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Friday 4 July 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 **Tuesday 15 July 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.

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## AGENDA

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

## 6. [NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING](#)

To consider the Notes of the Meeting of the Community Engagement Key Area Group held on 7 April 2025 (previously distributed).

## 7. [FESTIVE MARKET](#)

7.1 This report outlines the progress made toward delivering the proposed Christmas/Festive Market in Burgess Hill, including background research, Council approvals, project launch activities, and sponsorship developments. It highlights the significant groundwork already undertaken, the current funding status, and the need for further Council support to ensure the successful delivery of the event. Please find attached supporting Market Research at Appendix 1.

### 7.2 Background

Between mid-January and mid-March, the Head of Projects Officer undertook extensive research into the viability of hosting a Christmas Market in Burgess Hill in December. This included benchmarking similar events, assessing logistical requirements, and identifying potential partners and suppliers. See attached Christmas Market Case studies by LGA for your information.

Following these initial investigations, a KAG meeting was held on **Monday, 7th April**, during which the Council gave approval for the officer to proceed with securing infrastructure for the event. As a result, a **non-refundable deposit of £1,734** was paid to Chalet Events to reserve **16 wooden chalets**.

### 7.3 Project Launch

The **Festive Market was officially launched on 15th May** at the **Burgess Hill Means Business exhibition**. The launch generated a high level of interest from attendees, with strong expressions of support from local businesses and community members.

### 7.4 Sponsorship Progress

Since the launch, the Head of Projects has worked endlessly to attract sponsorship from the local businesses. This effort has resulted in the successful sponsorship of **9 out of 16 chalets**, as well as coverage for the **Giant Snow Globe** and **Santa's Sleigh**—key attractions that will enhance the festive atmosphere and draw footfall to the event.

Item	Amount (£)
<b>Estimated Total Project Cost</b>	<b>£16,970</b>
<b>Chalet Deposit Paid</b>	<b>£1,734</b>
<b>Sponsorship agreed (to date)</b>	<b>£9,750</b>
<b>Remaining Required Funding</b>	<b>£5,486</b>

## 7.5 Trader Interest & Income Projection

The chalets will be hired to traders at a rate of **£350 each for the full market duration**, including VAT. This fee applies to all traders **except those who are also acting as sponsors**. To date, **three traders have expressed confirmed interest**. Additionally, we have three sponsors who wish to use the chalet they are sponsoring. There are 2 chalets reserved for entertainment, leaving 8 chalets to fill.

It is important to note that **active recruitment of traders has been temporarily paused** while priority has been given to securing sponsorship, which is vital for covering core infrastructure costs in the early stages of the project.

## 7.6 Entertainment

- 2 chalets have been reserved for entertainment
- Giant Snow Globe booked for Sunday
- Ice rink for Saturday (will depend on the budget)
- Santa sleigh
- Carol singing
- Burgess Hill Girls singing
- Other schools also present
- Festive music to be piped through the Village for the duration of its stay
- More entertainment to be explored, depending on the budget

## 7.7 Key Concerns

- **Funding and Securing Quality Traders**

The Head of Projects is concerned that if the Council requires all funds to be raised in advance before booking essentials, the project may not go ahead. It was initially understood that funds from 'Bridge the Gap' would be used to support the project upfront, with costs to be recovered through sponsorship.

Focusing solely on sponsorship will delay progress significantly and may result in the loss of quality traders and entertainment. Raising the full cost through sponsorship alone could take the rest of the year.

- **Need for Council Support**

Whilst sales have been secured for over 50% of costs. There remains a risk that full costs will not be met; therefore, the success of this project depends on the Council's willingness to commit some of its own funds. The scale of work involved in advertising, securing sponsorships, and sourcing quality traders, as well as entertainment, is substantial. Attempting to manage all these elements simultaneously without any admin and financial support would be overambitious.

## 7.8 Length of the Market

Research into Christmas Markets in UK cities showed they often run throughout December. However, considering Burgess Hill is a town, a shorter duration of 6 days was deemed reasonable. Notably, chalet hire costs the same whether for 4 or 6 days.

After discussions with local traders, it has been recommended that the market run for **4 days instead of 6**, in order to make a bigger impact over a more concentrated period.

## 7.9 Suggestions

- **Duration Adjustment**

To ensure maximum impact and efficient resource use, the Market should be scheduled for **4 days** instead of 6.

- **Additional Resources**

To successfully deliver the event, additional resources are required. The Head of Projects seeks support from **Handmade & Hire** to support the project. A quote is to follow for providing the following services:

- Designing and delivering a 'Photos with Santa' experience – would this be based on one chalet or two joint chalets? (Please note, the Council does not have its own decorations.)
- Supplying and installing garlands and decorations on all 16 chalets across the site
- Installing festoon lighting in Church Walk (where the chalets will be placed)
- Implementing a Christmas music system supporting the setup of an event Wi-Fi solution

Some administrative support for the project to allow a greater effort on securing traders. A recently graduated student has undertaken some work experience with the Council in the running of events. If we could engage her as a contractor to assist with the project, there is a great chance of selling all the spaces more quickly, allowing time to return to the potential corporate sponsors.

## 7.10 Recommendation:

- a) To confirm that the Festive Market will be delivered in 2025 operational over 4 days.
- b) To note the work to date on securing sponsorship and agree that any overspend on the entertainment will be met through the Bridge the Gap funds, sufficient to meet any shortfall and has been allocated by the Council for use for events such as this to encourage footfall into the town during the redevelopment of the town centre, and
- c) To agree that an additional contractor will be part of the project for 5 hours per week for 6 weeks to complete the sales and sponsorship work to come from the Bridge the Gap budget.

## Risks

Environment Implications:

Unfortunately, the electricity plugging is limited to only 16 A (3kw) per chalet.

Therefore, any power needed for cooking will require external generators from the traders. Generators can be diesel, petrol or battery and while traders

could be encouraged to be “green” it is possible that diesel, petrol may be used by some.

Financial Implications:

The Bridge the Gap Funds are sufficient to meet any shortfall and have been earmarked by the Council for use for events such as this to encourage footfall into the town during the regeneration of the town centre.

Community Safety Implications:

No specific risks have been identified. Security will be available overnight and Police presence for regular patrols during the opening hours will be requested.

## 8. UPDATE ON VICTORY OVER JAPAN DAY 80<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

8.1 **Purpose of report:** Following on the town’s delivery of VE Day in May, it was felt that recognition should also be given to this significant anniversary and to recognise veterans specifically following on from feedback received at VE Day. The event will consist of a brief service at the War Memorial Garden which staff, councillors and dignitaries will be invited to attend. This will be publicised across the town. The event will be held at 11am on Friday 15 August and we are working with St John the Evangelist Church and Royal British Legion.

8.2 There **may** be a second element to the event which would be a dedicated lunch event for Veterans only. Nominations to attend the lunch would be provided by groups that support veterans such as the Royal British Legion, Veterans Breakfast Club. An initial discussion has been held with them and this was welcomed as a dedicated event as VE Day was open to all community groups. It was suggested that the preferred location would be the Constitutional Club due to accessibility, proximity to the war memorial garden, and that this space is familiar to veterans as a similar approach is offered after Remembrance Sunday. These would be an invitation only and funding has been requested from the MSDC VJ Grants programme to finance this.

8.3 **Recommendation:** The views of the Key Area Group are sought.

Environmental implications: Every effort has been made to source local suppliers in terms of venue and catering.

Financial implications: This event was requested following the success of VE Day, it was felt appropriate that the Council formally recognise VJ Day. The funding for the public service will be from remaining VE Day budget.

Community Safety implications: Information will be shared with local Police to advise of any public safety matters.

## 9. UPDATE ON COMMUNITY FACILITATION BY THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TEAM

9.1 The Town Council were involved in the launch of the UK Harvest Food distribution that is held on the second Monday of each month from March 2025. This provides residents an opportunity to receive food for a small donation preventing food going into food waste. Our role was to assist agencies attendance to provide a wrap around service and a successful launch was held

on 14 March 2025.

9.2 Burgess Hill One Stop Support Shop will be launched from September 2025. This has come from the meeting instigated by our team that brings together groups and agencies that support residents in our town. The One Stop Support Shop will be held in Salvation Army on the third Thursday of every month and very much a partnership venture. The timing of this coincides with the opening times of Foodbank and Pantry. There will be a wide range of services to offer free face to face support and practical advice in one venue on a regular basis.

9.3 RECOMMENDATION: THIS REPORT IS FOR NOTING.

**Risks:**

Environmental implications: There are none

Financial implications: There are none

Community Safety implications: A risk assessment of the event and discussion on supporting vulnerable members of the community would be held in advance as a briefing to all participating support groups and agencies.

**10. REPORTS ON EVENTS COMPLETED BY THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TEAM**

10.1 **Purpose of report:** This report is to provide reports on all events delivered since the last Community Engagement Key Area group meeting.

- a) Treat Day for Carers delivered in partnership with Burgess Hill Girls and Carers Support West Sussex, event held on 6 March 2025 at Appendix 2.
- b) Family Fun Sessions delivered in partnership with The Kings Church and Budding Foundation, event held on Monday 7 April 2025 at Appendix 3.
- c) Rock up and Ride event delivered in partnership with Respect Youth Club and Gosport BMX with funding support from Mid Sussex Partnership, event held on Tuesday 8 April at Appendix 4.
- d) Easter Crafts and Parade delivered in partnership with Burgess Hill Creative Community, event held on Monday 14 April at Appendix 5.
- e) Easter Trail report provided a free activity to families during the Easter Holidays at Appendix 6.
- f) Sports sessions working with two new providers and with a new booking approach held over Easter holidays at Appendix 7.
- g) Wowzer Wednesday launch event delivered Wednesday 28 May including launch of dedicated SEND session at Appendix 8.

10.2 **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 events.

## 11. [REPORT ON VE DAY 80](#)

11.1 **Purpose of report:** This report is to provide report on VE Day 80 delivered since the last Community Engagement Key Area group meeting.

11.2 Four events were delivered as set out below:

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

This event was held at Kings Weald Community Centre and launched our VE Day celebrations. 70 tickets were available for the public to book via the Town Council Help Point. The decorations were be red white and blue themed. The Community Engagement Team had secured financial support for the venue hire from GoodOaks Homecare and with Co-op for a contribution towards food for the event. Event Report at Appendix 9.

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

This event was held at 9am in the War Memorial Garden and was be led by Father David from St John the Evangelist. Salvation Army Band performed and an Order of Service was available paper copy from Help Point and downloadable from our website. Royal British Legion supported the event. Schools were invited to participate and there were opportunities to lay wreath liaising directly with the Poppy Appeal Organiser Sarah Voce. A Proclamation was read by Mr John Buck, we sang two songs and the service included the Raising of the VE Day 80 Flag. The Lord Lieutenant of West Sussex attended the event as did the local MP Alison Bennett.

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

This event was held outside the Help Point at 12.30pm and selected invited community groups were approached to have a table of 6. The Theatre Club Hall was be the base for the event and we served food to each table from there with the support of students from Burgess Hill Girls School, Burgess Hill Martlets Womens Institute, GoodOaks, Homecare and Burgess Hill Creative Community. Entertainment was provided by Southway Junior School, Burgess Hill Girls School and some roving entertainment from ukulele players. The Library team brought down some memory packs to encourage conversation but these were not really needed as there was much chatter going on. There was a cake competition promoted in advance and these cakes were 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 brought the community together to celebrate VE Day 80 in line with national guidance. The event was held from 4.30pm – 9.30pm. There was 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 open. Weald Classic Car Club brought their cars to form a display for residents to enjoy as they walk across the park. The Ringing of the Bells was held at 6.30pm and the event ended with the Lighting of the Beacon at 9.30pm. Community Groups raised £2,400 for their funds.

The full event report is attached at Appendix 10.

11.3 Feedback post events was extremely positive with the highlight of comments in securing ITV Meridian News to attend the lunch party. Several residents did contact the council and all comments were noted on our Compliments and Complaints log in accordance with Council policy.

11.4 **Recommendation:** THIS REPORT IS FOR NOTING.

**Risks:**

Environmental implications: Every effort was 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 was been shared with local Police to advise of the larger event in the park.

12. **REPORT ON SUMMER FAYRE**

12.1 The Summer Fayre was held on Sunday 22 June with over 80 stalls in attendance. The event had entertainment and free activities to provide a variety for all to enjoy and we have received a lot of positive feedback on the event. The event included the following:

- Summer Fayre Parade with Same Sky and Burgess Hill Creative Community and local schools funded by Burgess Hill District Lions.
- There was 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 was a dedicated games and play area and food suppliers offering wide variety of options to residents.
- Keymer Hall by Boutique Care Homes sponsored the programme building the relationship with a new business coming to the town.
- Funds raised for community groups attending the event exceeded £2,900 with one group achieving £900 selling cakes.

Event Report at Appendix 11.

12.2 **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.

### 13. [UPDATE ON FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES 2025](#)

13.1 **Purpose of report:** This report is to update the Key Area Group on forthcoming Holiday Activity plans for summer holidays and subsequent events. Clear publicity is planned to include sharing with all schools, website and social channels, our event notification list, banners and posters around the town.

13.2 Summer Holiday Activity Programme to be held 23 July – 31 August and the programme has now been finalised to include:

- Launch of Move it Mondays – focusing on coaching in basketball and tennis to encourage physical activity with basketball (Eastbridge Avenue) in the morning and tennis in the afternoon (St John’s Park). Bookings will be via a waiver form to enable as many people to participate with an officer present at every event (4 Mondays from 28 July onwards morning and afternoon sessions).
- 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.
- Family Fun Sessions providing dedicated support for young people with SEND working with Kings Church with funding support from Budding Foundation.
- The Sandpit will be available outside the Help Point operating 23 July - 2 September.

13.3 From September the focus will be on the delivery of the Library Author event publicised in About Town to be held on Monday 29 September where Erin Kelly will be promoting her new book. October half term activities including the celebration of 15 years of Young Carers events working in partnership with Burgess Hill Youth and our third Family Fun event for SEND are already planned. The Christmas Light Switch will be held on Saturday 22 November in Church Walk and is being worked on now with the essential items booked including stage, security and some entertainment. Further research on walkabout entertainment is being investigated now and final plans will be delivered at the next Key Area Group meeting. The Remembrance events will also be delivered by the Council staff team to. September is the planned month to consider the plans for 2026-2027 so if Councillors wish to contribute ideas to the programme please do let the Community Team know by end of August.

**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.