

# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre on Monday 7th October 2019 at 7.00pm.

**PRESENT:**

Cllr. J Beesley (Chairman)  
Cllr. K. Bedwell  
Cllr. D. Bennett  
Cllr. B. Cox  
Cllr. J. Edwards

Cllr. D. French (Vice Chairman)  
Cllr. G. Johnson  
Cllr. S. Mayhew  
Cllr. A. Smith

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

One member of the press  
Seven members of the public  
Councillor C. Macve  
Councillor P. Sparks  
PCSO Sue Choppin

Holly Goring - Town Clerk  
Mark Francis - Estates & Facilities Manager  
Minutes taken by Holly Goring

**1.0. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members and officers were reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on the agenda.

Councillor K. Bedwell wished to declare a personal interest in the agenda items relating to Ridgewood, as a result of her role as Chairman of The Ridgewood Village Hall Committee. The Town Clerk had advised that Councillor K. Bedwell could speak but not vote on items 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4.

**2.0. STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON MATTERS ON THE AGENDA AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION**

Two members of the audience wished to speak on items on the agenda.

**EL.21.10.19** It was **RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders to enable statements from members of the public on matters relating to items on the agenda.

A resident from New Road, Ridgewood wished to speak in relation to agenda items 7.3 and 7.4. He wished to thank the Town Clerk for adding these matters to the agenda. Looking at the initial figures and information provided within the agenda papers, the provision of CCTV seemed to be an expensive exercise. It was suggested that perhaps such provision could be included in the modernisation of the Ridgewood Village Hall. The resident was aware that the AGM was due to take place at the end of October 2019, and funding had been sought through the Town Council's community grant programme for 2020/21 for improved security to the front of the hall.

The entry barrier to the car park was however a more pressing matter. Part of the costs could be contained within the Ridgewood Village Hall refurbishment budget. It was suggested that the barrier could be offset from the monies already set aside by the Town Council. The resident did however realise that consultation was yet to take place with the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee and Millennium Green Trust.

Councillor Macve wished to speak in relation to agenda item 5.5 - new initiatives for 2020/21. There was currently a lack of seating available near the bus stop by Southview Drive/London Road opposite Uckfield Garage. It was suggested that a new bench be reinstated in this location as part of the budget setting process.

**EL.22.10.19** It was **RESOLVED** to reinstate standing orders.

### **3.0. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

### **4.0. MINUTES**

4.1. Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 27th August 2019.

**EL.23.10.19** It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 27th August 2019 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2. Action list

Members considered the Action List that had been previously circulated and subsequently noted the report.

4.3. Project Monitoring List – For information only

Members noted the Project Monitoring List and requested that Project No. 50 (FC93.01.19) - Safety Surface at Hempstead Lane, now be removed as a result of works having been completed.

### **5.0. FINANCE**

5.1. To note bills paid

Members noted the bills paid.

5.2. To note the income and expenditure report

Members noted the income and expenditure report.

5.3. To review the fees and charges for Snatts Road Cemetery in 2020/21

Members were reminded that each year as part of the budget setting process, the Town Council was required to review its fees and charges, which would include charges for Snatts Road Cemetery. At the previous meeting, members had also resolved to reduce the fee for children aged 1 - 18 years, in order to bring procedures in line with the new Social Fund (Children's Funeral Fund for England).

**EL.24.10.19** It was **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the report;
- (ii) approve the proposal to amend the reduced fee for children's burials for those aged under 18 years in line with the Social Fund (Children's Funeral Fund for England), with immediate effect, and;

(iii) propose a 1.5% increase in fees and charges for services in Snatts Road Cemetery in 2020/21.

- 5.4 To review the fees and charges for our Sports facilities and Allotments in 2020/21  
Members were also asked to consider the fees and charges for the Town Council's Sport facilities and allotments in 2020/21, as part of the budget setting process.

**EL.25.10.19** It was **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the report;
- (ii) propose a 1.5% increase in fees and charges for the hire of sports facilities and pitches, and rental fees for allotment fees in 2020/21.

- 5.5 To start considering new initiatives for the draft budget 2020/21  
As the process to consider new initiatives for the next financial year was now underway, members were asked to inform officers of projects.

It was suggested that as a result of the close linkages between the aims of the Climate Emergency Working Group and the proposal by the Estates & Facilities Manager to plant a tree for each tree removed, this initiative should be supported. The Estates & Facilities Manager had suggested that the site owned by the Town Council at the back of the Belbrook Business Park should be considered as a suitable place to replant trees, after the brambles were removed. The only caveat that members had with this proposal, was to suggest that an environmental assessment be undertaken to assess the biodiversity of the site before any brambles or vegetation was cleared. The Estates & Facilities Manager advised members that an application had been made to the Forestry Commission to obtain £2.5k grant funding towards tree planting in 2020/21. Another member did also request that consideration be given to the maintenance of any new trees and the need for this to be considered in the revenue budget.

One member had seen an initiative along the South Coast whereby memorial benches were covered in fishes with the names of those being remembered. Fish plaques could be purchase in memory of loved ones. Members were keen to explore this project also.

The Chairman also reminded members that it was hoped that progress would be made towards upgrading the play area in Luxford Field. The Estates & Facilities Manager advised that an initial quotation had been received from one company, and he was awaiting two others. This would provide an indication of the costs associated with the project and assist with budget setting. It was hoped that a further report on this project would be presented at the next meeting.

**6.0. ADMINISTRATION**

- 6.1. To note the minutes of the Allotment Conference meeting of 11th September 2019

Members noted the contents of the draft minutes of the Allotment Conference, held on 11th September 2019.

**7.0. ENVIRONMENT**

- 7.1 To note the current position of the Town Council's Estates

Members noted the work in progress and projects underway on the Town Council's Estates.

## 7.2 To review the sheltered seating area in Ridgewood Play Area

Members discussed the feedback received at a recent meeting held with residents of New Road, Ridgewood whereby concerns were raised with regards to the level of anti-social behaviour and noise nuisance created from the recreation ground and car park, in particular, after dark.

One member highlighted the issues that residents had discussed and felt the ideal solution would be to keep the sheltered seating area, but address the anti-social behaviour. This member had suggested the installation of a mosquito alarm which would emit a high-pitched frequency which would help to deter the use of the seating area late at night. The alarm could be set on a timer and auditory safe limits would be met.

Members discussed the proposal at length, with some feeling that the alarm would be prone to vandalism, and exclude a proportion of the population from using that area.

One member reviewed the statistics for reported crime in the ward of Ridgewood over the past year (Sept 2018 to July 2019) and found that 45 incidents had been reported. In response to residents' previous feedback that a number of households would report incidents when they occurred, this member felt that the number was relatively low, and suggested whether all incidents were being reported. The member felt that the only way to ensure Police patrols in this location, would be to report each and every incident that arose. It was also thought that the CCTV would be beneficial.

Members felt that the sheltered seating area was useful to parents or grandparents and was used during the day as a place of shelter from various weather. The sheltered seating area was also visible on the plans from very early on in the process.

Members recognised that they had a duty of care to residents, but also recognised that groups did move around, and it was acknowledged that similar issues were occurring in other areas of the town, such as Selby Meadows.

One member felt that more evidence was needed to understand the statistics and hotspots of activity within the town, before investment could be made and if one area received certain investment, it would then be necessary to look at other hotspots within the town and thus, become an expensive exercise.

It was also noted that a campaign be set up to encourage residents to report all levels of anti-social behaviour and crime. The issues discussed would be raised at the next ASB Problem Solving Group, a group which had been set up with partners from Crowborough.

A proposal was initially put forward to request that the Town Clerk further investigate the installation of the mosquito alarm, but received no seconder.

### **EL.26.10.19** It was **RESOLVED** to

- (i) note the report
- (ii) work with Sussex Police to run a campaign focused on encouraging the reporting of incidents of anti-social behaviour and crime;
- (iii) further investigate the statistics and evidence available and present this information to the next meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee.

7.3 To initially consider the costs of adding permanent CCTV cameras to Ridgewood Village Hall and Ridgewood Recreation Ground

One member stated that they were in favour of the provision of improved CCTV cameras, as this would protect residents, the building and recreation ground, but wished to clarify that the funds allocated by the Town Council towards the Ridgewood Village Hall, were originally earmarked for the car park, and the money raised by the Village Hall Committee would not be used towards the car park or CCTV.

A second member explained that in response to issues in Selby Meadows, CCTV had been installed and following its installation the young people moved to the other side of the meadow, which then provided a new challenge.

One member felt that further research was required into the criminal activity and anti-social behaviour occurring. They felt that if they were given a choice between CCTV or a Mosquito alarm, they would choose CCTV, as it would act in a protective capacity as well as a deterrent.

Once again members felt other areas of the town, may also require this level of public security, and therefore wished to consider the whole picture.

**EL.27.10.19** Seven members voted in support and **RESOLVED** to further investigate the provision of CCTV in New Road (Ridgewood Village Hall and Ridgewood Recreation Ground) and open up this investigation to include other areas of the town.

7.4 To note the initial investigations into the addition of a gate/security on Ridgewood Village Hall Car Park

Concerns were initially raised with regard to the installation of a gate on Ridgewood Village Hall Car Park. The Village Hall was a public building and the car park was also open to the public for the use of local facilities. In particular, concerns were raised with regard to emergency access.

It was expressed that the gate could be opened by the morning cleaner and closed again by the last hall user each night, but it was noted that to ensure continued use by all who currently accessed the hall, recreation ground or Millennium Green, a large number of people would need to have access to a code or key. The more widely known the code or accessible the key, the less secure the system would become.

The Ridgewood Village Hall had recently improved the security lighting around the building as it was felt that lighting may deter certain behaviour.

Overall, members had mixed views on the addition of a gate and requested more information in order to assist with their decision-making.

**EL.28.10.19** Members **RESOLVED** to further explore the costs associated with installing an entry system on the entrance to the Ridgewood Village Hall Car Park.

8.0. **LEISURE**  
None.

## **9.0. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS**

- 9.1. Children Stay Safe Day  
Nothing to report at this time.
- 9.2. Speed Indication Device (SID)  
Members noted the report.
- 9.3. Climate Change Working Group  
Members noted the report.
- 9.4. 2020 VE Anniversary Working Group  
Nothing to report at this time.

## **10.0. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

- 10.1. Active Uckfield Group  
Nothing to report at this time
- 10.2. Age Concern (AGM Only)  
Members noted the report.
- 10.3. West Park LNR and Hempstead Meadows LNR – Supporters Group  
Nothing to report at this time
- 10.4. Luxford Centre Management Committee  
Members noted the report
- 10.5. Uckfield and District Twinning Association  
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.6. Uckfield Park Run Board  
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.7. Uckfield Plastic Free Working Group  
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.8. Uckfield Railway Line Parishes  
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.9. Uckfield Youth Club Board  
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.10. Wealden Bus Alliance  
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.11. All Weather Pitch Operational Group  
Nothing to report at this time.

## **11.0 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

## 12.0. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

**EL.29.10.19** It was **RESOLVED** that pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it was advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

### 12.1. To consider a report on the Marketing programme

Members noted the reports and asked that information on all upcoming events be sent to members so they could share on social media.

The meeting finished at 8.42pm