



MINUTES of the **ORDINARY MEETING** of the **TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber on **Monday 4 March 2024**

Present: Janice Henwood Town Mayor
Tofojjul Hussain Deputy Town Mayor

Graham Allen
Diane Black
Christine Cherry
Richard Cherry
Stuart Condie
Matthew Cornish
Cedric de Souza
Robert Eggleston
David Eggleton
Anne Eves
Bob Foster
Matthew Goldsmith
Simon Hicks
Mohammad Hossain
John Orchard
Brenda Williams
Peter Williams
Adam White

* *Denotes non-attendance.*

(19.00)

99. OPEN FORUM

There were 10 members of the public present.

One member asked if Burgess Hill Town Councillors, who were not Mid Sussex District Councillors agreed with the new parking charges. Councillor Richard Cherry stated that the increase on charges was modest and better than other towns, as well as stating that it was a case of balancing the books for Mid Sussex District Council. Councillor Condie added that all Councils were needing to increase costs or cut budgets. Councillor White responded stating

he did not support the increase in charges.

Another member of the public questioned why there was a police presence. CEO Steve Cridland stated that the Council may be under threat, fuelled to a degree by what was seen on social media. It was felt extra security was needed. Councillor Eggleston added that a Councillor had received a death threat and it was confirmed by CEO Steve Cridland that this had been reported to police.

A member of the public stated that several people had been pushing for meeting with the developers of SA13 South of Folders Lane, in regards to a number of issues including parking, and traffic problems. He understood a closed meeting had been attended with the developer by a councillor and he wanted to know why they had been told they were not allowed to attend the meeting. Councillor Eggleton stated that the Council had been against the SA13 development, but that the planning application had been agreed. He stated a public meeting had taken place with Thakeham Home and that has led to a series of other meetings. He added that there had been a meeting on the site that morning with public community representatives present who were against the development. He stated that antisocial parking had been an issue and damage had occurred, which the developer had taken responsibility for and would be paying for repair. He stated that the developers were building a new set of parking spaces to alleviate the problem. A public meeting had been booked with Persimmon Homes but due to schedule changes this had been cancelled, Councillor Eggleton said that this would be rebooked. The member of public requested the MSDC planning case officer for the site be invited to attend the meeting, to which Councillor Eggleton replied stating he would invite him but could not guarantee his attendance.

Councillor de Souza questioned whether it was possible to make the live streaming of meetings accessible after the meeting, as members of the public had approached him in regards to it. CEO Steve Cridland stated that this would be something that would be needed to be looked into.

A member of the public questioned why the Chanctonbury allotments had been registered as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) if there was no plan to purchase the land, he also asked how the ACV would be affected as the site was still included on the District Plan. He then asked Councillor Peter Williams what was being done to adjust the wording on the District Plan with regard to the Nightingale site, as it stated it was a long-term lease. Councillor Peter Williams confirmed it had been part of consultation period which had recently ended and that it had been listed as a long lease and felt this meant it would never be held in perpetuity and this needed addressing. Councillor Eggleton responded stating that registering an ACV gives the holder the right to bid for a site but it

doesn't mean that the owners of the site are obligated to sell it to the ACV holder or that it is affordable. He said that the allotments on the Nightingale site would be statutory allotments which would give them protection.

On the subject of Burgess Hill Cricket Club's planning application, a member of the public asked how Burgess Hill Town Council was supporting the club. It was stated that Council had previously minuted that they would offer financial support when and if needed. Councillor Eggleton stated the application had been supported by all Cllrs when it had come in front of the Planning Committee.

A member of the public asked, as the Town Council was required to offer allotments under a statutory obligation, what was being done to reduce the waiting list. Councillor Henwood responded that the allotments were overseen by a competent officer who was dealing with the waiting list. The site at Nightingale Meadows offered a number of additional plots but at this point she was unable to specify by how many.

100. [APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE](#)

There were none.

101. [DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST](#)

Councillors Cedric de Souza, Richard Cherry, Cornish and Orchard all declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 16 Park Centre update, as were trustees.

102. [CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS](#)

Councillor Janice Henwood thanked Councillors Brenda Williams and Diane Black for reinstating the Youth Council, who had met for the first-time last week.

Councillor Henwood invited members of the public and Councillors to attend the candlelight vigils for Gaza, being held on the bandstand on Friday evenings, at 6pm, organized by Parents of Peace Mid Sussex.

She also informed the Council an invitation had been received from Abbeville, for representatives from Burgess Hill to attend their celebrations for 30 years of Twinning, in June. She added that there was a small amount of funding available, via the twinning fund. Any Councillors wishing to attend should speak to the CEO in the first instance.

103. [COUNCIL MINUTES](#)

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Monday 29

January 2024 were **AGREED** and signed as a correct record.

104. UPDATE FROM MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL (MSDC)

Councillor Robert Eggleston informed the Council that the Regulation 19 Consultation on the Draft District Plan had closed on 23 February with 2,882 comments. The Draft would now be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, with the completion date expected to be early Autumn 2024.

He then stated that MSDC had responded to Lewes District Council in regards to two proposed sites of development included in Lewes' development options report, which were close to the district boundary. One of the sites was close to Burgess Hill and the other Haywards Heath. MSDC was working with Lewes District Council to have the sites removed or, if they were to be allocated, the correct infrastructure contributions be made available.

He informed the Council that MSDC had agreed their budget with a 2.95% increase in council tax for 2024/2025.

Councillor Robert Eggleston stated that an Inquiry had been opened, into the Gatwick Airport expansion, which would allow the airport to open the emergency runway as a second runway for normal use. Together with 11 neighbouring authorities, MSDC was raising concerns around noise pollution, traffic and infrastructure. He stated that whilst it was a decision that would be made by the Secretary of State, local authorities were raising their concerns.

In regard to the Martlets redevelopment, Councillor Robert Eggleston said that he was reviewing progress with New River Retail on a weekly basis, and was working to keep the permitted development in place.. A member of public asked if buying New River Retail out of lease had been considered. Cllr Eggleston stated that he could make no more comment on the process at this time.

He then stated that he would be meeting with CEO Steve Cridland and Burgess Hill Cricket Club to discuss options for the development. A member of the public asked Councillor Robert Eggleston to clarify what he meant about options, as the planning application had been submitted already. Councillor Robert Eggleston responded that that he was referring to financing and governance issues, that needed discussing.

105. UPDATE FROM WSCC

Councillor Stuart Condie provided an update on a number of WSCC items:

He stated that he was still working with Burgess Hill Shed to agree a lease extension, as their current lease ran out in 2025.

In terms of Highway projects, he was working with residents on the idea of having Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ) in Burgess Hill, in areas where residents were struggling to park outside their homes, including roads such as Norman Road. The idea required a number of residents to be interested in using the scheme and it would be subject to a feasibility study.

He added he was also looking into parking within the industrial estate and working to reduce parking on pathways, as well as on junctions. Both issues were causing a number of problems. He said he was working with the Business Park who were raising funds for TROs, and although the schemes would not reduce the capacity, they would alleviate current issues.

Councillor Condie also stated that the resurfacing of Keymer Road and Ockley Road was still going ahead but a date had not been set.

Referencing education, he stated that there were still snagging issues with the new Woodlands Meed site and that no date of completion had been set. Referring to Bedelands Academy he stated that there were issues with the funding of the build and there was an upcoming debate on an extension to the budget to allow the build to go ahead as set out within the planning application. He added that secondary school places had been allocated on March 1st and that there were long waiting lists for applicants who did not get their chosen school, with 82 on the waiting list for Downlands and 88 for St Paul's.

Members of public were invited to ask questions on the matters contained within Councillor Condie's report. One person asked if a controlled parking zone could be set up along roads used for commuters for Burgess Hill Station, such as Ferndale and Silverdale Roads, which would force commuters to use the pay and display car parks, raising funds for MSDC. Councillor Condie responded that the zones were aimed at areas where residents were not able to park outside their homes, rather than roads that were used for commuter parking where adequate off-road parking was available for residents. He added the CPZ were not to do with money. It was then questioned if WSCC would create schemes if it was a small number of roads, and if Wivelsfield station area was included within the plan. Councillor Condie stated that there were at least 5 roads being considering including Wivelsfield Station.

Councillor Eves stated that she had recently visited BH Shed with other Councillors and it had been questioned if the summer room at the back, which was not being used by WSCC, could be opened up for use by Burgess Hill Shed. Councillor Peter Williams stated that the manager had told him they were under the impression they would be

granted a 5-year lease. Councillor Condie responded stating he was not aware of the 5-year lease and would look into the use of the summer room.

A member of the public questioned if Phase 2 of the Place and Connectivity Scheme would be going ahead, as documentation had stated it would happen in early 2024. Councillor Condie stated that the real time bus displays were being installed as part of the project and BHTC had received the funding from WSCC to manage this. Councillor Eggleston stated that the steering group had not met recently but when they did, they would be looking at other aspects of the project, including the resurfacing of Church Road and a crossing on Leylands Road. Councillor Peter Williams stated that he and Councillor Orchard had submitted a snagging list of issues with phase 1, but hadn't seen any activity to rectify these issues.

106. PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on Monday 8 January, Tuesday 30 January and Monday 19 February 2024 were **AGREED**.

107. STAFF AND MEMBER DEVELOPMENT KAG NOTES

The Notes of the meeting of the Staff and Member Development Key Area Group held on 21 February 2024 were considered and were **AGREED**.

108. INTERVIEW PANEL

The Council was asked to appoint 5 members to the interview panel to select a new CEO, one member was to be from the opposition parties.

RESOLVED that: the following Councillors were appointed to be on the interview panel: Richard Cherry, Diane Black, Janice Henwood, Peter Williams and from the opposing parties Anne Eves.

109. REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Council was asked to consider amending the Town Council's Standing Orders to allow a single payment limit of £50k, with any payments over and above this limit to be pre-approved by the Finance KAG Chairman or the Leader or the Deputy Leader, and to upgrade the on-line banking system accordingly.

RESOLVED that: The Council agreed to amend the Standing Order to allow single payments of £50k to be made.

110. RISK REGISTER

Concerns were raised over the grass verges near Burgess Hill Football Club and the public's use of these during match days, causing damage. Councillor Condi stated that he was looking into yellow lines for the bends and CEO Steve Cridland stated he was working with the club to install bollards.

Councillor Condi questioned why WSCC's risk register also included staff recruitment and cyber risks but BHTC's register did not. Councillors Richard Cherry suggested the staff recruitment element was possibly missing due to BHTC not providing social care, where many of the staff issues were originating. CEO Steve Cridland was asked to look into both items and the possibility of them being included in the risk register.

RESOLVED that: CEO to consider suggested additions. The contents of the report were noted.

111. REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS

RESOLVED that: The Council noted the information provided.

112. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Following the Council meeting in January 2024, Cllr Eggleston recommended some amendments to the Complaints Procedure and standing orders.

RESOLVED that: It was agreed that the Council adopt the procedures set out in appendix 2 to the agenda and amend the Standing Orders accordingly.

113. ADDITIONAL CCTV

It was discussed that the security of the building be upgraded with an additional 5 CCTV cameras installed for an amount of £1,789.

A member of the public questioned the justification for the spend. It was responded that given a Councillor had received a threatening letter and there had been several occasions where Help Point staff had had to deal with irate members of public, as well as the Councillors using the Help Point for their surgeries, the need had been assessed to be very real.

RESOLVED that: additional CCTV cameras be installed inside and outside the town council building at a cost of £1,789 and funds to be taken from the General Reserve to cover the costs.

114. **PARK CENTRE UPDATE**

Councillor Peter Williams updated the Council stating that a structural engineer visited the Park Centre on 15 February 2024. The initial concerns around the support to an girder were determined to not be an issue while the bulging walls would be monitored but were not an imminent problem. A full report was awaited from the structural engineer.

RESOLVED that: the information provided was noted.

115. **DIARY DATES**

RESOLVED that: the Diary dates were noted.

The meeting closed at 20:10