



Midhurst Town Council

**A Meeting of The Midhurst Town Council took place
on Monday 18th October 2021 at 7:00pm at the Midhurst Town Council Office, Old
Library, Knockhundred Row, Midhurst GU29 9DQ**

MINUTES

Present: Cllr C. Lintott (Chairman), Cllr J. Sutton, Cllr D. Coote, Cllr G. McAra, Cllr M. Richardson, Cllr J. Travers, Cllr M. Purves, Cllr G. Upjohn, Cllr A. Procter, Cllr L. Jeffries, Cllr N. Yeo and Cllr D. Fraser

Officer: Sharon Hurr, Town Clerk and RFO

Also Present: Julian Quail, Assistant Town Clerk, Mrs Barbara Coote and Ms Anne Rehill from The South Pond Group

C/130/21 - Apologies for Absence – Cllr Purves

C/131/21 – Declarations of Interest

Cllr Yeo and Cllr Sutton declared an interest in agenda item 12 “Grants 2021” and their affiliation to the Midhurst Community Hub.

C/132/21 - Public Participation Session:

Mrs McCullough provided a report prior to the meeting, which was read out by Cllr Lintott:

It has taken some weeks to get access to the mapping data that Deacon require to do their work. Hopefully this has now been sourced through CDC so that it doesn't have to be purchased at additional cost.

The first stage of the work which is the preliminary site analysis findings feedback – constraints and opportunities, will hopefully be completed by the end of next month. Following this Deacon will produce an overview plan showing broad opportunities across the study area (town centre wayfinding route plus Sainsburys area) using plan diagrams and character/precedent images (examples). We hope this second phase will be completed by the end of the year.

The more specific proposals/concepts should be available for consultation in early spring.

Following the walk around town with the local authority representatives, Chris Dye, West Sussex Highways has suggested that Deacon incorporate some potential highway improvements in their initial concept designs to be used for consultation, prioritisation and potentially for future Highway's funding. This of course will be done in consultation with MTC, other local authorities and representatives of the other Vision stakeholders.

This first phase of the design concept work is being jointly funded by CDC (£10K), MTC (£2K) and Cowdray Estate (£2K). We are very grateful to MTC for helping to fund this.

Meeting reconvened.



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C/133/21 - Minutes of the Previous Meeting

These were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting held on 20th September 2021. Proposed Cllr Coote, seconded Cllr Sutton, all agreed except Cllr Watts, Cllr Yeo, Cllr Procter and Cllr Smallman who abstained as they were not present.

C/134/21 - Matters Arising from those Minutes

None.

Cllr Fraser joined the meeting at 19:05.

C/135/21 - Report from County and District Councillors

West Sussex County Councillor Kate O'Kelly - Report previously circulated before the meeting. It was noted that the number of Covid 19 cases is trending upwards for the Chichester area. Cllr Coote expressed strong concern at the proposed savings regarding adult social care. This was a complex situation with increased need for support for this vital function. WSCC are proposing more savings for next year from the Adult Services budget. In advance they are doing a consultation on all aspects of Adult Social care. The survey closes on 8 November.

www.westsussex.gov.uk/yourlife

Action: Cllr Lintott to arrange for a post on the MTC website with a link to the survey.

District Councillor Gordon McAra - Report previously circulated and attached. Cllr McAra noted that the roads and pavements in Midhurst would benefit from a deep clean and would arrange this with CDC.

Action: Cllr McAra to arrange for a deep clean of roads and pavements in the centre of Midhurst.

C/136/21 – Finance, Asset and Policy Committee

Minutes of 26th July 2021 were adopted by Council. Proposed by Cllr Procter, seconded by Cllr McAra, unanimously approved.

C/137/21 - Planning and Infrastructure Committee

Minutes of 13th September 2021 were adopted by Council. Proposed Cllr McAra, seconded Cllr Fraser, unanimously approved.

Minutes of 27th September 2021 were adopted by Council. Proposed Cllr Watts, seconded Cllr Upjohn, unanimously approved.

C/138/21 – Community and Environment Committee

Minutes of 13th September 2021 were adopted by Council. Proposed Cllr Procter, seconded Cllr Sutton, unanimously approved.



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C/139/21 – South Pond

The Chairman suspended Standing Orders to allow representatives of the South Pond Group to address Council.

Mrs Barbara Coote kindly provided a summary of the situation at South Pond prior to the meeting. Mrs Coote explained that the UK is one of the world's most nature depleted countries being in the bottom 10% globally and the last in the G7 nations. Half a million of our ponds have been lost over the last 100 years and one in five remaining ponds are thought to be in poor condition.

South Pond Group is a voluntary group consisting of a core group of twelve and several other regular volunteers one Saturday morning a month. They have no income and are completely reliant on the land owners who have their own constraints. Despite their efforts it is often difficult to get things done. They are in great need of a comprehensive social media platform but do not have volunteers with these skills to enable this requirement. The volunteers come out in all weathers and work with enthusiasm to try and make South Pond a really biodiverse pleasant amenity for the town and generations to come.

A meeting was arranged by Cllr McAra with representatives from CDC - Penny Plant and Andy Howard - Judy Fowler, Anne Rehill and Mrs Coote from SPG. CDC have responsibility for the management of South Pond. A summary of what was discussed at that meeting is available from the Assistant Town Clerk.

Standing Orders Reinstated

C/140/21 - 2021 Grants

Cllr Coote explained that many charities are now seeking support. It is clear that local charities, such as Midhurst Meds and Midhurst Community Hub, are replacing a loss of support from both central and local government. This is a worrying trend and MTC are being asked to pick up the tab for these activities. The possibility of increasing the grant budget does not resolve the current and future predicament. The committee still awaits a paper articulating the proposal to amalgamate all grants.

The 2021 grant recommendation was proposed and agreed. Proposed Cllr Procter, seconded Cllr Smallman, unanimously approved.

C/141/21 - Boiler

The Town Clerk explained that she had attended a meeting the previous week with representatives from SSE and RJM Electrical Ltd to discuss the project and ensure that all parties were clear about the requirement. It was noted that floor boards will need to be removed at some point in December, but not before the Christmas Street Party on 3rd December. This will mean that potential hirers will have to have their booking cancelled when various works will be taking place. No new bookings are being made for this period. In addition, electricity will be unavailable for up to one week, meaning that members of staff will have to work from home.



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It is hoped that the new electric boiler will be installed before Christmas. Concern was raised at the potential cold within the building for both staff and people who hire the hall. Hirers have been informed of the situation and given the choice of cancelling or continuing with the booking. Staff are heating the building with portable heaters prior to hirers arriving.

C/142/21 - Grange Rota

The October and November Grange events were being covered by Cllr Lintott and Cllr Sutton, while December is being covered by Cllr Sutton and Cllr Smallman. January is being covered by Cllr Procter and Cllr Travers.

Action: Cllrs to advise the Assistant Clerk which dates they can cover on the Grange Rota.

C/143/21 - Actions

The actions were provided to the committee before the meeting. There was one outstanding action regarding the requirement for all council members to provide Cllr McAra with their thoughts on options for seeking grants regarding shopping locally.

C/144/21 - Reports from Outside Meetings

Cllr Upjohn attended several Ognells Trustees meetings which were called to address some ongoing issues. Beyond those was an inspection of the refurbishment of the late "wardens" flat which had to be de-nicotinised and is now in good condition. After the installation of a new boiler last year, the update of the old fuse boards which are out of date continues. A Christmas social has been arranged for residents. Cllr Upjohn wished it to be recorded that the Ognells Trustees are doing a very responsible job in running what is a considerable business (the building itself has been valued at between £800,000 and £1.2 million).

C/145/21 - Matters of Report

Cllr Sutton asked if a further bin could be placed at South Pond.

Cllr McAra informed the meeting that he had received a lot of positive feedback to the new post signs.

Cllr Richardson noted that someone had moved the CorTen steel planters outside Tesco's.

C/146/21 - Date of Next Meeting – The next meeting will be Monday 15th November 2021 at 7pm.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8pm.

Signed:.....

Dated.....

Chairman