



**MINUTES** of the **ORDINARY MEETING** of the **TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber on Monday **22 JULY 2024**

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**Present:** Janice Henwood Town Mayor  
Tofojjul Hussain Deputy Town Mayor

Graham Allen  
Diane Black  
Stuart Condie  
Matthew Cornish  
Cedric de Souza  
Robert Eggleston  
David Eggleton \*  
Anne Eves  
Bob Foster  
Jon Gardner \*  
Matthew Goldsmith  
Simon Hicks  
Mohammad Hossain \*  
John Orchard  
Andy Stowe \*  
Brenda Williams  
Peter Williams  
Adam White

\* *Denotes non-attendance.*

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(19.00)

**140. BURGESS HILL PANTRY: ADDRESS BY CLAIRE FULLER**

Claire Fuller informed the Council that the pantry filled the gap between the food bank and normal shopping, stating that the pantry was a longer-term option than the food bank. They offered a standard membership, which for £5 allowed families to complete a shop which was worth roughly £25 and they also offered bigger families additional items for a further £2.

She stated that they provided a range of items from tins to fresh fruit and frozen items. Their membership was 240, which represented about 600 individuals; membership was up 50% on 2023 and the

number of weekly shops was up 40%, with over 12,000 items a week leaving the shelves.

The Pantry was also providing wrap around care using the additional room within the unit; MSDC's homeless team were holding monthly sessions, as well as there being cookery, maths and English classes, IT support and social activities.

They had had work experience students from Woodlands Meed volunteer in the Pantry, which had been beneficial for all, as well as year 6 students from London Meed visit.

Claire added that stock came from a variety of places, such as FareShare Sussex, the hygiene and beauty bank, and local super markets, as well as donations from businesses, churches and schools. Adding that the food donation from supermarkets saved the stock going to landfill, and to date they had saved 20,000kg of products.

They had also done a reverse advent calendar in the lead-up to Christmas 2023, which brought in over 100 donations. Local business, RF Solutions LTD, also did a monthly shop worth £400 for The Pantry.

She stated that due to the regeneration of the town they would need to find a new location, and it was key that it was in the town centre, so members could easily access The Pantry via public transport. Adding that whilst there were alternative units available, the costs were currently not manageable and the increase in rent would mean they required an additional £30,000 per year. They were hoping to partner with businesses who were able to offer a yearly sponsorship, that would cover the additional costs.

Claire thanked BHTC for their continued support with The Pantry.

#### **141. OPEN FORUM**

One member of the public asked why residents were still able to walk around the covered shopping centre but seating had been removed, questioning what BHTC were doing to resolve the issues.

Cllr Peter Williams informed him that Market Place Shopping Centre was privately owned so there was little BHTC could do, but that he was meeting with the management regularly, stating that work was ongoing when the centre was closed to allow it to remain open for shoppers during the day. He added that the risk assessment in place did not allow for seating currently but there were plans to create a temporary covered seating in September, hoping the work would be completed by the end of October

A second member of the public questioned the lack of communication from BHTC on matters relating to the town such as, the large TV

screen outside the railway station, and the aforementioned issues with the shopping centre. Stating he had asked for information about the screen and had been directed to Network Rail for answers, rather than being provided a direct answer but when Cllr Williams had responded he had sent all the information over.

Cllr Peter Williams stated he had only provided information available to everyone on the Network Rail website. Cllr Henwood added that the Burgess Hill Town Council Planning Committee had refused the application but MSDC had agreed it. She also stated that BHTC would look at how information was communicated to residents.

A member of the public asked about the timescales for the town regeneration and whether it was realistic, as well as questioning why BHTC wasn't doing more. Cllr Henwood stated that this would be addressed in agenda item number 8 and that BHTC's statutory obligations were to provide allotments and a burial ground, whilst other responsibilities fell to MSDC and WSCC.

It was then asked by a resident what was being done to stop further hedgehogs being killed by the contactors mowing the grass verges and what BHTC was doing to rectify the situation.

Cllr Eggleston stated that grass cutting was contracted to Glendale on behalf of MSDC and it had been raised with officers at MSDC. Cllr Eves added that she had spoken with an officer and they would be looking at additional training for the contractors, as well as not mowing certain areas.

A fifth resident asked why the grass verges were only just being cut in July, when the campaign was 'no mow May', stating that the gutters had not been trimmed properly either. Additionally, he asked who owned the Burgess Hill Museum and how BHTC were supporting it.

Cllr Henwood stated that the verges were the responsibility of WSCC Highways, and that the mowing schedules allowed for it to be cut twice a season, unless it blocked sight lines. With regard to the Burgess Hill Museum, she stated this was organized by Burgess Hill Heritage and History Association and BHTC regularly supported them through the grants process.

Lastly, a member of the public thanked the Help Point in assisting with getting a hedge trimmed, to improve access along a pathway. She stated that she had attended the Help Point recently, after trying to resolve the matter for sometime on her own, and that it had only taken a week for it to be resolved after the Help Point had assisted. She recommended that others did the same with issues.

**142. [APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE](#)**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs David Eggleton, Jon Gardner, Mohammad Hossain and Andy Stowe.

**143. [DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST](#)**

There were none.

**144. [COUNCIL MINUTES](#)**

The Minutes of the Ordinary and Extraordinary Meetings of the Council held on 29 April 2024, 13 June 2024 and 24 June 2024, and the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Council held on 7 May 2024 were **AGREED**.

**145. [UPDATE FROM WSCC](#)**

Cllr Condie provided an update from WSCC on their budget stating there would be a significant shortfall in the coming years, and that the County Council would need to look at ways to decrease the shortfall.

He went on to say that a contractor had been appointed for the Bedelands Academy but currently there was at least a one-year gap in completion of the works and space being needed for children. Burgess Hill Academy was being investigated as an option to house the students.

He stated a social care inspection was due and they expected the result to be that the service 'required improvement'. He added Woodlands Meed had been handed over to governors, but he wasn't sure when they school had planned to move in.

It was asked whether Ockley Lane, Keymer Road and Junction Road resurfacing works would go ahead, Cllr Condie stated that as far as he was aware they would.

It was also asked if Net Zero should be the focus of WSCC, if there were budget issues. It was responded that in the long term it would save the County Council money.

**146. [CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS](#)**

Chairman Henwood informed the Council that the Planning Committee had recently been consulted on a street naming application. The suggested name was Abbotsford Place but the Committee had requested a name be picked at random from the War Memorial. MSDC stated they were unable to do so as families of the fallen would need to be contacted and Abbotsford Place would be used.

**147. [UPDATE FROM MSDC](#)**

Cllr Eggleston provided a report listed as Appendix 1 with regards to MSDC matters. It covered the Mid Sussex District Plan, Martlets Shopping Centre, Parks Masterplan, Centre for Outdoor Sport and Parking Strategy.

He stated that negotiations were ongoing in regard to the joint venture for the Martlets redevelopment but there was no time scale currently, and that he would keep BHTC informed as much as allowed.

A member of the public questioned how the redevelopment would be funded, Cllr Eggleston stated that New River Retail and MSDC would register as a Limited Liability Partnership and they would then need to provide a full financial report but was as yet unable to elaborate

It was asked what plan b was if the joint venture did not happen but it was stated that the focus was on the joint venture and other options were not currently being considered.

Cllr Eves stated that when the development took place, the Kiln and the Pantry would both close, unless spaces could be found for them. She asked Cllr Eggleston to consider allocating them spaces. He responded stating that these matters were between landlord and businesses and that tenant management plans were needed. Adding that MSDC were the residual freeholder of the land and that New River Retail owned the lease.

It was asked when the artificial pitches at the outdoor sports centre were expected to be completed. Cllr Eggleston stated this was expected to be early 2025 and the grass pitches would be completed at the same time.

**148. PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 13 May, 3 June, 25 June and 15 July 2024 were **AGREED**.

**149. FINANCE KEY AREA GROUP**

The Notes of the meeting of the Finance Key Area Group held on 24 June 2024 were **AGREED**.

**150. GRANTS AWARDS PANEL – NOTES OF MEETING**

The Notes of the meeting of the Grants Panel held on 24 May 2024 were **AGREED**.

**RESOLVED** that: the recommendations of the Grants Panel were **AGREED**.

**151. GRANTS APPLICATION PROCESS**

Cllr Mathew Goldsmith addressed the Council on the matter of the grants application process and asked them to consider a yearly process.

**RESOLVED** that: The grants process would become annual with the following recommendations;

- The amalgamation of the funding pot, so one stream – major and minor to fall within this. Applications to be considered for running costs and one-off capital expenditure.
- Move the scheme to annually to enable the fund to be split amongst applicants in one fair round.
- To move the deadline for applications to 31 January each year allowing time for groups to ensure financial information collated and this fits better with workloads for Officers.
- To restrict the scheme to organizations that have ‘Net Current Assets’ of less than £1 million to ensure that the scheme supports smaller groups.
- To update the conditions of funding to state that preference is given to those groups that have not received a grant in the last 24 months.

**152. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT KEY AREA GROUP – NOTES OF MEETING**

The Notes of the meeting of the Community Engagement Key Area Group KAG held on 10 June 2024 were **AGREED**.

**153. THE BURGESS HILL ACADEMY WORKING GROUP**

It was asked whether other academy schools in the area would be considered by the working group, but it was stated that the issues were with University of Brighton Academies Trust, not academies in general. However, they would include the Bedelands School in their considerations as, when completed, this was to also be run by the University of Brighton Academies Trust.

**RESOLVED** that:

1. The Burgess Hill Academy Working Group be established
2. That the function of the Working Group be decided at an inaugural meeting (August 2024).
3. That the Working Group be part of Burgess Hill Town Council's formal activities, in the interest of its community.
4. Council representatives on the Group will be Cllrs. Henwood, Stowe, Black, Foster and Brenda Williams.

**154. EUROPEAN FRIENDSHIP GROUP**

Cllr Eves stated that they were looking to revive town twinning and were hoping to connect clubs, such as choirs and sports clubs.

Cllrs Anne Eves, Stuart Condie and Brenda Williams were appointed as representatives of Burgess Hill Town Council.

155. **DIARY DATES**

**RESOLVED** that: the Diary dates were noted.

Meeting terminated at **20.35** hours.