

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Tuesday 10th April 2018

Ashdown Room, Uckfield Civic Centre
at
7.00 pm

AGENDA

Prior to the start of the meeting you are invited to have tea or coffee with Councillors from 6.30 pm

1. **Welcome and introductions by the Mayor**
2. **Apologies for absence**
3. **Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of the 11th April 2017**
4. **Matters arising from the minutes**
5. **Topics and questions raised by residents in advance**
6. **Consideration of the Town Council's Annual Report**
7. **Questions from the floor**

Cllr. Louise Eastwood
Town Mayor



UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING** held in the Council Chamber
Uckfield Civic Centre, Tuesday 11th April 2017 at 7.00pm

PRESENT	Cllr. L. Eastwood	Town Mayor
	Cllr. Mick Dean	Chairman of the Environment and Leisure Committee
	Cllr. D. Ward	Chairman of the General Purposes Committee
	Cllr. B. Mayhew	Deputy Chairman of the Plans Committee

Councillors:-

P. Sparks, P. Meakin, D. French, J. Love, K. Everett, H. Firth
C, Macve and I. Smith

Owen Coleman (Youth Member)

District Councillor Claire Dowling, County Councillor Chris Dowling

3 members of the press

24 residents and organisation representatives

Holly Goring – Town Clerk

Angela Paul – Administrative Officer

Minutes taken by Angela Paul

1.0 Welcome and introduction by the Town Mayor

Cllr. Louise Eastwood welcomed everyone and stated that she and the Councillors appreciated residents supporting the meeting and then introduced the Chairman of each of the three main committees.

2.0 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence received from Cllrs. D. Bennett, J. Anderson, J. Beckford, Mr J. Molesworth Edwards and Mrs Dorothy Sparks.

3.0 Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of the 13th April 2016

After an amendment to Cllr. Dean's Christian name which should be Cllr. Mick Dean not Mike, the minutes of the Annual Town meeting of the 13th April 2016 previously circulated were approved as being a true record.

4.0 Matters arising from the minutes

None.

5.0 Topics and questions by residents previously notified

Cllr. Eastwood read out the questions previously notified and provided responses:-

Question 1 from Mrs Boniface

(Luxford Field)

“Following a question to the Town Council about five years ago, asking for an upgrade/redesign of the playground on Luxford Field, I was told that it would not happen as there was an Uckfield Town Plan due to be implemented which would mean the reorganisation of the Town centre. Given that this plan has now been shelved can we now look forward to our town centre ‘village green’ having a playground worthy of its position. The equipment in the present playground is dire, old and very sparse. As it stands it is not a good reflection on the town’s ability to provide suitable recreation for its people. I know you have developed other play areas for which the townsfolk are very grateful but surely it is now time to enhance the ‘village green’ the centre of our lovely town!”

Response:

- The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council quite agreed that Luxford Field was a valuable space within the centre of the town and great for town events and activities. Unfortunately, due to financial constraints and as a result of potential regeneration plans for the town centre, any improvement works to the play area were put on hold until more was known.
- On 27th January 2017, the Uckfield Town Centre Joint Regeneration Committee at that time resolved to (1) keep the potential to redevelop and regenerate Uckfield town centre under review; and (2) to hold a further Joint Committee made up of ESCC, WDC and UTC to meet in Summer 2018 to provide an update on the project on that point.
- This meant that we were no closer in knowing what the economic situation would be at that point in time.
- The Town Council’s Strategic Plan for 2017-2022 does recognise the need to upgrade the council’s play areas and funding has been allocated for improvements to be made to Hughes Way in the next 12-18 months.
- It would be unwise to move forward with any substantial improvement plans to Luxford’s play area before the next meeting of the Joint Committee is held in 2018, nor would we have the funds to make improvements to the play area at the present time.
- In the meantime, the town council will consider what interim repairs can be undertaken this year and as part of the budget setting process for 2018/19, consider which play area should be prioritised next for improvement.

Question 2 from Mr Woodham

(Pigeons)

Ongoing issues with pigeons resulting in the new pedestrian paving slabs becoming stained, unsightly mess for residents/visitors and shopkeepers alike in these areas.

Potential health and safety issue if children were to fall over in these areas and touch the droppings. Pedestrians are walking through this mess and it does adhere to the soles of their footwear.

UTC and partners are dealing with the effect on what would appear an ad hoc basis but the cause is not being dealt with i.e. removal of these birds.

For consideration! At Kings Cross station in London the rail authority have brought in a falconer with a harrier hawk on a regular basis during the working days to deal with a similar problem.

What is the future for Uckfield High Street regarding these unwanted pests?

Response:

The Town Clerk agreed that it was a pity that after all the hard work undertaken by ESCC and Colas installing the new paving that they were now being spoilt.

- The Clerk advised that the pigeons and pigeon mess were assessed by an officer of Wealden District Council's Environmental Health team before Christmas. At that point in time, it was not considered to be a health and safety hazard nor deemed bad enough to take enforcement action.
- At that time, the Town Council also made contact with a number of local businesses who specialised in pest and bird control to explore what options would be available to the town. Costs varied and consideration of the central high street location would also need to be taken into account.
- Unfortunately despite properties opposite the old post office covering their premises with netting, the pigeons had still found a home there. This suggested that basic pest control options were not necessarily the answer.

In the last couple of weeks the Town Council had become aware that some residents were encouraging the pigeons by feeding them. We had therefore purchased signs which would be placed in Elizabeth Gardens to advise against feeding the birds;

- The Town Council had also liaised with tenants in the old post office building and provided a copy of the options available, which I believe had been passed onto their landlord/the property owner to take action – and we understand measures were going to be put in place.
- The Town Council had also arranged for Grounds staff to undertake deep cleans of the area as build-ups arise;
- The Town Clerk advised that she had been in contact once more with the Environmental Health Team at WDC and sent further photographs of the number of pigeons on the roofs requesting that they re-assess the situation which they have agreed to do.

- The Town Clerk also advised that WDC and their contractors were the responsible authority for the cleaning of the pavements but it was regrettable that they were not currently taking responsibility.
- Please note these are private properties and therefore other than liaising with those concerned and providing the relevant information, we have limited powers.

Question 3 from Mrs Frost

(Parking and Woodlands)

“I would like to raise the following points:

Lack of sufficient disabled spaces in the High Street, as well as loading and unloading bays, and pull ins for the buses.

The two current disabled spaces need to be clearly marked up with yellow hatchings to dissuade able bodied parking, with signage too.

Luxford car park is one way on both sides in the 3-hour area, and I have seen vehicles going the wrong way on several occasions it needs to be marked much more clearly, and signage too.

Have seen a concerning post on social media when some bike jumps were removed from some local woods that are now under private ownership. The young people who posted on the thread are left with the impression that Uckfield does not care about its younger members. Is there some suitable woodland in the ownership of the Town Council, where they could re-build their jumps. Apparently it took a long time to build the jumps (as in several hours), and had been there for at least one generation, and it would be a nice touch to find them another suitable site so they can build some more.”

Response

(1) Parking

- The Town Clerk advised that the scheme was developed under an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order which provided the town with time to review how the scheme was working and provide feedback to ESCC.
- A time schedule is given to enable the scheme to settle and then ESCC will undertake a review of how the space is used – this is typically 18 months after the work has completed;
- In regards to accessibility within the High Street, the Town Clerk had met with a local disability group shortly after the reopening of the High Street to listen to any concerns that they wished to raise e.g. trip hazards, parking spaces etc. The issues raised at the time were incorporated in the snagging list, which Colas will be addressing shortly on their return. This included clearer marking up of the two disabled spaces at the bottom of the High Street.
- In terms of longer term proposals, such as increasing the number of disabled bays - this would be fed into ESCC’s review.

If residents had further comments they were asked that any comments be passed to the Town Clerk to collate.

With regard to the allocation of loading bays this is not straight forward, as with other towns, these bays were often misused and blocked by normal vehicles. Therefore until civil enforcement was in place, it would be difficult to be on hand to regularly enforce these bays.

- Luxfords car park is the responsibility of Wealden District Council and the Town Council has also noted and received reports about the markings in the car park and have passed on the concerns to WDC.

(2) Jumps in woodland

- The Town Clerk confirmed that the Town Council was keen to support its younger generation and was already working with Uckfield Community Technology College to involve young people and receive their views. Recently two Youth Members joined the Town Council and would have an opportunity to take part in discussions and express their opinions.
- The Town Council provides spaces for a variation of sports within the town but unfortunately any woodland owned by the Town Council was protected either as an ancient woodland such as Boothland Wood or as Nightingale Wood had a number of Tree Preservation Orders. These woodlands were also heavily used by members of the public so unfortunately they would not be the best locations for jumps to be built.

Question 4 from Mrs Sparks

(Room hire – Civic Centre)

'Uckfield Town Council is giving discounts to prospective new hirers of the Civic Centre as set out in your Civic Centre and Foresters Hall venue hire charges 2017/18 to encourage them to make a booking. I can appreciate why you are doing this, but I am involved in several groups that hire the Civic Centre, including the Decorative and Fine Arts. This group has booked the Weald Hall for the last 21 years for their monthly meetings. Not only showing you loyalty but quite a number of our members use the Luxford Restaurant for lunch prior to the meeting, giving you their custom and more revenue.

Perhaps you would consider giving a discount to long term hirers to encourage them to continue using the facilities, or a special offer?'

Response:

- Cllr Ward advised that the Civic Centre Working Group undertook a full review of its fees and charges for the hire of the Civic Centre and Foresters Hall for the forthcoming year which was approved by General Purposes Committee in October 2016.
- As part of this review, members discussed the importance of recognising the loyalty of regular room hirers in addition to attracting new community groups and organisations. The Civic Centre Working Group and the Town Council were to continue to explore various options over the next few months and any decisions taken will be advertised.

6.0 Consideration of the Town Council's Annual Report

The Mayor introduced the reports from the Chairmen of the three main committees which had previously been circulated and asked if there were any questions arising from the reports.

None were forthcoming.

7.0 Questions from the floor

Mrs Frost advised that as many people were aware she was against the Highway improvements from the start and the question regarding pull ins for the buses had still not been resolved, due to lack of space on the road traffic was brought to a halt every time the buses were in the High Street especially at school time.

Mrs Frost asked what ESCC was doing to mend the many pot holes in and around the town and when they were going to spend some money on the repairs.

Cllr Eastwood advised that the meeting was a Town meeting and everybody was aware that there was a problem with potholes, Central Government had recently announced that there would be some monies available for Councils to assist with the repair of pot holes.

Mrs Frost advised that she knew it was a Town Council meeting but she noted that County Councillors were in attendance and asked if they would take the opportunity to respond.

Cllr. Chris Dowling agreed to respond and noted that pot holes were a problem nationally not just in East Sussex and were taken seriously by the County Council. The Highways Department was spending 90 million pounds on the repairs over the next 7 years and was working with their new contractors on the best and efficient way to carry out the works.

Cllr Sparks advised that when he was a County Councillor 4 years ago he argued that the most effective way was to initially repair the potholes properly rather than just carrying out patching which did not last and meant that the same holes were having to be repaired.

Mr Firth asked if consideration had been given to employing a Traffic Warden and sharing the costs with other Councils as illegal, inconsiderate and the 1hour parking limit was not being policed and although there was a large car park for the railway, commuters were still parking and blocking up nearby residential roads. If the Police were not going to carry out enforcement they should not receive any of the money from collected fines.

The Town Clerk advised that WDC had resolved recently at Cabinet to keep off-street parking free and explore options with ESCC for civil enforcement of on-street parking. WDC and Town and Parish Councils were continuing to talk with the Police and had been monitoring the situation and exploring interim measures.

Mr Selby asked why the signs for Ridgewood had disappeared from the road signs and also did the Council have any powers to do anything about the road surface in Mill Lane he was aware it was a private road.

The Town Clerk advised that when the new town twinning signs were erected the Ridgewood signs were removed which was not expected or planned by the Town Council but ESCC had been contacted and Ridgewood Village signs would be put back in place in due course.

Cllr. Firth advised that she was also aware of the concerns of residents regarding Mill Lane and had made enquiries but the problem was that the lane was private and that many people were involved including a Trust and the residents at Millington Court.

Mr Selby advised that he would make further enquiries regarding the ownership of Mill Lane.

Mr S. Colvin advised that he raised the question last year regarding the number of advertising hoardings on the roundabouts and he wanted to thank Cllr. Anderson for all his work with ESCC in arranging for the advertising hoardings to be removed from the roundabouts.

Mr Colvin was disappointed to see that following work carried out by Open Reach they had used the correct man holes covers on the new paving slabs but had spoiled the look by using tar rather than replacing the York stone slabs. He also wanted to know when the trees would be replaced.

The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council was also very disappointed to see that the work had been allowed to be carried out as it was understood that any works were subject to a Section 58 for 3 years. She understood from ESCC that the company was allowed a 6 month period for them to make good and she would be monitoring the situation.

With regards to the replacement trees we were waiting for new tree guards and again she was liaising with ESCC to be addressed.

Mrs Venables (representative of Buc Up) reported that since the toilet block in Luxford Car Park had been removed by WDC an old metal 'T' shape bar had been left sticking up from the ground and the top with sharp edges was at eye level of a small child and she was concerned it could cause a serious injury.

Cllr. Eastwood and the Clerk noted the report and would pass to WDC as urgent request to have removed.

Mrs Venables also advised that she was still very concerned about the possibility of flash flooding in the High Street due to the large amount of grit and sand accumulating in the gutters and drains especially the drains near to St Philips Church/school where the recent building work has taken place and a lot of mud/sand has run off from the building site. Mrs Venables had reported the problem before but ESCC were still not cleaning the gutters.

The Town Clerk advised that this would be followed up with ESCC.

Mr Firth advised that he had correspondence going back 9 years regarding the cemetery and for 5 years he had been asking for the wall to be repaired and he also wanted to know why a dog walker was still allowed to enter the cemetery by a gate as it was not very pleasant to find dog mess on the War Graves where he had planted daffodils.

The Town Clerk advised that there was a 10 year maintenance programme and the wall had been prioritised when budget setting for this financial year but the Clerk explained that before the programmed work could take place it would have to go out to Tender therefore would not take place until late 2017, early 2018.

Mr Blackford wanted to know why the grass at Ridgewood Play area and Luxford Field had not been cut as they both looked a mess, was it due to budget cuts?

The Town Clerk advised that the Grass Cutting contract had been awarded to new contractors and they were due to start work this week.

Mr Blackford also reported that it was not just the drains in the High Street that were blocked but the drains in Ridgewood and elsewhere in the town were terrible and he did not know why Councillors had not noticed or appeared to be doing anything about the situation.

Mrs Frost thanked the Town Councillors for all the hard work they undertook for the Town.

Mr Woodham referred to page 2 question 1 of the Minutes of the 2016 meeting regarding the southbound traffic slowed down at Church Street traffic lights by cars turning right into Church Street and asked if a solution was being considered for this dangerous junction as cars jumping the red traffic lights had been observed on many occasions by residents.

Cllr. Eastwood advised that the Town Council and ESCC were aware of cars jumping the red lights at Church Street and phasing of the lights and possible solutions to the problem was currently being considered and reviewed.

Mr Blackford advised that he had noticed that the old metal rings had appeared on the kerbs by Waitrose and asked if anybody knew why they were there.

Cllr. Eastwood advised that as they were part of the history of the old town and they should remain on the kerbs.

There being no further questions Cllr. Eastwood thanked everybody for attending and their interest and also thanked the Councillors and Officers for all the hard work they undertook for the Town.

The meeting closed at 7.50pm.



Uckfield Town Council Annual Report

2017-18



Council Offices
Civic Centre
Uckfield
TN22 1AE

Our Town Mayor's Annual Review of 2017-18

2017-18 has been a busy year, which has seen relationships develop with our key partner agencies and the town's community and voluntary organisations; making progress towards improving our buildings and open spaces, and working together, to support our residents.

Since last year the Council has refreshed its planning documents and agreed a set of priorities and budget for 2018-19. The Town Council received an excellent report from external auditors which advised that the council's finances and processes were sound and members fed into a number of key consultations to ensure the views of local residents were aired - this included East Sussex County Council's consultation on library services and Wealden District Council's consultation on their homelessness strategy. There is never a good time to become homeless, but the winter months are a particular concern. If you are concerned for your welfare or that of a family member, please contact Wealden District Council. An out of hours service is also available during evenings and weekends on 01323 644422.



Uckfield Town Council led the way for town councils in Sussex last year by setting up a new way of working to encourage youth engagement in the democratic process. This enabled sixth form students studying politics at Uckfield College to get involved in local democracy. One youth member stayed on with us and has been co-opted onto the council as a non-voting member. This has enabled them to take part in committee meetings and discussions but not to vote.

We are pleased to see progress made towards upgrading the town centre's CCTV system. The Town Council has been working with Sussex Police, BT Redcare and East Sussex Highways to arrange for the installation of a new system. The new HD cameras will provide a direct feed to Sussex Police Headquarters in Lewes and enable better footage to be captured. Uckfield Chamber of Commerce has also joined the partnership and will be funding the installation and care of one camera at the western end of Bellbrook Industrial Estate.

The Town Council has focused its attention on road safety, funding speed surveys in Church Street, Eastbourne Road and London Road (Ringles Cross) to understand the speed of vehicles travelling through this area and undertaking training to utilise speed indicator devices across the town. We have continued to liaise with East Sussex Highways to address the snagging issues outstanding since the improvement works on the High Street and pushed for quicker repairs by utility companies after unforeseen works. We also fed into Wealden District Council's parking review and maintained communication with both the district and Sussex Police to try and address parking issues within the town.

Residents have previously asked for more functions to take place in Uckfield and with this in mind, we focused our attention on the Civic Centre; increasing our calendar of events and improving our marketing. We have created a new website for the Civic Centre and introduced a monthly e-bulletin which advertises the main events we're organising in the Weald Hall. The events working group worked hard last year to set up

two events (i) Weald on the Field in August which saw around 2,000 people flock to Luxford Field to enjoy local street food, produce, drink and entertainment. The event was such a success we'll be doing it all again on Saturday 4th August 2018! And (ii) Uckfield Revival which saw classic vehicles, trucks and bikes from across the decades parade through the town before parking up to display on Luxford Field.

The Uckfield Dementia Forum has been in place for over a year and built up an excellent team of stakeholders involved in arranging events and sharing important information. Our one-year anniversary event held in November saw around 40 members of the public attend and enjoy a screening of Andre Rieu's Christmas concert with afternoon tea. We've arranged a number of Dementia Friend awareness sessions across the town to enable people to learn a bit more about dementia and the forum is now keen to hear from those living with dementia and their carers to understand what they would like to see in Uckfield, in terms of activities and support.

The Town Council has continued to support community and voluntary organisations within the town, with its community grant funding. 2017 saw Uckfield Civic Centre sponsor the 'charity of the year' at the Uckfield FM community awards. This was a wonderful event celebrating the excellent work achieved by individuals volunteering their time and energy to benefit the residents in our town.

We supported and participated in the Remembrance Parade. As Mayor it has given me great pride to remember those who fought and lost their lives in WW1, WW2 and Afghanistan. Brave soldiers laid their lives on the line to protect and serve their Queen and country so we could have a better future.

This will be my last annual report as Mayor of Uckfield, and I would like to say a big thank you to you all for supporting me in this role. I have learnt so much about the work of our community and voluntary organisations and welcomed the invitations from local businesses and groups to support you in your new and exciting ventures. Thank you for making Uckfield such a special place to live.

Cllr Louise Eastwood
Town Mayor
(Chairman of) Full Council



General Purposes Committee

The General Purposes Committee has responsibility for looking after the Council's property portfolio, for overseeing the proper operation of financial procedures and spending, and for ensuring that staff employment issues are addressed and resolved.

This is my second year as Chair of General Purposes. It has been a busy year and although we do have to look after our finances, we also have to ensure we maintain our assets. Below are a few of the things that we have achieved.

Property

We worked with Pyxis Consulting to develop an Asset Management Plan for the Town Council which will sit alongside our strategic plan and budget and encourage members to review the council's assets on a regular basis, as well as being better informed when making decisions on building maintenance, lease agreements and the future of our buildings.

The committee reviewed its building maintenance programme to prioritise work and consider how we can obtain better value by using a large tendering process for some works and using local contractors for smaller or more specialist projects.

Foresters Hall and the Civic Centre, two of our larger public buildings which are hired out to the public have started to be decorated. We also commissioned a feasibility study on West Park Pavilion to consider refiguring the space to enable greater use of the building. This was completed by a local surveying company.

The Weald Hall floor in the Civic Centre has been repaired, stripped back and re-oiled to improve its condition and enable the floor to withstand daily use for longer. We have reviewed and renewed the electrics and redecorated our property in Vernon Road. Lease agreements have also been renewed with existing tenants at the Hub and the Quickborn Suite.

Finance

Once again we have received positive reports from our internal auditors to advise that our finances and processes remain sound. We gave £36,950 to community groups and local organisations through our community grant funding programme. We also provided funding of up to £2,800 to the North Wealden Community Transport Partnership to contribute towards the Saturday 262 bus service which travels between the Ashdown Forest, Uckfield and Heathfield in addition to a grant of £10,000 to Wealden Works, who support young people aged 16 – 24 years old who are not in employment, education or training.

We have also reviewed our income streams including our fees and charges for room hire for 2018/19 and regularly chased and kept on top of bad debts to ensure that the council is not losing funds.

Staffing

During this year, we have undertaken a review of staffing at management level and we have welcomed new members of staff to the organisation. We were pleased to maintain

our five star health and hygiene rating for Luxfords Restaurant from Wealden District Council's Environmental Health team. Thank you to all of the staff in the Restaurant for your hard work.

On a personal level I would like to thank ALL of the staff who work for Uckfield Town Council for all their hard work and dedication.

Councillor Diane Ward
Chairman
General Purposes Committee

Environment and Leisure Committee



This is my last report as Chair of Environment and Leisure Committee. It has been an honour and a privilege to chair this committee. I would like to thank members of the committee for their hard work and healthy debate. I would also like to give a big thanks to our Assistant Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, Christine Wheatley, who supports the committee and for all of her help and guidance during our meetings.

Since the last report, the committee has been very busy. We have funded the installation of a new play area in Hughes Way which is now complete albeit some small touches such as new fencing and seating. We also arranged for the play area at Victoria Pleasure Ground to be resurfaced and we hope that both areas will bring enjoyment to families for years to come.

The committee continued to support the annual road safety day which in 2017, saw 11 primary schools take part from Uckfield and the surrounding villages. The day was first set up by former town councillor Jim Molesworth-Edwards who sadly passed away last year. The event is an excellent occasion and preparations are underway for this year which will focus more broadly on safety and see a number of partner agencies attend to educate young people on the importance of safety.

Projects were undertaken to modernise the town's infrastructure. This included the upgrade of street lighting in Olives Meadow whereby the Town Council assisted by acting as a conduit between residents and East Sussex County Council to ensure work was completed with minimal disruption.

We have also provided attractive displays within the town such as the wonderful display of Christmas lights which were enjoyed by visitors to the town, to our beautiful hanging basket and floral displays in the summer months.

Once again, the allotment conference provided strong debate and good banter, and we look forward to welcoming back the Allotment competition in 2018, which will see plots judged in July this year, with prizes for the best kept allotment winner on each site, one overall winner and there will also be a children's competition.

The committee agreed to a number of changes at Victoria Pleasure Ground - the restoration of the Cardale Memorial, bringing it back to its original shape and relocating it within the Pleasure Ground, making the pedestrian access between the Pleasure Ground and St. Philips School permanent to increase safety for school pupils, and installing new toilet doors at the pleasure ground to enable members of the public to have 24/7 access for a small fee of 20p.

We have recently launched a couple of new campaigns which encourage resident participation; our health and wellbeing campaign aimed at encouraging greater use of our beautiful green open spaces while improving your health and wellbeing, and instigating a dog fouling campaign aimed at changing the behaviour of dog owners that don't clean up after their dog. The committee agreed to investigate the introduction of dog bag dispensers in a number of the council's recreation grounds and research is currently underway.

A final thank you goes to our grounds staff who do a brilliant job every day to ensure our town remains clean and green looking. Well done team!

Councillor Mick Dean
Chairman
Environment and Leisure Committee

Plans Committee

This has been my first year as Chair of Plans Committee. The Town Council is a statutory consultee on all Uckfield-based planning applications and this committee plays a key role in the planning process by considering the comments and concerns of residents, and sharing these views with Wealden District Council, as the local planning authority.



The past few years have been particularly challenging for planning authorities as central government has relaxed a number of planning policies to encourage development. A number of new policies have also been introduced to push for an increase in house building. This has made the committee's role more difficult whilst they try to understand these legislative changes and determine whether applications are in-keeping with the town's built and physical environment.

Locally, my committee continues to have concerns in a number of areas with regards to infill development and the overdevelopment of properties which encroach on the attractive open plan design of our town's residential areas but also the impact such development has on the local infrastructure.

The committee and wider full council have fed into consultation opportunities on phase one of the Ridgewood Farm development, which will see 250 homes built over the next five years. This has included receiving sight of the full application (mix of housing, parking proposals, waste, pedestrian and vehicular access) and considering proposals put forward by the Highways Authority to introduce traffic calming measures in Lewes Road near to the new access routes up and as far as Highlands roundabout. The Town Council were also asked to put forward suggestions for street names for this development.

The Plans Committee has been briefed on the proposals to build new school buildings for Uckfield College and await sight of a full application for this which is due shortly. The Town Council has also been supporting the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group with the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for Uckfield. This could take a number of months to complete but once achieved, future developments in Uckfield will attract a greater proportion of Community Infrastructure Levy funding, which can be used for improving the local infrastructure.

With the above proposals and revision of the Wealden Local Plan, committee members will have a great deal to consider and digest throughout the year ahead. We will continue to work on your behalf and represent the views of our residents to assist in planning the future of Uckfield.

**Councillor Spike Mayhew
Chairman
Plans Committee**

Financial Summary for 2017-18 (draft)

INCOME and EXPENDITURE SUMMARY 2017-18 by COMMITTEE			
Committee	Budget set for 2017/18	Projected outturn at year end	Variation from budget set
	£	£	£
Environment and Leisure			
Expenditure	330,723	301,218	(29,505)
Income	70,155	83,708	13,553
<i>Balance total</i>	<i>260,568</i>	<i>217,510</i>	<i>(43,058)</i>
General Purposes			
Expenditure	813,582	788,227	(25,355)
Income	196,954	192,707	4,247*
<i>Balance total</i>	<i>616,628</i>	<i>595,520</i>	<i>(21,108)</i>
Luxfords			
Expenditure	181,851	171,894	(9,957)
Income	183,516	159,192	24,324*
<i>Balance total</i>	<i>1,665</i>	<i>12,702*</i>	<i>14,367</i>
() = indicates that savings were made * = shortfall in income levels			
N.B. Year-end financial processes need to be completed before the above figures can be finalised.			

ALLOWANCES PAID TO COUNCILLORS IN 2017-18			
	Allowances	Expenses	Notes
	£	£	
Cllr. James Anderson	£1,236.00	-	*Denotes Town Mayor. (An additional allowance is payable to the Mayor in connection with the duties of the position). The allowances are from the financial year 1 st April 2017 – 31 st March 2018.
Cllr. Jackie Beckford (left 30 June 2017))	£309.00	-	
Cllr. Jeremy Beesley (joined 31 Aug 2017)	£721.00	-	
Cllr. Duncan Bennett	£1,236.00	-	
Cllr. Louise Eastwood *	£2,942.00	-	
Cllr. Keith Everett	£1,236.00	-	
Cllr. Helen Firth	£1,236.00	-	
Cllr. Spike Mayhew	£1,236.00	-	
Cllr. Donna French	£1,236.00	-	
Cllr. Jackie Love	£1,236.00	-	
Cllr. Paul Meakin	£1,236.00	-	
Cllr. Ian Smith	£1,236.00	-	
Cllr. Paul Sparks	£1,236.00	-	
Cllr. Diane Ward	-	£20.70	

N.B.
 Councillors can choose to receive the allowance if they wish.
 Under the current legislation, co-opted Councillors are not eligible to receive an allowance.

Councillor Attendance

ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS (3rd April 2017 to 26th March 2018)					
Councillors	Full Council (10 meetings)	General Purposes (8 meetings)	Environment and Leisure (9 meetings)	Plans (17 meetings)	Overall Attendance %
J. Anderson	0 out of possible 10	-	-	1 out of possible 17	3.7%
J. Beesley	5 out of possible 5	-	5 out of possible 5	-	100%
D. Bennett (Deputy Mayor)	8 out of possible 10	-	7 out of possible 9	7 out of possible 17	61%
M. Dean	7 out of possible 10	8 out of possible 8	9 out of possible 9	-	89%
L. Eastwood (Town Mayor)	10 out of possible 10	6 out of possible 8	-	-	88.9%
K. Everett	8 out of possible 10	8 out of possible 8	9 out of possible 9	11 out of possible 17	82%
H. Firth	7 out of possible 10	7 out of possible 8	5 out of possible 9	-	70%
D. French	10 out of possible 10	-	8 out of possible 9	15 out of possible 17	92%
J. Love	9 out of possible 10	8 out of possible 8	-	11 out of possible 17	80.0%
S. Mayhew	10 out of possible 10	-	7 out of possible 9	17 out of possible 17	94%
P. Meakin	9 out of possible 10	7 out of possible 8	-	-	88.9%
C. Macve	9 out of possible 10	-	-	16 out of possible 17	92.6%
I. Smith	9 out of possible 10	7 out of possible 8	7 out of possible 9	-	85%
P. Sparks	10 out of possible 10	7 out of possible 8	-	-	94.4%
D. Ward	10 out of possible 10	8 out of possible 8	9 out of possible 9	-	100%

N.B. Attendances are from the 3rd April 2017 to 26th March 2018.

- Not all Councillors sit on all or the same committees every year.
- The Town Council also has both Finance and Personnel Sub-committees which meet as necessary.
- In addition Councillors sit on working groups, steering groups and also represent the Town Council on a number of outside bodies.

Our Community Grants Programme for 2018-19

Each year the Town Council sets a budget for the provision of community grants. In September 2017, the Finance Sub-Committee considered applications for grant funding for 2018-19. The following grants were subsequently approved by General Purposes Committee:

GRANTS AWARDED BY UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL FOR 2018-19	
Wealden Citizen's Advice	£18,836
Total Section 142 Grants	£18,836
Age Concern – Uckfield & District	£500
ATC 2530 (Uckfield) Squadron	£800
Brighter Uckfield Campaign	£1,165
First Field Responders	£2,665
Horse Rescue Trust	£250
Riverside Friendship Group	£300
Royal British Legion (Uckfield Branch)	£210
Samaritans	£160
Student Counselling Service – Uckfield College	£1,500
Uckfield Bonfire and Carnival Society	£3,950
Uckfield & District Preservation Society	£1,639
Uckfield FM	£2,500
Uckfield Festival Association	£3,950
Uckfield Food Bank	£1,560
4 th Uckfield Manitoba Beavers	£550
Uckfield Twin Club	£250
Uckfield Theatre Guild	£500
Total General Power of Competence Grants	£22,449
Total	£41,285



Our Annual Plan 2018-2019 PRIORITIES

PEOPLE

PLACE

1	<p>COMMUNITY GRANTS</p> <p>We will award up to £41,285 of community grant funding to local groups and charitable organisations for the period 2018/19.</p>	6	<p>NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN</p> <p>We will support the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to prepare a draft Uckfield Neighbourhood Plan ready for submission to the local planning authority.</p>
2	<p>HEALTH AND WELLBEING</p> <p>We will map the town's open spaces and footways, and introduce a number of initiatives to increase the use of these spaces and encourage greater physical activity.</p>	7	<p>TOWN COUNCIL BUILDINGS</p> <p>We will improve the condition and decoration of Town Council owned buildings, and assess how these buildings could be better utilised.</p>
3	<p>ENGAGEMENT AND ACCESSIBILITY</p> <p>We will expand on the Uckfield Dementia Forum to encourage Uckfield to be an accessible town; supportive of varying health conditions.</p>	8	<p>CELEBRATING GREEN INITIATIVES</p> <p>We will work with the Horticultural Association to encourage the conservation of water on allotments plots and run an allotment competition to celebrate attractive and resourceful plot management</p>
4	<p>CIVIC CENTRE EVENTS</p> <p>We will deliver a greater variety of events within the Civic Centre to attract a broad range of age groups and households.</p>	9	<p>SAFETY</p> <p>We will run campaigns to encourage safety and speed reduction; using speed indicator devices and educate school pupils about safety.</p>
5	<p>PUBLIC EVENTS IN THE TOWN</p> <p>We will work alongside the local business community and local community groups to deliver two free public events within the town; Weald on the Field and Uckfield Revival.</p>	10	<p>PAVEMENTS AND HIGHWAYS</p> <p>We will work with partner agencies to push for improvements to accessibility and safety on our pavements and highways.</p>
		11	<p>IMPROVING FOOTWAY LINKS</p> <p>We will work with partner agencies/landowners to explore how footway links could be improved throughout the town.</p>
		12	<p>PUBLIC CONVENIENCE</p> <p>We will work with partner agencies to investigate whether a suitable location can be found for a public convenience and the associated costs of contributing towards installation and maintenance.</p>

PROVISION

13	<p>COMMUNICATION</p> <p>We will increase public awareness of the Town Council's activities and increase engagement with residents.</p>
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Did you know?

Your County Council looks after:	Your District Council looks after:	Your Town Council looks after:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highways maintenance (road repairs, verge cutting, pavements, most street lighting); • Highway emergencies; • Winter gritting; • Rights of Way; • Public transport; • Adult Social Care (<i>carers, services for older people, learning disabilities, physical/sensory impairments</i>); • Children's services (<i>child protection, support for families</i>); • Education; • Leisure and culture; • Libraries; • Trading standards • Registration of births and deaths; • Waste disposal (<i>including household waste recycling centres</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Tax collection; • Local planning as your local planning authority; • Development control; • Building control; • Waste collection and street cleansing; • Environmental health (<i>including licensing, environmental protection – air quality, noise, food safety, health and safety</i>); • Housing advice; • Homelessness; • Benefits; • Leisure Centres; • Wealden car parks; • Supporting economic development, local businesses and tourism; • Community toilet scheme; • Community and capital grants scheme; • Conserving biodiversity assets, conservation areas and designated sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of Uckfield's green parks and open spaces; • Snatts Road Cemetery; • Upgrades and maintenance of Uckfield play areas, sports pitches and skate park; • Maintenance and management of Allotments; • Conservation of our nature reserves and conservation areas; • Floral displays and hanging baskets; • Christmas lights; • Town Centre CCTV; • Community grants; • Some street lighting; • Hire of rooms and events at the Civic Centre, Foresters Hall and Sport Pavilions; • Events held within the town to educate, mark special occasions, and celebrate Uckfield.