



Midhurst Town Council

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Minutes of a meeting of the Community and Environment Committee of Midhurst Town Council held at Rosemary's Parlour, North Street, Midhurst on 28th January 2019 at 7.30pm

MEMBERS

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| ✓ Ms J Fowler (Chairman) | Mrs M Guest (Vice Chairman) |
| Mr M Purves Chairman of the Council | ✓ Mr G McAra Vice Chairman of the Council |
| Rev. D Coote | Mr M Whittaker |
| ✓ Mrs T Truscott | ✓ Mrs J Sutton |

✓=Present

In attendance: Ms Ongley (Town Clerk) and Mr Quail (Assistant Town Clerk).
One member of the Press was present. Three members of the public attended. Rural Towns Coordinator Steve Hill attended.

80. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Rev Coote, Mr Whittaker, Mrs Guest and Mr Purves was absent without apology.

81. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

82. Representations from the Public

- 82.1** Karin Dunbar and Andy Chiverton spoke on behalf of the Town Team Community Interest Company (TTCIC). They asked if the Council would consider meeting with the TTCIC in the near future to discuss the town's Christmas lights and their extent across the town. Ms Fowler thanked them for their invitation.
- 82.2** Paul Conway spoke on behalf of Scottish and Southern Electric (SSE). He is the Project Engineer on works that had started today in North Street near the Lambert's Lane entrance. He explained that the work was emergency work and cannot be avoided, as the main cable has been faulting, and if left any longer it will fail completely. SSE will dig a trench along the footpath between Tesco to the entrance of June Lane and will lay new cable, 35 metres in total. This represents 4 to 6 weeks' work. At the section between Knockhundred Row and June Lane there will be 2-way traffic controls, which will be staffed at difficult traffic times. Each day he will assess the situation, and react accordingly. They are likely to work over 2 weekends, starting on 8th February, in order to alleviate traffic from schools, workers, etc. SSE will display emergency contact boards for problems, and staff will be on site from 7am until around 5 to 6pm most days including weekends. Mr Conway is involved in discussions with all the traders along that side of North Street to ensure their deliveries can still happen. He has visited all residents and stakeholders in the area to explain the situation. He wanted to speak to Councillors today at the meeting to reassure them that work is necessary and will be disruptive, and that he and his team will do everything they can to alleviate problems.

83. Matters arising from the minutes of 26th November 2018

There were none.

Dated this 18th February 2019.....Chairman



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84. Update of French Market business case

Steve Hill explained that the French Market is available and happy to attend Midhurst as part of the MADhurst events on Saturday 24th August 2019, as long as the Council would support it with road closures and with some funding for security staff, as laid out in his business case presented last year. The MADhurst committee would combine the French Food Market with the Craft Market and music events all in the same area, ensuring that the road closure was worthwhile. He stated that his previous suggestion of adopting the principle of up to 4 road closures per year in the same area, i.e. Church Hill/Red Lion Street/Market Square area, would be most useful and would generate more footfall into the town and enhance the activities offered in Midhurst. Mr Hill also looked forward to the Vision process looking at the potential for shared use and possible pedestrianisation of the area in the future.

Mr McAra expressed his support for this initiative and its potential to increase footfall and to bring both economic and wellbeing benefits to the town. He would like the Council to adopt the principle of up to 4 markets per year.

Mrs Sutton agreed it is a good idea. Midhurst is a market town, and markets of all kinds should be encouraged, which MTC can do by adopting the responsibility for the road closures, staffing, etc.

Mr Quail reassured the Committee that the MTC insurance policy can be amended to include these events at an additional premium, as long as MTC discloses the potential number of markets per year.

Mrs Sutton proposed that MTC adopts the principle of holding up to 4 markets per year in the Church Hill/Red Lion Street/Market Square area, including insurance, road closures and staffing. This was seconded by Mrs Truscott, all were in favour.

85. Update of Telephone Box Information Hub

Ms Ongley reported that she and the Amenity Worker had visited the box to assess the crack in the door and the hinges, as specified by a contractor who had quoted to refurbish the box. She reassured the Committee that the repair of the crack, repainting of the door, and tightening of the leather restraining hinges can be done in-house by the Amenity Worker at a cost of £20 for the paint. He had tested the wood around the crack and the hinges, and had assessed there is no safety issue with either. The fabric of both is likely to last for many years to come. The leather restraining hinges act as a back up to the main metal hinges, which are in good order and are not loose. The Clerk will seek quotes from carpenters or joiners to fit out the interior, to include Perspex leaflet holders and a town map showing businesses and facilities, within a poster holder which will make the map easy to change. Potential contractors will be briefed on site to clarify the specifications. She intends to report progress at the February meeting.

86. Dunford House, Heyshott – the home of Richard Cobden

Ms Fowler reported that this building is currently for sale by its owners the YMCA, and local people had recently launched a campaign, headed by Richard Cobden's four times Great Grandson Nick Cobden Wright, to create a foundation to save the building for its historic importance, to create an education centre, and to prevent it being developed into flats. Representations from local people, including organisations, had been sought and letters were due in today. Ms Fowler circulated wording she proposed for a letter of support from the Committee. Some Councillors had written in support as individuals. All agreed the wording and principle were acceptable and the Assistant Clerk was asked to send the letter tomorrow on MTC letterhead and via email.



87. Remembrance Sunday Parade 2019 onwards

Mr Quail reported that he and Mr Purves had attended a meeting with the local Royal British Legion (RBL) representatives, who had been instructed by their head office that they could no longer take on responsibility for putting on this event, from an insurance and risk point of view. Mr Quail had checked MTC's insurance and it covers this event. Mr Purves and Mr Quail had agreed it would make sense for MTC to take on the responsibility for these parades, with the RBL continuing to arrange the event from an operational viewpoint. Mr Quail will check that the war memorial is insured by the Town Trust. Mr McAra proposed to accept the contents of Mr Quail's report and to take on the responsibility for the annual parade, Ms Fowler seconded, all were in favour.

88. Floral Displays 2019/20

Mr Quail reported that a definitive list for this year had been compiled, with the help of Councillors. Flower prices have stayed the same this year, and FAP had agreed to retain the savings made from owning the baskets this year in order to fund additional baskets in North Street Car Park, outside the Old Library, and outside the bus stand. The rest of the baskets will be the same as last year. CDC have approved the use of 2 lampposts in North Street Car Park, subject to stress testing. The costs for stress testing had increased, but Mr Quail had negotiated a price that keeps within budget. Mrs Truscott proposed that the Committee accept the proposals for this year's arrangements, seconded by Mrs Sutton, all were in favour.

89. Floral Displays 2020 onwards

Ms Fowler asked members whether they would like to see expansion of the floral displays in future years, subject to an addendum to the business case for 2020/21 financial year.

Mrs Truscott suggested extending further up Petersfield Road and Bepton Road.

Mr Quail suggested considering the 8 posts which MTC owns and which are not lampposts, but are flower posts only. The current contractor will not stress test these posts, however another contractor had indicated they would, but at a higher cost.

Mr McAra said he would like those posts to be used, and that there are 12 spare posts stored at the cemetery which could be erected along North Street Car Park verge, parallel to the Causeway. This is CDC land, and MTC would need to get planning and other permissions, but they would enhance the car park greatly. This proposal would involve preparation work including a business case.

Mrs Truscott suggested that MTC include the TTCIC in any discussions about the future flowers, including funding.

Mrs Truscott proposed that the Committee meet with the TTCIC soon to discuss future expansion and funding of displays, and that this year's displays be assessed in the summer for quality and range. This was seconded by Ms Fowler, all were in favour.

90. Basketball hoop and board, Carron Lane recreation ground

A photo of the equipment had been circulated to members showing its current state of dilapidation. A discussion took place regarding its usefulness and safety.

Mrs Truscott noted that nobody had mentioned they use it during the recent user survey.

Mr McAra noted that as it is surrounded by grass people cannot bounce the ball, meaning it can only be used to shoot goals, and not for a full game.

Ms Fowler stated that she does not wish it to become a danger, and that it is currently unsightly and not being used much. If removed it could be reinstated at a later date.



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Mrs Sutton proposed that the hoop and board be dismantled now, seconded by Mrs Truscott, all were in favour.

91. Future Christmas Lights Contract

Mr Quail reported that it had been proposed to extend the current contract for Christmas Lighting, and members needed to decide for how long and what will be done next. MTC owns the current displays, and they are relatively new, in good condition, attractive, and in keeping with the area. The current contractor had indicated that he would extend the current contract at its current price. If MTC chose to go out to tender this year, there would be a cost implication that has not been budgeted for in 2019/20. He suggested that the current contract could be extended for one year, to allow time for a business case for 2020/21.

Mrs Truscott said she would like to hear the views of the TTCIC with regard to future displays.

Mrs Truscott proposed that MTC extend the contract for this year for one year only, and to meet with the TTCIC regarding future displays, seconded by Ms Fowler, all were in favour.

92. Grant Application Deadlines

Mr Quail reported that at the moment the deadlines at the end of June and the end of November leave little time to get the cheques out to organisations in a timely fashion, particularly around Christmas. He suggested that the deadlines for both phases be brought forward by one month to enable quicker payments. He suggested that Phase One applications come in during June and Phase Two in October. This was proposed by Ms Fowler, seconded by Mr McAra, all were in favour.

93. Results of survey and future plans for Recreation Ground Equipment

Mrs Truscott reported that a survey had been distributed to local primary schools and nurseries, and MTC had received 13 replies, which had been distributed to members. One common issue was lack of toilets. A main theme was the desire for climbing equipment. Horizontal climbing walls rather than high vertical ones had been suggested by a contractor. Another common theme was a desire for trampolines. Roundabouts or spinning items were popular, and some are available which are inclusive of disabled users. Most people indicated that the equipment is looking tired. She suggested that equipment suppliers are best placed to advise what is best and where it is best placed, including zoning for different age groups. Some items could be ordered soon as there is money in the budget in this financial year. Larger items such as a Multi-Use Games Area can be considered later, and would require planning permission and may not suit the space, particularly when other areas are available within the town. Also Forest Schools or Play Leaders could be used in the future to enhance learning in the countryside.

Ms Fowler noted that netting climbing frames are popular elsewhere.

Mr McAra noted that the trampolines and the muddy play areas are proving popular at the new Easebourne play area. He also noted that grants could be sought to help fund this type of equipment. He also suggested that Cowdray Estate could be approached if there was a future need to extend the area into the woodland. He felt the SDNPA's education team could help with learning in the countryside.

Mrs Truscott added that she would like to see a future plan drawn up, spreading the replacements and costs over several years. She had spoken with several suppliers, and they all offer a free site visit and advice.



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Ms Fowler stated that its great strength is its woodland countryside location, and it is important not to urbanise it too much.

Ms Fowler proposed that the office approach potential suppliers to visit the site and advise on equipment and layout, seconded by Mrs Truscott, all were in favour.

94. Matters of Report

94.1 Mr McAra showed members an example of a town map which is different from others, showing what the town offers people, e.g. library, museum, day centres, doctors, vets, Post Office, not just businesses. He indicated it would be a good type of map to use in the Phone Box Information Hub.

94.2 Mrs Truscott reported that the South Pond Group has its next working party on Saturday 2nd February, working on the islands and using the boat to reach inaccessible places before the nesting season begins.

94.3 Ms Ongley reported that at the next C&E Committee meeting, one of the Midhurst Dog Wardens will attend to speak with members. She is coordinating members' questions in advance. So far she will be asking about number of problems, whether they are owner-related, increase or decrease of issues, and experiences of dangerous dogs or strays in Midhurst. Further questions for the warden to be submitted to the Clerk.

95. Signing of Cheques

No signatories were present so no cheques were signed.

96. Proposal to enter into closed session to discuss contractual matters

This was proposed by Ms Fowler, seconded by Mrs Sutton, all were in favour.

The press and public left the meeting at this point. Mr McAra also left at 8.40pm.

96.1 Mr Quail had been approached by a voluntary organisation based in a neighbouring parish outside of Midhurst but which serves the young people of Midhurst. They had asked him whether there was any possibility of applying for grant funding despite not being based in the parish. A discussion took place where it was noted that the amended criteria for grants require evidence of how the grant will benefit Midhurst residents. As Midhurst youngsters attend this organisation, members could see no reason why this organisation should not apply for a grant.

Ms Fowler proposed that MTC advise them that they can apply for a grant, with evidence of residents' benefits and of similar funding from their own parish, seconded by Mrs Sutton, all were in favour.

96.2 Ms Fowler had attended a site meeting at the Stag Garden with the Secretary of the Midhurst Society and a sculptor proposing the donation of an original statue. The sculptor agreed that the proposed statue would be best placed in the area that MTC manages, but that a plan of services underground would be needed to ascertain whether it can feasibly be placed there and works be carried out successfully. Some of the conditions required by the sculptor include removal of a road sign, and shrouding of an electrical box. Lighting is also a requirement, but can be added later, and would be downlighting.

Mrs Sutton noted that the existing business case for improvements of the area would need a plan of underground services anyway, and also that an addendum to the existing business case would be needed should this proposal be accepted in the future.



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Ms Fowler proposed that MTC proceed with investigations into underground services and above ground fixtures and fittings in order to ascertain feasibility of this proposal, Mrs Truscott seconded, all were in favour.

With no further business the meeting closed at 8.59pm.

Dated this 18th February 2019.....Chairman