



MINUTES of the **ORDINARY MEETING** of the **TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber on **Monday 25th November 2024 at 7pm**

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.*

*Also in attendance: Chief Executive Officer
Inspector Derrick (NPT)
6 members of the public*

188. Presentation to Burgess Hill District Lions to commemorate their 70th Anniversary

The Town Mayor, presented the current president of the Lions club with a commemorative shield to mark their anniversary commenting on their great level of service given to the town. Christine Muschamp (President) receiving the shield thanked the Town Council for the

recognition and in turn said how much the Lions valued the Town Council.

189 OPEN FORUM

It was asked why the item regarding the standing orders to amend the public participation for the Key Area Groups was not on the agenda. The Town Mayor advised that it would be on the January Agenda.

190. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor Graham Allen	personal commitment
-------------------------	---------------------

Resolved

Council accepted the apologies for absence.

191. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations were received from:

Cllr DeSouza	Director of the Park Centre CIC
Cllr Cornish	Director of the Park Centre CIC
Cllr A Eves	Director of the Burgess Hill Community Partnership CIC
Cllr S Hicks	Director of the Burgess Hill Community Partnership CIC
Cllr A White	Director of the Burgess Hill Community Partnership CIC & member of Burgess Hill Bonfire Society
Cllr Foster	Member of the Spire computer Group

192. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor said how impressed she was with the resilience of all Councillors and staff who worked hard at the weekend and the previous 72 hours to re-organise the Christmas lights switch-on event. Thanks were given to all who worked so hard.

We had intended to have on the agenda the review of standing orders due to the discrepancy over public participation, however to allow a fuller review of the standing orders and further discussion this has been held over until January when the council can then fully debate all proposed changes. In the meantime, agenda will continue to include

the suspension of standing order 3.8c to allow for public participation to take place.

Congratulations were given to the Chief Executive who has completed level 5 of the community governance qualification resulting in a foundation degree.

193. COUNCIL MINUTES

Resolved:

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Monday 23 September 2024 were **AGREED** and signed as a correct record.

194. POLICE MATTERS

The Town Mayor welcomed Inspector Derrick from the Neighbourhood Policing Team. Inspector Derrick introduced his report and made comment on the statistics as updated in the agenda. He commented that the contact centre had significantly improved in call handling and response.

He referenced the previously prolific bike thefts in Burgess Hill, advising that the thief was a young person so could not be named, but was due in court soon. The Police had known his identity and had arrested him many times over the thefts.

He advised that uniformed police had reduced in numbers over a period of time, but there are still police in the town regularly and there are two teams situated at the Burgess Hill police station even though they may not be out and about.

Mid Sussex is a low crime area, the recent spate had been caused by one or two persons. Quite often one or two people can make a significant difference to the crime rate in a Town and this was the case.

Questions followed including: One Councillor had looked up the crime stats for their ward and was genuinely concerned as to the amount of violent crime against the person. He asked if this included domestic crime and was advised yes, these stats are not necessarily on the street crime and Burgess Hill is on the whole a safe place.

It was asked if there had been any update on the threats sent to Councillors earlier this year. There was no update other than they seem to have stopped. The Police would throw the full weight of the law against the culprits if identified. There seem to have been a spate of these not just to Councillors but hopefully have stopped.

It was asked how many of the new intake of 76 officers would be based in Burgess Hill. This was not known, but it was stressed that many new officers replaced retiring and departing police so it was not necessarily an increase in numbers.

It was commented as to the low funding of the force (7th lowest in the country), yet what the force do locally is excellent. Inspector Derrick advised he couldn't comment on the funding but did say that the police operate very differently now to 15 years ago.

The Inspector was asked his view on Community Wardens to help in the town to prevent shoplifting and other crimes. He replied that anything that helped the police with intelligence was welcomed. He spoke highly of the Haywards Heath scheme.

Finally, it was commented that the recent police liaison session in the help point had revealed how short the staffing was for Mid Sussex. But it would be helpful for a PC or other police officer to support them when they do the surgeries. The Inspector advised that there should be 6 PCSOs and 1 Sgt at any time in Mid Sussex, supported by many other response teams. The surgeries were requested by the inspector and he would see what he could do on resourcing future events.

Inspector Derrick was thanked for his attendance and he then left the meeting.

195. PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES

RESOLVED: The Minutes and decisions therein of the meetings 7th October 28th October and 18th November were adopted.

196. GRANT PANEL

Cllr Goldsmith reminded all that this would be the last time that the grants were awarded in this manner as the previously agreed new scheme would now take over.

RESOLVED: The notes and decisions therein of the meeting of 14th October were adopted.

197. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT KEY AREA GROUP

It was clarified that the sporting events had been pre-booked previously, this was to be revised to allow for booking, but on the day.

It was clarified that the Christmas Tree in the market place was paid for from the Bridge The Gap funds or the Community Engagement budget as there was budget available and this project fell under the approved terms.

RESOLVED: The notes and decisions therein of the meeting of 17th October were adopted.

198. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT KEY AREA GROUP

It was clarified that no further work had been approved, other than to ask for the costs to provide the cost for works, and if low enough the actual build costs to be provided, regarding the Beehive.

It was clarified that the Business Plan and then individual plans will come forward for the priorities identified at the visioning day.

It was commented that the market being paused for 2 years was a long time, and it was clarified that this would remain under review. It is still intended to hold special markets from time to time like the festive market.

RESOLVED: The notes and decisions therein of the meeting of 4th November were adopted

199. FINANCE KEY AREA GROUP

Cllr DeSouza clarified that point 2 at minute 63 is deferred to the January meeting.

It was clarified that point 4 at minute 64 would be reconsidered for the following year Christmas event.

It was further clarified that the lease for the pantry has not yet been signed, it will start January with a rent-free period. The £7k is to fit out the new premises. Ongoing funding to help with the rent will be considered in January for inclusion in the budget.

Due to Cllr DeSouzas' interest Cllr Hicks proposed the notes.

RESOLVED: The notes and decisions therein of the meeting of 13th November were adopted

200. UPDATE FROM WSCC

The Town Mayor advised that Cllr Russell, Cabinet member for Education and Skills at WSCC, had not been able to join the meeting and that Cllr Condie had kindly agreed to give a brief update on the SEN and educational concerns. He advised that SEN numbers were increasing and it was taking more than 20 weeks for plans to support children were put in place. This is funded by the Direct Schools Grant and the costs were predicted to be £120m by 2025. This is a significant pressure on WSCC as to how these costs are met.

The Town Mayor thanked Cllr Condie and asked that any questions on this or other WSCC matters please be directed to WSCC.

201. UPDATE FROM MSDC

Mid Sussex DC have agreed to issue an update on current matters for the Council, but this has not been able to be provided for this meeting. Cllr Eggleston supplied the following brief update:

1. *Stage 1 of the Examination of the District Plan completed this month with a series of hearings covering legal compliance issues. The Inspector raised several matters requiring further work, and we are providing the additional evidence that has been requested to support the plan. Included in this is work is the requirement to further consider the unmet need of authorities in our Northern and Southern Housing Market Areas. Providing the Inspector finds that the plan is legally sound we anticipate that the second stage which includes the site allocation to commence towards the end of Q1 2025.*
2. *Work on £8.5m Centre for Outdoor Sports continues and is on schedule with a target to open in Spring 2025.*
3. *Cabinet has agreed a £900,000 reserve to support the work on the redevelopment of the Martlets Shopping Centre and the legal and technical work continues in order to bring this forward. In the meantime, the Council and New River are jointly funding events. Urban Events over the half term, for example, had nearly 900 attendees and there has been a good take up of tickets for the ice rink.*
4. *In November we gave £33,363 in grants to Community Organisations across the district. Making the total amount awarded this financial year of just under £65,000. This compares with £31k granted for the whole of FY22/23. Another Cabinet Grants panel is scheduled for 10th March 2025 with a further £33k in grant funding available.*
5. *Tenders have now been awarded for phase 1 of the Parks Masterplan at: (i) Mount Noddy Recreation Ground, East Grinstead, (ii) Victoria Park, Haywards Heath and (iii) Hemsleys Meadow and Finches Field, Pease Pottage. The work is funded by s106 contributions, UKSPF and capital. Work is expected to start in Q1 2025.*
6. *The food waste recycling pilot programme is now fully rolled out to an additional 2000 households (now 5000). Work continues on the revenue and capital requirements for the roll out to the whole of the district by 31st March 2026. Both the revenue and capital costs have increased since the budget was set last year.*

7. *On the Parking Strategy: the revised proposals for Sunday, Bank Holiday and evening charges were approved in November together with a residents' season tickets at Queensway Car Park, East Grinstead. Plan to implement mid/ late Jan '25. A capital bid for priority technology investment projects, and the growth bid for more on-street enforcement is being considered through the current budget setting. Three priority car parks (one in each town) are being identified for pilot technology projects. There has been no adverse impact on parking transactions in any town following the introduction of the revised daytime tariffs.*

The Town Mayor thanked Cllr Eggleston and again asked that any questions for the District Council work streams be directed to MSDC.

202. CORRECTION OF MINUTE/ PAGE NUMBERS

The Chairman introduced the report which was noted

203. COMMUNITY BUILDING DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Cllr P Williams introduced the report and nominated Cllrs Eves and Foster as the two additional members of the group. It was further clarified that new members can be brought in as other councillors or external stakeholders (including those involved with the specific building projects) as needed.

RESOLVED: The Terms and reference and membership were agreed as:

Terms of Reference:

1. To play a role in all new proposals for community buildings brought forward through the Town Council or otherwise through:
 - Discussions with developers and the planning authority for allocation in strategic locations around the town to provide local centres for community.
 - Creating and keeping up to date a database of community facilities to monitor the use and availability at venues
2. To scrutinise, for value for money and feasibility, identified projects
3. To bring projects forward for consideration and completion as agreed.
4. To report via the Strategic Development KAG

Initial membership: The Chair and Vice Chair of Strategic Development KAG, The Town Mayor, The Leader of the Council plus Cllrs Eaves and

Foster. Officer support will include the Chief Executive Officer and Head of Projects. Other members including stakeholders external to the Council will be considered by the Development group and approved by Strategic Development KAG as the parent Committee.

204. DIARY DATES

RESOLVED: to approve the date of 20th May 2025 as the Annual Town Meeting 7pm at Cyprus Hall and to note the remainder of the report.

The Town Mayor ended the meeting at 8.05pm thanking all for attendance

Chairmans Signature

.....