

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Tuesday 11th April 2017

**Council Chamber, 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 13th April 2016**
- 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 Weald Hall
Uckfield Civic Centre, Wednesday 13th April 2016 at 7.00pm

PRESENT	Cllr. L. Eastwood	Town Mayor
	Cllr. Mike Dean	Chairman of the Environment and Leisure Committee
	Cllr. I. Smith	Chairman of the General Purposes Committee
	Cllr. J. Anderson	Chairman of the Plans Committee

Councillors:-

P. Sparks, P. Meakin, D. French, J. Love, D. Bennett, K. Everett, H. Firth
S. Mayhew, C, Macve and D. Ward.

District Councillor Claire Dowling, County Councillor Chris Dowling

2 member of the press

29 residents and organisation representatives

Christine Wheatley – Acting Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

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 Councillors appreciated residents supporting the meeting and then introduced the Chairman of the three main committees.

2.0 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Jackie Beckford, Mr Alan Blackford and Mr John Carvey.

3.0 Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of the 14th April 2015

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of the 14th April 2015 previously circulated were proposed as being a true record by Mr J. Molesworth Edwards and seconded by Cllr. S. Mayhew and agreed by those attending the meeting.

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 the responses:-

HIGH STREET

1) Is there any way, at various stages of the road works that the town could be opened to two way traffic? I do think the one way system is putting people off coming into town. I still come in and park at the south end, however many visitors are put off from what they remember from the previous road works. The system is better than the previous time as no complicated traffic lights are in place, which I agree with.

Cllr. Eastwood advised that this was considered when the tenders were reviewed for the project. The High Street will be open to 2way traffic as soon as possible, and if opportunities are identified to do this, then it will continue to be reviewed. To frequently change the flow of traffic in the High Street could create confusion for drivers, and potentially safety issues as a result.

2) Also the narrowing off the road near the station, caused by extending the pathway to the side of the railway bridge is causing many delays as two lanes of traffic can no longer fit through. Are there any plans to re-widen the road here?

Cllr. Eastwood stated that this does not form part of the current works however, if it is found to be a problem in the future the Town Council would discuss with ESCC.

3) One final question - please could we have some bins in the high street. Some have been removed and not replaced during the road works. There has always been a lack of bins near to HSBC; please can we have one near there?

Cllr. Eastwood advised that as part of the scheme new bins will be installed throughout the High Street the locations for their installation will be agreed with the Town Council.

"I would like to say thank you to the councillors for all their efforts with the keep Uckfield open campaign, we have enjoyed the fun themes as a family. I have lived in Uckfield for thirty years on and off and have seen some changes. I think the look of the high street will be improved but I don't want the shop keepers to suffer in order to make this happen"

Dr. Emma Furlong

HIGHWAY ISSUES

" 1) The southbound traffic is slowed down at Church Street traffic lights by cars turning right into Church Street, but waiting for a gap in the northbound traffic. A slight delay in the change to a green light for northbound cars would allow these to clear quicker, with no need for a filter. Has this been considered?

Cllr. Eastwood advised that this has been considered, and the flow of traffic is constantly under review. If significant issues occur then this will be revisited.

2) There is a bus stop in New Town opposite the Oasis dental surgery. There are cars parked along this stretch of road. Now would be a good time to add yellow lines to allow the bus to stop next to the kerb and not in the middle of the road. Keep in mind that passengers have to walk round cars to get on the bus. Could this be done?

Cllr. Eastwood thanked Mrs Howells for raising this issue and the Town Council will add it to the list of areas that are to be reviewed for potential installation of double yellow lines.

3) At what time the trees (to aid flood defences) being planted? Are these to be planted directly into the pavements, or in tubs? Do the new pavements need to be dug up?

If there could be a problem with roots reaching to buildings, I wonder if large shrubs would work instead?

Cllr. Eastwood advised that the trees will be planted following the completion of each side of the High Street. An information sheet with a diagram about 'tree pits' was circulated at the meeting which provides useful information about their installation and working. The new pavements will not need to be disturbed; spaces are being left for the trees as the work proceeds.

4) Why is a car allowed to park at the side of The Station pub?

Councillors were unsure of the area this referred to and queried if it was the area where the cycle parking has been installed and advised that if so this is Network Rail land, not highways.

5) How are the restricted parking times in the High Street and various lay-bys to be monitored/enforced?"

Mrs Pamela Howells

Cllr Eastwood advised that with regard to the enforcement of on-street parking restrictions discussions are ongoing with Sussex Police regarding the options for enforcement.

HIGHWAY ISSUES

"1) Was there a Vote on this spend if not who decided and why did they think it a good idea?"

Cllr. Eastwood confirmed that decisions relating to this phase of the project are made being made by Councillors from ESCC, WDC and UTC.

2) Have the Small Businesses that must have been affected been compensated?

Cllr. Eastwood advised that it was understood that the businesses are receiving a discount in their business rates but WDC would be able to advise on this.

3) Has any thought been given to those that will still continue to stop in the High Street to shop causing traffic chaos? Bearing in mind there are no Wardens or Police to either issue a ticket or move people on!"

Geoff Dagwell

Cllr Eastwood advised that there has been an increase in the number of parking spaces that will be available, including the Network Rail car park. The infrastructure for buses and pedestrians is being improved, to encourage more sustainable modes of transport.

6.0 Consideration of the Town Council's Annual Report

The Mayor introduced the reports from the Chairman 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

Mr. M. Sanders asked what was the Town Council's response to the Ridgewood Farm planning application for 1000 homes which had been approved by WDC. He read a statement outlining some of the history from when the first proposal was opposed in 2009 when ESCC stated that the by-pass had reached full capacity and Southern Water had concerns about the capacity of their treatment works.

Mr Sanders asked why WDC had still gone ahead and given outlining planning permission when these concerns had not been resolved.

Mr Sanders advised that there were already problems with traffic into the town centre and felt that with the extra housing at Mallard Drive, Old Timbers Lane Uckfield and in the villages of Maresfield and Newick, Uckfield was becoming a one street market town unable to cope with an increase of traffic.

Cllr. Anderson advised that the Town Council understood that the issues raised with Southern Water and South East Water had been resolved which included the smell from the sewage works next to the development but he would check that was correct.

He also advised that the applications for Mallard Drive and Old Timbers Lane had already been approved before the Ridgewood Farm development was proposed and UTC had no control over planning applications for outlying villages. Last year the Town Council's Planning Committee had objected to the Ridgewood Farm development and the new Planning Committee had submitted suggestions to WDC on how the infrastructure could be improved but they were the authority who would make the final decision.

Jane Eastwood asked why plans always included increasing primary school spaces and why is consideration not being given to providing additional space at the Uckfield Community Technology College which was already at full capacity as children within the town were being advised they could not attend the college because there were too many students.

Cllr. Firth a District Councillor as well as a Town Councillor advised that the college always said they did not need a bigger school however as a council we think that they do.

Cllr. Eastwood said that schooling and the lack of provision of GP surgeries etc. were issues that concerned her greatly and she would be pushing for better provision of all services. Cllr. Eastwood advised that she would contact the Principal of the college Hugh Hennerbry to discuss and confirm the college's exact position.

Cllr. Paul Sparks stated that when the 1000 houses were first proposed the Town Council was unhappy with the plans but were reassured that 35% would be affordable homes equating to 350 homes. This however, now appears to not be the case as the developer needs to provide a certain amount of open space known as SANGS due to the Ashdown Forest restriction. He had heard that the provision of this open space is not economical or viable for the developers to build 35% affordable homes and if the rumour is correct and they wish to reduce the number to 15% the loss of such a large number of affordable homes must be

strongly fought as the town needs these affordable homes and nothing less than 35% is acceptable.

Cllr. Eastwood advised that the Planning Committee had registered strong objections to WDC on the reduction in the number of affordable houses and the Town Council would continue to press for the number to be increased.

Mr A. Firth asked why the town's council tax kept going up and why it was so high compared to other towns like Lewes. He asked why did the council keep wasting money by spending money on providing £130,000 on an all-weather pitch and sports facilities and why are the football and cricket clubs subsidised by council tax payers as this was not fair on elderly people. The charges for the use of sports facilities should cover the true cost of the upkeep. The clubs subscriptions should cover the fees.

Cllr. Dean advised that careful consideration when setting budgets is always given to what the clubs should be charged but it is accepted that it is a service that should be provided for residents and their families and that sufficient revenue will never be received back from the clubs.

The clubs do look at other ways of receiving funding and the Cricket club and has applied for grant funding.

Cllr. Smith stated that Uckfield could not be compared to Lewes as Lewes did not have the large number of assets or services to fund as Uckfield. When looking at budgets Councillors do not take decisions for increases lightly and they have kept the increase within the maximum allowed and have tried to keep the tax manageable and still be able to keep the town looking as we like it. As everybody is aware funding from national government is being reduced and all authorities have had to look at ways of reducing their budgets.

Cllr. Bennett stated that Uckfield had a huge portfolio of assets acquired over many years to maintain in good condition. As a Town Council we are affected by other services being cut by WDC and ESSC and as a council we are looking at ways we could possibly take over some of these services, but these have to be paid for therefore not paying extra tax is not an option, we have to keep assets to a certain level but every year budgets have to be paired back.

Cllr. Meakin stated that residents should remember that the Council Tax also includes payments for WDC, ESCC, and the Police and Fire authorities not just the Town Council and that the Town Council precept was only a 2% increase.

Mrs S. Boniface stated that many people would know both she and her husband had for some years lobbied for speed restrictions in Church Street, and they were pleased to see that the 20 mph speed limit in the High Street would be extended into Church Street.

Did councillors know when the speed limit was in place what it would look like and will it be signage or just narrowing of the road which in places is already there. Mrs Boniface asked whether there would be speed humps similar to Maresfield.

Cllr. Smith advised that there would not be speed humps and he understood that there was to be signage and the road in places was to be painted a different

colour, but he was not sure where the coloured surfaces would be. He would be attending a meeting in the near future with TCR group and would ask the question and report back to Mrs Boniface.

Steven Corbin asked if anything could be done about the large number of advertising hoardings that are on the Tesco, Copwood and Blackdown roundabouts which look so unsightly and untidy, he asked if planning permission was required.

Cllr. Anderson advised that he had also noticed the hoardings and it had been brought to his attention by others. He would confirm with ESCC and WDC, it was his understanding that if the hoardings caused an issue for drivers ESCC would remove.

Cllr. Smith advised that he did take up this question with ESCC in December and was advised that if it was a temporary sign ESCC did not get involved but he also felt that it did now require some action.

Cllr. Macve asked if when deciding on a date for the Annual Town meeting consideration could be given to possible other events taking place on same day so there was no conflict on attendance.

Cllr. Macve advised that the Chamber of Commerce spent a lot of time considering the Ridgewood Farm development when the initial planning application was submitted as they were concerned about the highways infrastructure. The Chamber was in favour of the commercial development and the possibility of local employment. At the time ESCC stated that the highways were up to capacity and had now produced models and research into the effect of the new homes on the by-pass. This is to be resolved by the introduction of two lanes rather than one at roundabouts and ESCC have stated that there would be no further congestion on the by-pass.

Mr Charles Mears-Lamb from Noble Wines asked why it was necessary to have parking cones in the High Street outside his premises. He felt that it was not necessary as the road was wide enough for cars to be parked and for traffic to travel down the road, he had spoken with representatives from Colas and been advised that it was not a Health & Safety reason it was a contingency plan as they did not know how far the barriers would go across the white lines.

Cllr. Smith advised that his understanding was that the cones were in place to assist emergency services to move down the High Street if required and the cones could be moved by the workers if necessary. Cllr. Smith also advised that the one way system was the better option if the flow of traffic was frequently changed it would create more confusion for drivers.

Mr Charles Mears-Lamb advised that much had been made about traders receiving a 15% rate reduction but his rates bill had actually risen by an extra £20.00 per month. He asked if the council could go back to WDC and ask that they look at the rates again.

Cllr. Firth advised that traders could contact WDC direct and apply for a rate rebate in the same way as householders were able to.

Carol Brown from Church Coombe asked if more litter bins could be provided as there were only two for the whole estate. Mrs Brown also asked why there was not a play area for older children on the estate except for the cage at Downland Copse.

Cllr. Bennet advised that the Environment & Leisure committee/ Services Working Group were looking into the possibility of providing more bins and also where WDC bins have been reduced if there was a need to continue to have them in particular areas.

Cllr. Anderson took the opportunity to thank Buc Up and all other volunteers for all their hard work to help to keep the town clean.

Cllr. Smith advised that providing bins, emptying and disposing of the rubbish costs a lot of money which is sometimes the reason why the number of bins is diminishing.

Cllr Mcvee stated that he did not know why people could not take their rubbish home to dispose of in their own bins.

Jane Eastwood asked if any public health issues were considered with planning applications for additional homes against the sickness rate within the town. She asked if there were any statistics available from GPs etc., she was very concerned about air quality and pollution in the High Street and whether Southern Water could cope with the processing of sewage and the smell that sometimes comes from their site.

Cllr. Eastwood stated that she had sometimes received complaints in the summer about the unpleasant odour but the council would have to believe and trust that Southern Water can do what they say and that there would not be a problem. She thought that it was unrealistic to ask GPs the question regarding sickness rates.

Cllr. Firth advised that WDC do take on board health concerns and Environmental Health do monitor and regularly check areas. Councillors when considering planning applications always fought for more GP and school provisions.

Cllr. French asked members of the TCR if they could clarify the procedure for emergency vehicles moving through the town as she has asked ESCC the question but not received an answer. She was aware of a recent incident when a young person had fallen from their bike on Manor Park and the ambulance had been delayed when travelling on the by-pass.

Cllr. Smith advised that there was a meeting of the Project Board next week and he would ask if the emergency services recorded any delays in attendance, he would also ask about stop/go boards. He advised that on two occasions he had been in the town when an ambulance had travelled down the town and a fire engine had travelled up to Millington Court and on both occasions the workmen had moved barriers.

Mr Firth stated that he had been waiting 40 years for the regeneration of the town and he was very pleased with the work and changes and residents should be a little more patient and some inconvenience now would be worth it in the long run.

Alex Butcher advised emergency vehicles travelling under a "Blue Light" had to obey the blue indication diversion traffic signs and drive on the by-pass as it was illegal to ignore them by travelling up the High Street and any driver that did so could lose their licence.

Mr Mears-Lamb asked if someone could confirm the rumour that there were now no PCSO's in the town. Recently there was some known shop lifters in the town who had to be 'policed' by traders as when police were called the advice given was that a police officer would be sent by car from Eastbourne.

Cllr. Eastwood advised that she had recently attended a meeting with the police and they informed her that the police had to make savings of £56 million and some drastic changes to policing were to go ahead. They also advised that there would be only 4 PCSOs for the whole of Wealden. The Police are looking at providing Hubs around Wealden but none had been found so far, they also confirmed that the police station was to be sold.

Cllr. Eastwood reported that Town and Parish Councils are all very concerned about the cuts. She also advised that the Town Council had looked into funding one PCSO to serve Uckfield but the police would not guarantee that the person would not be used in other towns or villages therefore the council did not pursue the idea.

Mr J. Molesworth-Edwards advised that yellow lines had been painted in New Town, and the parking restrictions in Vernon, Harcourt and Selby Roads were being observed but not in Mill Drove and illegal parking especially on the bend were causing residents problems. There were also concerns that an emergency vehicle would have trouble gaining access along the road. Mr Molesworth Edwards wanted to know why the police were not doing anything about parking problems.

Cllr. Eastwood mentioned that at the recent police meeting she was informed that with regard to parking this was not a priority and they would not be enforcing any parking restrictions outside the town centre.

Cllr Firth advised that consideration had been given to sharing a Traffic Warden with Crowborough but had not progressed.

Cllr Smith advised that the Service Working Group were investigating the possibility of employing a Community Warden but until parking was decriminalised by WDC the Town Council could not move forward with the proposal.

There being no further questions Cllr. Eastwood thanked Officers and all Councillors for all the hard work they were undertaking for the Town.

The meeting closed at 8.02pm.



Uckfield Town Council Annual Report

2016-17

**Council Offices
Civic Centre
Uckfield
TN22 1AE**

Our Town Mayor's Annual Review of 2016-17

Two years on from the 2015 elections and our Town Councillors have settled into their roles well. They have been integral to the delivery of key projects within the town and been involved in many of the events and activities that you have attended.

As a Council, we have refreshed our five year Business Plan, to look ahead to 2022 and developed an annual plan for 2017-18. These documents set out our key priorities for the town and align closely with our budget.



Working in times of financial constraint, we have used the last year to build on our working relationships with our partner agencies including the District and County Council, as well as local community groups and voluntary organisations. We have looked into how we can assist, and work better together to maintain a good standard of service to our residents. With the imminent removal of central government grant to the District and County councils, it is likely that over time some services will be devolved to the lower levels of local government such as parish/town councils. We are therefore keen to review our working practices and invest now in our facilities and key projects, to help generate income for the town in the future.

We were on hand during the Highway Improvement scheme in Uckfield High Street, to ensure that fast responses were provided to concerns or issues as they arose. We do recognise that this was a difficult time for a number of businesses within the town and therefore regularly liaised with our partner agencies to make sure that your feedback was taken on board. We also used this time to work with local organisations to tidy up our High Street – getting the postbox repainted and a brick wall repaired in Civic Approach as key examples. I have to say the improvements have smartened up the area and we look forward to welcoming shoppers here for many years to come.

The 'Uckfield-the Future' group was established to organise a variety of events and activities during the roadworks and were able to arrange free weekend parking in the station car park. On the success of the events held, the Town Council will be holding two further events this year, which are definitely ones for the diary (*Weald on the Field on Saturday 5th August 2017 – a celebration of local produce, food, drink, music and entertainment and Uckfield Revival on Saturday 7th October 2017 – classic vehicles and entertainment*).

On-going projects have included our review of the CCTV system for the Town Centre and working with partner agencies to consider the options available to address parking in the absence of Police enforcement. The District's recent decision to work with the County Council and explore options for managing civil enforcement in the district is promising though, as is their intention to maintain free off-street parking. In

the meantime we'll be working with the Police and District Council to discourage inconsiderate and illegal parking within our town.

The last year has seen us introduce a new initiative of youth engagement which encourages students at UCTC with an interest in politics to become involved in the Town Council's decision-making process and take part in debates at our committee meetings. This project will be of benefit to the students; enabling them to increase their confidence and build on their experience, as well as benefit the Town Council by helping us to listen to a range of views from varying age groups.

The Town Council's Annual Town meeting provides a great opportunity for our residents – you can have your say on local issues within the town, meet and greet councillors and ask questions you may have on matters regarding the town.

From this report, you will see that Uckfield Town Council continues to work hard on behalf of the town and its residents, and we look forward to receiving your continued support of the town and council.

Cllr Louise Eastwood
Town Mayor
Full Council



General Purposes Committee

The General Purposes Committee has responsibility for looking after the Council's property portfolio, for overseeing the statutory requirements and financial operations of the Council, and for ensuring that staffing and employment issues are addressed and resolved.

This has been my first year as Chairman of General Purposes Committee – I have learnt a great deal in this role which has broadened my knowledge and built on my role as a local Town Councillor.

Property

We have worked with our surveyors to undertake the tender process for our Year 2 maintenance programme and selected contractors to commence these works in January 2017. Along with our surveyors we have agreed and prioritised work for Year 3 of our ten-year maintenance programme and ensured that our 2017/18 budgets align with these agreed works.

We have renewed leases for the Victoria Pavilion's storage garage, Quickborn Suite, the CAB and Bridge Cottage. The terms and conditions of use for Foresters Hall have also been reviewed.

This year we have installed new acoustic curtains and upgraded the lighting within the Weald Hall, at Uckfield Civic Centre, which have been appreciated by the people who have used it since. We have hosted many key events for the town including the Blues and Roots Festival, and organised some very well received events including Johnny Cash, Rave On--Buddy Holly and Elvis. We are always looking for ideas for groups or entertainment and thoughts from our residents are always appreciated.

Finance

As with last year, we have received positive reports again from our internal and external auditors to advise that our finances and processes remain sound. We have reviewed our fees and charges for room hire for 2017/18 and introduced special offers for any new community groups or voluntary organisations looking to hire our facilities.

Financial regulations and investment terms for the Town Council have been reviewed along with responding to consultations from central government, including the Local Government Settlement 2017/18. We are continuously looking for ways in which we can make savings and ensure our business is run effectively and economically. As part of this work we pursued an appeal to review the rateable value of the Civic Centre's business rates – this was successful and has now been reduced. We have also regularly chased and managed any bad debtors using Town Council facilities.

Policies

This year we have reviewed a number of Town Council policies, to ensure they reflect the latest best practice and legislative requirements. This has included policies on complaints, equalities, media and communications, risk management, time in lieu and code of conduct.

Staffing

During the year, we welcomed our new Town Clerk, Holly Goring. We are very pleased to have her on board and look forward to working with her for many years to come.

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 second year in the role of Chair of Environment and Leisure Committee. It has been a busy year with various projects being taken forward and it's been great to see the town looking so attractive.

A working group of the Committee explored options to improve the service levels of grass verge cutting within the town. This is currently undertaken by contractors commissioned by East Sussex County Council. The Town Council explored the options available and associated costs, but felt it would be wise to assess service levels in 2017 before making a decision, as a result of the contractors being fairly new. The Town Council is however responsible for the maintenance of its own parks and open spaces, and published an invitation to tender for its grass

cutting contract over the next three years. A new service provider has been awarded the contract, starting in April and we look forward to working with them.

Work has continued to support the local nature reserves in the town, as well as the supporter groups. The Committee approved the recent change in the byelaws for these nature reserves in line with DEFRA's recommendations and liaised with the County Council on proposed improvements to the footpath through Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve.

Members reported residents' concerns with regard to drainage in the town and helped to push for action in Fairlight, Nevill Road, as well as ensuring that the drains were cleared within the High Street following the improvement works. The Town Council also agreed to take on the maintenance of the culvert at West Park from April 2017, on behalf of the District Council.

We undertook repairs to the path in Elizabeth Gardens and agreed that the Farmers Market could move to Luxfords Field during the drier months of the year. We also worked with the Uckfield and District Town Twinning Association to put in place new Town Twinning signs which recognise our twin town of Arques-la-Bataille on all entrances to the town.

We part funded the 262 Saturday bus service between Hartfield and Uckfield via the Ashdown Forest, which enabled local residents and visitors to the area to reach attractions within the forest and take in the beautiful scenery. With our aim to encourage an increase in health and wellbeing, we installed a new and improved play area and Mixed Use Games Area at Ridgewood Recreation Area. We agreed that Hughes Way Play Area would be the next play area to be upgraded. We also welcomed a proposal for a local group to set up a future Parkrun initiative, which should be a great opportunity for residents in the town to get active and meet other people.

As well as handling environmental matters, the committee also reviews matters relating to community safety. Committee members agreed to run a campaign in 2017 which promoted the use of 'no cold calling' stickers on residents' front doors and window. The Town Council should receive the stickers shortly. Residents will be notified once these become available.

On the subject of safety, 2016 saw us hold another successful summer Road Safety Day with students from 10 local primary schools in the town and surrounding villages visiting Uckfield and receiving safety advice from the emergency services.

With these activities and on-going projects such as the provision of the annual display of Christmas lights throughout the town, our staff and Committee members have been kept busy over the course of the year. We should at this point thank those individuals and groups such as Brighter Uckfield that support our Grounds staff and Ranger with the upkeep of the town. Uckfield is an attractive place to live and together, we can make sure it stays that way!

Councillor Mick Dean
Chairman
Environment and Leisure Committee

Plans Committee

I've held the role of Chair of Plans Committee now for two years. It is an important position and ensures that the Town Council takes on a key role in the planning process by fulfilling its duty as a statutory consultee on all Uckfield based planning applications.

Over the last couple of years, central government have introduced a number of new policies and guidance documents in relation to housing and planning, many of which encourage development and push for an increase in house building. This has made the job of reviewing planning applications much more complex for members.

Our Committee members are able to look at all applications closely and using their local knowledge consider whether an application is feasible. We take on board the views of local residents and this is of utmost importance when we respond to the local planning authority (Wealden District Council) with our decision.

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



Initial plans were recently disclosed by Taylor Wimpey, who will be developing phase one of the Ridgewood Farm 1,000 home development. They propose to build 250 homes in phase one and will be submitting a full planning application to the local planning authority shortly. If they remain on schedule works could start onsite in 2018. We understand from feedback at the drop-in session that residents do have some concerns in relation to the proposed access routes off Lewes Road. The Town Council has captured those views and put these to the developers for consideration before their application is submitted.

With these extensive plans and the draft Wealden Local Plan being published for consultation in 2017, committee members will have a great deal to consider and digest throughout the year in addition to the release of further guidance from central government.

The committee will continue to work on your behalf and represent the views of its residents during this time whilst liaising with Wealden District Council to understand what the Local Plan holds for the future of the district and the local area.

Councillor James Anderson
Chairman
Plans Committee

Financial Summary for 2016-17

INCOME and EXPENDITURE SUMMARY 2016 – 2017 by COMMITTEE			
Committee	Budget set for 2016/17	Projected outturn at year end	Variation from budget set
	£	£	£
Environment and Leisure			
Expenditure	292,898	264,310	(28,588)
Income	44,463	72,209	27,746
<i>Balance total</i>	<i>248,435</i>	<i>192,101</i>	<i>(56,334)</i>
General Purposes			
Expenditure	814,441	767,422	(47,019)
Income	193,738	197,047	3,309
<i>Balance total</i>	<i>620,703</i>	<i>570,375</i>	<i>(50,328)</i>
Luxfords			
Expenditure	176,380	162,835	(13,545)
Income	179,152	158,591	20,561*
<i>Balance total</i>	<i>2,772</i>	<i>4,244*</i>	<i>7,016</i>
<p>() = indicates that savings were made * = shortfall in income levels</p> <p>N.B. Year-end financial processes need to be completed before the above figures can be finalised.</p>			

ALLOWANCES PAID TO COUNCILLORS IN 2016-17			
	Allowances	Expenses	Notes
	£	£	
Cllr. James Anderson	1,224	-	*Denotes Town Mayor. (An additional allowance is payable to the Mayor in connection with the duties of the position).
Cllr. Jackie Beckford	1,224	-	
Cllr. Duncan Bennett	1,224	-	
Cllr. Louise Eastwood *	2,913	-	
Cllr. Keith Everett	1,224	-	
Cllr. Helen Firth	1,224	-	
Cllr. Spike Mayhew	1,224	-	
Cllr. Donna French	1,224	-	The allowances are from the financial year 1 st April 2016 to the 31 st March 2017.
Cllr. Jackie Love	1,224	-	
Cllr. Paul Meakin	1,224	-	
Cllr. Ian Smith	1,224	-	
Cllr. Paul Sparks	1,224	-	

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 (4th April 2016 – 31st March 2017)					
Councillors	Full Council (8 meetings)	General Purposes (6 meetings)	Environment and Leisure (7 meetings)	Plans (18 meetings)	Overall Attendance %
J. Anderson	7 out of possible 8	4 out of possible 6	-	14 out of possible 18	78%
J. Beckford	6 out of possible 8	-	4 out of possible 7		67%
D. Bennett (Deputy Mayor)	5 out of possible 8	-	4 out of possible 7	11 out of possible 18	61%
M. Dean	8 out of possible 8	6 out of possible 6	6 out of possible 7	8 out of possible 8 (resigned committee Sept 2016)	97%
L. Eastwood (Town Mayor)	6 out of possible 8	5 out of possible 6	-	-	79%
K. Everett	7 out of possible of 8	5 out of possible 6	5 out of possible 7	7 out of possible 8 (joined Sept 2016)	83%
H. Firth	8 out of possible 8	5 out of possible 6	5 out of possible 7	-	86%
D. French	8 out of possible 8	-	7 out of possible 7	18 out of possible 18	100%
J. Love	7 out of possible 8	6 out of possible 6	-	17 out of possible 18	94%
S. Mayhew	8 out of possible 8	-	5 out of possible 7	16 out of possible 18	88%
P. Meakin	7 out of possible 8	6 out of possible 6	-	-	93%
C. Macve	8 out of possible 8	-	-	16 out of possible 18	92%
I. Smith	8 out of possible 8	5 out of possible 6	5 out of possible 7	-	86%
P. Sparks	7 out of possible 8	-	-	-	88%
D. Ward	8 out of possible 8	5 out of possible 6	7 out of possible 7	-	95%

N.B. Attendances are from the 4th April 2016 to 31st March 2017.

- 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 2017-18

Each year the Town Council sets a budget for the provision of community grants. In September 2016, the Finance Sub-Committee considered applications for grant funding for 2017-18. The following grants were subsequently approved by General Purposes Committee:

GRANTS AWARDED BY UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL FOR 2017 -2018	
Wealden Citizen's Advice	£18,000
Total Section 142 Grants	£18,000
Active Uckfield	£1,000
Age Concern	£450
East Sussex Association for the Blind (Uckfield)	£300
Field First Responders	£3,000
Royal British Legion (Uckfield Branch)	£210
Samaritans	£250
Sky High Trampoline and DMT Club	£500
Uckfield Bonfire and Carnival Society	£3,240
Uckfield and District Twinning Association	£450
Uckfield Festival Association	£3,240
Uckfield FM	£2,500
Uckfield Food Bank	£1,560
Uckfield Performance Ensemble	£1,750
Uckfield Theatre Guild	£500
Total General Power of Competence Grants	£18,950
Total	£36,950

Our Priorities for 2017-18

Our Annual Plan 2017-18














PEOPLE	PLACE
1. Support local groups and charities through the provision of community grant funding	6. Implement the Town Council's litter bin policy
2. Support initiatives within the town to encourage good health and wellbeing amongst our residents, and an increased awareness of health conditions	7. Work with our partner agencies to lobby for a reduction in the amount of litter on public highways
3. Work with local businesses and organisations to create a Dementia Friendly town, starting with the creation of an Uckfield Forum	8. Implement improvements to the operation of CCTV in Uckfield Town Centre
4. Increase signposting of existing facilities and explore the provision of additional public conveniences	9. Work with our partner agencies to continue to educate school pupils about road safety
5. Support an increase in the provision of events and activities for the town	10. Work with partner agencies to identify further improvements to accessibility and safety on our pavements and highways
	11. Promote the town's green spaces and, allotments to encourage greater leisure and recreation
PROVISION	
12. Improve communication and engagement with residents through increased use of noticeboards and social media	
13. Increase communication with local community groups to enable greater sharing of information and support	
14. Strengthen partnership opportunities with local service providers to ensure delivery of good quality services to our residents	

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.



Uckfield Town Council 2015 - 2016

CENTRAL WARD					
	Helen Firth C/O Uckfield Town Council Civic Centre Uckfield TN22 1AE		Paul Meakin 38 Olives Meadow Uckfield TN22 1QY		Diane Ward 75 Regency Close Uckfield TN22 1DS
NEW TOWN WARD					
	Duncan Bennett - Deputy Town Mayor 179 Framfield Road Uckfield TN22 5AU		Mick Dean 48 Keld Avenue Uckfield TN22 5BW		Barry Mayhew 63 Forge Rise Uckfield TN22 5BX
NORTH WARD					
	James Anderson Allsorts 144 High Street Uckfield TN22 1QR		Louise Eastwood - Town Mayor C/o Uckfield Town Council Civic Centre TN22 1AE		Donna French 42 Olives Meadow Uckfield TN22 1QY
	Jacqueline Love C/o Uckfield Town Council Civic Centre TN22 1AE		Christopher Macve The Cedars, London Road Uckfield TN22 1HY		Paul Sparks 27 Roman Way Uckfield TN22 1UY
RIDGEWOOD WARD					
	Jackie Beckford 55 Baxendale Way Uckfield TN22 5GB Home:		Keith Everett 14 Swallow Court Ridgewood Uckfield TN22 5YB		Ian Smith 30 Castle Rise Uckfield TN22 5UN