

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of **UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre on Monday 25th February 2019 at 7.00pm

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

2 members of the Press (recording)
County Councillor Chris Dowling
County/District Councillor Claire Dowling
Three members of the public

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 interest that they may have in relation to items on the agenda.

Declarations of interest were received from the following members in relation to agenda item 9.0:

Councillor K. Everett and Councillor I. Smith as they both sat on the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee.

Councillor J. Beesley as he had been appointed as the Town Council's representative on the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee.

A declaration of interest was received from Councillor C. Macve, in relation to agenda item 10.0 as he was a member of the Uckfield & District Lions Club.

A declaration of personal interest was received from Councillor J. Love in relation to agenda item 11.0.

A declaration of interest was received by Councillor P. Sparks at the start of agenda item 11.0, as he had been appointed the Town Council's representative for Wealden Works.

A declaration of interest was received by Councillor S. Mayhew at the start of agenda item 20.1, in relation to part of the report provided under confidential business from the Civic Centre Working Group.

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

FC.98.02.19

It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to enable the Chair of Ridgewood Village Hall to speak.

The Chair of Ridgewood Village Hall Committee, Mrs Bedwell wished to speak in relation to agenda item 9.0.

Mrs Bedwell explained that the summary prepared by Town Council staff clearly outlined the basic principles of the plans for the extension but they wished to clarify some further points. It was advised that the hall was used extensively Monday through to Sunday by all ages and people within the Ridgewood and Uckfield community. No provision had been made for a community facility to accompany the planned 1,000 homes being built at Ridgewood Place. The Chair explained that they were aware that the Town Council was currently focusing its attention on other assets, but strongly believed that due to the population increase planned for Ridgewood, the alterations and improvements to the hall were of paramount importance.

As well as holding community fundraising events, the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee had looked extensively at the current grant funding available, and getting investment for a rebuild/renovation was limited. They were therefore asking for the Town Council as the owner of the building to assist, and to see if they could significantly contribute towards the build, in the form of a public works loan.

Mrs Bedwell noted that she was aware an election was pending, but they had limited timescales in which to apply for grant funding. They also appreciated that Uckfield Town Council was not the Uckfield bank. They highlighted the many advantages to the Town Council in supporting the project, namely the Town Council would be investing in their own building, investing in the local community and contributing to the expanding Ridgewood community. Public loan board finance was small and taxpayers were currently contributing to other public works loans through the town. It would therefore increase the value of the asset and it would leave a legacy for the Ridgewood community for the next 50 years and beyond.

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

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

Budget setting - the County Council's budget went through Full Council for adoption three weeks ago, which attracted some press coverage. It was important to note that almost 75% of the County Council's budget went on social services. A 2.99% increase in council tax had been agreed. They would also be receiving grant funding from the Department for Transport to carry out road repairs in the county. As a result they were revising the schedule for road repairs and resurfacing in 2019/20.

New Town- Cllr Dowling had been made aware that there was a bad pothole in Harcourt Road, which he had been advised would be repaired by the end of this week. Newtown Action Group had also raised the issue of a streetlight not working throughout the winter. This had been reported and also advised that it would be repaired this week.

Lewes Road – Cllr Dowling advised that a meeting would be taking place later in March to look at the final proposals for traffic calming.

One member raised their concerns with the state of the roads in Manor Park and pothole issues, where infills had since come out. Cllr Claire Dowling advised that she was on the case with this issue and Nevill Road in particular was listed on a schedule of works.

Councillor Claire Dowling reminded the Town Council of the Great British Spring Clean initiative which would be taking place between 23rd March and 22nd April 2019.

Wealden District Council approved their budget proposals at their meeting of Full Council the previous week. It had been agreed to increase Council Tax by 2.76%. East Sussex County was due to become a pilot area for business rate retention. Currently the District Council could retain 50% of the business rate income through this scheme, the new pilot would enable 75% to be retained locally. It had also been announced by central government that the New Homes Bonus would be reducing substantially from 2021/22 so this was now an unreliable source of income.

The new waste contract with Biffa would be starting on 29th June 2019 (jointly with Rother and Hastings). There were in the region of 90,000 bins to be collected in Wealden District.

A member had enquired previously about the cost of the garden waste service part of the contract. Cllr Claire Dowling advised that an overestimate had been quoted in a previous report of £100k, but it was thought that it would cost less than this.

The new waste contract would not include any recycling credits, so this would be a loss of £1.5million in terms of income previously received. This was the main reason for introducing the charge for garden waste collection, which had been introduced in neighbouring authorities in the previous contract.

In response to questions received, Cllr Claire Dowling advised that information

had been circulated to residents on three occasions since Christmas regarding composting and recycling. The rate of £50 per bin was a fixed rate for garden waste collection per household per year.

One member asked what the figures were for Wealden District for the business rates. Cllr Claire Dowling advised that she would find this out and provide the information.

FC.99.02.19 It was **RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

4.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from District Councillor Peter Waldock.

5.0 MINUTES

5.1 To resolve that the minutes of the meeting of Full Council on 14th January 2019 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

FC.100.02.19 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of Full Council of the 14th January 2019 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:

FC51.09.18 – Motion by Councillor P. Sparks

6.0 COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

(a) Plans Committees – 21st January and 11th February 2019

FC.101.02.19 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Plans Committees of the 21st January and 11th February 2019.

(b) Environment and Leisure Committee – 28th January 2019

FC.102.02.19 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Environment and Leisure Committee on 28th January 2019.

(c) General Purposes Committee – 18th February 2019

FC.103.02.19 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the General Purposes Committee of the 18th February 2019.

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
Nothing to report at this time.

- (iii) Gatwick Airport Consultation Group
Nothing to report at this time.

8.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

- (i) Civic Centre Working Group
To be reported under confidential business
- (ii) Uckfield Events Working Group (Celebrate Uckfield)
Members noted the report.
- (iii) Uckfield Dementia Forum
Members noted the report.

9.0 TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR SUPPORT FROM THE RIDGEWOOD VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE

Members considered a report which outlined the plans of the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee to extend and refurbish Ridgewood Village Hall. The report requested the support of the Town Council in funding their proposals.

One member asked for clarification on the timescales of the S106 agreement and funding anticipated from the Ridgewood development. The Town Clerk advised that she would check with the local planning authority.

Members wished to thank the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee for their hard work and dedication to date, in getting the project onto paper and starting to fundraise. The village hall was a great facility within the Ridgewood community.

FC.104.02.19 It was **RESOLVED** to request the Town Clerk to explore the options available to the Town Council in terms of whether it would be able to contribute towards the proposed extension and building alterations drawn up by the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee.

10.0 TO CONSIDER A PROPOSAL BY THE UCKFIELD & DISTRICT LIONS CLUB FOR THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Members were presented with a report which explained that 2019, would be the 50th anniversary of the Uckfield & District Lions Club and their fantastic work within the town. The Lions had approached the Town Council with some ideas for marking this special occasion, which included placing benches in Luxford Field with anniversary type benches, similar to the design of the 'Lest we forget benches.'

Members wished to say a big thank you to the Lions for all their hard work in the community. They achieved a tremendous amount and members wished to thank the Lions for this kind offer.

It was proposed to accept their offer to place four new benches in Luxford Field. It was suggested that the new benches replace the existing wooden ones on the eastern side.

Members also discussed potential locations for the planting of trees in Uckfield. Members thought it would be useful to know the types of tree that the Lions wished to plant, before considering location. A couple of places were considered including Holy Cross Churchyard and Victoria Pleasure Ground but it was suggested that the Town Clerk should contact members separately on this matter. The advice of the Grounds staff would also be sought.

FC.105.02.19 It was **RESOLVED** to thank the Uckfield & District Lions Club for their very generous offer, to accept their proposal to place four new benches in Luxford Field. It was agreed that these should replace the four wooden benches on the eastern side. Members also suggested that the bench which had been vandalised at the bottom of Streatfield Road could also be considered as a possible item for replacement.

11.0 TO CONSIDER THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY WEALDEN WORKS

Further to discussions held at the last meeting of Full Council on 14th January 2019, members were presented with a broad range of documents to consider which set out their business plan, finances and recent sources of income.

One member noted that there were conflicting statements within appendix B regarding the future of the Skills UK income stream. Further clarity would be needed on this.

Clarity was also required on the donation made by Wealden Works to the London Welsh Rugby Club.

Members noted that the Town Council did have an annual grants process, but were also keen to understand what financial contribution Wealden Works were seeking.

FC.106.02.19 Members **RESOLVED** to ask the Town Clerk to seek clarification on the following four points, from Wealden Works:

- (i) the future and certainty of the income stream from Skills UK;
- (ii) what financial contribution they would be seeking for 2019/20;
- (iii) clarification on the purpose of the funds paid to the London Welsh Rugby Club;
- (iv) whether they have considered working in association with the Princes Trust.

12.0 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON UCKFIELD'S PLASTIC FREE CAMPAIGN AND TO CONSIDER PURCHASING A WATER SOURCE TO SUPPORT THE REFILL INITIATIVE

Members considered an update on the Town Council's work to reduce the use of single use plastics, and a proposal to install some form of drinking water supply to enable the Civic Centre to become a refill station as part of a national initiative to reduce the use of plastic bottles.

Members wished to thank Town Council staff for their excellent work on starting to reduce the use of single-use plastics. It was thought that a bill was currently going through Parliament to ban the use of single-use plastics, but even if approved, it would take some time to become full legislation.

Members supported the installation of Option 3 (as detailed in paragraph 3.5 of the report), as the best option as it would be available 24/7 and provide clean drinking water. Adequate signage would be required, and the Town Clerk reminded members that members of the public could download a mobile app which would highlight the main refill stations in the Uckfield area.

FC.107.02.19 Members **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the update provided on the plastic free campaign in Uckfield;
- (ii) purchase and install option 3 (a floor standing Artic Chill 88 drinks fountain);
- (iii) allocate the funds in the 2019/20 identified for plastic free initiatives to be used towards the cost of this installation.

13.0 QUARTERLY PROGRESS UPDATE ON UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL'S ANNUAL PRIORITIES FOR 2018-19 (Q3)

Members reviewed the update provided against the 2018-19 priorities for the Town Council.

Members commented on how useful the update report was, and subsequently noted the report.

14.0 TO SIGN AND SEAL THE LEASE AGREEMENT FOR THE SOURCE

FC.108.02.19 Members **RESOLVED** to approve the lease agreement for the Source, with Uckfield Baptist Church and two Councillors signed and sealed the lease agreement at the meeting.

15.0 TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

Members noted the Mayor and Deputy Mayor's engagements.

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

Six grants of deeds of burial had been received:

Thomas Chapman

Stephen John Jenkins

Suzanne Emily Spink

Felicity Mercer, Nicholas Mercer and Mark Mercer

Terry Wincott

Margaret Elaine Ward

FC.109.02.19 It was **RESOLVED** to sign the certificate for the following.

17.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED

None received.

18.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

19.0 CHAIRMAN'S (TOWN MAYOR'S) ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor, Councillor S. Mayhew announced that he attended the Lion's 50th Anniversary Gala Dinner on 23rd February 2019, and that he would be hosting a Charity Ball in honour of the Uckfield Lions and District Club on Saturday 2nd

March 2019 in the Weald Hall of the Civic Centre, Uckfield. Tickets were still available.

20.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

FC110.02.19 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.

20.1 Update report of the Civic Centre Working Group
Members discussed and noted the report.

The meeting finished at 8.48pm.