

NOTES of the **CUSTOMER SERVICES KEY AREA GROUP MEETING** held in the Council Chamber on **Tuesday 28th October 2025** at 19.00 hours.

KAG Members: Adam White Chairman
Diane Black*
Robert Eggleston
Anne Eves
Matthew Goldsmith
Simon Hicks
Tofojjul Hussein
Cllrs: P Williams (substituting for D Black)

Also present:

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

* Denotes non-attendance

81. OPEN FORUM

The Chair welcomed all and noted there were no members of the public so moved to the substantive agenda

82. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED: Apologies were accepted from

Cllr Black	Personal Commitment
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83. SUBSTITUTES

It was noted that the following Councillors were substituting:
Cllr P Williams for Cllr Black

84. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Hicks declared he was an allotment holder for item 8

85. CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair made the following announcement as had appeared in the Councillors Briefing Note last week:

South East Water have advised they are applying to the Secretary of State of A Non-Essential Use Ban (NEUB). This targets commercial and non-household water use and requires approval by the Secretary of State. While they are applying it may take several weeks to get approval, and even then, it may not be approved.

Under a NEUB, the categories of mains water use which will be restricted are:

- Watering outdoor plants on commercial premises
- Filling or maintaining a non-domestic swimming pool or paddling pool
- Filling or maintaining a pond
- Operating a mechanical vehicle washer
- Cleaning any vehicle, boat, aircraft or railway rolling stock
- Cleaning non-domestic premises
- Cleaning a window of a non-domestic building
- Cleaning industrial plant
- Suppressing dust, unless required for health and safety reasons such as reducing dust around heavy machinery to maintain visibility and reduce the risk of accidents
- Operating cisterns in unoccupied buildings

This will clearly affect a number of businesses and will also affect some of the standard operations of the council. The Council have not used the hosepipe to water the civic flowers since the hosepipe ban was introduced (despite having an exemption at that time), we will be turning the water off in the allotments from 1st November (which we always do anyway) and will be monitoring the water use in the Burial ground. We will not be cleaning vehicles nor windows on our buildings. At this time, we are hopeful to bring these back in the spring, but that will depend on the position of rainfall and water reserves over the winter. Autumn planting has not as yet been ordered and is waiting to see if this order is granted. It was also mentioned that graffiti removal may be affected as this uses water in the removal process.

86 NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: The Notes of the meeting of the Customer Services Key Area Group held on 16th June 2025, having been previously circulated, were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

87 HELP POINT REPORT

Mrs Banister was thanked for her report, it was commented that it is interesting to see the amounts raised, although the real value is in promoting the traders and local artists via the shop window.

The reports over the past year have been useful. But it was now asked for an ongoing report of the activity and opportunities and challenges that the help point face. Mrs Banister and the CEO offered to work with Cllr Hicks and the Chair to create the format of the report as wanted.

The report was noted

88. MAINTENANCE TEAM REPORT

It was raised with disappointment that WSCC have mown the wilding verges which the Town Council is supposed to look after with an agreed one cut only in September. They have been mown again and this time the grass has not been taken away meaning that either the Town Council or the volunteers will need to do this to stop any damage. Mrs Hughes confirmed that the Town Council have taken this up with WSCC, the liaison officer was not aware that this has happened and is investigating. It is hoped that WSCC will return to remove the cuttings from their erroneous cut. It was commented that this had been working well and the error was disappointing. Mrs Hughes will update once a final response is received from West Sussex.

Stone Garden Plaque (point 54 of the maintenance report in appendix 2)

It was noted that the wording was no longer legible. It was also believed that WSCC were the owners, although their admission to being responsible for looking after it was not the same as ownership. The KAG felt that WSCC should be asked to pay for the works at least in the first instance. Mrs Hughes was thanked for obtaining a quote.

Open Space Management Plan (point 55 of the maintenance report in appendix 2)

It was clarified that there was no saving in the 2025/6 budget as it would be budgeted for next year. The recommendation would allow the allocation not to be necessary for next year.

Ditches at former RBL site (point 56 of the maintenance report in appendix 2)

It was agreed that the trenches had been an extra safeguard, it was expected that the clearing of the drains would have been enough to resolve the problem at the time so the trenches could be refilled. It was suggested to slightly hump the trench so that it would still act as a natural barrier should there be flooding, but not to the point of creating a trip hazard.

The Maintenance Team were thanked for the huge amount of work undertaken and reported back.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To contact WSCC in the first instance to ask that they refurbish the lettering on the stone garden plaque
- 2) To use the knowledge gained from the current open space management plans to renew the plans inhouse for the next 5 years, with the intention of an ecologist producing new plans at the end of that period
- 3) Fill the existing ditches at the former RBL site and monitor.

89. REMEMBRANCE PLAQUE FOR GEN JOHN HALL

The KAG felt that allowing the Park Centre to reclaim the plaque was appropriate.

RESOLVED: that the plaque can be returned to the Park Centre, for public display in the building

90. POLICY FOR THE LETTING OF COUNCIL OWNED LAND

Following a question The CEO shared the application form with the committee to show that there would be scrutiny in to alcohol and live music. It was asked to specifically draw attention to alcohol sales and that if the maximum number of MSDC Temporary Event Notices (TEN) had been reached in a given year the Town Council would not be able to grant use for an event on the land which needed a TEN.

It was asked to include a question about whether consultation had been carried out and if so by whom and the results of this and also for a Terms and Conditions of Hire notice to be available on the website.

RESOLVED: To adopt the Policy for letting of Council Land as contained at Appendix 3 of the report, with amendments to the application form to ask specifically about alcohol sales, consultation and that an accompanying Terms and Conditions of hire notice be added to the website.

The meeting ended at 19.28

Chairman