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Wednesday 2 April 2025

To: **MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT KEY AREA GROUP.**

A **MEETING** of the **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT KEY AREA GROUP** will be held in the Council Chamber on **Monday 7 April 2025** at **19:00** hours, when your attendance is required.

Copied to all members of the Council for information

Julie Holden
Chief Executive Officer

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

Filming, recording of Council meetings and use of social media: there is a notice displayed in the Council Chamber setting out the Councils protocol for filming at meetings.

AGENDA

1. **OPEN FORUM**
Members of the Public are permitted to speak in accordance with [Standing Order 3.8.](#)
2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
3. **SUBSTITUTES**
4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

5. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

To consider the Notes of the Meeting of the Community Engagement Key Area Group held on Thursday 17 October 2024 (previously distributed).

6. CHRISTMAS VILLAGE

6.1 **Purpose of Report: To propose the Council run a Christmas Village for 2025, allowing the Officers to secure the chalets now and to start to secure sponsorship and funding.**

6.2 **Background**

The Head of Projects has been looking at the potential to bring a Christmas market to Burgess Hill for 2025. This will be in addition to the Christmas events that are planned for the festive period but will provide a continuance of the festive mood and encourage footfall in to the town during this period. The Town Council will likewise have the Christmas lights already switched on to give a very welcoming feel. It is intended to provide the Christmas Market for a week in December Thursday – Wednesday December possibly 10th – 17th (but this is not confirmed).

6.3 2024 saw the planned festive market “blown away” by the strong winds making our festivities dampened as a result, as the gazebos were not able to be erected for safety reasons. While using empty shop units can be a more assured way of bringing a market, this is fraught with its own problems of having electricity and heating connected for a week, or having to find other solutions to provide light and heat internally. Shops are not “outside” and smaller indoor markets don’t have the aesthetic appeal that a nestled market can have.

6.4 Some of the more successful markets over the festive period include Winchester and London’s Leicester Square where wooden chalets are brought in to the market place, festival decorated and sell Christmas goods for gifts, decorations, food and drinks. This is the model the officers are considering. Along with the Christmas Village, the intention will be to attract various vendors and other attractions to make this a destination event hosted in Burgess Hill, to bring more people in and hopefully encourage footfall in to other shops and eateries while here.

6.5 A successful event could be the start of an annual event. These markets are popular, there is not one as yet in the Mid Sussex area. There is a small cluster of such chalets at Wakefield Place during the Christmas Light trail (Glow wild) where cider, marshmallows for toasting etc are sold. It does add to the atmosphere and can be very popular.

6.6 Proposal

6.7 To hire 16 chalets, these will be brought in and set up on Church Walk, the vendors will take custody of them for a week starting the afternoon, the market will be open midday – 7pm each day. The event will run for 6 days to allow for delivery and collection and cover one weekend.

6.8 Officers have spoken to other community groups about supplementing the event with picture booths, Santa grotto or sleigh, choirs to carol and there are other positive options to follow. While having a skating rink or other activity would also be popular these are very expensive and may not be possible, however if enough sponsorship were to be achieved more can be added in.

6.9 Costs

6.10 Officers are confident that the right pricing schedule will allow for sponsorship of the chalets and traders to “rent” them for the week. It may be that we reserve one or two that we want to allow community groups (such as the shed or crafters market etc) to have a day rather than having to “rent” for a week. The intention is to approach businesses to sponsor the chalet - their name and logo will be attached to the Chalet, and the space be rented by an appropriate trader. It may be that shops/ cafes in the town want to take a space in order to offer festive fayre, we are looking to bring in those who sell Christmas gifts and items as well as food and drink. It is not known yet whether there will be any additional insurances needed

All costs are ex VAT

Cost to hire chalets	£7,176
Electricity	£2,000
Security	£3,500
Piping music	£500
Commercial refuse/ recycle	£200
Additional entertainment	£1,000
Total	£14,376

Income projection

Sponsorship of chalets	8,000
Rent for chalets	5,000
MSDC grant	1,500
Total	14,500

6.11 As stated above it may be that the Town Council determine to utilize some of the chalets for community groups which could bring down the rental income, however the MSDC funds are not as yet confirmed (there were funds available last year to assist in the Town Council festive activities and it is hoped there may be funding available this year)and it may be that the Town Council needs to use some of the Bridge the Gap funds to cover any shortfall in the income. If the event is successful and creates a surplus, this will go towards the costs of replicating and growing the event for 2026.

6.12 As a new initiative this will need some significant advertising which is not shown in the above costs but would need to be factored in. Banners, posters and articles in the newspapers and magazines serving the area are all relatively low cost. If the Council wanted to take out adverts in neighbouring towns and villages this would need an additional budget line.

6.13 In order to secure the chalets for 2025, a 25% deposit is required before the 10th April, this would need to be met from the Bridge the Gap fund, and fund raising has not as yet started for this project as it has not been approved by KAG to proceed. The deposit is £1,794.

6.14 **Next Steps**

6.15 If the KAG approve the team to proceed with this project, the first step is to determine the week and book the chalets and then start marketing the sponsorship of the chalets, while seeking traders to book in for the week. Councillors from the KAG are welcome to engage with Ramize Easter regarding the visits to the businesses as we seek sponsorship, we will also ask the Burgess Hill Business Park Association and Burgess Hill Business Association to share the opportunity with their members. However, visiting the shops and businesses on church walk and wider in the town centre, to get their involvement with the village but also supporting the village by agreeing to some late night shopping, extra festivity and reassuring them that the village will not block access to their shops. We will approach MSDC regarding any concession that may be possible for parking during that week. While the regeneration of the town centre will hopefully be occurring at the same time, support from MSDC regarding the Economic promotions team for supporting the case for concessions will be sought, to make it clear that Burgess Hill is very much open for business during the works in the run up to Christmas. If KAG support the project an update as to progress will be brought to a KAG between June – September.

6.16 **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1) KAG are asked to approve the concept of the Christmas Village, and give an indication of the preferred dates.
- 2) KAG are asked to approve the booking of the chalets for £1,794 from the Bridge the Gap fund.

Risks:

Environmental implications: There are none

Financial implications: There is sufficient funds in the Bridge the Gap fund to allow this project to be pump primed by the Council. With hard work the sponsors and traders will ensure the costs are met. Should the Officers fail to make the sponsorship and income the financial loss to the Council is £1794 deposit.

Community Safety implications: Security for the site operating at night and overnight is built in to the costs to ensure that the village remains secure. A Christmas village may attract the wrong type of interest and we will work with the local police for a presence during the operating hours.

7. [UPDATE ON VE DAY EVENT THURSDAY 8 MAY 2025](#)

7.1 **Purpose of report:** This report is to update the Key Area Group on forthcoming four events planned for VE Day. on 4 events.

1. **Pre Ve Day tea party – Thursday 1 May**

This event will be held at Kings Weald Community Centre and launches our VE Day celebrations. The Town Mayor has been invited to represent the Council and we have entertainment planned. 70 tickets are available for the public to book via the Town Council Help Point. The decorations will be red white and blue themed. The Community Engagement Team have secured financial support for the venue hire from GoodOaks Homecare and with Co-op for a contribution towards food for the event.

2. **Raising of the Flag – Thursday 8 May**

This event will be held at 9am in the War Memorial Garden and will be led by Father David from St John the Evangelist. Salvation Army Band will perform and an Order of Service will be available paper copy from Help Point and downloadable form our website. Royal British Legion are supporting the event. Schools will be invited to participate and there will be an opportunity to lay wreath liaising directly with the Poppy Appeal Organiser Sarah Voce. A Proclamation will be read by Mr John Buck, we will sing two songs and the service will include the Raising of the VE Day 80 Flag.

3. **Street Lunch Party – Thursday 8 May**

This event will be held outside the Help Point at 12.30pm and selected invited community groups have been approached to have a table of 6. There are 12 groups invited and responses are currently being collated. The Theatre Club Hall will be the base for the event and we will be serving food to each table from there with the support of students from Burgess Hill Girls School. Entertainment will be provided by Southway Junior School, Burgess Hill Girls School and some roving entertainment from some ukulele players. The Library team will be bringing some memory packs to encourage conversation. There will be a cake competition promoted in advance and these cakes will be served to the community groups with judging by representatives from Burgess Hill Martlets WI and GoodOaks Homecare. The Community Engagement Team have secured financial support for the food for this event from GoodOaks Homecare.

4. **Main event in St John's Park – Thursday 8 May**

This event will bring the community together to celebrate VE Day 80 in line with national guidance. The event will be held from 4.30pm but as a public space we will be setting up on site from 3pm. There will be a variety of entertainment planned on a stage and traditional games available for all to enjoy with food available to purchase and the Cricket Club bar will be open. Weald Classic Car Club will be bringing their cars to form a display for residents to enjoy as they walk across the park. The Ringing of the Bells will be at 6.30pm and the event will end with the Lighting of the Beacon at 9.30pm.

The four events will be publicised in the following approach:

- Information provided to all residents via About Town magazine circulated to 15,000 households from 17 March 2025.
- Posters will be displayed on Town Council noticeboards from 3 April to advise events.
- Banners are will be displayed after the Easter activities have finished from 22 April at prominent locations in the town.
- Promotional Boards will be placed at the Entry Signs to the town.
- Press release will be issued.
- Social Media will be utilised.
- A dedicated web page is available now and will be updated as more information is finalised.
- A commemorative programme will be available to download from the webpage and paper copies will be available. The Community Engagement Team have secured financial support for the programme from Burgess Hill Girls School and these printed copies will be available for residents to collect from the Help Point, who may also choose to purchase a commemorative badge.

Recommendation: THIS REPORT IS FOR NOTING.

Risks:

Environmental implications: Every effort has been made to source local suppliers.

Financial implications: This event was budgeted for and approved at this Key Area Group and subsequently Finance and Full Council. Every effort to engage and secure local sponsorship has been made and noted in the report above.

Community Safety implications: Information has been shared with local Police to advise of the larger event in the park.

8. **UPDATE ON HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES 2025**

8.1 **Purpose of report: This report is to update the Key Area Group on forthcoming Holiday Activity plans.**

8.2 Easter Holiday Activity Programme will be in place from 7 April and includes an Easter Trail in the town to encourage footfall with 22 local businesses/shops participating. The following events will be held:

- Two Family Fun Sessions will be held on Monday 7 April for families with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities. This event is delivered with Kings Church and financial support has been secured from the Budding Foundation.
- 4 sports sessions across the two week period working with tennis and basketball coaches.
- Rock Up and Ride event to be delivered on Tuesday 8 April working with Gosport BMX Club, Respect Youth Club and Sheddingdean Baptist Church. Basketball sessions will also be held as part of this event. The Community Engagement Team have secured financial support for this project from Mid Sussex Partnership.

- 8.3 May Half Term Activities will include a Young Carers event, an inflatable event in St John's Park and Mid Sussex District Council will be delivering their Skate Fest event in St John's Park.
- 8.4 Teddy Bears Picnic will be delivered on Monday 7 July in St John's Park. This event is delivered in partnership with The Kings Church Mid Sussex and Central Sussex Rotary.
- 8.5 Summer Holiday Activity Programme to be held 23 July – 31 August and work has begun to secure suppliers.
- Wowzer Wednesday Programme will include the launch of the programme with the inflatables event (this is a change as we normally end the programme but wanted to give this a refresh), Quantum Theatre will be coming back to St John's Park to perform Alice Through The Looking Glass.
 - A further Rock Up and Ride event will be held which Burgess Hill District Lions are financially supporting.
 - The Sandpit will be available outside the Help Point.

Recommendation: THIS REPORT IS FOR NOTING.

Environmental implications: Every effort has been made to source local suppliers.

Financial implications: This event was budgeted for and approved at this Key Area Group and subsequently Finance and Full Council. Every effort to engage and secure local sponsorship has been made and noted in the report above.

Community Safety implications: Information will be shared with local Police to advise of the larger events in the park.

9. [UPDATE ON SUMMER FAYRE 2025](#)

9.1 **Purpose of report: This report is to update the Key Area Group on forthcoming Summer Fayre plans.**

This event has been given another refresh and will be a great way to bring the community together on Sunday 22 June from 11am-3pm in St John's Park. Over 80 stalls have confirmed their wish to be involved in the event and entertainment and free activities have been secured to include the following:

- Summer Fayre Parade with Same Sky and Burgess Hill Creative Community and local schools. The workshop launch will be held on Monday 28 April and we are welcoming the Creative Community expertise as part of this.
- There will be a varied entertainment to include a slack line for people to practice their balancing (!); a Bird display (financial support has been secured from GoodOaks Homecare and for the first time a BMX display.
- There will be a dedicated games and play area and food suppliers will be invited.
- A dedicated web page has been created and this will feature a downloadable programme.
- A clear publicity plan will be in place to promote the event.

Recommendation: THIS REPORT IS FOR NOTING.

Environmental implications: Every effort has been made to source local suppliers.

Financial implications: This event was budgeted for and approved at this Key Area Group and subsequently Finance and Full Council. Every effort to engage and secure local sponsorship has been made and noted in the report above.

Community Safety implications: Information will be shared with local Police to advise of the larger events in the park.