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Tuesday 6 June 2023

To: **MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT KEY AREA GROUP,
BURGESS HILL TOWN COUNCIL**

A **MEETING** of the **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT KEY AREA GROUP** will be held in the Council Chamber on **Wednesday 14 June 2023 at 18.30 hours**, when your attendance is required.

Steve Cridland
Chief Executive Officer

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

[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 (whether in the Open Forum or during the meeting) 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.

[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.

AGENDA

1. OPEN FORUM
2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRPERSON
3. CHAIRMANS ANNOUCEMENTS
4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
5. SUBSTITUTES
6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In respect of any matter on the Agenda.

7. NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

To consider the Notes of the Meeting of the Community Engagement Key Area Group held on Thursday 6 October 2022 (copy available on our website).

8. EVENT PLAN DELIVERED IN 2023

The Event Plan was agreed at the Key Area Group meeting held in October 2022 and is attached at Appendix 1. This sets out the team timetable for activities. This will be an opportunity for the events team to provide verbal updates on activities completed during the 2022 Council year, to include the following events:

- Jubilee Fest in June 2022
- Holiday Activities
- Young Carers and SEND events
- Trails in the Town Centre supporting our local businesses and town centre-based events – Lions Day and St George’s Day
- Tea Party events for our Senior Citizens
- National events – Remembrance and Holocaust Memorial Day
- Christmas activities – Light Switch On, Hampers and theatre performances.
- Burgess Hill Big Coronation Lunch
- Importance of working with Partner Organisations

RECOMMENDATION:

Councillors are asked to note the contents of this report.

Risk Implications: These were considered in advance of events being booked. No financial implications.

9. **EVENT IDEAS FROM OUR NEW COUNCIL**

This is an opportunity for the new Councillors to contribute any ideas they have on the events to be delivered going forward. The team will begin planning activities for April 2024 - March 2025 in September this year. The reason for this is to research any potential activity costs, consider partnership working and potential funding applications that may support the delivery of the events programme. We then collate the budget we would require to deliver the activities which would be submitted to this Key Area Group and the Finance Key Area Group for consideration, and then for final approval at Full Council.

RECOMMENDATION:

Councillors are asked to contribute their views on future events and activities of the Community Engagement team.

Risk Implications: These will be considered in advance of events being finalized. No financial implications at this stage.

10. **MID SUSSEX MARATHON**

Burgess Hill Town Council have supported the Mid Sussex Marathon event since its inception in 2015. A successful event was delivered on Monday 1 May with the support of the Community Engagement Team who assisted with a hospitality tent, issuing of the medals and participants t-shirts and social media coverage of the event, on the day. Prior to the event we also deliver residents letters to those within the immediate vicinity, as part of the event management plan and the Maintenance Team assist with installation of posters advising the public of the event route.

There was an overall increase in participation for the event and the Board met on Monday 5 June to discuss the event's progress. The number of volunteers across the three days had increased and it was felt the reason for this was due to the improved registration for volunteers online. There was agreement that we would like to see an increase in the participation of schools and the Town Councils will be assisting with this going forward to try and build on the established relationships each Town Council has with schools within its area.

There was a request for the Town Council to commit now to the event for 2024 to be delivered in Burgess Hill on Monday 6 May. This would be supported on the day by members of the Community Engagement Team, and in advance from the Maintenance Team, as per previous years. In terms of value, the Community Engagement Team feel this is a good value event which brings people into the town.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Community Engagement Key Area Group are asked to approve the requested £1,000, at this stage, which will form part of the 2024-2025 programme of events. The funds will be from the Community Engagement budget for that year, but a commitment to the event is sought at this stage. This amount is requested from all three supporting Town Councils.

Risk Implications: This event forms part an integral part of the programme of events for the year and the towns participation is essential.

Financial implications: The financial burden for this event lies with the event organisers and the Town Council contribute a set amount.

11. ABOUT TOWN MAGAZINE

The Community Engagement Team is responsible for external communications produced by the Town Council. This includes our social media, press releases and our magazine About Town. This is delivered to just under 15,000 households, three times a year. The Editor, a former employee of the Town Council, receives articles for submission and works with staff to create a magazine which includes articles on Council activities and plans, and relevant community information received by external groups. The magazine includes paid advertising which is sourced by the Community Engagement Team, but this has become challenging to secure in this current climate.

Background information to assist New Council

At **Full Council** on Monday 17 May 2022, Agenda Item 25 the following report was prepared and considered:

“The Community Engagement KAG suggested that there were possibly cheaper options to producing About Town such as a smaller quarterly leaflet or brochure in the future. It was confirmed that there would be a survey in the About Town magazine and a digital survey for residents to fill out to seek views on the magazine in the next issue.

A survey was circulated in the March edition of the magazine and the responses collated are attached as Appendix 5 and 6. 50 electronic responses and 55 paper responses were received.

Council is advised of the following points to be considered:

- The magazine is circulated to 14,000 households, three times per year. A response of 105 represents 0.75% response rate.
- The survey was provided in paper copy in the magazine and publicized via a press release, and on social media on three occasions (27 March; 14 April; 21 April) to promote the opportunity to complete the survey.

- The costs of the magazine are as follows:

Royal Mail Delivery cost - £1,702 per issue.

Print costs - £3,947 per issue.

Staff cost - approximately £1500 per issue.

Advertising revenue – approximately £1,800 per issue, however this varies.

During Covid, there was a 50% reduction in our rates but this has been changed to 25% reduction for local businesses.

Currently, we are operating at an approximate £4k deficit per issue.

Considerations:

- It is recommended that written communication is provided to all residents to ensure we are communicating to all in the community.
- This is a significantly low response rate.
- Distribution points if not delivered to each household would need to be considered and approached for necessary permissions but could include:

Help Point

Burgess Hill Library

Market Place Shopping Centre

Burgess Hill and Wivelsfield train stations

Doctors and dental surgeries in the town

Cafés in the town”

For your information now the responses received are attached at Appendix 2 and 3 for review (not 5 and 6 as referred to above as these were the Council Appendices numbers).

Full Council agreed the following as set out in Minute 356 dated Monday 17 May 2022:

“Councillor Eves stated that she was disappointed with the response to the survey, but noted that those who did respond said that they found the magazine useful. She circulated a proposal for recommendation of continuation of the About Town magazine. She outlined the importance of communication between the editor and the Councillors, especially in terms of the editing deadline, and suggested that a more sustainable type of paper be used.

Councillor Foster agreed with Councillor Eves, noting the importance of making About Town accessible to the public, and encouraged the idea that the Community Engagement Team experiment with different formats for the magazine.

Councillor Lawrence seconded the need for accessibility, and Councillor Henwood seconded the idea to change the format and paper.

RESOLVED that:

The following recommendations

1. The Council would continue to deliver to all households.
2. Plenty of information on what the Town Council was doing, as well as events it was running, would be provided in the magazine.
3. The editor inform Councillors and Burgess Hill Town Council of the editorial copy deadline, one month ahead.

were **APPROVED.**”

About Town was then discussed at the **Finance Key Area Group** held their meeting on 14 November 2022, Minute 111 refers, under 1st Draft Review Budget, and the following was discussed and agreed:

“For the format and delivery of the About Town magazine to be reviewed as external costs had risen substantially since the last review was undertaken with each issue now costing in the region of £6k (3 issues per year).

Resolved that:

The Community Engagement KAG to revisit the format and delivery of the About Town magazine.”

It was agreed with the Chief Executive Officer Steve Cridland that this would be considered by within the new Council year. The resolution of this group will be considered by Finance Key Area Group and Full Council.

Current status

The magazine has continued to be delivered to all households and the editorial deadlines are shared with Councillors via Briefing Note for all issues.

The current tender in place expires for the November 2023 issue. The Editor liaises with their graphic designer and the magazine is produced within agreed timescales.

The paper quality has been slightly reduced for the forthcoming issue to reduce costs.

The costs for the July 2023 issue are:

Payment to produce the magazine: £3,610

(The original price quoted was £4,233 on paper quality cover 200gsm and inside 130gm. The forthcoming magazine will be produced on paper quality cover 170gsm and inside 100gsm for a saving of £623.)

Distribution and editor costs: £2,922

Advertising income for this issue: £1,200

Net loss for this issue is: £5,332

Further considerations:

The Community Engagement Team is committed to delivering some form of written communication. It is best practice to utilize all communication channels to ensure we reach the wider community, but in a cost-effective manner.

There are other magazines delivered to residents to communicate towns news to include:

- Mid Sussex Matters – produced and delivered by Mid Sussex District Council.
- RH Uncovered - a new magazine for the town introduced in the last year.
- Burgess Hill Pages Community Magazine and Business Directory.
- Burgess Hill Community Ad Magazine.

The Town Council (Help Point team) also liaise with Local Authority Publishing and contribute to a magazine for the town that is distributed from the Help Point and published once every two years. This magazine is produced at no cost to the Town Council and is funded by the publisher sourcing local advertisers. Copies of the magazine are viewable online: <https://www.burgesshill.gov.uk/help-point/tourist-information/town-guide/>. It is worth highlighting that local businesses are approached to advertize within this magazine, as is also done for About Town (albeit once every two years and our About Town magazine three times a year).

Other Councils produce A4 newsletter on four pages of A4 paper that is delivered to residents via a delivery company – the focus is generally on their Council news:

https://www.haywardsheath.gov.uk/Newsletters_30336.aspx

For 13,100 residents, they pay approximately £1,200 to produce and print and delivery costs are in the region of £1,000. This is for a smaller publication of four sides of A4 news.

<https://www.eastgrinstead.gov.uk/news/the-line/> is another example of a Council communication and does focus on Council activities, rather than those of the wider community. This is a four-page bi-annual publication and distributed to 15,500 households for approximately £1,000 and print costs are approximately £1,300.

Should the Key Area Group decide to continue with the current format and offer, the tender process would need to commence in Autumn this year.

Other print providers are available and could produce at a lower cost than currently paying. An initial discussion was held with a provider of a local magazine who focus on 10-14 pick-up points in the town so our distribution

costs with Royal Mail would immediately go (in region of £1,700 per edition), and it was suggested we produce a lower number as not all 14,800 we discussed would be collected. The approximate costs were £4,000. This would still assume that advertising would be sourced and we would need to explore potential graphic designers to lay out the magazine, this is provided as part of the current package with our existing provider.

Costs have been investigated with a local print provider for a four-page A4 on 150gsm silk in colour and are as follows:

7,500 = £860

10,000 = £1,200

15,000 = £1,600.

RECOMMENDATION:

Councillors are asked to consider the proposals set out at the May 2022 Full Council meeting and other considerations provided to include costings and distribution in this report.

Councillors should consider whether the Town Council want to provide written communication on their activities only, or include the wider town activities?

Risk Implications: Written communications are essential to ensure we reach as many groups as possible in our community.

Financial implications: Potentially, funds could be saved if we change the current format. These will be considered in by the Finance Key Area Group meeting on Tuesday 27 June and then at Full Council on Monday 3 July 2023. The Council Tendering Process would need to be adhered to in full.