



Midhurst Town Council

**A Meeting of The Midhurst Town Council took place
on Monday 17th January 2022 at 7:00pm at the Midhurst Town Council Office, Old
Library, Knockhundred Row, Midhurst GU29 9DQ**

MINUTES

Present: Cllr C. Lintott (Chairman), Cllr M. Purves, Cllr J. Travers, Cllr D. Coote, Cllr G. McAra, Cllr M. Richardson, Cllr R. Watts, Cllr D. Smallman, Cllr N. Yeo and Cllr D. Fraser

Officer: Julian Quail, Assistant Town Clerk

Also: Sharon Hurr, Town Clerk and RFO

C/001/22 – Chairman’s Announcements

The Chairman welcomed all those present to the meeting. She announced that Cllr Purves had sadly resigned. Cllr Purves joined the Council in June 2011 taking over the title of youngest Midhurst Town Councillor. Injecting youth, energy and vibrance to the Council he brought many new ideas about engagement with our residents and how the town and the council could improve. Serving on the Town Trust and the Youth Trust, Cllr Purves took over as Chairman of the Council in 2016 until 2020, remaining as Chairman of the Community & Environment Committee to this day. The Chairman thanked him for his service and said he will be very sorely missed.

C/002/22 - Apologies for Absence - Cllr J. Sutton, Cllr Upjohn, Cllr Procter and Cllr Jefferies

C/003/22 – Declarations of Interest

None.

Meeting halted for Public Participation Session

C/004/22 - Public Participation Session:

Phillipa McCullough from the Midhurst Vision Group was not available and had asked Cllr Lintott to read out her report.

Meeting reconvened.

C/005/22 – Policing in Midhurst

Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) Ford kindly attended this meeting to report on police activity in Midhurst. He informed the meeting that Operation Interceptor was developing intelligence regarding drug dealing in Midhurst. Local information is critical in helping the police crackdown on dealing. He encouraged people to phone 101 and provide any evidence they have on drug dealing. He was also pleased to announce that Operation Mini was looking into stolen and vandalised cars in the area. The police are erecting signage and promotional material to help people become aware of this problem. Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) had reduced following the opening of the skatepark and visits to local homes. There was some limited drunken behaviour.



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Police staffing levels were good during Covid, with strict isolation only being employed where necessary. Close and regular interaction was in place with Rother College, where the police regularly offer words of advice.

PCSO Ford's new e-mail is nathan.ford@sussex.police.uk

Cllr Yeo explained that he is hoping to recruit sufficient members of the public to start the speedwatch initiative again later in the year.

Cllr McAra requested that PCSO Ford attend meetings once a quarter at Full Council.

C/006/22 - Minutes of the Previous Meeting

These were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting held on 20th December 2021. Proposed Cllr Coote, seconded Cllr Yeo, all agreed.

C/007/22 - Matters Arising from those Minutes

None.

C/0078/22 - Report from County and District Councillors

West Sussex County Councillor Kate O'Kelly - Report previously circulated. Cllr Coote was pleased to note that West Sussex County Council Highways had, at the request of Cllr O'Kelly, agreed to increase the number of dropped kerbs in Midhurst, following the report prepared by two local residents.

District Councillor Gordon McAra - Report previously circulated.

C/009/22 – Finance, Asset and Policy Committee

Minutes of 22nd November 2021 were adopted by Council. Proposed by Cllr Fraser, seconded by Cllr Lintott, unanimously approved.

C/010/22 - Planning and Infrastructure Committee

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

C/011/22 – Community and Environment Committee

Minutes of 13th December 2021 were adopted by Council. Proposed Cllr Yeo, seconded Cllr Watts, unanimously approved.

C/012/22 – Draft Budget

The draft budget was circulated prior to the meeting and was adopted by Council. Proposed Cllr Purves, seconded Cllr Yeo, unanimously approved with the exception of Cllr McAra who abstained.

C/013/22 – St Ann's Hill Project

A business case has been raised by Cllr McAra regarding the St Ann's Hill Project Working Group, which will comprise of Cllr Watts (Chairman), Cllr Sutton, Cllr Procter and Cllr McAra.



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This Working group will report into the Finance, Asset & Policy Committee each month during the implementation and embedding stages of this project handing over as it moves into the business-as-usual maintenance of an MTC asset.

As part of the application for a New Homes Bonus Grant, Hooli provided a quotation for the design of a brand identity, interpretation boards and other marketing items for St Ann's Hill. Receipt of this grant for the purpose of marketing was acknowledged by Councillors.

The Terms of Reference and delegated powers for the St Ann's working group was tabled (including spend up to £1,500 per item) and approved. Proposed Cllr Coote, seconded Cllr Smallman, all agreed. After a query from Cllr Richardson, Cllr McAra confirmed that not including reference to English Heritage was correct as this is not required. The ToRs and delegated powers are attached at Annex A.

C/014/22 – Total Energies

The Assistant Clerk provided a resumé of the last ten months regarding the on-going dispute with Total Energies. Given that MTC have received no correspondence from the company, it has been decided to begin the complaints procedure, which starts with Total's Complaints Department. A response will be received in ten working days. If we are not satisfied with their response to our complaint, we can contact Sarah Devenish, Service Delivery Manager at Total Energies Gas & Power. Following this we can seek, if necessary, independent advice from the Citizens Advice (CA). If we still remain unsatisfied with the response, we have the right to contact the Energy Ombudsman in Warrington.

C/015/22 – Fire & Rescue Services Public Consultation

MTC have been invited by the Chief Fire Officer of West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSSFRS), Sabrina Cohen-Hatton, to take part in their service's public consultation, around their proposals for their Community Risk Management Plan 2022 – 2026. The document sets out the direction of the service over the next four years, and as part of this we have six proposals that we are seeking feedback on. The proposals include:

- Enhancing retained (on-call) operating model
- Weekend protection, prevention and response improvements
- Improving protection, prevention and response performance in rural areas
- How WSRFS should deal with false alarms from automatic fire systems
- When they should review our Emergency Response Standards
- How WSRFS proposes to undertake a review of specialist appliance requirements to consider current and future risks to firefighter and public safety

It was agreed that individual Councillors should reply separately. It was also agreed that MTC will send a formal response. It was noted that the use of retained firefighters is challenging during the week.

Action: Cllr Yeo to draft the MTC letter to WSRFS.



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C/017/22 - Actions

The actions were provided to the committee before the meeting. All actions are now closed.

C/018/22 - Reports from Outside Meetings

None

C/019/22 - Matters of Report

None

C/020/22 - The Chairman made a proposal to move into closed session to discuss staff matters, seconded by Cllr Purves, unanimously approved.

C/021/22 - Date of Next Meeting – The next meeting will be Monday 21st February 2022 at 7pm.

Signed:.....

Dated.....

Chairman



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Annex A

St Ann's Hill Project Working Group

Terms of Reference and Delegated Powers

1.1 Project Working Group

- 1.2 The Project Working Group currently consists of four Councillors and the Clerk: Cllr Watts (Chairman), Cllr McAra, Cllr Proctor, and Cllr Sutton.
- 1.3 The Project Working Group will meet monthly, at various convenient locations.
- 1.4 Minutes of each Project Working Group meeting will be kept and submitted to the Finance, Asset and Policy Committee.
- 1.5 The Project Working Group will continue for a period of two years, and a review by full Council regarding whether it will continue for a further year or conclude will take place in January 2024.

2.1 Finances

- 2.2 There is a total of £30,000 in the Town Council budget (£10,000 for 2021-22, £15,000 for 2022-23, and £5,000 for 2023-24)
- 2.3 To date, the Town Council has been funded £1,328 by Chichester District Council New Homes Bonus funds for 'marketing/promotional' costs. There is also an allocated £10,000 CIL money that can be drawn on if required.
- 2.4 The Project Working Group will be permitted to spend up to £1,500 per item, to expedite matters without the requirement for ratification by Finance, Asset and Policy Committee or full Council.
- 2.5 Appropriate records of all expenditure will be kept and made available to Finance, Asset and Policy Committee or full Council as requested.

3.1 Scope of Work

- 3.2 Legal – to formally take responsibility for the acquisition of the St Ann's site (with support from MacDonald Oates Solicitors)
- 3.3 Infrastructure – to maintain and improve the site (with support from Midhurst Green Volunteers and others)
- 3.4 Media – to promote the site by way of a logo, interpretation, signage and a website (with support from Hooli)



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3.5 Fund Raise – to acquire further grant support for the project

4.1 Maintenance

4.1 An informal agreement with Midhurst Green Volunteers has been established improving site appearance and safety

To note: the grass is currently cut by the MTC Groundsman

5.1 Aspirations of the Project Working Group

5.2 To return the site to reflect the sites status as a designated Ancient Monument

5.3 Improve the site infrastructure

5.4 To provide the opportunity for occasional commercial hire of the site

5.5 To promote the site as an important part of the town's attractions for residents and visitors.

5.6 To promote the site to local schools as an educational facility as well as the natural/woodland environment.

6.1 Other Information

6.1 To work with the Chichester District Council Archaeologist may consider aa future archaeological excavation at the site.