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10<sup>th</sup> June 2025

To: **MEMBERS OF THE CUSTOMER SERVICES KEY AREA GROUP.**

A **MEETING** of the **CUSTOMER SERVICES KEY AREA GROUP** will be held in the Council Chamber on **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 19:00** hours, when your attendance is required.

**Copied to all members of the Council for information**

Julie Holden  
Chief Executive Officer

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.

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## 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. **TO ELECT A VICE CHAIR**
6. **CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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Members of the KAG; Diane Black, Robert Eggleston, Anne Eves, Matthew Goldsmith, Tofojjul Hussain, Simon Hicks, Adam White (Chair)

## 7. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

To consider the Notes of the Meeting of the Customer Services Key Area Group held on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025 (previously distributed).

## 8. TOURISM - RAILWAY 200 UPDATE

- 8.1 **Purpose of the item: to update members on the planned Railway 200 trail and a plaque to commemorate the anniversary while linking in a Burgess Hill "First".**
- 8.2 The content for the Rail 200 trail has been created and will shortly be uploaded to our page on the Bluebell Railway App.
- 8.3 As per the last KAG we have been researching a potential focus for a plaque to create a permanent commemoration of Rail 200 in the town. In research and conversations with the Burgess Hill Heritage and History Association we have learned that Burgess Hill station has a significant place in British railway history as the first British rail station in the UK with a female station manager who was appointed in 1980. Her groundbreaking appointment marked a pivotal moment in the movement toward gender equality within the UK's railway industry. We are contacting various places to gather more information and are currently waiting for a response from Southern Rail who manage Burgess Hill Station as to whether they would allow a plaque in her honour at the station.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Members are asked to approve the permanent plaque which will mark Railway 200 and the link to the Burgess Hill Station.

#### **Risks:**

Environmental implications: There are none

Financial implications: The cost of the plaque will be £100.00 approx , this will be accommodated from the Help Point/Tourism budgets.

Community Safety implications: There are none

## 9. HELP POINT REPORT

- 9.1 **To Purpose of the item: to update members on the current position and work of the Help Point from January 2025 – June 2025 – see Appendix 1**
- 9.2 Further to our KAG in January we are happy to report that our statistics show a 38% increase in enquiries/activity in the Help Point in comparison to the same period in 2024.
- 9.3 It is important to note that in the last 6 months we have experienced an increase in known vulnerable visitors, who we would categorise under customer welfare, those people who are in need of social/ wellbeing care – which the staff are not trained to provide, and which does not form part of their employment criteria. These visits take a significant number of staff hours across departments – additionally they can put a strain on staff welfare when aggressive/disturbing behaviour is directed towards them.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

For noting

#### **Risks:**

Environmental implications: There are none

Financial implications: The £23k of partner income relating to the Help Point Contribution received from MSDC which is an annual agreement, should be considered a risk as it could be withdrawn in the future.

Community Safety implications: The Help Point is a safe space and the Help Point use the Mid Sussex Business Crime Partnership DISC system

## 10. MAINTENANCE TEAM REPORT

- 10.1 **Purpose of report: This report is to update members on the work carried out by the Maintenance Team, in addition to the routine maintenance schedule, since the last meeting held in March 2025, and planned works. See Appendix 2.**

This report is for noting.

### **Risks:**

Environmental implications: There are none.

Financial implications: There are none.

Community Safety implications: There are none.

## 11. BRIDGE AT BATCHELORS FARM

- 11.1 **Purpose of report: To update the committee as to the report to repair the bridge and determine the way forward.**
- 11.2 Further to the report at the last KAG (Minute 58 24.03.25) , the report on the repairs, expected condition and costs to repair have been gathered by the team, the estimate at £50,000 being well above the need to tender for three quotes and use contract finder.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

KAG are asked approve the repairs and recommend to Finance KAG that the monies be put away half in the 2026/7 budget and half in the 2027/28 budget with the works being carried out in Spring (April/May 2027).

### **Risks:**

Environmental implications: there are none

Financial implications: As per the report, the cost will need budgeting over two financial years to ensure it can be met.

Community Safety implications: The bridge is expected to last for 1-2 years; it should therefore remain safe for use. If, however, through the regular inspections and as a result of inclement weather or vandalism the structure fails it will need to be sealed off until the repairs can be made.

## 12. ORGANISATIONS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

- 12.1 **Purpose of the report: At the council meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> May, the Council agreed to joining the Open Spaces Society. This KAG are asked whether there are other groups that would be worthwhile considering.**
- 12.2 The Council are members of National Association of Local Councils, Town and County Planning Association and Open Spaces Society. There is room in the budget for some nominal membership costs if the KAG feel there are specific

organisations that would be beneficial.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Committee to advise whether they would like to consider any new memberships

**RISKS:**

Environmental implications: there are none

Financial implications: the budget has a capacity to accept one or two new modest membership subscriptions

Public Safety implications: there are none

## 13 **TREES FOR STREETS SCHEME**

### 13.1 **Purpose of report; to consider whether this scheme is something the Council may wish to participate in.**

### 13.2 Background:

The **Trees for Streets** scheme is a national street tree sponsorship initiative in the UK, managed by the charity **Trees for Cities** in partnership with local councils. The programme aims to improve urban environments by encouraging the public and businesses to fund the planting of trees along streets and in public spaces.

### 13.3 How the Scheme Works

- **Public Involvement:** Residents and businesses can sponsor the planting of street trees by making a donation through the Trees for Streets website. Sponsorships can be for commemorative purposes, environmental contributions, or community beautification.
- **Location Requests:** Sponsors can suggest specific locations for planting. The council then assesses the site for suitability, including factors like underground utilities, pavement width, and local infrastructure.
- **Council Planting:** Once approved, the local council arranges the planting, maintenance, and care of the tree—typically during the winter planting season.
- **Maintenance Commitment:** Councils usually commit to watering and caring for the tree for the first three years to ensure its survival.

### 13.4 Cost to Councils

- **Variable Costs:** The cost of planting and maintaining a tree varies by location and species but is generally around **£200 to £500 per tree**.
- **Funding Gap:** Sponsorships often help councils cover part or all of this cost, easing pressure on local authority budgets. Sponsors or local residents may help with caring for a tree (watering it) after planting.
- **Administrative Support:** While the programme helps generate community funding, councils still bear some administrative and operational costs associated with site assessment, planting logistics, and ongoing maintenance.

### 13.5 Benefits

- Enhances biodiversity and urban greening.
- Helps mitigate climate change effects (e.g., urban heat islands).
- Encourages civic engagement and community pride.

- Offers a cost-sharing model to sustain tree planting efforts amidst budget constraints.

In summary, the Trees for Streets scheme is a collaborative model that leverages public sponsorship to support urban tree planting, reducing financial pressure on councils' budgets while improving local environments.

### 13.6 West Sussex County Council considerations

All and any trees position will have to be approved by WSCC, the following link explains a number of dos and don'ts regarding siting of trees in West Sussex. If trees have to be planted in containers, the costs will increase considerably as the containers need to be significant size which is not included in the above approximate costs. Planting trees on verges and parks or open spaces will be allowed subject to site lines and other conditions. West Sussex have been contacted to ask them for their views of the Trees for Streets scheme being furthered by Burgess Hill Town Council.

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/maintaining-roads-verges-and-pavements/verge-maintenance/donate-a-tree-scheme/>

**RECOMMENDATION:** the KAG are asked to consider any next or future steps

#### **RISKS:**

Environmental implications: there are no negative issues

Financial Implications: there is limited budget available this year, this may require budgeting for the future, if sponsorship was achieved to cover costs this scheme could go ahead subject to resource availability.

Public Safety implications: there are none, unless the trees are planted in the pavement, therefore in the longer-term tree roots can be a trip hazard, however this will be considered at planting stage to minimise impacts.

### 14. **MARLE PLACE MUGA –**

#### 14.1 **Purpose of Report : to consider supporting provision for a PickleBall court.**

#### 14.2 Background

The Council has become aware of a number of residents requesting that a pickleball court be provided in the Marle Place Mutli -Use Games Area (MUGA).

Pickleball is a racket or paddle sport in which two or four players hit a perforated, hollow plastic ball over a 34-inch-high (0.86 m) net Pickleball is played indoors and outdoors. Aspects of the sport resemble tennis and table tennis played on a doubles badminton court. The dimensions are not exactly the same as a tennis court.

The suggested siting of Marle Place MUGA is a facility owned and managed by Mid Sussex District Council, as are the St Johns Tennis Courts which have also been suggested. At this time this request would primarily be whether the Town Council would support the siting of a facility. The Triangle centre has a paddle tennis (Paddleball) court which again is not the same as Pickleball. Pickleball has been growing in popularity since being invented in 1965 in the

United States, and there are leagues in both the US and some Asian Countries, although not yet here in the UK.

As Mid Sussex DC are currently undergoing master plan reconsiderations of several parks in the District this could be a good time to support the request.

**RECOMMENDATION** : the Committee are asked whether to formally write to MSDC to support the request that a Pickleball court be included in one or more parks in Burgess Hill and the Marle Place MUGA in particular.

**RISKS:**

Environmental Implications: outdoor sport is good for health and wellbeing

Financial Implications: At this time none to the Town Council

Public Safety Implications: none

15. **LAND AT OLD RBL BUILDING**

15.1 Purpose of report: for information and consideration

The former RBL building was demolished some years ago now. The Council have used the land at Remembrance time for display of Poppies and other such items but it is largely not used. It is fenced off and there were two long trenches running the width of the plot for drainage. The land is intended as the site for the Beehive Centre, however there are currently no timelines for this and it could still be many years away.

15.2 Earlier this year officers were approached by the manager of the Constitutional Club looking to hold a charity event to include external music and they were seeking permission to put a stage on the land. They were granted permission subject to providing satisfactory risk assessment and insurance. No fee was charged for the use of the land, providing the land is left in good condition and the event was charitable.

15.3 Since the discussion West Sussex County Council (who had been approached to ask if they could cover the trenches for the event) have advised that the trenches should not be left exposed as the fencing is not adequate to stop someone wandering on to the patch of land and the Council could be liable for not taking steps to make the ground safe. Queries are being made to fit in a plastic drainage tube and cover over the trenches as a result. There may be a cost, however the Constitutional Club as they are keen to use the land for their event have indicated they may be able to contribute to this cost if it is not able to be accommodated in the Councils budget. As it is not a matter of wishing to cover over the trenches but advice that we could have a liability if we do not, this work will need to proceed. If the works cannot be done due to costs the back part of the grounds will need to be fenced off with Harris fencing or similar to ensure that the area remains safe.

15.4 A secondary issue would be whether the Council wishes this patch of land to be used for public events such as the Constitutional Club have requested. If so should the council consider a policy, if the event is charitable or no cost to attend for the community, it is not charged for, but if it is for a private event, then should the Council refuse to allow it to be used or have a charging

regime? Should there be a limit to the number of events held being open air and on a partially residential street?

- 15.5 If the Council would like a policy on this, it could be brought back to the next meeting for consideration.

**RECOMMENDATION:** to note the report and to consider whether terms for letting the land for ad hoc events should be brought back.

**RISKS:**

Environmental implications : loud noise from events can disturb the peace of the area, however this would not be a regular event space. Litter and detritus from any event must be cleared away by the event organiser.

Financial implications : to cover over the trenches, costs are being sought.

Public Safety implications : the exposed trenches although fenced off, could be accessed and need more robust restrictions.