

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre on Monday 17th February 2020 at 7.00pm.

PRESENT:

Cllr. J Beesley (Chairman)
Cllr. K. Bedwell
Cllr. D. Bennett
Cllr. B. Cox

Cllr. D. French (Vice Chairman)
Cllr. G. Johnson
Cllr. A. Smith

IN ATTENDANCE:

One member of the press
Two members of the public
Councillor C. Macve
Councillor P. Sparks

Sarah D'Alessio - Assistant Town Clerk
Mark Francis - Estates & Facilities Manager
Rachel Newton – Senior Administrative Officer
Minutes taken by Sarah D'Alessio/Rachel Newton

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.

Councillor B. Cox wished to declare a personal interest in agenda item 7.3 due to his involvement in the Community Fridge initiative, and work with the Newtown Action Group.

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

One member of the audience wished to speak on items on the agenda.

EL.46.02.20 It was **RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders to enable statements from members of the public on matters relating to items on the agenda.

A local resident and allotment holder wished to speak in relation to agenda item 7.3. The resident advised that allotment holders already distributed their surplus stock. They discussed the difficulties of an allotment shelf, that they would like it outside of the boundary fence away from the allotments, and explained a number of allotment dangers that the public may not be aware of. They also wished to highlight the need to reduce dog mess at allotment sites.

EL.47.02.20 It was **RESOLVED** to reinstate standing orders.

3.0. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors J. Edwards and S. Mayhew.

4.0. MINUTES

4.1. Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 6th January 2020

EL.48.02.20 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 6th January 2020 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2. Action list

Members noted the action list.

4.3. Project Monitoring List – For information only

There was no project monitoring list, as a result of the projects being completed.

5.0. FINANCE

5.1. To note bills paid

Members noted the bills paid.

5.2. To note the income and expenditure report

Members noted the income and expenditure report.

6.0. ADMINISTRATION

6.1. To consider the future of the calendar competition

One member stated that it would be a shame if we didn't have a calendar for the office wall and at home. It was recognised that technology had moved on, and members were open to discussing alternative options for production in-house, and looking at possibilities to use an Uckfield based printer.

A second member suggested that with advertisements starting to commence in March, it would now be too short notice for this coming year, so for cost cutting and revenue options, perhaps the Town Council should look at changing the calendar competition in the following year (2021).

Another member noted that we tended to see competition entries from the same people each year, so it would be important to spread the word to encourage new interest from budding photographers; through The Voice and social media, i.e. local media may help.

There was mention of perhaps producing a small, laminated wall chart with photos and adverts as a cost saving option. Other suggestions were one sided photographs with advertising around the edge. It was suggested that Uckfield College could be engaged, going forward.

It was proposed for UTC to investigate wall chart cost and feasibility for 2021.

EL.49.02.20 Members **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the report, and;
- (ii) request office staff to investigate the suggested alternatives to the current calendar competition for 2021.

7.0. ENVIRONMENT

7.1 To note the current position of the Town Council's Estates

The Estates and Facilities Manager informed members that the pontoon under the railway bridge had now been removed.

Members wished to say thank you for the new bins and the fact that there were less incidences of the bins overflowing in Elizabeth Gardens.

Members subsequently noted the report and special thanks was given to the Estates and Facilities Manager for his detailed report.

7.2 To consider a number of street light repairs

The Estates and Facilities Manager advised members of a meeting with East Sussex Highways regarding streetlighting.

In regards to the streetlights along the footpath between Tesco and Streatfield Road there was an option to replace just four columns. It would not be possible to use a cherry picker in this location and the path had been reported to be very dark by residents.

One member thought the costs outlined were quite reasonable in comparison to other types of lights. They liked the idea of replacing alternate lights along the path to spread the costs, but felt if the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money was available, they should do as much as they could with that money.

Belmont Road connected two major residential estates with elderly residents, and more light would improve residents' feeling of safety, so this was a priority. One member suggested that the CIL money be used and to get this sorted out as soon as possible.

The Estates and Facilities Manager made clear to members that if all work listed was carried out, this would only leave £1k left in earmarked reserves of CIL funds. He also advised that the concrete lamps were falling apart, so if we used these funds now, next year we might need replacement columns, which would not be cost effective. One member mentioned that there might be more CIL money in future.

The members proposed to use the CIL funding available in earmarked reserves and to fix all of the streetlights listed for repair or replacement now. This was seconded.

One member also proposed that the Town Council should start to explore the ability to place charging points in the town and had seen lamp column versions. This could be further discussed at the next meeting.

EL.50.02.20 The proposal was taken to a vote. With only one member abstaining (Cllr. A. Smith) and no votes against, members **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the report, and;
- (ii) request that all streetlight repairs or replacements listed in the report be completed using the CIL funds available in earmarked reserves.

7.3 To consider the support the Town Council can provide to the Uckfield Community Fridge Campaign

Members considered a report which set out the aims of a local resident to look at reducing food waste and potential initiatives which would support this within the town. Councillor B. Cox provided further background and information to members about the scheme.

Councillor B. Cox stated that other areas had started to look at the initiative and some areas were more established with their schemes, such as Brighton.

One member raised concerns about guaranteeing food safety, e.g. yoghurt donations. Councillor B. Cox advised that most community fridges worked with supermarkets and there were set rules with regards to perishable goods etc. although transportation of foods had not been looked into in detail yet though.

One member raised a question on how to make sure people accessed the service for the right reasons – Councillor B. Cox advised that there would be a dedicated secure building or container for the fridge which would be under lock and key, for the public to organise and run themselves, and the local resident would form a team to carry out the required tasks.

A query was raised, asking that if someone contracted e-coli, who would be liable for this type of complaint? Councillor B. Cox advised that there had been no issues so far in the local ones that he had researched and they had been run by the local community. Councillor. D Bennett suggested that the initiative needed to be in the centre of town.

Councillor K. Bedwell thought it was a lovely idea and hated food waste but was not convinced of safety at that time. Members suggested that visits should be arranged to look at the schemes already running. It was proposed that visits be made to Forest Row and Brighton.

EL.51.02.20 Members **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the report, and;
- (ii) request that staff organise a visit to the community fridge schemes in Forest Row and Brighton.

8.0. LEISURE

8.1 To consider the designs for Luxfords Play Area and feedback from the public

Councillor J. Beesley informed members that he had attended the full open day with the Estates and Facilities Manager and Town Clerk. There had been a fantastic response from local primary schools for the poster competition and thanks was given to staff for organising this.

Consideration needed to be given on whether the Town Council wished to invest more funds to provide accessible equipment such as a swing for wheelchair users. The original design had changed to allow wheelchair users onto existing equipment such as the roundabout. A two metre high fence had not been included in the designs at this time, to be placed around a wheelchair swing. This would normally be added in schools so that users did not get hurt by a wheelchair swing user. It was suggested that further investigation into other wheelchair accessible play equipment was also needed.

Enquiries had also been made by the Estates and Facilities Manager of the costs associated for extending the footpath to the newly shaped play area. The cost to have in the region of 75 metres of tarmac laid would be approximately £10k, just type 1 would be in the region of £5k.

The relevance of the castle design put forward by HAGS-SMP was reflected in a number of the school posters.

It was proposed to accept the design from HAGS-SMP but to investigate other accessible play equipment with HAGS which could be incorporated.

EL.52.02.20 Members **RESOLVED** to request that the Estates and Facilities Manager contact HAGS-SMP to advise them that their design had been selected from the three designs put forward, and for further investigations to be undertaken into other means of accessible play equipment.

- 8.2 To consider the opportunities of the 'Our Parks Initiative'
One member was interested in the idea, but felt it would be useful if further investigation could be given towards the costings.

EL.53.02.20 Members **RESOLVED** to request office staff to carry out more research into this initiative and report back.

9.0. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

9.1. Speed Indication Device (SID) Working Group

Members advised that it was regrettable that the programme could not continue at this time, and that the equipment could not be placed where they wanted to use it.

EL.54.02.20 Thanks was given to Councillor P. Sparks for his work on the initiative and members **RESOLVED** to agree that unfortunately the group should be disbanded and other measures be explored for reducing speeding traffic within the town of Uckfield.

9.2. Climate Change Working Group

Plans for the EXPO day in June 2020 were going well, with 12 companies already interested in attending.

Going forward it was likely that the workstreams of the community fridge and Uckfield Plastic Free working group would come under the wider remit of the Climate Change Working Group.

Members subsequently noted the report.

9.3. 2020 VE Anniversary Working Group

A VE Day 1940s Cabaret evening had now been booked in for Friday 8th May 2020 (doors opening at 7.00pm, event starting at 7.30pm) in the Weald Hall, Uckfield. There would be 1940s music, music from Uckfield Concert Brass and the Uckfield Singers.

Members noted the report.

10.0. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

- 10.1. Active Uckfield Group
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.2. Age Concern (AGM Only)
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.3. West Park LNR and Hempstead Meadows LNR – Supporters Group
Nothing to report at this time
- 10.4. Luxford Centre Management Committee
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.5. Uckfield and District Twinning Association
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.6. Uckfield Park Run Board
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.7. Uckfield Plastic Free Working Group
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.8. Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee
Councillor D. Bennett highlighted the importance for local Councillors and local bodies to reiterate their policies in relation to sustainable transport and in particular any support for reopening the Uckfield to Lewes railway line.
- Members noted the report
- 10.9. Uckfield Youth Club Board
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.10. Wealden Bus Alliance
It was advised that Wealdlink should be invited to the Climate Expo event.
Members subsequently noted the report
- 10.11 All Weather Pitch Operational Group
Nothing to report at this time.

11.0 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor J. Beesley highlighted problems with flooding in Mill Lane under the bridge to Roller Mill. Councillor D. Bennett highlighted points with regard to safety in this area. The bridge currently adjacent to the Roller Mill had large gaping holes in parts. No lifesaving equipment was available and it posed a health and safety risk.

Members were aware that this was private property, and it was a private bridge on private land, but small children were at risk. It was acknowledged that in bad weather and high water levels, people did go there to look at the river.

Furthermore, Councillor D. Bennett advised that he saw a three-foot tree trunk, forced down the river in the bad weather in February, so if a small child were to fall in, they wouldn't have a chance.

12.0. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

EL.55.02.20 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. To consider a report on the Marketing programme

Councillor J. Beesley ran through the report. It was suggested that all VE activities be advertised together. The Weald Hall was going to be decorated and suggested that Bridge Cottage be asked for any props or 1940s memorabilia. Local schools should also be approached to get involved in creating drawings of WW2 posters.

Members subsequently noted the report.

The meeting finished at 20.31pm