UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the **General Purposes Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre on Monday 5th November 2018 at 7.00pm

PRESENT:

Cllr. D. Ward (Chair) Cllr. K. Everett Cllr. P. Sparks (Vice-Chair) Cllr. P. Meakin

Cllr. M. Dean

IN ATTENDANCE:

One member of the press Councillor C. Macve Holly Goring – Town Clerk Mark Francis – 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. No declarations were received.

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

Councillor C. Macve wished to raise a query with regard to agenda item 5.2 (income and expenditure reports).

His enquiry related to the income and expenditure report for Luxfords Restaurant. It had been noted that the actuals differed somewhat from the budgeted figures at this point in the financial year, and questioned whether the profiling was accurate.

The Town Clerk explained the difference in expenditure (actual versus budgeted) as two unforeseen costs had arisen early in the financial year, one relating to the rates, and one relating to the salary costs of staff, which had increased subject to the changes in the NJC scales and national minimum wage. Unfortunately as a result of the timing of when the information had been received, the budget had already been set for 2019/20.

There were a couple of early anomalies within the income figures, where a large event had to be credited following a cancellation, which had skewed the presentation of the figures. The busy season for the Civic Centre and restaurant had recently begun, therefore it was difficult to review the figures at this point in the year before the full picture could be analysed.

3.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor L. Eastwood, H. Firth, J. Love, I. Smith.

4.0 MINUTES

4.1 <u>Minutes of the meetings of the General Purposes Committee held on the 1st</u> October 2018

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee on the 1st October 2018 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2 Action list

Members considered the action list and agreed to remove the following items which had either been completed or appeared elsewhere on the agenda:-

GP23.10.18 – To give early consideration to the draft fees and charges

One member suggested that the detail of action GP43.02.18 be expanded to explain that members had expressed an interest in exploring and providing greater facilities to support female based sports as well as existing sports undertaken at West Park.

4.3 Project list

One member asked for an update on the use of the toilets at Victoria Pavilion. The Town Clerk provided an update on the doors, the latest with regard to anti-social behaviour, and general use and cleanliness of these facilities.

Members noted the updated project list.

5.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS

5.1 To note bills paid

Members noted the report.

5.2 To note the income and expenditure reports for 2018/19

One member highlighted how busy the restaurant had been the previous Friday before the U3A meeting in the Weald Hall, with customers waiting for tables.

Members subsequently noted both reports.

5.3. Bad Debts

Members noted the report.

5.4 To confirm the fees and charges for 2019/20

Members reviewed the proposed fees and charges for room hire in the Civic Centre, Foresters Hall and Sports Pavilions for 2019/20. Members had put forward a proposed 2% increase at the last meeting of General Purposes Committee and were now reviewing the revised figures. It was suggested that figures be rounded, for ease.

GP28.11.18 Members **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the report and proposed figures, and;
- (ii) approve the 2% increase in room hire charges for the Civic Centre, Foresters Hall and Sports Pavilions.

5.5 To consider a grant application for funding in 2019/20

Members reviewed the previously circulated papers which contained detailed information about an organisation who had initially submitted an application for community grant funding in August 2018. Unfortunately it had recently been identified that an application had been missed from the process, and was therefore not reviewed by the Finance Sub-Committee at their meeting on 12th September 2018.

Members noted that it was a difficult situation, they were sympathetic to the cause but had to consider the application on its own merits at this point in time. They also advised the Town Clerk that they hoped measures would be put in place to reduce the risk of this happening in the future.

Even if the application had been considered at the Finance Sub-Committee meeting in September, the amount requested of £4999.04 was a large amount and the Town Council would have found it difficult to fund this amount alongside the other 23 community grant applications received, as the pot of funding available under the General Power of Competence was a total of £25,000.

Members requested further information before a decision could be taken. It was therefore suggested that the matter be deferred to the meeting of Full Council on 3rd December 2018.

GP29.11.18 Members **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) defer the agenda item to Full Council on Monday 3rd December 2018;
- (ii) request that contact be made with the organisation and additional information be sought prior to the matter being discussed at Full Council.

6.0 BUILDINGS

6.1 To note the current position with the Council's buildings

The Facilities Manager presented an update on the current condition of the Council's buildings, risk assessments that had been undertaken and maintenance works that were programmed in.

The Town Clerk wished to thank the new Facilities Manager for his hard work in his first couple of months at the Town Council, in particular for overseeing the refurbishment of the restaurant and liaising with contractors, but for also progressing a number of other workstreams.

The Chairman, Councillor D. Ward echoed the comments of the Town Clerk and thanked all staff for their help with the refurbishment.

Members subsequently noted the report.

7.0 POLICY

7.1 <u>To review the Town Council's Financial regulations in line with the recently</u> amended Standing Orders

Members reviewed the amendments provided and noted that the standing orders had been previously presented with these amendments in August 2018.

GP30.11.18 Members **RESOLVED** to:

(i) adopt the amendments on page 10 and 11 to the Town Council's Financial Regulations.

8.0 ADMINISTRATION

- 8.1 <u>To receive a report on the administration of the Council</u> Members noted the report.
- 8.2 <u>To receive Members' audit reports</u>

 Members noted the audit reports received.

9.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

- 9.1 To consider reports from:-
 - (i) Citizens Advice Bureau

The member representative for the Citizen's Advice Bureau referred members to the achievements of the Bureau in the past quarter and positive financial outcomes for residents living in Uckfield and the surrounding villages. They also noted that customer satisfaction rates remained good and they continued to provide a good service.

Members subsequently noted the report.

- (ii) Ridgewood Village Hall Management Committee
 Nothing to report at this time.
- (iii) <u>Uckfield and District Preservation Society</u> Nothing to report at this time.
- (iv) <u>Uckfield Volunteer Centre</u> Nothing to report at this time.
- (v) <u>Wealden District Association of Local Councils Management Committee</u> Nothing to report at this time.
- (vi) <u>Wealden District Association of Local Councils Planning Panel</u> Nothing to report at this time.

10.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

11.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

GP31.11.18
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.

12.1 <u>Action list (confidential business)</u> Members noted the report.

12.2 <u>To review the draft lease agreement for the Signal Box</u> Members reviewed the papers provided by the Town Clerk.

GP32.11.18 It was **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the details of the report;
- (ii) approve the content of the draft lease/tenancy agreement, and;
- (iii) approve the proposal to appoint contractors to carry out additional works as detailed in the report.
- 12.3 To undertake a rent review on Osborne Hall

Members reviewed the papers provided by the Town Clerk.

GP33.11.18 It was **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the details of the report;
- (ii) not undertake a rent review of the premises at this point within the term of the lease agreement.

The meeting closed at 8.34pm.