



MINUTES of the **ORDINARY MEETING** of the **TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber on **Monday 29th September 2025 at 7pm**

Present: Stuart Condie Town Mayor
David Eggleton Deputy Town Mayor

Diane Black
Matthew Cornish
Cedric de Souza *
Robert Eggleston
Anne Eves
Bob Foster
Jon Gardner *
Matthew Goldsmith
Janice Henwood
Simon Hicks
Trevor Hines
Mohammad Hossain
Tofojjul Hussein *
John Orchard *
Andy Stowe
Adam White
Brenda Williams
Peter Williams

* Denotes non-attendance

Also in attendance: Julie Holden - Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Sam Kimblin - Administrative Support Officer
Sarah Roberts - Corporate Services Officer
3 Members of the Public

282. OPEN FORUM

There were no comments or questions.

283. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The following apologies for absence were noted

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| Cllr Cedric de Souza | Personal Commitment |
| Cllr Jon Gardner | Unwell – the Council sent their good wishes |
| Cllr Tofojjul Hussein | Personal Commitment |
| John Orchard | Personal Commitment |

284. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Declarations were received from:

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| Simon Hicks | Regarding item 13, A personal interest was declared as an allotment holder. |
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285. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair stated that he really enjoyed the Burgess Hill bonfire procession held on 27th September and the street food offerings.

He also congratulated the Burgess Hill Town Football Club on their first match using their improved pitch.

Permission has been granted for a second runway at Gatwick. He mused as to whether further discussion should take place about what this means for the town of Burgess Hill.

286. **COUNCIL MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Monday 7th July 2025 were **AGREED** and signed as a correct record.

287. **PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES**

It was commented by a Cllr that in past minutes, an arboricultural report was always requested for all applications where trees were being felled. This was not always being adhered to at recent meetings. The Chair of the Planning Committee said this approach was still being applied in most instances.

Another Cllr asked about the Ferndale Road Community Traffic Regulation Order from the Minutes of 4th August. If the nearby construction works had now finished, was this TRO still required? The Chair of the Planning Committee said they were taking the lead from local residents on this issue and the impact of the nearby construction works was not the only reason for the TRO.

RESOLVED: The Minutes and decisions of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 4th August, 26th August and 15th September 2025 were **AGREED**.

288. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT KEY AREA GROUP NOTES OF 15th JULY MEETING**

A Cllr referred to Note 65 regarding the Update on Forthcoming Activities and the event date clash between the Summer Fayre and the Classic Car event on 14th June, requesting that this item should be put back on the agenda for the next Community Engagement KAG and it had not been an agenda item. The Chair of the KAG advised that the next years plan would be on the next KAG agenda and could be discussed then.

A Cllr repeated her request under Note 60 for International Day of Peace to be observed by Burgess Hill Town Council (BHTC) in 2026.

A Cllr asked if all Cllrs could be made aware a little earlier of the annual list of dates that the Town Council officially commemorate. This would give Cllrs an opportunity to comment on the annual list before it is set in stone.

The Chair of the Community Engagement KAG replied that an annual list will be on a future Community Engagement KAG Agenda and that officers require more than 12 months to plan some events.

A comment was made that Christmas has not appeared on the Community engagement KAG for some time and now all the plans have been put in place. It was clarified that Christmas events have been properly discussed at the past KAGs.

It was further commented that the 2026 Summer Fayre was not on the KAG Agenda so members of the public did not know that event would be discussed. It was confirmed that the whole programme of events for 2026 would be on the next KAG agenda in October.

RESOLVED: The notes and decisions of the Key Area Group held on 15th July 2025 were agreed.

289. STAFF AND MEMBER DEVELOPMENT KEY AREA GROUP NOTES OF 21ST JULY MEETING

The CEO gave an update on staff. An offer has been made and verbal acceptance of the new head of Finance and Corporate Services role. The proposed post holder's name is David Hood, and he has over 20 years' experience in relevant areas of business.

It is hoped that he will start with BHTC on 20th October for 3 days a week and a 6-week handover with the current RFO, after which he will work full time.

It was asked when the extra post for a Community Engagement team member of staff would be recruited. It was answered that if approved tonight recruitment will start before January in line with the decision of the KAG.

It was requested that in future the Chair of the KAG seek views of the KAG membership before agreeing a change in meeting date. The Chair noted the comment and replied that changing dates was necessary on this occasion but there had been time for comments to be submitted before or after the KAG.

It was commented that 4 community engagement officers sounds excessive. If the Christmas market is not a success, then Council should have the opportunity to review our staffing.

It was advised that the Community Engagement team would take on additional tasks including the Mayor's secretarial role moving from corporate to community engagement team and emergency planning. Should it continue, the Community Engagement team will take over organising the Christmas market next year from the Head of Projects.

The Council struggle to find time for developing the IT strategy and will need to be better prepared for the changes to the AGAR. Therefore, tasks are proposed to be reallocated away from the Corporate Services team, to rebuild the capacity.

It was commented about the RFO responsibility being transferred to the CEO, which seemed uncommon and not a good separation of duties.

It was commented that it is common for the CEOs/Town Clerks to also be the RFO, but the CEO would not be doing the day-to-day work. She would simply have an overview, with overall responsibility. Cllr Eggleton said risk management was considered at the KAG. There are already checks and balances in place.

Will the change of roles be reflected in the standing orders and will this go to Finance KAG to be approved? The CEO said she would look at this but it may be that little if anything needs amending.

RESOLVED: The Notes and the decisions of the meeting of the Staff and Member Development Key Area Group held on 21st July 2025 were agreed.

290. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT KEY AREA GROUP NOTES OF 28TH JULY AND 18TH SEPTEMBER MEETINGS

The Chair of the KAG went through the meeting notes of 28th July and 18th September 2025 including local authority reorganisation and other items.

Regarding Note 76 from 18th September - Brookleigh Community Building, a Cllr queried whether it had been resolved that BHTC would “possibly” take over the management of the building rather than “no”. The Chair clarified that the resolution was a “no” at this time, and this was made clear in the notes of the KAG, but if MSDC made another proposal it could be reconsidered.

Cllrs were referred back to the notes of 18th September 2025 KAG. The Chair of the SDKAG advised that following reflection and discussion with Leader of the Council and the Vice-Chair of the KAG, he would not be proposing the recommendations as set out in the paper concerning note 75. However, he did recommend the notes and decision 76 for adoption.

There was no proposer for the original recommendations from the SDKAG, therefore a new proposal was made:

To replace decision 75 with:

The Council will:

- (a) Give the proposal for an alternative facility at the Burgess Hill Academy, proposed by Richard Cherry (“Plan B”), sufficient time to be presented and, accordingly gives until 31st March 2026 for a fully developed and costed proposal to be submitted to the Community Buildings and Development Working Group.

(b) Subject to the outcome in (a) above:

- (i) obtains Pre Planning Advice from the Planning Authority on the RIBA Stage 2 design for The Beehive; and
- (ii) meets with the Urban Design team at Mid Sussex District Council to obtain feedback on the design and its compliance with the Design Guide.

but only if it has been decided not to pursue Plan B.

- (iii) If it is decided not to pursue the Plan B, prepares an indicative funding plan and business plan for The Beehive to be presented to the then next meeting of the Strategic KAG together with a public engagement strategy.

A member of the public commented that it's not clear for members of the public what the detail of the "Plan B" to utilise Burgess Hill Academy are. It was advised that the full details of the proposal are included in Appendix A of the Notes of the Strategic Development KAG held on 18th September 2025.

It was further suggested that if Plan B is not the answer, before any further design work is carried out on the Beehive, should the Council engage a market research company to obtain views of members of the public? However, it was suggested that point 2 (iii) of the newly proposed resolution would include a public engagement strategy which would cover this.

RESOLVED 1) To approve the notes from the meetings of 28th July and 18th September and the decisions with exception of note 75 as contained in the notes.

2) To replace decision 75 with:
The Council will:

(a) Give the proposal for an alternative facility at the Burgess Hill Academy, proposed by Richard Cherry ("Plan B"), sufficient time to be presented and, accordingly gives until 31st March 2026 for a fully developed and costed proposal to be submitted to the Community Buildings and Development Working Group.

(b) Subject to the outcome in (a) above:

- (i) obtains Pre Planning Advice from the Planning Authority on the RIBA Stage 2 design for The Beehive; and
- (ii) meets with the Urban Design team at Mid Sussex District Council to obtain feedback on the design and its compliance with the Design Guide.

but only if it has been decided not to pursue Plan B.

- (iii) If it is decided not to pursue the Plan B, prepares an indicative funding plan and business plan for The Beehive to be presented to the then next meeting of the Strategic KAG together with a public engagement strategy.
- (iv) The Financial implications are Nil prior to 31st March 2026.

291. ST JOHNS WORKING GROUP

The chair of the Working Group introduced the items discussed in a recent meeting with MSDC officers.

She advised that every 4 weeks there will be a catch-up Teams meeting. That phase 1 of the masterplan will only consider 3 areas; the MUGA/ Playpark, the skate park and tennis courts. It was stressed to MSDC that the working group do not want any more tarmac in the park. Wifi had been raised as the group were divided as to whether it should be introduced. MSDC do not know who is responsible for the roll out of wifi so that is held in abeyance at this time.

A Cllr asked – the basketball court. 2 x pickle ball courts can fit within a basketball court within the MUGA. Could this be considered to be included?

It was also mentioned that a Cuckfield wifi planning application showed WSCC paying for wifi to be installed at semi-rural locations including parks. This is something that could be explored.

Another Cllr asked if having free wifi would encourage more people including young people to visit the park rather than stay indoors.

Wifi can be used for nature interest items and bird watching.
Public safety aspect of wifi and also benefits to sport clubs

RESOLVED: To submit the response at Appendix A to Mid Sussex District Council

292. DELEGATED DECISIONS

The decision related to the Local Government Reorganisation Survey for Sussex submission was noted.

293. COUNCIL POSITION ON PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

A Cllr thanked the Chief Executive Officer for preparing the agenda with the detailed explanation of the different kinds of Proportional Representation (PR).

The CEO clarified that the item had come from the Local Government Reorganisation submission where a Cllr had asked for PR to be included. But as this was an officer delegation and there was no Burgess Hill Town Council policy on PR, this could not be included. By adopting a policy decision, if PR is discussed in the future, then the Officers would be able to advise on the Council's position. However, as the Council do not have the power to amend the electoral process used, this is not a decision that can be implemented, it is for advisory purposes only.

There was some discussion as to what the proposal should be, in the end the Council decided that the recommendation in the papers would suffice.

RESOLVED: Burgess Hill Town Council would support electoral reform to introduce Proportional Representation at all levels of Government.

294. ALLOTMENT TENANCIES

A comment was made about the Gatehouse Lane allotments, currently the lease is due to terminate on 31st December 2026. The next lease after this is still awaiting signatories, so it is very much dependent on Gatehouse Lane remaining under our control.

RESOLVED: The amendments to the Tenancy Agreements, as outlined in the report, were approved.

295. COST OF LIVING RISE FOR STAFF MEMBERS

The report was noted.

296. DIARY DATES

The forthcoming dates were noted and it was advised that the following meeting was missing from the list on the agenda.

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| OCTOBER | | |
| Community Engagement Key Area Group | Tuesday 23 October | 19.00 hours |

The meeting was closed at **8.01pm**.

Chairmans Signature

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