

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of **UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre on Monday 4th December 2017 at 7.00pm

PRESENT:

Cllr. L. Eastwood (Town Mayor)	Cllr. C. Mace
Cllr. D. Bennett (Deputy Mayor)	Cllr. S. Mayhew
Cllr. J. Beesley	Cllr. P. Meakin
Cllr. K. Everett	Cllr. I. Smith
Cllr. M. Dean	Cllr. P. Sparks
Cllr. D. French	Cllr. D. Ward
Cllr. J. Love	Mr D. Manvell (Youth Member)

IN ATTENDANCE:

2 members of the Press
1 member of the Public
1 County Councillor – Councillor Chris Dowling

Holly Goring – Town Clerk
Christine Wheatley – Assistant Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer

Minutes taken by Holly Goring

1.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and officers were reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interest that they may have in relation to items on the agenda. None were received.

2.0 STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON MATTERS ON THE AGENDA AT THE MAYOR'S DISCRETION

None were received.

3.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL AND WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

FC.64.12.17 It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to allow members of the audience to speak.

Councillor Chris Dowling provided an update on matters within his constituency.

Eastbourne Road – Cllr Dowling explained that he been liaising with Cllr Smith regarding community speedwatch in Eastbourne Road.

Bird in Eye Hill – Cllr Dowling had been talking to the residents in this area for some time regarding the speed of traffic. The speed survey data obtained by Framfield Parish Council was being discussed by the parish and he was awaiting a decision on whether they wished to take forward a community match initiative in this area.

Twittens/pavements in Newtown –Cllr Dowling had been advised that works were due to take place to the twittens in the Keld Avenue area and between Alexandra Road and Mill Lane on or around Thursday 7th December 2017.

East Sussex County Council - the County Council were currently working through their budget setting process which would be considered and agreed by their Full Council in February 2018.

FC.65.12.17 It was **RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

4.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Anderson and H. Firth.

Apologies were also received from District and County Councillor Cllr. Claire Dowling.

5.0 MINUTES

5.1 To resolve that the minutes of the meeting of Full Council on 23rd October 2017 taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

FC.66.12.17 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of Full Council of the 23rd October 2017 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

5.2 Action list

Members considered the action list and requested that the following actions be removed from the table as no further action was required at this time:

FC.103.02.17 – To consider the funding of Speed Traffic Surveys

FC. 61.10.17 - To appoint a representative and substitute to the management committee for Uckfield & District Housing Association Ltd.

FC. 62.10.17 – To review East Sussex County Council's Draft Strategy 'East Sussex Libraries – the way forward'

6.0 COMMITTEE MINUTES

6.1 To note the acts and proceedings of the following committee meetings:-

(a) Plans Committees – 6th November and 27th November 2017

FC.67.12.17 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Plans Committees of the 6th November and 27th November 2017.

(b) Environment and Leisure Committee – 13th November 2017

FC.68.12.17 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Environment and Leisure Committee of the 13th November 2017.

FC.69.12.17

- (c) General Purposes Committee – 20th November 2017
It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the General Purposes Committee of 20th November 2017.

7.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

- (i) The Uckfield Town Centre Regeneration Joint Committee
Nothing to report at this time.
- (ii) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Members noted the report of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.
- (iii) Gatwick Airport Consultation Group
Nothing to report at this time.

8.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

- (i) Civic Centre Working Group
A report is due to be considered under confidential business.
- (ii) Uckfield Events Working Group (Celebrate Uckfield)
Members considered a proposal put forward by the working group to run the Weald on the Field and Uckfield Revival events in 2018 and set aside a total amount of £3,000 within the draft 2018/19 budgets for this purpose.

FC.70.12.17

Members discussed the amount proposed, and subsequently **RESOLVED** to set aside £3,000 within the 2018/19 draft budget towards the organisation of two events: Weald on the Field and Uckfield Revival.

- (iii) Dementia Friendly Working Group – Uckfield Dementia Forum
Councillor Sparks reported back on the success of the recent one year anniversary event which took place at the Luxfords Centre on Wednesday 29th November 2017. It was very uplifting to see the enjoyment and involvement of attendees. It was a wonderful event and Councillor Sparks wished to thank everyone involved in making it happen.

Members subsequently noted the report.

9.0 TO AGREE THE PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES FOR CIVIC CENTRE ROOM HIRE IN 2018/19

Members reviewed the report which provided three potential options for charging within Uckfield Civic Centre.

One member felt the proposals were confusing and provided calculations based on the average income between the period of 9am and 9pm.

A second member raised their concerns with options A and B and felt the standard and more simplistic schedule of rates in option C was more favourable. They made a formal proposal to the Council to approve Option C.

Discussions continued, with a fourth member wishing to endorse the comments

of a fellow member who explained the need to cover staffing costs during the evenings and weekends.

The Town Mayor took the original proposal to accept Option C to a vote. This resulted in two votes in favour and 10 votes against.

Discussions continued before, one member made a formal proposal to council members to accept option A.

The Town Mayor took the second proposal to accept Option A to a vote. This resulted in nine votes in favour and two votes against.

FC.71.12.17 It was therefore **RESOLVED** to approve Option A which would introduce peak and off peak rates for room hire in the Civic Centre, in 2018/19.

10.0 TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2018/23

The Town Clerk explained that the Strategic Plan had been refreshed to take account of any newly identified priorities and changes in the last year. Once members were content with the draft document, it would be presented alongside the draft annual plan and draft budget for public consultation prior to Full Council in January 2018.

Members noted that reference was made to the 'low' level of crime on page 3. It was requested that a comparison be made or reference given within the report, to explain what average figures this low level had been compared against.

Members subsequently noted the report.

11.0 TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN FOR 2018/19

The draft annual plan had also been refreshed to reflect the priorities of the Town Council in 2018/19.

It was suggested that the wording for priority 11 be changed to state 'throughout the town' to incorporate any work undertaken to improve footway links across the town rather than just in the south.

Members subsequently noted the report.

12.0 TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT ANNUAL BUDGET FOR 2018/19

The Assistant Town Clerk advised that provisional figures had been received from Wealden District Council that day with an indication of the tax base and parish support grant that the Town Council would receive in 2018/19.

The parish support grant was provisionally set at £14,159 and the provisional council tax base figure was 5568.20. Re-calculated, this created a draft percentage increase of 2.49% per household per annum.

Members considered the draft figures and projects incorporated. Under General Purposes Committee, one member highlighted that the Town Council would need

to revisit the hiring charges for the Civic Centre, subject to the approved charges. They also suggested that the Town Council pay for polling cards for future by-elections. The Town Clerk advised that they would explore the costs and report back at the next meeting.

Members subsequently noted the report.

13.0 TO REVIEW THE TOWN COUNCIL'S STANDING ORDERS

In response to discussions at the meeting of Full Council on 11th September 2017, the Town Clerk undertook research to understand how neighbouring authorities handled questions or statements from members which were unrelated to the council agenda.

It was explained by the member who raised this matter, that sometimes there were urgent items which councillors wished to raise but as these matters had not been listed on the agenda, they were unable to put them forward. Procedures varied by local parish/town council. Some local councils refrained from enabling members to speak on matters unrelated to the council agenda, or required at least some form of notice, similar to Uckfield Town Council. At present as per paragraph 11.1 of the Standing Orders members could make a statement at the Town Council meeting which was not related to the agenda provided seven clear days of notice had been given to the Clerk.

This notice period was originally put in place to enable a detailed response to be given or research to be gathered prior to the meeting, otherwise any question may not receive a response until the following meeting which was usually 4-6 weeks later.

Members discussed the suggestion at some length and due to the concerns raised with altering current procedures, it was decided not to pursue the matter at this time.

One member wished to raise an additional matter relating to paragraphs 15.3 and 15.4 which stated that a Chairman of a Committee could not serve longer than three consecutive years. This member noted that it often took time to fully understand a subject area and the knowledge built whilst acting as Chair was invaluable. They thought it made sense to extend this period to a four year term.

On the Town Clerks advice, the Mayor requested that the Clerk investigate this matter further and report back to the next Full Council meeting.

14.0 TO REVIEW AND RESPOND TO THE PROPOSED HIGHWAYS WORKS LINKED TO PHASES 1A & 1B OF DEVELOPMENT AT RIDGEWOOD FARM

Members considered the proposals put forward by East Sussex Highways for highway works in Lewes Road to support the new access points to the Ridgewood Farm development. In summary members wished to raise the following:

- they supported the extension of the 30mph speed limit;
- thought it was positive to see that the proposed enhancements went as far north as Highlands roundabout;

- raised concerns with the most southern access point and its proximity to the bend in the road not far from Little Horsted roundabout. The second (northern) access point appeared to be relatively safe. It was then questioned why two access points were required and not one;
- although members understood the importance of the traffic calming measures being proposed, road narrowing brought with it extra road signage and street furniture which created clutter and meant the environment would look very different from its current rural setting;
- vegetation had recently been cut back along the footpaths. Members questioned whether ESCC would continue to be responsible for this area as part of their annual verge cutting/maintenance programme.

Members also sought clarity on any proposed footpath diversions during the works, and plans for creating the footpaths from the town into the site. The Town Clerk advised that this feedback would be passed to East Sussex Highways for consideration.

15.0 TO NOTE THE TOWN COUNCIL'S VIEWS ON THE TOWN CENTRE 20MPH SPEED LIMIT

East Sussex Highways were seeking to formalise the proposed change to the speed limit in Uckfield High Street and neighbouring roads, following the introduction of the 20mph speed limit as part of the highway improvement works.

Members supported the proposal and noted the report.

16.0 TO NOTE THE FINDINGS FROM THE SPEED SURVEYS COMPLETED ON THE ACCESS CORRIDORS INTO UCKFIELD

Members were presented with the data captured from speed surveys undertaken in Bird in Eye Hill, Church Street, Eastbourne Road and London Road (Ringles Cross).

Members were advised that it was hoped in the longer term, that improvements could be made to these areas through a phase four of highway improvements to the access corridors. There was also work being undertaken by a working group of the council to establish a road safety scheme by using speed indicator devices in various areas of the town and changing driver behaviour.

With this in mind, members noted the report.

17.0 TO CONSIDER THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND'S REVISED PROPOSALS FOR NEW PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES

Members noted the proposals put forward for the new parliamentary constituencies.

18.0 TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

Members noted the Mayor's engagements.

19.0 SIGNING OF GRAVE CERTIFICATES AND TO NOTE TRANSFERS OF DEEDS OF GRANT

Five grants of deeds of burial had been received:

FC.72.12.17 It was **RESOLVED** to sign the certificates for the following:
Pamela Edith Mayell, Maxie William Mayell & Angela Cowing
Anita Edwards
Richard Warner
Mr Ian James Best
Gary John Nicholls
Peter Henry Davies, Marilyn Joyce Davies and Myrna Horthy

20.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED

None received.

21.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Clerk provided an update which had been received from Wealden District Council that day regarding the Industrial Estate:

Positive news had been received. Arrangements had been made for the hazardous chemicals to be removed from the unit on the Bellbrook Industrial Estate. The most hazardous chemical had now been removed.

The work to clear the unit would continue but would obviously take a little time.

The Clerk confirmed again, that the most hazardous chemical had now been removed. Wealden District Council and Uckfield Town Council expressed their gratitude to the owner of the unit for organising this and Wealden District Council appreciated the role taken by the Town Council.

22.0 CHAIRMAN'S (TOWN MAYOR'S) ANNOUNCEMENTS

None received.

23.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

FC.73.12.17 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.

23.1 Report of the Civic Centre Working Group

FC.74.12.17 Members noted the update and proposals provided and **RESOLVED** in principle, subject to further detail being presented in January 2018, to allocate funds of up to £40k from general reserves to cover the costs of upgrading Luxfords Restaurant.

23.2 Update report on the installation of the Town Centre CCTV

FC.75.12.17 Members noted the update provided and **RESOLVED** to proceed in partnership with the Uckfield Chamber of Commerce.

The meeting finished at 8.52pm.