



UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

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Town Clerk – Holly Goring

A meeting of the **General Purposes Committee** to be held on
Monday 9th March 2020 at 7.00pm
in
The Council Chamber, Civic Centre

AGENDA

Under The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, members of the public are able to film or record during a committee meeting.

1.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and officers are reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on this Agenda. Should any Member consider that they require a dispensation in relation to any prejudicial interest that they may have, they are asked to make a written application to the Clerk well in advance of the meeting.

Notice should be given at this part of the meeting of any intended declaration. The nature of the interest should then be declared later at the commencement of the item or when the interest becomes apparent.

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

3.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

4.0 MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committees held on the 27th January 2020

4.2 Action list – for information only
(Attached)

4.3 Project list – for information only
(Attached)

5.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS

- 5.1 To note bills paid
- 5.2 To note the income and expenditure reports for 2019/20
(Attached)
- 5.3 Bad Debts
(Attached)
- 5.4 To receive the minutes of the Finance Sub-Committee held on
27th February 2020 (Attached)
- 5.5 To consider the recommendations of the Finance Sub-Committee held on
27th February 2020 (Attached)
- 5.6 To note the report of the Internal Auditor (February 2020)
(Attached)

6.0 BUILDINGS

- 6.1 To note the current position with the Council's buildings
(Attached)
- 6.2 To consider an update from the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee
(Attached)

7.0 POLICY

- 7.1 To consider the revised Risk Management Policy – No. 29
(Attached)
- 7.2 To review proposed amendments to the Town Council's Financial Regulations
(Attached)

8.0 ADMINISTRATION

- 8.1 To receive a report on Health and Safety within the Council
(Attached)
- 8.2 To receive Members' audit reports
(Attached)

9.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

- 9.1 To consider reports from:-
 - (i) Citizens Advice Bureau (Attached)
 - (ii) East Sussex Association of Local Councils AGM (nothing to report)
 - (iii) Ridgewood Village Hall Management Committee (nothing to report)
 - (iv) Uckfield & District Housing Association Ltd Mgt Committee
 - (v) Uckfield and District Preservation Society (nothing to report)
 - (vi) Uckfield Volunteer Centre (nothing to report)
 - (vii) Wealden Works (nothing to report)
 - (viii) Wealden District Association of Local Councils – Management Committee (nothing to report)
 - (ix) Wealden District Association of Local Councils – Planning Panel (nothing to report)

10.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

11.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

To consider whether to **RESOLVE** to exclude the press and public (pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960) during consideration of the following confidential business to be conducted: -

- 12.1 Action list (confidential business)
(Attached)
- 12.2 Update report on the Town Council's lease agreements
(Attached)
- 12.3 To consider an update on Luxfords Restaurant
(Attached)



Town Clerk
3rd March 2020

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

ACTION LIST – FOR INFORMATION ONLY

General Purposes Committee

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Completed
<u>GP15.08.16</u>	<p><u>To consider the relocation and future use of the Telephone Box</u></p> <p>Further to this discussion, Members RESOLVED to:</p> <p>(4.1) agree to the relocation of the telephone box and site it in place of the two redundant BT boxes outside of Hartfields, Uckfield High Street, and;</p> <p>(4.2) request that all Members should engage their constituents on the possible use of the telephone box, and put forward sensible suggestions to the Chair of General Purposes Committee or Town Clerk.</p>	15.08.16	GP Com / HG	Work will begin shortly to re-approach BT to discuss the existing telephone kiosks in Uckfield High Street and consider, with the public, the use of the traditional red telephone box.
<u>GP32.01.18</u>	<p><u>5.4 To consider the re-allocation of funds to purchase community speedwatch equipment</u></p> <p>Members subsequently RESOLVED, subject to obtaining reassurance from Sussex Police on the on-going maintenance of the software and who had financial responsibility for updating the equipment, that funds be reallocated within the speed reduction budget to purchase the necessary equipment for Community Speedwatch (radar device and tablet) at a cost of £800.</p>	22.01.18	HG	Sussex Police have now decided to release the new software as an app free to download and use on commercially available tablets. It will take a little extra time to change it but they are working on getting this sorted ASAP. Contact has been made with the Community Speedwatch group. Awaiting update on what the group wish to do.

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Completed
<p><u>GP43.02.18</u></p> <p><u>GP12.07.18</u></p>	<p><u>6.3 To consider the feasibility report undertaken for West Park Pavilion</u> With seven votes in favour and one abstaining, members RESOLVED to request the Town Clerk to explore this matter further – identifying potential interest in the Pavilion, their requirements, the development of a business plan and associated costings.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED to note the revised plans and request the Town Clerk to proceed further with exploring this option, to specifically look into changing room and toilet provision, the requirements of the Football Association, potential funding opportunities and an understanding of what is required to support multi-use space.</p>	<p>05.03.18</p> <p>09.07.18</p>	<p>HG</p>	<p>Work in progress.</p>
<p><u>GP39.02.19</u></p>	<p><u>4.5 To consider the recommendations of the Finance Sub-Committee meetings held on 9th January and 6th February 2019</u> Members took a vote and it was RESOLVED to approve the recommendations of the Finance Sub-Committee, in particular: (i) eight votes were received in favour of approving the amendments to the grant application form; (ii) eight votes were received in favour of the amendments to the Grant programme's internal procedures; (iii) eight votes were received in favour of the proposal to change the dates for the 2021/22 grants procedure (closing dates for application 31st January 2021 and grants meeting held in February 2021).</p>	<p>18.02.19</p>	<p>HG/SD</p>	<p>To be actioned in 2020.</p>

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
PROJECT MONITORING – OVERALL STATUS

Date of Report	March 2020
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Committee	General Purposes		
Project Name	West Park Pavilion Scheme	Project Number	49
Resolution Number	Funds	Date	Commentary
FC86.01.18	£15,000	15.01.18	Agreed as part of the 2018/19 under new initiatives for General Purposes Committee.
	£25,000	25.06.19	Progress is now underway on this project. The Town Council will be exploring reconfiguration of the internal layout and an expression of interest will be submitted to the Football Foundation to see whether the Town Council can proceed with a full application for grant funding to assist with improvements to the Pavilion.

Committee	General Purposes		
Project Name	Data Protection	Project Number	51
Resolution Number	Funds	Date	Commentary
FC86.01.18	£2,000	15.01.18	Agreed as part of the 2018/19 under new initiatives for General Purposes Committee in order to meet requirements relating to the new General Data Protection Regulations which came into force on 25 May 2018.
	(minus £1186) = £814	10.08.18	In line with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations, Uckfield Town Council appointed an organisation to carry out an audit of practices of Data Protection and provide Data Protection Officer support services for a period of 12 months. This has totalled £1,030.60 and will also include training for staff and members.

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
PROJECT MONITORING – OVERALL STATUS

			In order to meet the recommendations of these regulations, new email accounts were also set up for all Councillors using the @uckfieldtc.gov.uk domain, to ensure greater security. This cost a total of £155.40.
	£754	20.03.19	Office staff have purchased a small batch of encrypted memory sticks for purpose of administration. Awaiting costs of purchasing these.

New initiatives for 2019/20

Committee		General Purposes	
Project Name		262 Bus Service	Project Number 54
Resolution Number	Funds	Date	Commentary
FC93.01.19	£3,900	24.06.19	Awaiting invoice for quarter one.
	(minus £913.67) = £2,986.33	06.08.19	The invoice for quarter one has been paid and was calculated at £913.67. Contact has been made with North Wealden Community Transport Partnership to find out what percentages the other parishes are contributing.
	(minus £822.30) = £2,164.03	24.10.19	The invoice for quarter two has now been paid and was calculated at £822.30.
		09.12.19	We await the invoice for quarter three. In the meantime, the Town Clerk has made contact to request the potential service costs and contributions required from parishes along the route for 2020/21 to enable members to make a decision on whether they wish to contribute to the Saturday Service in 2020/21.
	(minus £927.54) = £1,236.49	21.01.20	The invoice for quarter three has been received and paid, which was for the amount of £927.54. This leaves adequate funds to cover the costs of our contribution for quarter four.

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
PROJECT MONITORING – OVERALL STATUS

Committee	General Purposes		
Project Name	Replacement of Civic Centre booking system		Project Number 59
Resolution Number	Funds	Date	Commentary
FC93.01.19	£8,000	24.06.19	Town Council office staff have met with one out of four companies that create booking systems, that may be suitable for the Town Council's facilities. Further meetings will take place in 2019.
		09.12.19	Awaiting new administrative staff to start in 2020 and ensure they are fully engaged in the project, as they will be the main users.

Committee	General Purposes		
Project Name	Online event ticket system		Project Number 60
Resolution Number	Funds	Date	Commentary
FC93.01.19	£1,500	24.06.19	The Marketing and Communications Officer has prepared a brief to circulate to local web developers to assist with the purchase and installation of an online event ticket system on the Civic Centre Website. Work will commence on this project in July 2019.
		09.12.19	Work will commence on this in January 2020.
		04.03.20	The Marketing & Communications Officer approached a number of web developers and has now commissioned one locally, to carry out the work required to set up a Tickera online event ticket system for the Civic Centre via the Civic Centre website. 50% of the upfront cost has been paid and we are liaising with the web developers to arrange the detail of the schedule of work.

Meeting of the General Purposes Committee

Monday 9th March 2020

Agenda Item No. 5.3

BAD DEBTS UPDATE

1.0 Summary

1.1 The report details the current position regarding bad debts.

2.0 Details

2.1 The following bad debts are showing on our finance system and will be pursued by office staff over the next week. They are for all relatively small amounts:

- Ceroc Zeal – currently liaising with debt collector to obtain an update on amount outstanding;
- Mr Asargiotaks;
- CRD Contractors;
- Emma Naylor Fitness;
- NHS High Weald;
- NRCorp;

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: Holly Goring

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the **Finance Sub-Committee** held in the Oakleaf Room, Civic Centre on Thursday 27th February 2020 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Cllr. P. Sparks (Chairman) Cllr. C. Macve
Cllr. B. Cox Cllr. D. Ward

IN ATTENDANCE:

Sarah D'Alessio – Assistant Town Clerk

Minutes taken by Sarah D'Alessio

1.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members and officers were reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on this agenda

None received.

2.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor. J Beesley.

3.0 MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Sub-Committee held on the 18th September 2019

FS.07.02.20

The Chairman asked for it to be noted that he left the room for 5 minutes for agenda item 4.0 of the Finance Sub-Committee meeting due to having a prejudicial interest in one of the grants applications.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Finance Sub-Committee of the 18th September 2019 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4.0 TO REVIEW THE RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY No.29

Members reviewed an updated version of the Risk Management Policy for 2020. The Chairman asked if it should include reference to

the Town Council's safeguarding policy(s). The Assistant Town Clerk was asked to investigate.

FS.08.02.20

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to the General Purposes Committee that the revised Risk Management Policy No.29 be adopted.

5.0

TO CONSIDER CHANGING THE TOWN COUNCIL'S PAYMENT METHOD TO SUPPLIERS FROM CHEQUE TO BACS

Members discussed how the system currently worked for paying suppliers and the necessities of moving into the digital age. Members also discussed what the cost saving advantages were by paying by BACS (reduction in postage, administration and banking costs) but it was mentioned that security was a big concern.

It was suggested that Councillors be involved, and the Members Audit could be extended to take this into account.

Councillor D. Ward entered the room at 6.14pm.

The Chairman, Councillor P. Sparks summarised the discussion at that point in the meeting. Councillor Ward expressed her concerns and expressed the need for 100% reassurance that staff were doing their job correctly as Councillors would ultimately be responsible. It would also protect staff from any risk of fraud.

FS.09.02.20

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to the General Purposes Committee that the BACS system be trialled for a three month period; to be introduced from April 2020, with two Councillors to check, sign and authorise payments being made through the system.

6.0

MATTERS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman wished to address correspondence received from the Uckfield Community Orchestra which the Assistant Town Clerk read out in regards to their community grant allocation for 2020/21.

It was discussed how gratifying and honest it was of them to write.

FS.10.02.20

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to the General Purposes Committee that the Uckfield Community Orchestra still receive the community grant that had been allocated to them for 2020/21.

The Chairman thanked the representatives for their attendance.

The meeting closed at 18.32pm.

Meeting of the General Purposes Committee

Monday 9th March 2020

Agenda Item 5.5

TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE HELD ON 27th FEBRUARY 2020

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the recommendation of the Finance Sub-Committee from their recent meeting on 27th February 2020 whereby they considered three matters:
- updated Risk Management Policy;
 - changing payment methods to suppliers from cheque to BACS, and;
 - considering a change to an organisation's plans for which community grant funding had been allocated in 2020/21.

2.0 Risk Management Policy – No. 29

- 2.1 At the meeting of Finance Sub-Committee on 27th February 2020, members reviewed the refreshed Risk Management Policy. It was recommended that:

4.0 TO REVIEW THE RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY No.29

Members reviewed an updated version of the Risk Management Policy for 2020. The Chairman asked if it should include reference to the Town Council's safeguarding policy(s). The Assistant Town Clerk was asked to investigate.

FS.08.02.20

*It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to the General Purposes Committee that the revised Risk Management Policy No.29 be adopted.*

- 2.2 This item will be considered formally by General Purposes Committee under agenda item 7.1 of the agenda on 9th March 2020.

3.0 Changing payment method to suppliers

- 3.1 At the meeting of Finance Sub-Committee on 27th February 2020, members considered a proposal to change the current cheque payment method to suppliers to BACS from April 2020.
- 3.2 It was explained to members that there were a number of reasons why this change should be made now. A number of suppliers had agreed in the past year not to accept cheques including larger organisations such as Wealden District Council. It would reduce the Town Council's postage costs, and the cost to have cheque paper printed up specifically for the Town Council. The costs of processing cheques through the banking system were greater in addition to administrative costs and the time taken by staff within the office. By changing, it would also improve the Town Council's relationship with suppliers, as although the current cheque run takes place fortnightly, by the time the cheques are processed, signed by two councillors and sent out in second class post, the recipient then has to bank the cheque so it could be up to 10 days that the monies have cleared since the cheque was first produced.

5.0 TO CONSIDER CHANGING THE TOWN COUNCIL'S PAYMENT METHOD TO SUPPLIERS FROM CHEQUE TO BACS

Members discussed how the system currently worked for paying suppliers and the necessities of moving into the digital age. Members also discussed what the cost saving advantages were by paying by BACS (reduction in postage, administration and banking costs) but it was mentioned that security was a big concern.

It was suggested that Councillors be involved, and the Members Audit could be extended to take this into account.

Councillor D. Ward entered the room at 6.14pm.

The Chairman, Councillor P. Sparks summarised the discussion at that point in the meeting. Councillor Ward expressed her concerns and expressed the need for 100% reassurance that staff were doing their job correctly as Councillors would ultimately be responsible. It would also protect staff from any risk of fraud.

FS.09.02.20

*It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to the General Purposes Committee that the BACS system be trialled for a three month period; to be introduced from April 2020, with two Councillors to check, sign and authorise payments being made through the system.*

4.0 Matters deemed urgent by the Chairman

- 4.1 At the meeting of Finance Sub-Committee on 27th February 2020, members considered an enquiry from one of the local organisations who had been allocated community grant funding in 2020/21.
- 4.2 The Uckfield Community Orchestra had approached the Town Council to advise that they were delighted to receive a letter last November, confirming the award of a grant of £400 by the Town Council. Originally the main focus of the application was to be able to attract an excellent music director by paying Music Union rates. The new committee had looked at this and felt that even with the generous grant it would not be sustainable to offer an increase of this amount of money. It would put a lot of pressure on their finances, and could detract from our principle of being affordable.

They advised the Committee of a proposed change in the way in which the grant would be used and requested permission from the Town Council to do this.

6.0 MATTERS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman wished to address correspondence received from the Uckfield Community Orchestra which the Assistant Town Clerk read out in regards to their community grant allocation for 2020/21.

It was discussed how gratifying and honest it was of them to write.

FS.10.02.20

*It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to the General Purposes Committee that the Uckfield Community Orchestra still receive the community grant that had been allocated to them for 2020/21.*

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Members are asked to approve the recommendations of the Finance Sub-Committee, for:

(i) the BACS system to be trialled for a three-month period; to be introduced from April 2020, with two Councillors to check, sign and authorise payments being made through the system;

(ii) the Uckfield Community Orchestra still to receive the community grant that had been allocated to them for 2020/21.

Contact Officer: Holly Goring

Uckfield Town Council

Internal Audit Report 2019-20 (Interim Update)

Prepared by Nigel Archer

***For and on behalf of
Auditing Solutions Ltd***

Background and Scope

The Accounts and Audit Arrangements introduced from 1st April 2001 require all Town and Parish Councils to implement an independent internal audit examination of their Accounts and accounting processes annually. The Council complied with the requirements in terms of independence from the Council decision making process from the outset of the revised Regulations, with Auditing Solutions Ltd subsequently appointed to undertake the internal audit function on behalf of the Council for the residue of 2009-10 and beyond.

This report sets out those areas examined during the course of our recent second interim visit to the Council, which took place on 6th and 7th February 2020, supplements the initial work undertaken on 28th October 2019 and will be subject to further update following the final visit on a date yet to be booked following the year-end close-down in May or June 2020.

Internal Audit Approach

In continuing our review for 2019-20, we have again had regard to the materiality of transactions and their susceptibility to potential mis-recording or mis-representation in the year-end Statement of Accounts.

Additionally, with the previously recorded transition from the “Full Code” audit to the “Limited Assurance” regime we are now required to report upon an extended range of the Council’s accounting and other processes annually. Consequently, we have and will continue at future visits to undertake work in each area covered by the Internal Audit Certificate of the year’s Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR in short), which now forms the annual Statutory Accounts for the Council.

Overall Conclusion

We are pleased to record that no significant concerns or issues have been identified during the course of testing undertaken to date: consequently, it has not been considered necessary to append an Action Plan of any formal recommendations and the Clerk and her colleagues are to be commended for the standards of work provided and the successful transition of the Council’s staffing following retirements of the previous RFO and the Administrative Officer late in 2019.

Detailed Report

Maintenance of Accounting Records & Bank Reconciliations

The Council continues to use bespoke Sage accounting software to maintain its accounting records, with annual support currently provided by third party contract accountants (Acuity, who were previously known as Armida prior to a change of ownership). The Council remains a full Sage software user, with Current and Interest Bearing Deposit accounts operated at NatWest Bank, supplemented by occasional Term deposit holdings at Lloyds Bank.

Our objective here is to ensure that the accounting records are being maintained accurately and currently and that no anomalous entries appear in cashbooks or financial ledgers. Therefore:

- We have again verified that an appropriate cost centre and nominal ledger structure remains in place for 2019-20;
- We have checked the opening Trial Balance in the accounting software for 2019-20 to the closing Financial Statements for 2018-19 to ensure that all the detailed balances have been properly rolled forward with no matters arising;
- We have checked and agreed two sample months' receipts and payments transactions (May and September 2019) from both bank accounts to the appropriate cashbooks, including the daily "sweeps"; and
- Finally in this area, we have checked and agreed the software based bank reconciliations as at 31st May and 30th September 2019 for both accounts with no matters arising worthy of note.

Conclusions

There are no matters arising in this area to warrant formal comment or recommendation.

Review of Corporate Governance

Our objective is to ensure that the Council has a robust series of corporate governance documentation in place; that Council and Committee meetings are conducted in accordance with the adopted Standing Orders and that, as far as we are able to ascertain, no actions of a potentially unlawful nature have been or are being considered for implementation. We have, to date: -

- Noted that, as in previous municipal years, the Council's extant corporate documentation such as Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Members' Code of Conduct are subject to on-going review and were again considered fit for purpose following some relatively minor revisions (most latterly in July and November 2018 respectively) to ensure consistency with the previously issued updates to the NALC model documentation;

- Continued our review of the Council's minutes, examining those for the Full Council and its Standing Committee meetings (with the exception of Planning) held to end January 2020 with a view to identifying whether or not any potential issues exist that may have an adverse effect, through litigation or other causes, on the Council's future financial stability – no such issues were identified;
- Noted previously that the Council met all necessary criteria to adopt the General Power of Competence and that this was re-affirmed in May 2019 following the election of the new Council in accordance with extant legislation; and
- We are again pleased to acknowledge the existence of a plethora of relevant, formally adopted Policies and Procedures, together with more detailed written operating procedures in line with best practice, also noting that these continue to be reviewed and updated periodically.

Conclusions

There are no matters arising in this area to warrant formal comment or recommendation.

Review of Expenditure

Our aim here is to ensure that: -

- Council resources are released in accordance with the Council's approved procedures and budgets;
- Payments are supported by appropriate documentation, either in the form of an original trade invoice or other appropriate form of document confirming the payment as due and/or an acknowledgement of receipt, where no other form of invoice is available;
- That an official order is raised for all relevant goods and / or services: we acknowledge that this will not be necessary for all items of expenditure, which are regularly the subject of contracts (e.g. grounds maintenance) or legal requirements (e.g. non domestic rates);
- All discounts due on goods and services supplied are identified and appropriate action taken to secure the discount;
- The correct expense codes have been applied to invoices when processed; and
- VAT has been separately identified (where applicable) and coded to the control account for periodic recovery.

We are pleased to note that sound control continues over the authorisation of, and payments for, supplier invoices and other similar expenditure (still predominantly paid by cheque).

We have extended our testing of payments at this update visit, examining a sample of all those payments individually in excess of £4,000 together with a further selection of every 40th cashbook transaction (irrespective of value) to 31st December 2019. This sample comprised approximately 70 payments, totalled just over £300,000 and represented 50% of all non-pay related expenditure in the year to that date.

In relation to VAT, the current RFO continues to submit quarterly electronic submissions in a timely manner and we have verified that the December 2019 return had been completed in accord with the Sage control account balances and the new Making Tax Digital legislation.

Conclusions

There are no matters arising in this area to warrant formal comment or recommendation.

Assessment and Management of Risk

Our aim here is to ensure that the Council has put in place appropriate arrangements to identify all potential areas of risk of both a financial and health and safety nature, whilst also ensuring that appropriate arrangements exist to monitor and manage any such risks identified in order to minimise the opportunity for their coming to fruition.

- We have noted previously that the Council's corporate insurance cover is provided under a long term agreement by Zurich supplemented by property cover provided by QBE. We have examined the former's current year's policy schedule (to June 2020) and Public Liability stands at £15 million, Employer Liability stands at £10 million, Fidelity Guarantee stands at £1 million and there is adequate Loss of Revenue cover in place at £400,000 for the Civic Centre at £34,000 across other locations. The QBE policy for the year to October 2019 was considered as part of the final 2018-19 audit that for the year to October 2020 has yet to be considered again currently;
- We again note that the Council has a formal Strategic Risk Management Policy in place, which was most recently re-adopted by the General Purposes Committee in August and, by subsequent minute approval, Full Council in September 2019; and
- We again note that sound control registers are in place, on a weekly basis, to record the ground staffs' health and safety inspections of the Council's various play areas and associated facilities.

Conclusions

There are no matters arising in this area to warrant formal comment or recommendation.

Budgetary Control & Reserves

Our objective here is to ensure that the Council has a robust procedure in place for identifying and approving its future budgetary requirements and level of precept to be drawn down from the District Council; also, that an effective reporting and monitoring process is in place. We also aim to ensure that the Council retains appropriate funds in general and earmarked reserves to finance its ongoing spending plans, whilst retaining appropriate sums to cover any unplanned expenditure. Consequently:

- We are pleased to note the conclusion of the Council's budget deliberations at its meeting on 20th January 2020 and that the Precept for 2020-21 was formally adopted, and properly recorded, at £942,405 (with no further Council Tax Support Grant receivable); and

- We also note that members continue to be provided with sound periodic budget management reports during the current year to date (generally monthly) and have briefly considered the end December 2019 position and note that whilst there are some “line by line” variances, the overall position would appear to be quite strong at present.

Conclusions

There are no matters arising in this area to warrant formal comment or recommendation.

Review of Income

The Council receives income from a variety of sources including hire fees for use of the Civic Centre, the Luxford restaurant facility, other property lettings, Cemetery activities, allotments, sports pitches, bank interest and VAT recoveries.

Our objective is to ensure that robust systems are in place to ensure that all income due to the Council is identified and invoiced (where applicable) in a timely manner and that effective procedures are in place to ensure that appropriate recovery is effected within a reasonable time span. Consequently, we have:

- Noted from Financial Regulations that members are required to review the scales of fees and charges for all its activities annually and have obtained detail of those pertaining to the Civic Centre and Forester Hall lettings, Pavilion & Sports pitch hires, Cemetery activities and allotment rentals for the current financial year (which were duly approved in the previous municipal year);
- Noted that officers and members continue to regularly manage, report on and review long-standing and potential bad debts, the most recent of which did not identify any significant issues to warrant further action at present;
- We have examined the Cemetery income streams at this update stage by selecting all those burial register entries for the six month period July to December 2019 and ensuring that each was duly supported by funeral directors’ application forms and death certificates, that the fees charged for each activity were in accord with the published scales, that relevant Sales Ledger invoices had been raised in Sage and that there were no undue delays with settlements of same;
- As noted earlier in this report, we have checked and agreed two sample months’ receipt transactions in full from cashbooks to bank statements, including bank interest arising on the Reserve account at NatWest;
- Verified the bank interest arising on Lloyds 12 month term deposit received in July 2019 to the re-investment contract note (interest being “rolled up” to increase the annual holding);
- Tested periodic incomes such as rentals for the Signal Box, Victoria Pavilion, Quickborn Suite, Vernon Road, the Source, Cemetery Chapel and The Hub for April 2019 to January 2020 from sales ledger invoices to ensure that there were no obvious errors or omissions where receipts could have been expected – no such issues were identified; and

- We note that the Luxford trading position is monitored very closely by the Operations Manager and his staff and that members are provided with sound trading reports on a regular monthly basis but have not commented further due to the commercial / confidential nature of the outturns.

Conclusions

There are no matters arising in this area to warrant formal comment or recommendation at present – we did not test the Civic Centre lettings at this stage because this was covered in some detail during 2018-19 and there have been no processing revisions in 2019-20.

Petty Cash Accounts and Corporate Debit / Credit Cards

The transition to the “limited assurance” regime requires us to specifically express a view on the operation of petty cash schemes within the Internal Audit Certificate at Part 3 of the revised Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

- Two “office” based petty cash accounts are in operation at the Civic Centre in addition to the general operational floats held for the till functions. These are maintained on a day-to-day basis for the separate use of Administration and Luxford expenses utilising Sage cashbooks for transaction processing and accounts are “topped up” periodically as and when required (usually in round sum amounts of £150) and are not operated on a formal “imprest” basis;
- We have checked and agreed a sample month’s payments (January 2020) on both accounts to ensure that each was supported by an appropriate invoice or till receipt, that VAT (where applicable) was being separately identified for periodic recovery and that the goods or services were appropriate for the Council’s activities. We also note the continuing formal control of the “cash-in-tin” balances and re-imbursements, which are subject to independent managerial review; and
- We note that the Council is in possession of a NatWest One Card, with a maximum credit limit of £5,000 and settlement in full by automatic monthly direct debit. We have checked and agreed the transactions for the month ending 15th July 2019 to supporting documentation, also ensuring the goods and services were appropriate for the Council’s activities.

Conclusions

There are no matters arising in this area to warrant formal comment or recommendation.

Review of Salaries

In examining the Council’s payroll function, we aim to confirm that extant legislation is being appropriately observed as regards adherence to the Employee Rights Act 1998 and the requirements of HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) legislation as regards the deduction and payment over of income tax and NI contributions, together with meeting the requirements of the local government pension scheme as further revised from 1st April 2019 in relation to the staff salary contribution bandings.

We have examined the payroll procedures in place and physical payments made to staff in 2019-20 by reference to the October 2019 documentation, the underlying detail for which continues to be produced “in house” by the current RFO utilising bespoke Sage payroll software. Consequently:

- Gross pay rates have been checked to ensure that the NJC pay award and spinal column point revisions for 2019-20 had been duly implemented;
- PAYE Tax Codes and National Insurance Tables have been checked to ensure that appropriate allowances are being applied for the year following the annual budgetary increases in personal allowance thresholds with effect from April 2019;
- Local Government Pension Scheme deduction rates have been checked to ensure they are in accord with the revisions to the bases of employee contributions, most latterly with effect from 1st April 2019;
- Variable hours and expenses have been verified to individuals’ timesheets and claim forms;
- We have checked and agreed the net pay computations on pay slips to the payroll summaries and resultant electronic NatWest Bankline instructions and the settlement of deductions for HMRC and LGPS; and
- We note that electronic monthly returns are made in a timely and accurate manner in accord with current HMRC legislation (aka Real Time Initiative).

Conclusions

There are no matters arising in this area to warrant formal comment or recommendation.

Investments and Loans

Our objectives here are to ensure that the Council is investing “surplus funds”, be they held temporarily or on a longer term basis, in appropriate banking and investment institutions, that an appropriate investment policy is in place, that the Council is obtaining the best rate of return on any such investments made, that interest earned is brought to account correctly and appropriately in the accounting records and that any loan repayments due to or payable by the Council are transacted in accordance with the relevant loan agreements.

- Currently we note that the Council has one periodic Term deposit with Lloyds Bank (for a twelve month period ending in July 2020) and also, as noted earlier, holds “surplus” funds in an Interest Bearing account at NatWest, the interest arising on which has been tested to end September 2019 currently; and
- The Council has four separate PWLB liabilities and we have checked and agreed the first instalment repayment covering them all (in July 2019) to their third party direct debit settlement advice notes and Sage cashbooks as part of the higher value supplier testing noted earlier in this report.

Conclusions

There are no matters arising in this area to warrant formal comment or recommendation.

Meeting of the General Purposes Committee

Monday 9th March 2020

Agenda Item 6.1

TO NOTE THE CURRENT POSITION WITH THE COUNCIL'S BUILDINGS

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report sets out the current position with the Council's buildings.

2.0 The Buildings

2.1 The Civic Centre, Victoria Pavilion, The Cemetery Chapels, The Signal Box, West Park and Foresters Hall, Osborn Hall.

All buildings - boiler servicing has been completed.

The Civic Centre

- Water ingress has been noted above the foyer atrium in the main entrance. Investigations are ongoing by the E&F Manager, this will involve scissor lift hire;
- Footpath lights between Tesco & Civic Centre are booked to be replaced - one of four currently working;
- Martletts room has been part decorated with Oakleaf room planned to be completed in March, carried out by staff;

Victoria Pavilion

- Works are underway to connect the ground staff workshop to the Town Council network to save money on printing and speed up work loads between the two areas;
- Pot hole repairs have been carried out in the car park due to heath and safety;

The Signal Box

- Nothing to report.

Foresters Hall

- Decoration works almost complete, with two small areas to be completed weather permitting;
- Notices are still being used on cars in the car park;
- The gate between the Hall and Chapel has been repaired due to weather damage;
- Ongoing floor polishing is being carried out, however we have seen an increase in venue hire and it is challenging to gain access between bookings throughout some days, which could be seen as a positive;

Snatts Road, Chapel

- Works to the South pitch of the Chapel have been completed, with the remainder of the roof to be completed in April using the scheduled Building Maintenance fund;

Osborn Hall/Hempstead Lane car park

- Nothing to report;

West Park

- Structural survey has been carried out of the roof;

2A Vernon Road,

- Following a request for longevity, the tenant has agreed to extend their lease for a further 12 months;

Ridgewood Village Hall

- E&F Manager is continuing to liaise with the Chair of RVH Committee to ensure H&S compliance;

3.0 Annual maintenance programme

- 3.1 Good progress has been made by the E&F Manager to oversee the delivery and completion of works outlined in the Year 5 Maintenance Programme for the Town Council's buildings. £75k was set aside for these works in 2019/20 with contingency:

Project	Description	Amount set aside	Completed?
Stock Condition	Five yearly survey of all buildings	5,000	✓
Chapel, Snatts Road	Full window and lead repairs, plus security grates	15,000	✓
Foresters Hall	Doors/Frame decoration Remove link roof Pebble dash render repairs	6,000 10,000 2,500	✓ ✓ Still to be completed
Victoria Pavilion	Plumbing alterations	5,000	Works are not viable due to design
West Park Pavilion	Roof repairs to loose and broken gable ends	1,500	✓
Civic Centre	Roof clean of all moss and treatment	15,000	✓

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officers: Mark Francis

Meeting of the General Purposes Committee

Monday 9th March 2020

Agenda Item 6.2

TO CONSIDER AN UPDATE FROM THE RIDGEWOOD VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE

1.0 Summary

1.1 At the meeting of General Purposes Committee on 27th January, members considered in detail a statement from the Chair of the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee, which questioned the future of the committee and requested that the Town Council prepare for any future changes should the Committee wish to hand back the hall to the Town Council.

1.2 The resolution from the General Purposes Committee meeting was:

GP36.01.20 *After some discussion, members **RESOLVED** to ensure continued dialogue between Uckfield Town Council and the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee and for updates to be provided to each General Purposes Committee over the coming months as more information becomes available.*

1.3 This report ensures we continue dialogue with the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee and provides an update on three areas:
(i) planned proposal to carry out the works to the car park, in two stages;
(ii) details of the refurbishment of Ridgewood Village Hall, plus a breakdown of current income and expenditure, plus hall bookings across the week;
(iii) extending the lease agreement.

2.0 Upgrading Ridgewood Village Hall Car Park

2.1 Members considered a report from the Estates and Facilities Manager at their meeting of General Purposes Committee on 16th December 2019, which advised that the upgrading of the Ridgewood Village Hall Car Park could be carried out in two stages. The first stage would extend the size of the car park, by taking in the current grassed area, to provide more spaces, the latter stage would involve the final tarmac finish and lining.

One member asked for reassurance that by doing the works in two stages, that it would not cost more. The Estates & Facilities Manager advised that the works were merely split into two from the original quotation, so there would be no increase in costs as a result of carrying out the works in two phases.

It was acknowledged that there was a meeting of the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee early January, so it may be worth waiting to understand their plans for refurbishment, and that any works to the car park would not have an impact on the cost or timescales of that refurbishment. It was also noted that the car park was used by others, such as those using the Millennium Green, so it does need to be improved for all users.

GP29.12.19 *It was **RESOLVED** to delay the agreement to upgrade the car park until the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee had held their meeting in early January, and therefore defer the decision until the next meeting of General Purposes Committee on 27th January 2020.*

- 2.2 We have now received a response in writing from the Chair of the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee which advises that the committee are happy with the proposed works to the car park, in two stages.

3.0 Information on the current running of the RVH Committee

- 3.1 The table below shows income and expenditure for RVH over a two-year period. The E&F Manager has noted the cleaning costs are well above average for a hall of this size. In comparison, Uckfield Town Council's cleaning expenditure for three buildings is around the figure of £6500 per annum.

Income/Expenditure

Expenditure	2017	2018
Cleaning	4787	7132
Insurance	1264	1280
Rates/Rent	602	622
Utilities	2605	2641
Repairs/Renewals	2258	2026
Bank Charges	115	60
Sundries	250	206
Depreciation of Equipment	146	125
Total	12027	14092

Lettings income	16176	18267
Fund raising	2932	5374
Total	19108	23641

Annual Surplus	7081	9549
Accumulated fund	53957	63506

- 3.2 Is it believed the accumulated fund will be used towards the internal refurbishment project, with the tender for works being distributed on 6th March 2020.
- 3.3 Hall bookings are currently detailed below. As the table demonstrates, the hall is currently booked out for the majority of the week.

TIMETABLE FOR RIDGEWOOD VILLAGE HALL:

As at 10/1/2020

Monday	09:00 – 14:00	
	16:00 – 19:00	
	19:30 – 22:00	
Tuesday	09:30 – 12:00	
	13:15 – 15:15	
	15:45 – 20:30	
Wednesday	09:30 – 11:00	
	12:45 – 14:00	Deb's Dancers
	15:30 – 20:30	
Thursday	09:30 – 12:15	
	13:00 – 15:30	
	15:45 – 19:15	
	19:15 – 21:15	
Friday	09:30 – 11:30	
	12:00 – 16:00	
	12:00 – 15:00	
	16:15 – 20:30	
	15:45 – 20:30	
Saturday	09:00 – 13:00	
	13:00 – 17:00	
Sunday	18:00 – 22:00	

- 3.4 The current bookings are similar to those booked at Foresters Hall on a weekly basis which are managed by Uckfield Town Council.

4.0 Current views of the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee

- 4.1 The Ridgewood Village Hall Committee last met on 20th February 2020. At that meeting they discussed the points raised by the Town Council at their last meeting of General Purposes Committee and considered the year ahead.
- 4.2 RVH Committee members agreed that they would did not propose to make any changes prior to the next AGM in October 2020, and would wait and see what interest and take up there is at the time for the seats on the committee.
- 4.3 They had agreed that it might be useful to review the Constitution to look at the number of committee seats. It may also be that after the refurbishment, some roles on the committee may no longer be necessary.
- 4.4 It was suggested by the RVH Committee that, going forward, the Town Council should allocate more than one Town Councillor to represent Uckfield Town Council on the RVH Committee (Outside Bodies representation) to ensure ongoing dialogue between the RVH Committee and Uckfield Town Council. The Town Clerk would advise that this could be altered at the Annual Statutory meeting of the Council in May 2020.

5.0 Supporting the RVH Committee with the refurbishment

- 5.1 The cost of the internal refurbishment works in the summer of 2020, have been estimated to cost in the region of £59,390.82 plus VAT, which totals £71,268.98.
- 5.2 Unfortunately as the Ridgewood Village Hall is not a VAT registered business, they will be required to pay the VAT so the full total specified should be considered.
- 5.3 It is proposed that the works will take a period of 6-8 weeks to complete, and during that time, the RVH Committee will not be receiving any income for hall hire. The Charity Commission recommend, as with any business that there should be a working capital for 3-6 months for the hall to fall back on during this time.
- 5.4 In May 2019, members agreed to rename the earmarked reserves (£49,000) set aside for the upgrade of the Ridgewood Village Hall Car Park to 'Ridgewood Village Hall Improvements' (see resolution below):

FC25.05.19 Members **RESOLVED to:**

(i) note the report;

(ii) with 11 votes in favour, and one against members agreed for the scope of the Town Council's earmarked reserves set aside for Ridgewood Village Hall Car Park (£49,000) to be broadened and retitled 'Ridgewood Village Hall Improvements' with a stipulation that the resurfacing and improvements to the car park be incorporated in the overall build cost, subject to the Town Council giving prior approval of the car park specification to ensure it meets the standard required, and;

5.5 At present, the finances would work as follows:

RIDGEWOOD VILLAGE HALL REFURB FINANCE PLAN 01/03/20

Total in Fundraising	£5614.61
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Total in CAF	£67887.44
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Current Total	<u>£73502.05</u>
ESTIMATED REFURB	£71268.98

Required

WORKING CAPITAL RESERVE REQUIRED	£5000.00
----------------------------------	----------

10% CONTINGENCY	£7200.00
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<u>TOTAL REQUIRED</u>	<u>£83500.00 (rounded up)</u>
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UTC Earmarked reserves

Car park works estimated to cost £34,500 plus 10% contingency	£38000.00
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This would leave a total of £11,000 remaining within earmarked reserves.

5.6 Ridgewood Village Hall Committee are requesting if the Town Council would provide the RVH Committee with up to £11,000 from the earmarked reserves available to sit within their account during the refurbishment works, as a fall back position. It would therefore only be used if desperately required. It would be unlikely that the funds would need to be used, but available to support the RVH Committee during this period of time.

6.0 Extending the lease agreement

6.1 It has been suggested by the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee that any work to extend the lease agreement to assist with future grant funding applications, be placed on hold until after the AGM meeting in October 2020.

7.0 Recommendations

7.1 Members are asked to:

- (i) note the contents of the above report;
- (ii) agree to the upgrade of the car park being carried out in two stages;
- (iii) to allocate two UTC representatives to the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee at the Annual Statutory meeting of the Council in May 2020;
- (iv) agree to the temporary transfer of up to £11,000 to be made to the RVH Committee during the refurbishment period from earmarked reserves allocated for Ridgewood Village Hall Improvements;
- (v) to agree to hold off on the extension of the lease agreement until after the October AGM meeting of the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee.

Contact Officer: Holly Goring/Mark Francis

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

Policy Number 29		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	01.12.14	GP.39.12.14 – Adopted at General Purposes Committee
2	18.01.16	Reviewed at General Purpose Committee GP.50.01.16
3	06.03.17	GP.42.03.17
4	01.03.18	Finance Sub Committee review of draft amendments
5	09.01.19	Finance Sub Committee review of draft amendments
6	18.02.19	Reviewed Finance Sub-Committee recommendation at GP (18.02.19)
7	12.08.19	GP Committee to review updates – approved.
8	13.02.20	Finance Sub-Committee view of draft amendments

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Uckfield Town Council is aware of its responsibility to manage risk to ensure it achieves its objectives to deliver a high quality of public services and to ensure it provides good governance.

The Council has various policies in place to ensure significant risks are controlled, reviewed and monitored. This document forms the Town Council's Risk Management Strategy, it provides an overview of risk management and how it will be monitored.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Finance Sub-committee.

The tables below detail the controls in place for the main service areas at risk

- Insurances
- Working with others
- Self-managed risk

Table 1. Insurances

Risk Identification			
<u>Insurance Cover</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Review Date</u>
Protection of physical assets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buildings, and contents (where applicable) • Business interruption • Stock • Computer Equipment • Civic Centre CCTV • Town Centre CCTV • Terrorism 	Company: QBE Ins (Europe) Ltd Policy No: Y126862QBE0119A Period of cover: 19 th October 2019 - 18 th October 2020	Arrangement reviewed annually by the Town Clerk	August 2020
Public Liability including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers Liability • Libel and Slander • Motor Vehicles • Fidelity Guarantee • Personal Accident • Legal Expenses • Money • Civic Regalia • Litter Bins • Bus Shelters • Large Grounds Equipment 	Company: Zurich Municipal Policy No: YLL-272007-6913	Public and Employers Liability £10M Libel and Slander £250,000 Fidelity Guarantee Members and Employees £1M	Current policy 19 th June 2019- 19 th June 2020 Reviewed annually by the Town Clerk

Internal controls			
Up to date register of assets		✓	Ongoing
Regular maintenance arrangements for physical assets.		Budgets in place, maintained by staff and outside contractors.	
Annual review of risk and adequacy of cover		✓	
Ensuring robustness in insurance provider		Review other service providers.	
Ensuring we comply with new requirements set out in the EU General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)	Appointment of independent Data Protection Officer	GDPR-Info were re-appointed DPO for Uckfield Town Council in May 2019	Annual review – to assess contract and action plan.
	Audit undertaken of current practices, with action plan of areas to focus attention	GDPR-Info visited premises on 28 June 2018 and carried out full one day audit.	
Ensuring we have adequate network security and firewalls in place	Uckfield Town Council has recently upgraded the Civic Centre Wi-Fi. A feature was added to the public Wi-Fi, which each client has to accept prior to joining the Wi-Fi, giving protection for Uckfield Town Council from misuse.	Redway Networks	

	Uckfield Town Council has installed a tailor-made Network fire wall with VPN capabilities to further strengthen network security and only allow traffic that is pre-authorised.	Redway Networks	
Internal audit assurance			
<p>Internal auditor testing includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review of internal controls in place and their documentation. ✓ Review of management arrangements regarding insurance cover. ✓ Testing of specific internal controls and report findings to the General Purposes Committee. 			

Table 2. Working with others

Risk Identification

	<u>Details</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Review Date</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security of vulnerable buildings, amenities or equipment 	<p>Civic Centre, The Hub, West Park and Victoria pavilions and the garage store alarmed and maintained by outside contractors.</p>	<p>Security Alarms - Innovation Period of cover: April 2020 – March 2021</p>	<p>All security alarm companies to be accredited to the Security Systems and Alarms Inspection Board(SSAIB) and or the National Security Inspectorate (NSI)</p>
	<p>Civic Centre, The Hub, West Park and Victoria pavilions and Foresters Hall maintained by outside contractors.</p>	<p>Fire Alarms – Sovereign All expire Sept 2020</p>	
	<p>Works are ongoing to enable Victoria Pavilion to connect with the Civic Centre network to enhance CCTV provision of the area.</p>	<p>Redway Networks/Focus telephones/Brighton CCTV</p>	

	<u>Details</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Review Date</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of services being carried out by others 	Town Centre CCTV	New Town Centre CCTV system in place Nov. 2018– Six cameras. i-witness partnership Sussex Police	Annual review by Town Clerk
	Civic Centre	Civic Centre own CCTV system - Brighton CCTV Feb 2019	Review to be undertaken in March 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Banking arrangements, including borrowing 	Banking arrangements reviewed every two years by Finance Sub-committee.	Partial review carried out prior to June 2019	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional services (architects, project managers etc.) 	To use specialist when required.		Review to be undertaken as and when required on a project by project basis.

Internal controls by Internal Auditor

- Standing Orders
- Annual review of contracts
- Clear statements of management responsibility for each service.
- Adoption and adherence to codes of practice
- Arrangements to detect and deter fraud and/or corruption
- Regular bank reconciliation, independently reviewed.

✓

✓

✓

✓

✓

✓

Internal audit assurance

Internal Auditor testing includes:

- ✓ Review of internal controls in place and their documentation.
- ✓ Review of management arrangements regarding insurance cover.
- ✓ Testing of specific internal controls and report findings to the General Purposes Committee.

Table 3. Self-managed risk
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Regular scrutiny of financial records and proper arrangement for the approval of expenditure○ Regular budget monitoring statements○ Minutes properly numbered and paginated with a master copy for safe keeping○ Regular returns to HM Revenue and Customs; contracts of employment for all staff, systems of updating records for any changes in relevant legislation○ Regular returns of VAT, relevant officer training○ Procedures for dealing with and monitoring grants made○ Procedure in place for recording and monitoring Members' interests and gift and hospitality received○ Adoption of codes of conduct for Members and employees○ Developing systems of performance measurement○ Documented procedures to deal with enquiries from the public○ Documented procedure to deal with responses to consultation requests○ Monitoring arrangements by the Council regarding Quality status
Internal audit assurance
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Review of internal controls in place and their documentation✓ Review of minutes to ensure legal powers in place recorded and correctly applied✓ Testing of income and expenditure from minutes to cashbook, from bank statements to cashbook, from, minutes to statements etc. including petty cash transactions✓ Review and testing of arrangements to prevent and detect fraud and corruption✓ Testing of disclosures✓ Testing of specific internal controls and report findings to the General Purposes Committee

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Issue No.	Date Agreed	Details of amendments
1	11 th October 2005	Reissued in new format
2		Draft 6 (13 th May 2008)
3	27 th May 2008	General Purposes Minute No. GP.010.05.08
4	17 th August 2009	General Purposes Minute No. GP.017.08.09
5	18 th April 2011	General Purposes Minute No. GP.104.04.11 Full review undertaken
6	13.04.15	GP.70.04.15 Review and Update
7	15 th August 2016	Amendment in response to updated model financial regulations
8	5 th November 2018	Amendment in line with revised Standing Orders – GP Committee
9	9 th March 2020	Proposed amendments in line with changes to NALC's Model Financial Regulations in 2019

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1.0 GENERAL

- 1.1 These Financial Regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council. The Council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of financial control which facilitates the effective exercise of its functions, including arrangements for the management of risk and for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption. These Financial Regulations are designed to demonstrate how the Council meets these responsibilities.
- 1.2 The post of Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) is a statutory office under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and shall be appointed by the Council. The RFO, acting under the policy direction of the Council, shall administer the Council's financial affairs in accordance with proper practices. The RFO shall determine on behalf of the Council its accounting records and accounting control systems. The RFO shall ensure that the accounting control systems are observed and that the accounting records of the Council are maintained and kept up to date in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.3 The RFO shall produce financial management information as required by the Council.
- 1.4 At least once a year, prior to approving the annual accounts, the Council shall conduct a review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.5 In these Financial Regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in 'Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in England and Wales - A Practitioners' Guide' which is published jointly by NALC and SLCC and updated from time to time.
- 1.6 In these Financial Regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations shall mean the Regulations issued under the provisions of the Audit Commission Act 2003, or any superseding legislation and then in force unless otherwise specified.
- 1.7 Section 150(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 which governed the stewardship of money held by local councils has been repealed. It required that 'every cheque or other order for the payment of money be signed by two members of the Council'. Although this requirement has been repealed it is felt that it still remains good practice and will be retained by the Council.

2.0 ANNUAL ESTIMATES

- 2.1 Each committee shall formulate and submit proposals to the Council in respect of revenue and capital expenditure for the following financial year, not later than the end of January each year.
- 2.2 Detailed estimates of income and expenditure on revenue services and receipts and payments on capital accounts shall be prepared each year by the RFO.

- 2.3 The Council shall review the estimates not later than the end of January each year and shall fix the precept to be levied for the ensuing financial year. The Mayor or Town Clerk shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each Member with a copy of the approved budget.
- 2.4 The annual capital and revenue expenditure shall form the Council's budgets and the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.
- 2.5 In considering its annual estimates the Council shall have regard to its current five year Business Plan.
- 3.0 BUDGETARY CONTROL**
- 3.1 Expenditure on revenue items may be incurred up to the amounts included in the approved budget.
- 3.2 No expenditure may be incurred that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that item of expenditure, unless first approved by the General Purposes Committee or the Urgent Consultation Panel. Unspent provisions in the revenue budget shall not be carried forward to a new financial year, unless moved to other budget headings or placed in an earmarked reserve by resolution of the General Purposes Committee.
- 3.3 The RFO shall regularly provide each committee with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose "material" shall be in excess of [15%?] of the budget.
- 3.4 The Clerk may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council which is necessary to carry out any repair, replacement, Health and Safety or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £5,000. The Clerk shall report the action to the appropriate committee as soon as possible thereafter.
- 3.5 Where expenditure is incurred in accordance with Regulation 3.4 above such sums shall be approved by the General Purposes Committee at the next available meeting.
- 3.6 No expenditure shall be incurred in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure, unless the relevant committee is satisfied that it is contained in the capital programme and that the necessary capital funds are available, or the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained. Such authority is to be evidenced by a minute or by an authorisation slip duly signed by the Clerk and where necessary also by the appropriate Chairman.

- 3.7 All capital works relating to contracts shall be administered in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations.

4.0 ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT

- 4.1 All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 4.2 The RFO shall be responsible for completing the annual accounts of the Council as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and shall submit them to and report thereon to the Council.
- 4.3 Anti-Fraud and Corruption
- 4.3.1 In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations the separation of duties of Officers dealing with financial transactions shall be carried out wherever practical, thus reducing the risk of fraud or suspicion of fraud.
- 4.3.2 Wherever possible arrangement shall be made to ensure that the same two Officers carry out no more than two of the following:-
- (a) The ordering of works, goods or services.
 - (b) The acknowledgement of their receipt,
 - and
 - (c) The examination and certification of invoices and accounts.
- 4.3.3 Wherever possible, Officers responsible for the examination and checking of records of cash transactions shall not be engaged in any of these transactions.
- 4.4 Internal Audit
- 4.4.1 The RFO shall complete the Annual Accounts of the Council and shall submit the accounts for approval and authorisation by the Council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 4.4.2 The RFO shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the Council's accounting, financial and other operations in accordance with proper practices. Any Officer or Member shall, if the RFO or Internal Auditor requires, make available such documents of the Council which appear to the RFO or Internal Auditor to be necessary for the purpose of the internal audit and shall supply the RFO or Internal Auditor with such information and explanation as the RFO or Internal Auditor considers necessary for that purpose.
- 4.4.3 The Internal Auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work required by the Council in accordance with proper practices. The Internal Auditor, who shall be competent and independent of the

operations of the Council, shall report to the General Purposes Committee in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report in respect of each financial year.

In order to demonstrate objectivity and independence, the Internal Auditor shall be free from any conflicts of interest and have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the Council.

4.4.4 The RFO shall make arrangements for the opportunity for inspection of the accounts, and associated documents for the display or publication of any notices and statements of account required by the relevant Acts and Regulations.

4.4.5 The RFO shall, as soon as practicable, bring to the attention of all Members any correspondence or report from the Internal or External Auditor, unless the correspondence is of a purely administrative nature.

4.5 Members' Audit

On a monthly basis one Member of the Council will carry out an audit in accordance with the Members' Audit Policy No. 63 and will report their findings to the next meeting of the General Purposes Committee. This audit incorporates spot checks of supplier invoices, customer invoices, timesheets, and bank reconciliation and verification to nominal code, as well as the petty cash for both Uckfield Town Council and Luxfords Restaurant.

4.6 At least once a quarter and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chairman shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and be noted by the Council. This can form part of the existing member audit procedures.

5.0 **BANKING ARRANGEMENTS, CHEQUES AND ELECTRONIC BANKING**

5.1 The Council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the Council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee.. They shall be regularly reviewed for efficiency.

5.2 All monies received by the Council, including Luxford's takings, shall be banked daily and a full record made on the reverse of the paying-in slip

5.3 With the exception of the arrangements set out in Regulation 6.1, all certified invoices and payments shall be paid by cheque, drawn on the Council's accounts and all cheques shall be signed by two members of the Council. A schedule of payments, listed by committee heading, and signed by the same two Members of the Council, shall be provided and presented at the next meeting of the committee.

6.0 **PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

- 6.1 Apart from petty cash, payments shall be effected by cheque or other order drawn on the Council's bankers.
- 6.2 All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the Officer issuing the order. Before certifying an invoice, the Officer shall be satisfied that the works, goods or services to which the invoice relates have been received, carried out, examined and approved.
- 6.3 Duly certified invoices shall be examined in relation to arithmetical accuracy and authorisation, and shall be coded to the appropriate expenditure head. The RFO or appropriate Officer shall take all possible steps to settle all invoices or statements submitted, and which are in order, within 30 days of their receipt, or earlier, or in such manner, (e.g. standing order, direct debit etc), if such payment results in benefit to the Council, subject to any initial instruction forms or letters being signed by two Members of the Council.
- 6.4 All duly certified invoices will then be entered on the schedule of payments made and presented to the next meeting of the appropriate committee in accordance with Regulation 5.3.
- 6.5 The RFO or other appropriate Officer may authorise petty cash to Officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers, relevant receipts or other supporting documentary evidence for payments made shall be forwarded to the RFO with a claim for reimbursement.
- (a) The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of no more than £200 for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses incurred by the Council.
 - (b) The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of no more than £250 for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses incurred by Luxfords Restaurant.
 - (c) Re-imburement for sums over £50 from any petty cash float shall only be made by cheque.
 - (d) Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked as provided in Regulation 9.
 - (e) Management of petty cash will be in accordance with internal audit procedures.
- 6.6 Corporate credit card accounts must be set up to operate within defined limits and cleared monthly by direct debit from the main bank account.
- 6.7 Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as Service Administrator, alongside the Town Clerk. The bank mandate approved by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts. The bank mandate

will state clearly the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the use of the Service Administrator alone, or by the Service Administrator with a stated number of approvals.

- 6.8 Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page, and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved password facilities must not be used on any computer used for council banking work. Breach of this regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.
- 6.9 Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written hard copy notification by the suppoer and supported by hard copy authority for change signed by two signatories (Town Clerk/RFO or authorised member signatory). A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.

7.0 PAYMENT OF SALARIES AND WAGES

- 7.1 As an employer, the Council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salaries shall be as agreed by the Council.
- 7.2 Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be made for tax, National Insurance and pension contributions, may be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts.
- 7.3 All time sheets where applicable shall be in a form prescribed by the RFO and certified as to their accuracy by the member of staff and countersigned by the appropriate manager.
- 7.4 Appropriate Officers shall notify the RFO as soon as possible of all matters affecting the payment of salaries and wages and in particular:-
- Appointments, resignations, retirements, dismissals, suspensions, secondments and all other staff movements.
 -
 - Absences from duty for sickness or other reasons.
 - Information necessary to maintain records of service for superannuation, income tax and national insurance.
 - Changes in remuneration, allowances or working times.
- 7.5 The RFO and the Town Clerk are authorised to make payments of salaries and

wages through 'Bankline' subject to such initial permission being signed by two Members of the Council.

7.6 In the event of emergencies where no two authorised Officers are available to make such payments, the RFO or Town Clerk shall request two Members of the Council to be present.

7.7 The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually for the following financial year and such review shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chairman of the Council or relevant committee. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time. This forms part of the annual budget setting process.

8.0 LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

8.1 All loans and investments shall be negotiated by the RFO in the name of the Council, and shall be for a set period of time in accordance with any appropriate Council Policy. Changes to loans and investments should be reported to the General Purposes Committee at the earliest opportunity.

8.2 The Council's Investment Policy (No. 45) shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance and reviewed at least annually. Prior to the receipt of the precept instalment every six months, the Finance Sub-committee will provide information to the General Purposes Committee on the possible investment of these funds.

8.3 All investments of money under the control of the Council shall be in the name of the Council.

8.4 All borrowings shall be effected in the name of the Council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The terms and conditions of borrowings shall be reviewed at least annually.

8.5 All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.

9.0 INCOME

9.1 The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of, and under the supervision of the RFO.

9.2 Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be ultimately responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Council.

9.3 Appropriate committees will review their fees and charges annually following a report by the RFO or other appropriate Officer.

9.4 All accounts due will be collected in accordance with these Regulations and any sums found to be irrecoverable or any subsequent bad debts shall be reported

to the General Purposes Committee.

Overdue accounts and bad debts shall be treated in the following manner:-

- (i) Customers with outstanding accounts at 90 days shall be passed to a registered debt collector following a final seven day warning at the discretion of the RFO or appropriate Officer of the Town Council.
 - (ii) Any bad debts that cannot be recovered shall be referred to the General Purposes Committee for authorisation to be written off or for authorisation to make arrangements to collect the debt in other ways.
- 9.5 All sums received on behalf of the Council shall either be submitted to the RFO for banking or to the appropriate Officer collecting the money as directed by the RFO. In all cases all receipts shall be deposited with the Council's bankers in accordance with Regulation 5.2 or in such manner as subsequently directed by the Council's Internal Auditor.
- 9.6 A reference to the related invoice, or otherwise, indicating the origin of each receipt, shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 9.7. All sums received by BACS will be made available for scrutiny for subsequent audits.
- 9.8 Every transfer of official money from one member of staff to another shall be checked and signed for by the receiving Officer.
- 9.9 The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT return that is required.
- 9.10 Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the Council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the General Purposes Committee to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.
- 9.11 Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.
- 10.0 ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES**
- 10.1 An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate, e.g. petty cash purchases. Where an order number is given verbally, a written order must be raised. Copies of all orders issued shall be retained.
- 10.2 Access to the ordering programme shall be controlled by the RFO.
- 10.3 All Members of the Council and Officers are responsible for obtaining value for

money at all times. An Officer issuing an official order is to ensure as far as reasonable and practicable, that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction.

- 10.4 Only the Town Clerk, RFO, Civic Centre Manager or other such Officers nominated by them, may initiate orders which shall be endorsed by a second Officer.
- 10.5 Goods and services received shall be checked against the relevant copy of the purchase order.

11.0 CONTRACTS

- 11.1 Every contract, whether made by the Council or by a committee to which the power of making contracts has been delegated, shall comply with these Financial Regulations and no exception from any of the following provisions of these Regulations shall be made other than in an emergency, provided that these Regulations shall not apply to the contracts which relate to items (i) to (iv) below:-

- (i) For the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services.
- (ii) For specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants or other services identifies to be of a specialist nature by the Town Clerk, RFO or Civic Centre Manager.
- (iii) For work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant.
- (iv) For work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council;
- (v) For additional audit work of the external auditor up to an estimated value of £500;
- (vi) for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and/or are only sold at a fixed prices

- 11.2 Where it is intended to procure or enter into a contract:-

- (i) For expenditure of £10,000 or less in value, the Town Clerk or a duly approved Officer shall have authorisation to obtain such goods or services from an appropriate firm.
- (ii) For any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value between £10,000 but not exceeding £25,000, the Town Clerk shall invite quotations from at least three appropriate firms from a preferred list of contractors as set out in the Financial Regulations.

- (iii) For expenditure which is valued at £25,000 or more, the council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations (requiring the Council to use the Contracts Finder Website to advertise contract opportunities, set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the aware of new contracts).
- (iv) The full requirements of the Regulations [The Public Contracts Regulations 2015], as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public services contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time). (Where the value of a contract is in excess of £181,302 (which may change from time to time) for a public service or supply contract or in excess of £4,551,413 for a public works contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include advertising the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website and in OJEU).
- (v) A public contract in connection with the supply of gas, heat, electricity, drinking water, transport services, or postal services to the public; or the provision of a port or airport; or the exploration for or extraction of gas oil or solid fuel with an estimated value in excess of £363,424 for a supply, services or design contract; or in excess of £4,551,413 for a works contract, or £820,370 for a social and other specific services contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in OJEU) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016.
- 11.3 Invitations to tender shall state the period and the general nature of the intended contract and the Town Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. In addition, the invitation shall state that tenders must be addressed to the Town Clerk and the last date by which such tenders should reach the Town Clerk. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specially marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.
- 11.4 All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Town Clerk or other appropriate Officer in the presence of at least two Members of the Council.
- 11.5 The Town Clerk or other appropriate Officer shall record the details of the tender, the names and addresses of each tenderer, the amount or price of the tender, the time and place of opening, and the names and signatures of those present at the opening of the tenders. The above details shall be reported to the Council, or where the tenders have been sought by a committee to that committee.

- 11.6 If fewer than three tenders are received for contracts valued above £50,000 or if all the tenders are identical, the Council may make such arrangements as it thinks fit for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works.
- 11.7 Any invitation to tender issued under this Regulation shall contain a statement of the effect of Standing Orders Nos: 25.1. 25.2 and 25.3.
- 11.8 When applications are made to waive Standing Orders relating to contracts to enable tenders to be negotiated without competition, the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the General Purposes Committee.
- 11.9 Neither the Council, nor any committee is bound to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate
- 11.10 Should it occur that the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, that the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was undertaken.

12.0 PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS

- 12.1 Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract, by the RFO upon receipt of authorised certificates issued by the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract and a valid claim for payment from the contractor. (Subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).
- 12.2 Where contracts provide for payments by instalments, the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case when it is estimated that the total cost of the work carried out under a contract, excluding fluctuation clauses, will exceed the contract sum by five per cent or more, a report shall be submitted to the Council or relevant committee.
- 12.3 Any variation to a contract, or addition to, or omission from a contract must be approved by the Town Clerk in writing. The Council or appropriate committee should be informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

13.0 STOCKS, STORES AND EQUIPMENT

- 13.1 The Officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and security of all relevant buildings, furniture, equipment, cash, stocks and stores in that section.
- 13.2 Appropriate Officers shall ensure that all conditions of insurance are complied with in respect of cash, valuables and property.

- 13.3 Delivery notes or invoices must be obtained in respect of all goods received, and goods must be checked as to quantity and quality against the purchase orders at the time delivery is made.
- 13.4 Stocks and stores shall generally be maintained at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 13.5 The RFO or appropriate Officer shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

14.0 ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES

- 14.1 The Town Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds of properties owned by the Council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all assets owned by the Council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, (where possible), nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held, in accordance with the current Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 14.2 The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate register of assets and investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown on the register shall be verified at least annually with a safety inspection of assets.
- 14.3 No property shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the Council, together with any other consent required by law, save where the estimated value of any one tangible movable property does not exceed £500.

15.0 INSURANCE

- 15.1 Following the annual risk assessment (Financial Regulations 16.1 and 16.2), the RFO shall effect all insurance and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers.
- 15.2 The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report to the appropriate committee at the next available meeting.
- 15.3 The RFO or appropriate Officer shall give prompt notification to the insurers of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations effecting existing insurances.
- 15.4 The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances affected by the Council and the property and risks covered and annually review the Council's insurance requirements.
- 15.5 All appropriate employees of the Council shall be included in suitable fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure of the Council.

16.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

16.1 The Council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The RFO or appropriate Officer shall prepare, for approval by the Council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the Council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the General Purposes Committee at least annually.

16.2 When considering any new activity, the RFO or appropriate Officer shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the General Purposes Committee.

17.0 SECURITY AND MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

17.1 Records of a financial nature shall be retained in accordance with a schedule of minimum periods to comply with tax and insurance requirements or other instructions or advice received from the appropriate authorities. Regardless of the above all records must be retained, as a minimum, until after the completion of each year's external audit.

17.2 The Council will comply with the Freedom of Information Act and any other appropriate Council policy or other applicable legislation that may be introduced or amended from time to time.

18.0 REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

18.1 It shall be the duty of the General Purposes Committee to review these Financial Regulations from time to time. The Town Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the General Purposes Committee of any requirement for a consequential amendment to them.

Meeting of the General Purposes Committee

Monday 9th March 2020

Agenda Item 8.1

TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON HEALTH AND SAFETY WITHIN THE COUNCIL

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update for members on the various elements of health and safety that need to be considered within an organisation.

2.0 Health and wellbeing of staff

- 2.1 The table below provides figures from the past six months and the cumulative picture for the whole year to date, in comparison with 2018/19.

	As at 04.03.20 (sickness recorded in past six months) (29 staff)	Cumulative total for the year 2019/20	As at 20.03.19 (27 staff)
Actual days taken as short-term Doctors' certificate	16.0 days	22.0 days	87.0 days
Actual days taken as self-certificated sick leave	15.0 days	29.0 days	61.0 days
Average number of days self-certificated sick leave per person	0.52 days	1.0 days	2.3 days
Actual days taken as long-term sick leave	25.0 days	104.0 days	139.0 days
Average number of days sickness per person	1.93 days	5.34 days	10.6 days
National average of sick days taken in the public sector per person (<i>*sickness absence in the labour market – ONS 2016</i>)	4.30 days		

N.B Although the above are allocated as days please note that some of these working days relate to part-time workers which do not equate to a 7.4 hour day. Long term sickness is anything more than 28 calendar days.

3.0 Personal learning and development

- 3.1 An online training portal has been set up by the Estates & Facilities Manager to enable all staff to easily carry out their refresher training in all aspects of our work.

4.0 Health and Safety Risk Assessments

- 4.1 Ongoing facility audits are being carried out frequently, with issues being addressed by staff or contractors.

- 4.2 A Health and Safety Audit has been carried out by the British Safety Council. The report has been received with a variety of recommendations, with an overall view of having a good foundation to build upon.
- 4.3 All risk assessments have been reviewed by the E&F Manager, and a recent Health and Safety Audit carried out by the British Safety Council has highlighted where we may wish to add to these, to further strengthen the portfolio we have.
- 4.4 First aid kits in all buildings are being monitored and updated regularly.
- 4.5 The E&F Manager is carrying out regular water monitoring of each building to ensure Uckfield Town Council remains compliant.
- 4.6 The Civic Centre defibrillator has been serviced with new batteries.

5.0 Fire Safety

- 5.1 The E&F Manager has requested reviewed fire risk assessments from all tenants for this year 2020.
- 5.2 Fire risk assessment has been carried out for the Civic Centre, with actions being worked on by E&F Manager.
- 5.3 Fire door survey carried out in September 19 following Fire Risk assessment with some remedial works required.

6.0 Cleaning

- 6.1 The E&F Manager has arranged a new in-house cleaning arrangement which gives the ability to keep a more regular and closer eye on any repairs or matters of health and safety in the pavilions and Foresters hall.

7.0 Accident reporting – Quarter 3 (2019/20)

- 7.1 Three incidents to report for information only.

Contact Officers: Mark Francis/Holly Goring

Appendix A

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



MEMBERS AUDIT FORM

MONTH SEPTEMBER 2019

Checklist:

Documents will be chosen at random by Members carrying out the Audit.

SAGE AUDIT TRAIL (DETAILED)

Check source documents including nominal code and authorisation.

Supplier Invoices
Customer Invoices
Timesheets



BANK RECONCILIATION AND VERIFICATION TO NOMINAL CODE:

Check bank reconciliation to SAGE print outs, bank statement and nominal codes.

Clerks Account
General Account
Special Interest Bearing
Lloyds Bank Account



PETTY CASH

Check cash balance and vouchers

Town Council Petty Cash
Luxfords Petty Cash //



Signed

Print Name G. Johnson

Dated 2/3/20

Members comments:-

Supplier Invoice Checked

Supplier Name	Invoice No. and Date	P. Order No	Confirmed Stamped, signed, correct nominal code	Confirmed Cheque No. entered and signed by two Cllrs.	
KITCHEN SERVICES	2073 16/08/19	12609	✓	✓	PAID SEPT 2019
PPL PRS	S/N 1208 771	12679	STAMPED AREA SENT IN POST WITH CHQ	—	
P. WATERS ENGINEERING	148322 11 SEP	12588	✓	115709	PAID SEPT 2019

Customer Invoices Checked

Customer Name	Invoice No.	Charges correct	Payment date on invoice	Bank Paying in receipt No.	
ADRENALIN JIVE	CC 37610	✓	09/09/19	✓	BACS PAYMENT CHECKED
THE KINGS CHURCH	CC 37657	✓	30/09/19	106341	STATEMENT PAYMENT SLIP

Timesheets checked

Staff Name	Week/month Checked	Hours correct	Payment correct	Payslip date	BACS Form
JORDAN MITCHELL	SEPT 6 SEPT 2019	✓	✓	27/09/19	✓
JOANNE BROOKER	SEPT 2019	✓	✓	27/09/19	✓

Bank Reconciliation Checked

Bank Account	Statement No.	Signed	Reconciled	Nominal Code
CURRENT ACCOUNT	SHEETS 24-42	✓	✓	1200

Petty Cash Checked

Account Name	Reconciliation Correct, Month	Voucher Name	Correct float to SAGE balance
Town Council	SEPT 2019 ✓	ALL ✓	✓ CORRECT
Luxfords	SEPT 2019 ✓	TESCO 11/09/19 TESCO 30/09/19 ✓	✓ CORRECT

Appendix A

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



MEMBERS AUDIT FORM

MONTH JANUARY 2020

Checklist:

Documents will be chosen at random by Members carrying out the Audit.

SAGE AUDIT TRAIL (DETAILED)

Check source documents including nominal code and authorisation.

Supplier Invoices
Customer Invoices
Timesheets



BANK RECONCILIATION AND VERIFICATION TO NOMINAL CODE:

Check bank reconciliation to SAGE print outs, bank statement and nominal codes.

Clerks Account
General Account
Special Interest Bearing
Lloyds Bank Account



PETTY CASH

Check cash balance and vouchers

Town Council Petty Cash
Luxfords Petty Cash



Signed .

Print Name ... HELEN FIRTH

Dated ... 3/3/20

Members comments:-

Supplier Invoice Checked

Supplier Name	Invoice No. and Date	P. Order No	Confirmed Stamped, signed, correct nominal code	Confirmed Cheque No. entered and signed by two Cllrs.
BENTONS.	521861	12977	✓	✓
H.T. WHITE LWC	7701560	12973 12979	✓	✓
ALBION HOUSE LTD	22932	13014	✓	✓
TRADEES COFFEE	149615	12962	✓	✓
NELLA	7578703	12969	✓	✓

Customer Invoices Checked

Customer Name	Invoice No.	Charges correct	Payment date on invoice	Bank Paying in receipt No.
CRD-CONTRACTOR	L38329	✓	✓	BACS SD 26-3-20
COSTAIN LTD	LL38357	✓	✓	CC. 047191

Timesheets checked

Staff Name	Week/month Checked	Hours correct	Payment correct	Payslip date	BACS Form
BARRY HARWOOD	JANUARY	148	✓	31/1/20	✓
JORDAN MITCHELL	JANUARY	24	✓	31/1/20	✓

Bank Reconciliation Checked

Bank Account	Statement No.	Signed	Reconciled	Nominal Code
BUSINESS RESERVE	SHEET 117	✓	✓	✓
CURRENT CLARKS	SHEET 483	✓	✓	✓

Petty Cash Checked

Account Name	Reconciliation Correct, Month	Voucher Name	Correct float to SAGE balance
Town Council	✓ Gain 7P		✓
Luxfords	✓		✓

Meeting of the General Purposes Committee

Monday 9th March 2020

Agenda Item 9.1(i)

REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES: REPORT OF THE CITIZEN'S ADVICE BUREAU (CAB) 23rd January 2020

The recruitment of a number of new trustees is ongoing, broadening the skill set of the current board, with the aim of increasing the number of trustees to ten.

Wealden CAB has recently undergone a very thorough audit from the central CAB office and passed this audit with a green rating.

With regard to finances, all indications are that the CAB are managing their finances very sensibly, with an eye constantly towards saving money e.g. on stationery. A draft budget has been drawn up for 2020/21, but cannot be finalised until all contributions from parish councils are known.

The CAB continues to be very busy. Client numbers are up 17% on the previous year and have reached nearly 5000 (their SLA requires them to support for 4000 clients p.a.). A new trainee money advice worker is currently being recruited and an active marketing campaign to recruit new volunteers is currently ongoing.

Of particular concern are 'forgotten' people who were previously receiving support from adult social care, but have had their support cut – they are approaching CAB, because they don't know where else to go. For example, more older people are coming in for foodbank vouchers, because Meals on Wheels has been cut.

Cllr. Angie Smith