



THE UCKFIELD VOICE

MAYOR'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

by Cllr. Louise Eastwood

I was extremely pleased and honoured to be asked to turn on the Christmas lights at Holy Cross Church this year. The tree festival looks absolutely stunning! A big thank you and congratulations to all who took part.

Once again, our High Street is adorned with some wonderful Christmas lights which make our town look very festive and a perfect reason to go out, take a look and support the local shops, which include many independent traders providing something for everyone. Please support our town!

Looking back at the summer, we had some colourful floral displays around the town. Well done to our Brighter Uckfield Group, Grounds staff and contractors – they worked extremely hard over the summer months to make our town look beautiful. We've also seen some wonderful community events such as the Festival, Weald on the Field, Revival and the Carnival, which celebrated 190 years this year! Thank you to all who took part in organising these events and a big thank you to our residents for supporting them.

Just to touch on our charities and volunteers again, they have worked tirelessly throughout the year to support vulnerable people within our town, I think they all deserve a big round of applause for giving up their free time to help others. This is what makes our town so special – we have a real sense of community spirit!

On behalf of Uckfield Town Council, I'd like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and the very best for the New Year!



Ron Hill Photographic



Photo : Paul Shepperd

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SETTING OUR DRAFT PRIORITIES AND BUDGET FOR 2018/19

In order to set budgets ready for the new financial year, public authorities have spent these last few weeks reviewing their priorities and the costs of service provision. The Council Tax you pay each year contributes to services provided by these authorities including East Sussex County Council, the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner, East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, Wealden District Council and your local Town Council.

Uckfield Town Council uses its share of these funds to ensure that your town continues to be a vibrant and attractive place to live and work, and we work closely with partner agencies to do this. After listening to the issues raised by residents during the year, and reviewing our income and expenditure, the Town Council prepares a draft annual plan and budget for 2018/19. These are due to be considered by Full Council on 4th December 2017.

CALENDAR PRESENTATION

Winning entrants to Uckfield 2018 calendar competition attended the prize presentation in the Council Chamber at the Civic Centre on the evening of the 30th October.

First prize of a £50 gift card was awarded by the Uckfield Town Mayor Cllr. Louise Eastwood to Darren Coleshill for his entry chosen for September. Second place and a £35 gift card was awarded to Jonathan Close for his entry chosen for April and a £20 gift card for third place was awarded to Lynne Ireland for her entry chosen for October. The entrants who supplied the 12 winning photographs on the theme, 'Celebrate Uckfield' were each presented

with a copy of the calendar before an audience of councillors and the competition judges. The calendars were delivered to all Uckfield households during November 2017. At the event, the theme for the 2019 calendar was announced as 'The Spirit of Uckfield' and entries will be welcomed from January 2018.

The Town Council were saddened to learn that Jean Chamberlain Hare, a regular contributor to the Uckfield Calendar Competition, has passed away. Jean's photo 'Uckfield Grand Prix' is included in the 2018 Calendar for July. Our condolences are with the family.



Some of the winning entrants with competition judges

YOU SHALL GO TO THE BALL!

by Cllr. B. Mayhew

Earlier this year The Uckfield Theatre Guild decided to organise a youth section within their group. The aim is to engage, involve and encourage younger members in the performing arts. I was honoured to be appointed Chair of this group and we were delighted to receive a request to provide this year's annual pantomime in The Civic Centre.

Pantomime is such a big part of the Christmas tradition for many families, so how wonderful to have one locally. This year's production is 'Cinderella' which is sure to delight young and old with a mix of familiar songs, beautifully prepared by our Musical Director Dan Card. There's slapstick comedy, ladies dressed as boys and men as dames...what more could you ask for?

The young performers comprise members of the Uckfield Theatre Guild Youth and guest members from the Deborah Lamb Theatre Arts School, plus a few adult performers to boost the cast.

Emma Creffield, director, is loving the rehearsals with the mix of adults and children, although she's not sure the role of Buttons is suitable for a shy and retiring councillor like me...**oh yes it is!** She is also going to be interpreting the matinée in BSL for Deaf patrons, let's hope she doesn't get a pie in the face!



Uckfield Theatre Guild - Youth
on behalf of Uckfield Town Council
presents the pantomime

Cinderella

Saturday 16th December
2pm* and 7pm
Uckfield Civic Centre



Box Office
01825 769694
(*BSL interpreted performance)



Ticket Prices
Adult/child £7.50
Group of 4 tickets £27.00
Parties of 10+ tickets £6.25 each

Tickets are selling fast, so call the Box Office soon, otherwise even your fairy godmother won't be able to magic you up an invitation.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Agendas are posted on the Town Council website www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk in PDF format, and are also posted on notice boards throughout the Town. Full Council agendas and minutes can also be seen at the Uckfield Library.

Meetings are held in the Council Chamber on the first floor of The Civic Centre, Uckfield and start at 7.00pm (unless otherwise stated). If you wish to ask a question at a meeting, on items on the agenda, it is advisable to submit your question beforehand to allow a full response to be given at the meeting. All questions should be directed to the Town Clerk. Please email admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk or call the Council offices tel: 01825 762774.

DECEMBER

4th	-	FULL COUNCIL (BUDGET MEETING)
18th	-	PLANS

JANUARY

2nd	-	ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE
8th	-	PLANS
15th	-	FULL COUNCIL
22rd	-	GENERAL PURPOSES
29th	-	PLANS

LAST MONTH IN YOUR COUNCIL

As we near Christmas, the Town Council has been looking back at this year's progress and looking ahead to the next financial year.

The progress made towards the Town Council's annual priorities by officers and councillors was commended. Over 80% of the Town Council's priorities were completed or on schedule for completion by year end. A great variety of events had taken place this year including the educational road safety day for local primary schools. The council had provided grant funding to community groups and organisations, and continued to liaise closely with partner agencies to push forward projects to improve road safety, improve health and wellbeing and increase public awareness of health conditions.

The Town Council were also delighted to receive a clean report from the external auditor which demonstrated that the Town Council had sound financial and governance procedures for the year ending 31st March 2017.

An interesting presentation was provided by the Conservators of Ashdown Forest to all council members, which highlighted the Forest's history and how the Conservators were first established. In the 1880s Parliament put in place legislation which required an independent body to oversee and manage the activity of the forest day to day. The Conservators are not a public body or charity and are not able to set a precept to raise funds – this has proved challenging and has required them to review their governance and working practices. The Town Council were invited to attend their next Parish Liaison meeting and to engage with them during a period of transition.



A recent full council meeting saw members debate at some length, the difficulties posed by the changes in East Sussex County Council's draft strategy for library services. Although Uckfield Library would remain open, to make savings the county council were proposing to stop the running of seven libraries across the county and associated financial support, along with removing all mobile library services. It was considered a step too far and the council would be submitting a response to the consultation to reflect these views.

The Town Council has agreed to hold an allotment conference in July 2018 with a number of awards up for grabs including an opportunity for our young budding horticulturalists to get involved in the children's competition.



River Uck, footpath near Hempstead Mill

Council staff will also be working jointly with Wealden District Council to take forward a number of initiatives over the next few months to map and promote the town's green spaces and footways. Uckfield is a beautiful town with a range of attractive open spaces, so let's celebrate these facilities, encourage greater use and assist with improving our health and wellbeing.

We hope you've found these updates helpful this year! Have a very merry Christmas and we'll back with more in the New Year!