**A meeting of Midhurst Town Council took place on**

**Monday 20th February 2023 at 7:00pm at the Midhurst Town Council Offices,**

**Old Library, Knockhundred Row, Midhurst, GU29 9DQ**

**MINUTES**

**Present**: Cllr C. Lintott, Cllr D. Coote, Cllr J. Travers, Cllr D. Merritt, Cllr J. Hensey, Cllr R. Watts, Cllr G. McAra, Cllr D. Fraser, Cllr D. Smallman, Cllr J. Sutton, Cllr G. Upjohn and Cllr N Yeo.

**In attendance**: County Councillor Kate O’Kelly, and Sharon Hurr, Town Clerk and four members of the public; Philippa McCullough and Geoff Allnutt from the Midhurst Vision Group and two members of The Midhurst Society.

**C/218/23 – Chairman’s Announcement:** The Chairman welcomed members of the public to the meeting.

**C/219/23 – Apologies for Absence:** Cllr L Jeffries

**C/220/23 - Declarations of Interest:** Cllr Sutton and Cllr Merritt regarding their connection with the Midhurst Hub (item C/229/23).

Meeting halted for Public Participation Session

**C/221/23 - Public Participation Session.**

The Midhurst Society are currently seeking a location for an archive of their documents and for research to be undertaken, including by members of the public and school children, therefore they expressed an interest in Lilac Cottage. Going forward the Society will concentrate on history and heritage.

Philippa McCullough had provided an update regarding the Midhurst Vision Community Interest Company (CIC) earlier in the day and explained that feedback to the consultation had been favourable although concerned was raised in relation to reduction in on-street parking. Ms McCullough cited four priorities going forward, which were improvement to car park signs (to encourage greater use of The Grange Car Park), improvements to North Street, the Police Station and Rumbolds Hill. Funding for these plans may be forthcoming from Chichester District Council over the next two financial years, if 20% match funding could be secured.

Meeting reconvened.

**C/222/23 - Minutes of the Previous Meeting:** The minutes of the meeting held on 16th January 2023 were proposed by Cllr Coote, seconded by Cllr Merritt, agreed by all present and adopted.

**C/223/23 - Matters Arising from those Minutes.** None.

**C/224/23 - Report from County and District Councillors:**

* **West Sussex County Councillor Kate O’Kelly** – *Taken after item C/231/23*: Report circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Merritt, sough clarification regarding issues of dampness and mould in rented accommodation and Cllr O’Kelly confirmed that once reported, Chichester District Council would act quickly to resolve matters.
* **District Councillor Gordon McAra** – Report circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr McAra also reported that the Midhurst Museum café had closed due to the costs of operation. Cllr McAra also reported that he was aware that there had been some issues at the Italian Restaurant Fratelli in West Street and the Home Office were processing these matters. Cllr McAra also confirmed he would not be standing for election in May 2023 for Chichester District Council – Cllr Lintott thanked him for the 12 years he had served Midhurst as District Councillor.

**C/225/23 – Finance, Asset and Policy Committee:** The minutes and questions relating to the Minutes and adoption of the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd January 2023 were adopted by Council as proposed by Cllr Hensey, seconded by Cllr Smallman and agreed by all present.

**C/226/23 - Planning and Infrastructure Committee:** Minutes of 9th January 2023 were adopted by Council as proposed by Cllr Fraser, seconded by Cllr Watts and agreed by all present.

**C/227/23 - Planning and Infrastructure Committee:** Minutes of 23rd January 2023 were adopted as proposed by Cllr Hensey, seconded by Cllr Fraser and agreed by all present.

**C/228/23 -–** **Community and Environment Committee:** Minutes of 9th January 2023 were adopted by Council as proposed by Cllr Watts, seconded by Cllr Smallman and agreed by all present.

**C/229/23 – Midhurst Vision CIC – Grant request:** The Chairman explained that there was currently a remaining £3,000 within this year’s budget for the Vision and following a debate, it was proposed that the funds should be awarded to the project by Cllr McAra with the proviso that any future contribution from MTC to the MVCIC would only be granted for contribution towards physical implementation, this was seconded by Cllr Watts and agreed by all present with one abstention.

**Action:** The Clerk to organise payment of the grant to the Midhurst Vision CIC.

**C/230/23 – Lilac Cottage; To discuss and indicate the preferred use of Lilac Cottage from the Options Paper:** The Chairman introduced the report circulated prior to the meeting. A debate took place regarding how the building could be utilised for the Midhurst Community Hub and potentially other organisations.

Cllr O’Kelly arrived.

Further discussion took place in relation to potential grants to bring the building to appropriate standard for use. The Chairman also explained the plans for the Curfew Garden (in the ownership of the Town Trust) and how a walkway could be provided from Cowdray land southwards of the town, into the Curfew Garden and on into the Old Town. Further debate highlighted the importance of access for people with disabilities and that currently potential costs for renovation was being drawn from the building survey as opposed to actual quotations. The Chairman highlighted that the Town Council MTC need to consider how best to use the building before space is offered to the Community Hub and any other organisations and made a request for Councillors to volunteer for the ‘working group’, and Cllrs Watts, Merritt, Hensey, Smallman and Fraser offered to form this group as administered by the Clerk.

**Action:** The Clerk to convene a meeting of the Lilac Working Group.

 **C/231/23 –** **Review of outstanding actions:** None

 **C/232/23** - **Reports from Outside Meetings:** Cllr Merritt confirmed that the committee for the Scout Hut expressed thanks that the path to the door had been repaired. Cllr McAra reported that Midhurst Area Cycle group were working on Jubilee Path and 20mph speed limits.

 **C/233/23 - Matters of Report:** Cllr Smallman commented that she had been given positive feedback regarding the Northern Gateway Signage. Cllr Coote reminded Councillors that planting of whips would take place on 4th March 2023 by the Midhurst Green Volunteers and invited Councillors to assist with this task.

 ***Standing Orders suspended and Closed Session opened***

 **C234/23 – Staff Matters**

 ***Standing Orders Reinstated and Closed Session ended***

 **C/235/23 Date of Next Meeting –** Monday 20th March 2023 at 7pm.

The meeting ended at 8.17pm.

Signed………………………………………………………… Dated……………………………………….

Chairman