Mid Sussex District Council and the Cricket Club, the Council agreed 'in principle' to provide 40% of the cost of redevelopment up to a maximum of £400,000 providing this was matched by Mid Sussex District Council and there were shared governance arrangements of the charity between Mid Sussex District Council and the Town Council, subject to consultation with residents.
4. That the potential capital requirement referred to in 3 above be referred to the Finance Key Area Group to assist in its development of the Council's forward capital programme.

RESOLVED that:

Council voted on this item and it was **rejected 7 votes, to 6 votes.**

Councillor Neumann questioned why MSDC were not taking the lead on this project.

Councillor Cornish agreed in principle that the pavilion was a great asset, but expressed concerns that Mid Sussex District Council would only give money if Burgess Hill Town Council gave money. He also expressed concern that the money given by Burgess Hill Town Council would be in the form of a PWLB loan.

Councillor Henwood expressed concern over the business plan, stating she wanted to see more detail, especially on the usage of the facility by other community groups.

NEW BURIAL GROUND

1. The Council agreed the commencement of the planning and construction of the new burial site and to provide funding of approximately £250,000 for this project.
2. That a loan from the Public Works Loan Board be applied for once the Finance KAG has considered all the bids to the Community Facilities Fund and agreed an amount to apply for and also subject to consultation with residents.

3. That an additional site be identified and acquired whenever possible and the possibility of making this a natural burial site be investigated.
4. That officers meet with members of the Muslim community to understand their requirements and identify arrangements the Council need to take into account when developing the new burial ground.
5. That the potential capital requirement referred to in 1 above be referred to the Finance KAG to assist in its development of the Council's forward capital programme.

RESOLVED that:

Due to the rejection of the St John's Pavilion item; item 2 on the New Burial Ground project was superseded and Council agreed to remove this item. **All in favour.**

Council then voted on points 1, 3, 4 and 5. **All in favour.**

BEEHIVE PROJECT

1. Council noted the expected cost of the professionals for stage of the reduced project, and referred to Finance Key Area Group the potential capital requirement referred to assist Finance Key Area Group in its development of the Council's forward capital programme.

RESOLVED that:

All in favour.

CUSTOMER SERVICES KAG RECOMMENDATIONS

TIERED PLANTERS IN CHURCH WALK

1. That 2 x 3 tier flower planters with flowering plants be hired from Plantscape for summer 2023 to be suitably placed in Church Walk at a cost of £500 including delivery and removal. Funding to come from the Street Scene Reserve.

CHURCH CLOCK REFURBISHMENT

1. That the sum of £26,000 be included on the Council's forward Capitol Plan to refurbish the 4 faces of the clock at St John's Church.

2. That a further quote be obtained and the possibility of grant funding be investigated.

BATCHELORS FARM COMMUNITY ORCHARD

1. That £9,500 be made available over the next financial year to create the orchard and plant ½ the trees each financial year.

FOLDERS MEADOW REPLACEMENT EQUIPMENT

1. That further investigation be carried out to establish whether the broken piece of equipment could be repaired.
2. That if the piece of equipment could not be repaired, then a 'Dizzy' roundabout be installed at a cost of £3035 plus installation and delivery and that application be made for Section 106 funding to cover the cost.
3. That if there was any Section 106 funding remaining, the '4 in a row' piece of equipment be purchased and installed at a cost of £1,625 plus delivery.

GRIT BINS

1. That 10 grit bins be purchased and installed at a cost of £2475 subject to approval from WSCC.

RESOLVED that:

All in favour.

394. STRATEGIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT KEY AREA GROUP – NOTES OF MEETING

The Notes of the meeting of the Strategic Planning and Development Key Area Group KAG held on 11 January 2023 were **AGREED**, subject to the changes in item 393.

395. CUSTOMER SERVICES KEY AREA GROUP – NOTES OF MEETING

The Notes of the meeting of the Customer Services Key Area Group KAG held on 17 January 2023 were **AGREED**, subject to the changes in item 393.

396. FINANCE KEY AREA GROUP: NOTES OF MEETING

Council considered the notes of the meeting of the Finance KAG held

on 23 January 2023. The decisions and recommendations of the Finance Key Area Groups were considered as follows:

- A. Approve the 2023/24 Revenue Budget and set the Precept at £965,833
- B. To categorise and approve, using a traffic light system, each of the projects detailed within the Capital Programme:
 - i. Basket Ball Court Upgrade: RED – supported by the town council but refer to MSDC for funding,
 - ii. Batchelors Farm Community Orchard: GREEN – funds (£9.5k) to be ring-fenced from the 2022/23 surplus,
 - iii. Beehive Centre: AMBER - Investigate new project concept and defer any additional expenditure on design work,
 - iv. Burial Ground Phase 2: GREEN - funds (£250k) to be ring fenced from the Community Building and Projects Reserve, however, the seeking of external funding should continue,
 - v. Parish (church) Clock: GREEN - funds (£25k) to be ring fenced from the Community Building and Projects Reserve, however, the seeking of external funding should continue,
 - vi. Park Centre: AMBER - Charity formation, Trusteeship, Governance, Financials remain outstanding, and for the project to be split into two phases, “Repair and Refurbishment” and an optional “Extension Build”, and
 - vii. St John’s Pavilion: AMBER - Charity formation, Trusteeship, Governance, Financials remain outstanding.

RESOLVED that:

For Item A – the Annual Budget Vote – **all in favour**.

Council agreed to remove item **B) vii)** due to the previous vote on the St John’s Pavilion Item. **All in favour**.

The Notes of the meeting of the Finance KAG held on 23 January 2022 were **AGREED**, subject to the above changes.

397. GRANTS AWARDS PANEL – NOTES OF MEETING

The Notes of the meeting of the Grants Awards Panel held on 12 December 2022 were **AGREED**.

398. ARCHITECT: BEEHIVE

Councillor Eggleston gave some background to the project, explaining that of twenty-two architects who had applied for the tender, two had been shortlisted. He stated these architects had interesting proposals for the Royal British Legion (RBL) site.

Councillor Neumann questioned whether a theatre that was not on the ground floor would be satisfactory.

Councillor Eggleston stated that one of the architects being considered had designed a first-floor theatre, previously.

Councillor Miah questioned the viability of the project, should it be moved from the RBL site, as the project had been previously paused owing to rising costs.

Councillor Eggleston explained that the move to the Martlets was solely hypothetical, and that using an existing structure may help to decrease costs. It would also mean the construction risk for Burgess Hill Town Council was decreased. He stated the project would not be entered into without it being commercially viable.

Councillor Cornish questioned what would happen to the RBL site.

Councillor Eggleston said that nothing was planned yet, but that revenue generating options would be considered.

RESOLVED that:

1. The appointment of an architect to redesign the Beehive be delayed pending a response from NRR as to whether the facility could be incorporated into their plans for the Martlets.
2. Should an architect be required and the original site is to be used, then the CEO, in conjunction with the working party, be given delegated authority to appoint one of the two remaining architects.
3. If the facility could be accommodated in the Martlets and an architect was required, then the architect selected in 2 above be appointed to design a new facility in the Martlets subject to negotiation on fees.

All in favour.

399. [DIARY DATES](#)

JANUARY 2023		
Planning Committee	Tuesday 31 January	19.00 hours
FEBRUARY 2023		
Planning Committee	Monday 20 February	19.00 hours
MARCH 2023		
Council	Monday 6 March	19.00 hours
Planning Committee	Monday 13 March	19.00 hours
APRIL 2023		
Planning Committee	Monday 3 April	19.00 hours
Planning Committee	Monday 24 April	19.00 hours

RESOLVED that:

Council noted the upcoming dates.

400. [FORTHCOMING ROTA OF MEETINGS 2023-2024 AND INDUCTION PROGRAMME 2023](#)

RESOLVED that:

Council noted the induction programme and forthcoming rota of meeting 2023-2024.

401. [LAND ABUTTING 3 ALEXANDRA ROAD](#)

Residents from Alexandra Road were present at the meeting and expressed gratitude to the Town Council for their support. They expressed the importance of green spaces for the community and urged Councillors to approve the item.

Councillor Henwood expressed admiration for the tenacity of residents involved.

RESOLVED that:

Provided the residents provide the funds and cover the legal costs, the Town Council purchase the land abutting 3 Alexandra Road and maintain it as public open space.

All in favour.

Meeting terminated at 21:49