

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of **UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre on Monday 22nd October 2018 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT: Cllr. S. Mayhew (Town Mayor) Cllr. J. Love (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr. J. Beesley Cllr. D. Manvell
Cllr. M. Dean Cllr. P. Meakin
Cllr. L. Eastwood Cllr. I. Smith
Cllr. D. French Cllr. P. Sparks
Cllr. C. Macve Cllr. D. Ward

IN ATTENDANCE:

One member of the press (*recorded the meeting*)
Councillor Chris Dowling (East Sussex County Council)

Holly Goring Town Clerk

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. They were advised that notice should be given at this part of the meeting of any intended declaration and that the nature of the interest should then be declared later at the commencement of the item or when the interest became apparent.

However, no such declarations were forthcoming.

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

None received.

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

FC.56.10.18 It was **RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders to enable County Councillor Chris Dowling to provide an update.

Councillor Dowling updated members on East Sussex County Council matters. He informed members that pavement repairs were due to take place week beginning 26th November 2018 in Newtown along the section from the station up to the Framfield Road junction. He was aware that the Town Clerk had also received the notification and the Clerk was seeking clarification on the details of the work before sharing wider.

Councillor Dowling had been very pleased to attend the Remembrance event hosted by the Newtown Action Group in Selby Meadows on Sunday 7th October 2018, and expressed his disappointment that only seven days later, the bench seating and picnic tables had been vandalised and set alight.

Members were advised that a meeting was due to take place the following week, with officers and key partner agencies to review the highway proposals in Lewes Road. A representative from the Town Council would also be invited.

East Sussex County Council's next Cabinet meeting had been cancelled but they had started their budget setting process and it was expected that an early report would be presented to the following meeting. The RPPR process (Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources) would then commence in preparation for their February Budget meeting.

Councillor D. Ward reminded Councillor Dowling that the Town Council reviewed its draft budget in December, and would be finalising the budget for 2019/20 in January 2019. It was therefore asked whether the County Council could give parishes an early indication of any services which would need to be reviewed or areas which were proving difficult to fund, going forward.

The Town Clerk advised that she had written to the Directors at East Sussex County Council to ask the same question, and to be provided with information on the County Council's discretionary services. This would then enable the Town Council to analyse where future decisions may need to be taken.

FC.57.10.18 It was **RESOLVED** to reinstate standing orders.

4.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor D. Bennett, and District Councillors Claire Dowling and Peter Waldock.

5.0 MINUTES

5.1 To resolve that the minutes of Full Council on 4th September and 10th September 2018 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

FC.58.10.18 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of Full Council on the 4th September and 10th September 2018 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 agreed to remove the following items which had been completed or appeared elsewhere on the agenda;-

FC.52.09.18 - Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission

FC.53.09.18 - New procedure for handling surplus land - Asset Mgt Plan

It was requested that item FC.51.09.18 remained on the action list. This related to the motion received from Councillor P. Sparks, which asked for a letter to be written to the MP to support a change in the by-laws to make parking on

pavements against the law. A letter had been sent. The Town Council was yet to receive a response.

The Town Clerk also advised that she would share the comments submitted on Wealden District Council's website in relation to the Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission, with members shortly.

Members discussed the plan to reduce the use of single-use plastic. Councillor Firth had visited a town in Scotland where all shops/businesses used paper bags. Councillor Smith advised that Brighton Uckfield were looking into a scheme that Lewes were exploring. It was noted however, that there were major concerns in the recycling industry nationally, with some authorities taking a decision to stop recycling plastic altogether. It had been noted in the media that "more rubbish was exported than recycled."

6.0 COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

FC.59.10.18

(a) Plans Committee on 17th September and 8th October 2018

It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Plans Committees of the 17th September and 8th October 2018.

FC.60.10.18

(b) Environment and Leisure Committee of the 15th October 2018

It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Environment and Leisure Committee of the 15th October 2018.

FC.61.10.18

(c) General Purposes Committee of the 1st October 2018

It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the General Purposes Committee of the 1st October 2018.

7.0 TO RECEIVE UPDATES FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

(i) The Uckfield Town Centre Regeneration Joint Committee

Nothing to report at present.

(ii) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Members noted the report.

(iii) Gatwick Airport Consultation Panel

Nothing to report at present.

8.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM FULL COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS

(i) Civic Centre Working Group

Nothing to report at present.

(ii) Dementia Friendly Working Group – Uckfield Dementia Forum

Members noted the report.

(iii) Uckfield Events Working Group - Celebrate

Councillor D. French advised members that the Uckfield Revival event had been very successful despite the weather forecast. Lewis Riley, who was an up and coming Kart racer led the classic vehicle parade through the town with over 120 vehicles taking part and displaying their vehicles on Luxford Field. Councillor

French wished to thank everyone for their help on the day. Members subsequently noted the report.

9.0 QUARTERLY PROGRESS UPDATE ON UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL'S ANNUAL PRIORITIES FOR 2018-19

Members reviewed a quarterly progress update on the Town Council's priorities for 2018-19.

It was questioned whether Manor Park could be incorporated into the work around pavements and highways under priority 10. Other members felt that the issues affecting Manor Park were complex and varied road by road in terms of ownership, with some sections of pavement being the responsibility of the nearby householder and some sections being the responsibility of all 40-50 properties in that road. Residents' concerns had been raised on numerous occasions with East Sussex Highways, but it had been recommended that the footways be brought up to an adoptable standard before they could take them on.

Members subsequently noted the report.

10.0 TO NOTE THE REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2017-18

Members had been provided with a copy of the final report from the External Auditor for the Town Council's accounts for the financial year 2017/18 (ending on 31st March 2018).

Members wished to thank the Responsible Financial Officer once again for such a good and sound audit, and noted the report.

11.0 TO CONSIDER A MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR D. FRENCH

Councillor D. French had put forward a motion to propose that the Civic Centre join the Safe Haven Scheme. Councillor French did not feel that it was too onerous a commitment. It was a scheme that had started in Peacehaven and Seaford, and required a business to sign up to a Facebook group and place a sign in their window/premises to advise anyone who was feeling vulnerable that their premises would be a safe place to go until trouble had passed. It was aimed predominantly at young people, but would support a range of individuals.

Members were generally in support of the concept and noted that the Civic Centre was already used by many as a safe place, with the Clerk informing them of young school children coming in during the afternoon, teenagers entering the building, as well as older people living with dementia or family members who had lost their relatives.

However some concern was raised in regards to the Town Council's staff and in particular, the caretakers, and the pressure it might be placing on them should an incident occur.

The Town Clerk advised that she had already, in difficult situations, advised the caretakers to lock the front door if they anticipated any risk of danger, and to phone the relevant emergency services. This advice could be repeated and a plan of action put in place.

FC.62.10.18 Members **RESOLVED** to sign up to the Safe Haven scheme in the Civic Centre, but advised that staff look out for their own safety and protection at all times.

12.0 TO CONSIDER A MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR D. WARD

Councillor D. Ward informed members about the Benefit and Debts Advice Project funded by the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in the coastal regions.

A presentation had recently been received at a WDALC meeting, and parishes were informed that the service was not currently available in the region of High Weald Lewes Havens CCG. Referrals were made by health services and self-referrals could also be made if residents were in certain postcode areas.

Disability Living Allowance was being phased out and PiP (Personal Independence Payments) were being phased in. This project was different to the money advice services provided by the Citizen's Advice Bureau because the officers had specialist knowledge and linkages to the health service.

There were mixed views, particularly as the CCG area did not correlate with the geographical district of Wealden. Some members were also concerned that it might duplicate existing services, but did recognise that any support of this nature was important to residents and did not see any harm in making contact.

FC.63.10.18 Members **RESOLVED** to approve the motion and for a letter to be written to the High Weald Lewes Havens CCG to request that they explore the possibility of funding the service in their CCG area, in order to support residents living in this part of Wealden District.

13.0 TO REVIEW AND RESPOND TO THE HIGHWAY PROPOSALS FOR THE NEW ROUNDABOUT JUNCTION AND LAYBY ON THE A22 UCKFIELD BY-PASS

Members reviewed the first draft of the proposed highway scheme to provide a new roundabout junction and lay-by on the A22 Uckfield Bypass associated with the development at Ridgewood Farm.

Members felt the proposals indicated that the new roundabout on the A22 was too small to enable large articulated lorries to carry out a full turning circle. It was thought that previous outline plans had suggested that any vehicles from the new business space further up the A22 would not be able to turn right onto the road, so they would need to travel down to this roundabout to use as a turning point, in order to head north.

Members queried what the travel plan would be during the works, in terms of managing traffic flow on the A22 and reducing the risk of traffic congestion. The works could cause gridlock in the town centre.

One member also reminded Full Council that the Town Council wished for all residential estates to be 20mph zones and this would be an opportunity to incorporate this into the scheme, for vehicles travelling off the A22 and into the new development.

The Town Clerk sought clarity on the comments made and advised that the comments made with regard to the scale and sizing of the two roundabouts, the need for a travel plan during construction and speed restrictions in the new development, would be put forward to ES Highways and Welbeck Strategic Land.

14.0 TO REVIEW THE 2019/20 PROPOSALS FROM EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL ON THEIR GRASS VERGE CUTTING CONTRACT

East Sussex County Council had recently contacted the Town Council to advise that they would be continuing with their current practice in 2018/19 to only provide two cuts per year of urban grass verge cutting, in 2019/20. Their previous service saw a minimum of five cuts carried out on urban grass verges up into the current financial year.

They had put forward two options for consideration by the Town Council in 2019/20:

(i) For Uckfield Town Council to pay for four additional urban grass cuts to enhance the existing service by the County Council. This would cost the Town Council in the region of £6009 per annum (with the service being carried out by the County Council's contractors);

(ii) A financial contribution be given by the County Council to Uckfield Town Council to carry out two urban grass cuts based on their contract rates, at £3004 per annum (and the Town Council would be responsible for arranging a contract for all urban grass verge cutting).

Members found the decision particularly difficult as they were aware the prices could change year on year. They were also aware that once they started contributing to the service which had previously been carried out in full by the County Council, there would be an expectation on the Town Council to continue to do this.

The Services Working Group had looked into the option of taking on the contract back in 2015-16, but it was not an attractive option. Contractors would have to meet specific requirements set by the County Council in terms of health and safety, specific qualifications and use particular equipment which could incur additional costs for the Town Council.

A number of residents had been seen in 2018/19 cutting their own verges, but this was not the case across the whole of the town, and some verges were located in difficult positions alongside the main highways.

It was asked whether alternative options could be explored such as a different number of cuts, or just doing the junctions and key areas of the town. The Town Clerk advised that she did not think that any other options were being offered in terms of the frequency of the cuts as this would complicate matters across the county, but was happy to enquire regarding the junctions and key areas.

Members were generally concerned about both options but recognised that a decision needed to be taken.

FC.64.10.18

With eight votes in favour and six votes against, it was **RESOLVED** to proceed with the first option put forward by the County Council (i) *For Uckfield Town*

Council to pay for four additional urban grass cuts to enhance the service provided by the County Council. This would cost the Town Council in the region of £6009 per annum,
with it being made clear that this decision was purely for the financial year 2019/20 and not a future or on-going arrangement.

15.0 TO RE-SIGN AND SEAL THE AMENDED LEASE FOR THE SMALL HALL(CHAPEL) ADJACENT TO FORESTERS HALL

Members were advised that an amendment needed to be made to the new lease agreement for the Small Hall (Chapel) adjacent to Foresters Hall, as contact details were incorrect for a couple of the Trustees.

The amendments have since been made, and the new lease agreement was now ready to be re-signed by two councillors and sealed, in order to confirm execution by the Town Council.

FC.65.10.18 Members **RESOLVED** for two councillors to re-sign and seal the lease agreement for the Small Hall (Chapel) adjacent to Foresters Hall, on behalf of the Town Council.

16.0 TO APPROVE THE SIGNING OF THE CONTRACT WITH TIKSPAC FOR THE DOG WASTE BAG DISPENSER SCHEME

It was advised that members of Environment and Leisure Committee had been investigating a scheme that would provide ten free Biodegradable Dog Bag Dispensers for a four-year period. The scheme would be run by the company, TiksPac. Ten locations had been identified and a draft contract agreement had been drawn up on this basis.

It was clarified that the bags would be biodegradable and compostable.

A concern was noted in section 6, regarding the situation if the company was taken over, in that the Town Council would not have any influence in the process. It was felt that something should be added to this clause, to specify that the Town Council could object if the transfer of company was against the Town Council's ethics.

FC.66.10.18 Members **RESOLVED** to:
(i) note the attached agreement with TiksPac;
(ii) approve the content of the agreement and for the Town Council to proceed;
(iii) request that the agreement be signed off by the Proper Officer on behalf of the Town Council.

17.0 TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

Members noted the engagements of the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

18.0 SIGNING OF GRAVE CERTIFICATES AND TO NOTE TRANSFERS OF DEED OF GRANT

Two deeds of grant had been received.

FC.67.10.18 Members **RESOLVED** to sign the grave certificates for the following:
Stanley Desmond & June Florence Megan Williams
Mrs Betty Doreen Dadswell

19.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED
None received.

20.0 TOWN CLERKS ANNOUNCEMENTS
None.

21.0 TOWN MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS
The Mayor, Councillor S. Mayhew had also attended the Remembrance event arranged by the Newtown Action Group on Sunday 7th October 2018. It was a fantastic event and a great deal of hard work had gone into organising the event and making all of the poppies. It was with great sadness to hear of the vandalism the following week.

The Town Council had purchased two small perspex Tommy statues to place in the Civic Centre, to commemorate the 100 years since the end of World War One. One would be placed in the Council Chamber cabinet, and one would be placed on display in the Civic Centre foyer, with some of the knitted poppies from the Newtown Action Group's commemoration event.

The Mayor, also wished to advise members and members of the public that a community safety meeting was due to take place on Friday 26th October, in the Council Chamber of the Civic Centre at 10.00am, which would have representatives of Sussex Police in attendance.

22.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

FC68.10.18 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.

22.1 Update on Luxfords Restaurant
Members noted the update provided.

The meeting closed at 8.59pm.