

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

14 September 2020

Clair Hall Decision a Major Blow to Haywards Heath and surrounding Community

Mid Sussex District Council Cabinet decision to permanently close Clair Hall will remove half the community meeting space in Haywards Heath. Alternatives to closure not seriously considered by Cabinet.

Mid Sussex District Council's Cabinet met today and unanimously voted¹ to permanently close Clair Hall, the principal community centre in Haywards Heath.

The decision was made as an executive decision by the Conservative Cabinet alone. The Cabinet have decided not to put the matter to the full council.

This means that the final decision on the future of the Hall was made with absolutely no public consultation by the Council and without even allowing the views of the rest of the council to be heard.

Cabinet members conceded during their meeting that there are no plans for the replacement of Clair Hall nor is there any certainty about how, when and where such a replacement could be provided.

Councillor Robert Eggleston, Liberal Democrat Deputy Group Leader on MSDC said "The Cabinet at MSDC have shown a total disregard for the people of Haywards Heath. At the District Council elections only last year, permanently closing Clair Hall was never mentioned by the Conservatives, yet Conservative councillors feel that they have the right to steamroller the closure of Haywards Heath's largest community facility through without public consultation."

Local organisations which regularly use the Hall are up in arms about this serious blow to cultural life in the community. Social media has reflected the widespread dismay felt in the town and two petitions have been launched - including the Liberal Democrats' [here](#) - so that residents could make their views felt.

Liberal Democrat and Lindfield resident Anne-Marie Cooke said, "We believe that there are ways to keep Clair Hall in operation, at little or no cost to the Council, until an alternative community centre can be put in place. However, the Conservative leadership of the Council would not listen."

Liberal Democrats will continue to use all means at their disposal to fight for Clair Hall to be kept open until there is a full legal commitment to a modern, state of the art replacement.

Liberal Democrats are still urging residents to make their feelings about the closure of Clair Hall clear by either signing the petition at <https://midsussexlibdems.org.uk/en/petition/petition-to-save-clair-hall> or lobbying their councillor directly.

ENDS

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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NOTES TO EDITOR:

1. The Cabinet at MSDC comprises seven Conservative Councillors, two of whom represent wards in Haywards Heath Cllr Ruth de Mierre Haywards Heath Lucastes Cllr Stephen Hillier, Haywards Heath Bentswood