



ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

**Tuesday 12th April 2011
in
The Weald Hall, Uckfield Civic Centre
at
7.30 pm**

AGENDA

Prior to the start of the meeting you are invited to have coffee with the Councillors

- 1. Welcome and introduction by the Mayor.**
- 2. Apologies for absence.**
- 3. Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of the 26th April 2010.**
- 4. Matters arising.**
- 5. Topics and questions by members of the public previously notified.**
- 6. Consideration of the Town Council's Annual Report.**
- 7. Questions from the Floor.**

**Cllr. John Carvey
Town Mayor**

25th March 2011

The Mayors Report Cllr John Carvey



This year has again been a busy and challenging year for the Town Council.

We, like everyone, have kept an eye on the economic situation and have had to look at our future spending to ensure that we keep spending within our budgets. Together with the District and County Councils we have kept the council tax at the same level as last year. The Town Councils finances are healthy and we still hope to be able to carry out our future planned projects.

The winter again hit us with severe weather this year. There was an improvement in dealing with the conditions but there are still more lessons to be learnt. Heavy snow does in fact present problems that are very difficult to deal with without spending vast sums of money. East Sussex County Council are aware of the many potholes for which they have received further funding. We have been assured that they are dealing with this problem as quickly as they can. I am pleased to report that the County have started on the surface water flooding problem and are still gathering information and further meetings are planned.

Road Safety Day last June was bigger and better than ever. We had a record number of schools and children taking part and the weather was exceptional too! (if not a trifle warm). Part of Road Safety Day included a poster competition, the standard was exceptionally high. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the emergency services for their very valuable input on the day. My gratitude also stretches to all the other helpers and the many other organisations without whose help and contributions Road Safety Day would not happen. Many thanks to Cllr Molesworth-Edwards for organising this event.

Still on road safety we sponsored a Safer Wealden Partnership on Road Safety bringing together representatives from Police, Fire, Ambulance and Parish and Town Councils' road safety organisations.

I am pleased to report that work has commenced on a Garden of Remembrance at Snatts Road cemetery. The cemetery working party has looked at various options and have come to a decision, plans have been submitted and agreed by the Environment and Leisure Committee. This will be a vast improvement to the existing cemetery and we hope that it will become a place of peace and serenity where people can go to reflect and find comfort amongst these surroundings.

Uckfield Civic Centre

The Civic Centre and Weald Hall are conveniently situated in the centre of Uckfield. A suite of six various size rooms are available for hire seven days a week and are suitable for all types of functions and events. The Weald Hall is an extremely well equipped venue with excellent stage, sound, and lighting facilities suitable for any production be they amateur or professional. For our customers there is also FREE Wi-Fi access through out the building. For bookings and enquiries for all rooms please call the bookings line on 01825 747790



General Purposes Committee

Cllr. Dorothy Sparks

Chairman



The General Purposes Committee has a wide range of responsibilities which includes Governance, Finance, Personnel, Buildings and the Luxford Restaurant. It deals with all the items which allow the council to be run legally, on a sound financial basis, administered well and to maintain its building assets in good order.

The Five Year Plan has enabled us to identify the future needs and aspirations of the council and to shape policy. Generally, committees have identified services and projects which could in the short to medium term reduce expenditure or increase income, those services that are essential to residents and also projects that are required to maintain the council's significant assets. Our budget for 2011/12 has increased by only 0.04% which equates to six pence per annum for a household with a Band D council tax.

Over the past few years, we have been placed in the same band as District Councils and Principal Authorities for auditing. The government is now making changes to the threshold. We should be placed in a lower band, where the regimen is less stringent, hopefully resulting in lower auditing costs.

We have continued to review our existing policies and upgrading them where there is a change in government legislation or best practice. Our Business Continuity Plan is well on the way to being in place, to ensure we are in a position to continue functioning if a catastrophe occurs to one of our buildings, in particular the Civic Centre. We are proud that our Quality Council Status application for reaccreditation has been approved. Not an automatic process, which meant considerable input from the Town Council staff to put the case forward.

We have been working towards 'Greening' our buildings, to enable future energy costs to be reduced. We have an excellent business case for energy saving enhancements, including a wind turbine, for the Victoria Pavillion, which will also upgrade facilities. We do have monies in the reserves to pay for the enhancements but have applied for a grant which could reduce costs by half. Similarly the energy costs of the Civic Centre will be reduced by installing a solar Photo Voltaic array on the roof, together with renewal of the central heating boiler and other energy saving initiatives.

The Citizens Advice Bureau have taken a lease on the southern half of the Hub building, next to the Civic Centre and will work in partnership with the Town Council in providing additional services for our residents. The northern half will continue to be earmarked for youth usage. We have given £34,853 in Grants to a variety of local groups to support and encourage community activities.

The council's newsletter, the Voice, has been placed in Uckfield Matters, a monthly magazine delivered to Uckfield residents. We have been able, therefore, to have six editions, per annum rather than four, but also reduce the costs considerably. The Town Guide will also be produced this year and will be available at the Civic Centre from June 2011.

I would like to thank the officers and staff of all departments for their hard work over the past year, enabling the council to proceed with its many projects.

Environment and Leisure Committee

Cllr. Alan Wittaker
Chairman



The work and responsibilities of Uckfield Council's environment and leisure committee (E&L) range widely and often take more than one council term to complete. One of the best examples of this is the ongoing work at Victoria Pleasure Ground.

As long ago as the end of 2007 the initial work, a scoping report, began on making the grounds fit for purpose in the twenty-first century. That was the beginning; the end is not yet in sight. This is partly because the money had to be found and budgeted for, and the committee also needed the views of the two main users of the sports facilities, the football and cricket clubs. Both of these share the pavilion, which needs upgrading, and both are ambitious and have their eyes set on playing at more senior levels.

The wind sweeps across the Victoria grounds and trees will be planted to form a windbreak and, incidentally, replace those lost to the Great Storm of the 1980s. The almost constant wind makes Victoria an obvious location for a wind turbine. Before any windbreak could be planted the best site for a wind turbine had to be chosen by professionals in the sustainable energy business. This has now been done and the E&L committee expects work on erecting the turbine to begin in a matter of weeks.

Once up and running, the turbine will power the pavilion and, it is hoped, eventually earn some money for the council. It will certainly cut electricity bills.

Another green feature, and one that will also save money for the council and therefore for taxpayers, will be the rainwater "harvester", an underground water tank collecting rainwater. The harvester will be installed under a new barn, a large garage cum storage facility which is needed by the council's ground staff

More trees and wildflowers will eventually be planted at Victoria and the harvested rainwater will be used to water these as well as the plants in the council's containers and flower beds, such as those in Elizabeth Gardens.

Sustainability increasingly features in much of the work of the E&L committee. The installation of solar panels in council buildings, particularly on the wide flat roof of the Civic Centre, is being investigated, as is the energy use of Luxfords restaurant.

In order to scrutinise aspects of the work of the E&L committee a number of working groups are busy at any one time. One of these groups is currently looking at sporting requirements throughout the town, and another has just finished putting the cemetery and its future role under the microscope. Work has already started on tree coppicing, which will allow more light into the copse bordering Snatts Road and so encourage wild flowers to bloom, a woodland walk where ashes can be interred will soon follow, and a pavilion where commemorative plaques can be placed will be finished later this year.

Also to be completed this year is a healthy mile, a marked out mile and metric mile that can be used by walkers convalescing and building up stamina. It can also be used, of course, by the healthy who want to know exactly how far they have jogged.

All this is just a snapshot of the work of the environment and leisure committee which does more, much more.

Plans Committee

Cllr. Thelma Rumbelow
Chairman



With the forthcoming reshaping of planning regulations, it is hoped that householders will have more flexibility over what they can do on their own property and local residents' groups will be able to put forward ideas for improving neighbourhood facilities.

Current regulations sometimes lead to disputes between local and district councils regarding, for example, infilling in estates, which creates numerous problems, including car parking – the provision of public transport being insufficient for local needs.

There has been a great deal of house building around Uckfield, which has increased pressure on local services and it is hoped that increased co-operation between councils and local communities will ensure a sufficiently robust infrastructure which will make life easier for us all.

Grants awarded by Uckfield Town Council 2011

Wealden Citizens Advice	£18,000
Uckfield Bonfire and Carnival Society	£3,500
Uckfield Housebound Club	£500
Uckfield and District Twinning Association	£1,000
Uckfield PHAB Club	£1,618
East Sussex Association for the blind (Uckfield)	£300
Mediation (Incorporating Time 2 Talk)	£825
St Peter and St James Hospice	£1000
Uckfield Festival Association	£4,000
Uckfield Theatre Guild	£800
UCTC Young People's Counselling Service	£2,000
Millington Court Friendship Group	£200
Uckfield Community Orchestra	£510
Uckfield Holy Cross Choral Society	£750

BUDGET COMPARISONS AND PRIORITIES FOR THE COMING YEAR

	2010-2011 £	2011-2012 £	Variation £
Estimated Spending	1167983	1,126,715	-41,268
Estimated Income	-425205	-389,680	-35,525
Estimated Spending (net of income)	742,778	737,035	-5,743
Contribution to/A1(from) Reserves	-12,700		
Budget Requirement (Precept)	730,078	737,035	6,957

INCOME and EXPENDITURE SUMMARY 2010-2011 by COMMITTEE

Committee	Budget Set £	Projected Out Turn £	Saving/ Over- spend £
Environment and Leisure			
Expenditure	238,075	206,780	(31,295)
Capital, Growth, New Initiatives, etc	77,730	77,700	(30)
Income	(53,884)	(47,566)	6,318
Total	261,921	236,914	(25,007)
General Purposes			
Expenditure	608,033	565,224	(42,809)
Capital, Growth, New Initiatives	12,000	17,210	5,210
Income	(136,001)	(136,937)	(936)
Total	484,032	445,497	(38,535)
Luxfords Restaurant			
Expenditure	229,445	202,530	(26915)
Capital, Growth, New Initiatives	2,700	2,08195	(505)
Income	(235,320)	(205,115)	30,165
Total	(3,175)	(430)	2,745

* Figures in brackets indicate savings and income made.

ALLOWANCES PAID TO COUNCILLORS

	Allowances £	Expenses £	Notes
Cllr. John Carvey*	2115.00	0.00	
Cllr. Duncan Bennett	835.00	0.00	* Denotes Town Mayor.
Cllr. Louise Eastwood	835.00	0.00	(An additional allowance is payable to the Mayor in connection with the duties of the position.)
Cllr. Thelma Rumbelow	0.00	0.00	
Cllr. Dorothy Sparks	835.00	0.00	
Cllr. Alan Whittaker	835.00	0.00	
Cllr. Bob Sweetland	835.00	0.00	The allowances are from year ending 31st March 2011.
Cllr. Helen Firth	835.00	0.00	
Cllr. Len Ashby	0.00	0.00	
Cllr. Sarah Hall	835.00	0.00	
Cllr. J. Hallett	835.00	0.00	
Cllr. Anne Parker	835.00	0.00	
Cllr. Michael Harker	835.00	0.00	
Cllr. James Molesworth-Edwards	835.00	0.00	
Cllr. Ian Smith	835.00	0.00	

COUNCILLORS' ATTENDANCE AT FULL COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES 2010 - 2011

	Full Council	General Purposes	Environment and Leisure	Plans	%age
Number of Meetings	8	9	9	16	
Cllr. Len Ashby	6	8	-	15	88%
Cllr. Duncan Bennett	7	-	4	11	67%
Cllr. Louise Eastwood	6	6	-	14	79%
Cllr. Thelma Rumbelow	8	-	6	16	91%
Cllr. Dorothy Sparks	8	8	6	-	85%
Cllr. Alan Whittaker ***	7	7	8	-	85%
Cllr. Bob Sweetland	4	7	-	-	65%
Cllr. Helen Firth	8	-	7	14	89%
Cllr. John Carvey*	8	9	-	-	100%
Cllr. Sarah Hall	7	7	-	-	82%
Cllr. Jeremy Hallett	8	-	8	14	91%
Cllr. Anne Parker	5	-	6	-	65%
Cllr. Michael Harker	5	8	7	-	77%
Cllr. James Molesworth - Edwards	8	8	-	14	91%
Cllr. Ian Smith	8	-	8	-	94%

Notes - Not all Councillors sit on all committees. At the start of the Municipal year, Councillors will state their preferences and depending on demand, will be elected to their preferred committees.

* Denotes Town Mayor

*** Denotes also a District Councillor.

1

The attendance figures are from 6th April 2010 - 14th March 2011.

Luxfords Restaurant
Uckfield Civic Centre

www.uckfieldciviccentre.com

Foresters Hall
Harcourt Road,
Uckfield

Whether you want a hearty breakfast, a wholesome home-cooked lunch or simply tea and cake we have menus to suit all occasions

Open Monday to Saturday
8.30am to 4pm
Fully licensed.

01825 761659



Foresters Hall is available for a wide range of functions including: children's parties, keep fit, martial arts, etc, as well as exhibitions, meetings, etc.

To check availability and for hire rates, please call

01825 747790

MEMBERS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

CENTRAL WARD

John Carvey (Town Mayor)

23 Farriers Way,
Uckfield.
TN22 5BY
Tel: 767902
Mobile: 07917 208883



Helen Firth

22 Harcourt Road,
Uckfield.
TN22 5DU
Tel: 764048



James Molesworth-Edwards

78 Vernon Road,
Uckfield.
TN22 5DY.
Tel: 768597
Fax: 760898
Mobile: 07884004084



RIDGEWOOD WARD

Michael Harker

The Cottage,
Eastbourne Road,
Ridgewood,
Uckfield.
TN22 5ST
Tel: 765684



Ian Smith

30 Castle Rise,
Uckfield.
TN22 5UN
Tel: 766360



Bob Sweetland

Fintry Lodge,
New Road,
Ridgewood,
Uckfield.
TN22 5TG
Tel: 765731



NORTH WARD

Louise Eastwood

7 Jeffreys Way,
Uckfield.
TN22 1JE
Tel: 01825 762774



Len Ashby

12 Downsview Crescen
Uckfield.
TN22 1TX
Tel: 762255



Duncan Bennett (Deputy Mayor)

179 Framfield Road,
Uckfield.
TN22 5AU
Tel: 744179



Thelma Rumbelow

11 Tower View,
Uckfield.
TN22 1SB
Tel: 761153



Dorothy Sparks

27 Roman Way,
Uckfield.
TN22 1UY
Tel: 764287



Alan Whittaker

17 Ironstone Way,
Uckfield.
TN22 1XJ
Tel/Fax: 768315



NEW TOWN WARD

Sarah Hall

3 Jeffreys Way,
Uckfield.
TN22 1JE
Tel/Fax: 764801



Anne Parker

14 New Road,
Ridgewood,
Uckfield.
TN22 5TG
Tel: 761915



Jeremy Hallet

11 Selby Rise
Uckfield
TN22 5ED
Tel: 761124



You can also contact the Councillors via the Council Office Staff

Town Clerk: Ashley Serpis
Assistant Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer: Christine Wheatley
Civic Centre Manager: Susan Isted

- POST - Council Offices, Civic Centre, Uckfield. TN22 1AE.
- PHONE - 01825 762774
- Email - admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk

(please note: the Councillors do not visit the Council Offices regularly.