

NOTES of the **CUSTOMER SERVICES KEY AREA GROUP MEETING** held in the Council Chamber on **Monday 16th June 2025** at 19.00 hours.

KAG Members: Adam White Chairman
Diane Black
Robert Eggleston *
Anne Eves
Matthew Goldsmith
Simon Hicks*
Tofojjul Hussein

Also present: Cllrs: P Williams (substituting for R Eggleston) & J Henwood (substituting for S Hicks)

Chief Executive Officer: Julie Holden
Head of Customer Service: Alice Banister
Head of Maintenance: Sarah Hughes

3 members of the public

** Denotes non-attendance*

(19:00 hours)

66. OPEN FORUM

The Chair wished everyone a Happy Sussex Day and then asked if there were any points for open forum. There were none.

67. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED: Apologies were accepted from

Cllr Eggleston	Personal Commitment
Cllr Hicks	Personal Commitment

68. SUBSTITUTES

It was noted that the following Councillors were substituting:

Cllr Henwood for Cllr Hicks

Cllr P Williams for Cllr Eggleston

69. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Eves declared an interest in item 15 as her husband was a member of the Constitutional Club

Cllr White declared an interest in item 15 as a member of the Executive of the Constitutional Club.

It was clarified that as the matter was not directly concerning the Constitutional Club there was no conflict. However, please see the notes at that item as the discussion progressed.

70. TO ELECT A VICE CHAIR FOR THE 2025/26 YEAR

RESOLVED: Cllr Goldsmith would be the Vice Chair

71 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair made the following announcements:

Updates from the past meeting but not included in this agenda:

The Christmas Lights Contract has been let to a firm called Ichthus who are based on the South Coast, the base contract came in under the budgeted amount, leaving room for discussion for some extra illumination.

The Burial Ground extension work is underway, there have been some comms issued last week and more will follow to reassure people of the progress and how this affects day to day use of the burial ground. A visit to the site for Councillors will be organised shortly.

Brookleigh have replied to the Chief Executive regarding the earlier consultation and overall mobility corridor scheme and have agreed to provide a briefing for Councillors, a date is to be arranged.

A draft lease has been issued today to the Cyprus Hall Assoc, regarding their new lease.

Finally, he offered congratulations to Sarah John, St Andrews Pre-School and Sarah Voce, Poppy Appeal who had both been awarded Medal of the Order of the British Empire (BEM) In the Kings Birthday Honours. His good wishes were echoed by the KAG.

72 NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: The Notes of the meeting of the Customer Services Key Area Group held on 24th March 2025, having been previously circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

73 TOURISM - RAILWAY 200 UPDATE

It was asked for the name of the individual to be added to the Plaque, it

was advised that the name is Pennie Bellas and permission to include her name in the plaque was currently being sought.

RESOLVED: To continue with a permanent marker for Railway 200 and the Railway Station

74. HELP POINT REPORT

It was asked why foodbank vouchers were given when the foodbank is across the road. The Head of Customer Services advised that the help point are an email point that processes those requests as the foodbank resources struggle with this. However, It was advised that a conversation with the Foodbank as to whether the help point was necessary as a conduit would be held.

There were questions around the traders sales in the help point, asking for a fuller report on the shop and the transactions that take place for sales. A member of the public stated that the sale figures are reported to the Finance KAG and posted on website, but that a report on the shop regarding its effectiveness had not come forward.

Questions were asked as to the issues around the aggressive behaviour that the staff have witnessed. The KAG were assured that the staff have the appropriate training and support with panic buttons etc, however these visits can take up a significant amount of time and can result in the police being called.

The report was noted

75. MAINTENANCE TEAM REPORT

It was asked what Glendale had not done in last years contract and it was clarified that it was hedgecutting in our parks.

Thaks were recorded to the maintenance team for their work and also for the placing of the hedgehog sign.

There was also a comment as to the positive usefulness of the allotment working group.

The report was noted.

76. BRIDGE AT BATCHELORS FARM

The Chair introduced the report and outlined some comments sent on by councillors who were not able to be present. Mrs Hughes advised that Edburtons have advised there is an alternative option that would be a smaller bridge and therefore cost less, they have been asked to provide a cost for this. Depending on the quote will determine whether the project will need to go to 3 tenders. Should the KAG wish to go

ahead with the original quote of £50,000 then three tenders will be sought.

There was concern expressed as to any delay in working on the bridge, and it was suggested that the work should be undertaken this year to reduce the risk of collapse of the bridge and potential claims for damages to the Council. While the report from Edburtons was accepted, there was concern that the existing structure would not last 2 years, especially if flooding occurs in the stream over which the bridge sits.

It was suggested that if this bridge needed closing off, this could be done as there were other exits.

A member of the public asked where the bridge was and then advised that they did not feel the bridge needed any work. A member of the public suggested that more quotes were needed as the current one was probably inflated as the customer was the Council.

RESOLVED: Work on replacing the bridge in Batchelors Farm to go ahead without delay, the cost of which is recommended to the Finance KAG is taken from the Community Building Reserve, with the provision that such sums are repaid to that Reserve over a period of 2-3 years.

77. ORGANISATIONS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

The KAG noted the report but had no additional subscriptions to consider at this time.

78 TREES FOR STREETS SCHEME

There was a discussion as to this scheme, it was potentially operating in Brighton and Worthing and the Chief Executive had put some calls in to find out how it worked in practice. It was stated that the trees are more likely for verges in residential streets than the town centre as the WSCC policy regarding where tarmac or paving is in existence WSCC will not agree to a tree being planted.

RESOLVED: To not proceed with the scheme at this time, but work with WSCC to replace and provide new trees.

79 MARLE PLACE MUGA

There was general support for the provision of pickleball courts in the town. There were mixed views on using existing tennis courts.

The tarmac'd area in Marle Place did seem an ideal position and this should be supported to MSDC.

RESOLVED : the KAG requested that the officers write to MSDC to support the request that a Pickleball court be included in one or more parks in Burgess Hill, including Marle Place, as part of their redesign.

80. LAND AT OLD RBL BUILDING

The Chief Executive clarified that she had made the decision to allow the use of the land for the one off charitable event. Following this and a discussion with the ward member it had come to the KAG to determine if the Council wanted a policy on whether to let out the land for future events.

It was asked what the event was for and how long it would go on and whether there was to be outside music. It was clarified that it will go on to 7pm and it was outside music believed to be with four bands.

It was proposed and seconded: not to support the event as there was no policy in place at the time.

At this point as the issue was regarding the current event, Cllr White, due to his interest in the organisation who had requested the use, abstained from the vote.

The motion was defeated.

There was concern as to the trenches being covered over and whether this would cause drainage problems and why WSCC should advise us to spend money on private land. It was clarified that they had been approached to assist with covering over the trenches for the event, but while there had given their advice as to the potential liability of the Council if left unattended.

Comment was made from the public gallery that officers declarations of interest should be made regarding decisions made. it was advised that Officers do not make declarations at meetings, only Councillors.

RESOLVED: The KAG requested that a policy be drawn up for consideration for any future requests to use the land.

The meeting ended at 20.11

Chairman