



UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

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Town Clerk – Holly Goring

A meeting of the **General Purposes Committee** to be held on
Monday 1st June 2020 at 7.00pm
in
REMOTE MEETING (VIA ZOOM)

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 meetings of the General Purposes Committees held on the 9th March and 20th April 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 There are no income and expenditure reports until accounts are completed for 2019/20
- 5.3 Bad Debts
(Attached)
- 5.4 To consider carry forwards of unspent revenue budget from 2019/20
(Attached)
- 5.5 To write off small under and over payments on the Town Council's accounts
(Attached)

6.0 BUILDINGS

- 6.1 To note the current position with the Council's buildings
(Attached)

7.0 POLICY

- 7.1 None.

8.0 ADMINISTRATION

- 8.1 To receive a report on Health and Safety within the Council
(Attached)
- 8.2 To receive Members' audit reports
(none completed due to Covid-19 restrictions)
- 8.3 To consider the details of the East Sussex Fire & Rescue's public consultation "Planning for a Safer Future"
(Attached)

9.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

- 9.1 To consider reports from:-
 - (i) Citizens Advice Bureau
 - (ii) East Sussex Association of Local Councils AGM
 - (iii) Ridgewood Village Hall Management Committee
 - (iv) Uckfield & District Housing Association Ltd Mgt Committee
 - (v) Uckfield and District Preservation Society
 - (vi) Uckfield Volunteer Centre (Attached)
 - (vii) Wealden Works
 - (viii) Wealden District Association of Local Councils – Management Committee
 - (ix) Wealden District Association of Local Councils – Planning Panel

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 To note update on the Town Council's lease agreements
(Attached)
- 12.2 To note update on staffing and Civic Centre/Luxfords Restaurant
(Attached)



Town Clerk
26th May 2020

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



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

PRESENT:

Cllr. C. Macve (Chair)	Cllr. H. Firth
Cllr. D. Ward (Vice-Chair)	Cllr. J. Love
Cllr. B. Cox	Cllr. P. Sparks
Cllr. J. Edwards	

IN ATTENDANCE:

1 member of the press (recorded the meeting)
4 members of the public

Holly Goring – Town Clerk
Mark Francis – Estates & Facilities Manager
Sarah D'Alessio – Assistant Town Clerk & RFO
Minutes taken by Holly Goring

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 the agenda.

Councillor J. Edwards declared his interest in agenda item 6.2 as a result of being a representative for the Town Council on the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee.

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

GP38.03.20 It was **RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders to enable one member of the public to speak in relation to agenda item 6.2.

Local resident Mr Noble explained to committee members that he had been a resident of Ridgewood for 25 years and had become Vice Chair of the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee in recent months. He reminded the committee of the fantastic hard work that had been achieved by local people voluntarily to bring the procedures and running of the Village Hall in line with current guidance and best practice.

He requested that members consider the recommendations within the report, compassionately, to enable the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee to allow the refurbishment to go ahead. It was important for the hall to be upgraded to reflect modern usage and standards.

Cllr. Ben Cox arrived at 7.03pm

GP39.03.20 It was **RESOLVED** to reinstate standing orders.

3.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors A. Smith and C. Snelgrove.

4.0 MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the meetings of the General Purposes Committee held on the 27th January 2020

GP40.03.20 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee on the 27th January 2020 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2 Action list

One member asked whether the action relating to the community speedwatch group was still relevant, following the update provided at the Environment & Leisure Committee.

The Town Clerk advised that there were two groups in town – the Speed Indicator Device working group (SID) which had been set up by the Town Council working alongside volunteers and a Community Speedwatch group which had set itself up independently in the Ridgewood area. The Town Clerk advised that she would re-contact the Community Speedwatch group to understand the current situation.

Members noted the action list.

4.3 Project list

Members noted the project list.

5.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS

5.1 To note bills paid

Members noted the bills paid.

5.2 To note the income and expenditure reports for 2019/20

Members noted the reports.

5.3. Bad Debts

Members noted the current bad debts recorded and reasons for this.

5.4 To receive the minutes of the Finance Sub-Committee held on 27th February 2020

Members agreed to note and receive the minutes of the Finance Sub-Committee held on 27th February 2020.

5.5 To consider the recommendations of the Finance Sub-Committee held on 27th February 2020

Members considered the full details of the minutes of the Finance Sub-Committee meeting held on 27th February 2020 and proposals with regards to changing payment methods for suppliers and approving the allocation of a community grant for 2020/21 subject to an update provided.

The Chairman of Finance Sub-committee provided a summary of the discussions at the meeting; explaining that sub-committee members were in unanimous agreement to change the current method for supplier payments. There were a variety of reasons. Many organisations no longer accepted cheques as a method of payment. The change to BACS would also be far more efficient and cost effective. However sub-committee members did debate to what extent councillors should become involved in the process. It felt sensible to give a trial period of three months (April to June 2020) with two councillors being tasked with making sure the correct amounts were being made to the correct suppliers. The Finance Sub-Committee would then review after three months. They had also considered whether the monthly member audit could incorporate an extension of its current checks to review the new process in more detail.

One member asked whether they will still be required to check various papers (i.e. payments against what was placed on the finance system). The Assistant Town Clerk & RFO clarified, explaining that yes, the Town Councillors would be required to check the SAGE report against the BACS listing for payment in order to authorise payment.

GP41.03.20 Members voted unanimously and **RESOLVED** to approve the recommendation of the Finance Sub-Committee to authorise 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, and;

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

5.6 To note the report of the Internal Auditor

Members reviewed the report of the Internal Auditor from his two day visit at the beginning of February 2020. Members were very pleased to see that the Internal Auditor continued to have no cause for concern.

Members wished to say a special thank you to the new Assistant Town Clerk & RFO for the successful transition recognised within the report.

The Chairman, extended his thanks and passed congratulations onto the office in what they knew, had been a trying time.

Members subsequently noted the report.

6.0 BUILDINGS

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

Members reviewed the regular update on works and repairs within the Town Council's buildings.

One member raised their continued concerns with regard to car parking in Foresters Hall car park and neighbouring roads. A person had parked across a driveway in Harcourt Road recently and caused an obstruction. It was felt that the matter really did need addressing.

The Town Clerk clarified that if a member of the public parks across a driveway and causes an unnecessary obstruction, that it is a matter for Sussex Police and can be reported, and acted upon.

In regards to Foresters Hall Car Park, the Estates & Facilities Manager had prepared information for the committee to consider around 10-12 months ago, specifically looking at a barrier entry system to manage car parking within the hall car park. At the time, members did not wish to take any action.

One member advised that they had recently been placing letters/notices on vehicles parking inconsiderately, or larger vehicles to advise them of alternative locations where they could park more safely.

Members subsequently noted the report.

- 6.2 To consider an update from the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee
Members considered the detailed report on a number of issues related to the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee (*current running costs, phasing the works to the car park, transfer of funds to be held as a fall back during the weeks that work is taking place and the committee's view of the future of the Village Hall Committee and suggestion to hold off on extending the lease agreement at this time*).

One member expressed that they were perfectly happy to support the recommendations but felt having two UTC Councillors appointed as representatives could cause confusion, and suggested that it would be better to have one appointed representative and one substitute.

A second member agreed with the above suggestion. They expressed the frustration of the Village Hall Committee in not receiving the grant funding to carry out the proposed extension and hoped that the internal refurbishment and improvements to the car park would improve the current facilities available. By improving the car park, the Town Council could again review access into the car park and aspects around security.

GP42.03.20 With five votes in favour and one member abstaining on recommendation (iii) in particular, members **RESOLVED** 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) allocate one UTC representative plus a substitute 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) agree to hold off on the extension of the lease agreement until after the October AGM meeting of the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee.

7.0 POLICY

7.1 To consider a review of the Risk Management Policy – No. 29

Members reviewed the revised Policy which reflected the recommendations of the Finance Sub-Committee.

GP43.03.20

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the revised version of the Risk Management Policy – No. 29.

7.2 To review proposed amendments to the Town Council's financial regulations

The Town Clerk talked through the proposed amendments within the financial regulations and updates that they had received from NALC (National Association of Local Councils).

No comments were received and members subsequently noted the report.

8.0 ADMINISTRATION

8.1 To receive a report on Health and Safety within the Council

Members reviewed the report circulated and noted the contents.

8.2 To receive Members' audit reports

Members noted the reports received.

9.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

9.1 To consider reports from:-

(i) Citizens Advice Bureau

One member highlighted the information provided within the report which advised that the Meals on Wheels service was being cut. It was felt that this could have a significant impact on households. They were not quite sure that Foodbank vouchers replaced the service that Meals on Wheels provided. The contact and social interaction of the Meals on Wheels service was just as important as the hot meals provided.

Members noted the report.

(ii) East Sussex Association of Local Councils AGM

Nothing to report at this time.

(iii) Ridgewood Village Hall Management Committee

Nothing to report at this time.

(iv) Uckfield & District Housing Association Ltd Management Committee

Nothing to report at this time.

(v) Uckfield & District Preservation Society

Nothing to report at this time.

(vi) Uckfield Volunteer Centre

Nothing to report at this time.

(vii) Wealden Works

Nothing to report at this time.

(viii) Wealden District Association of Local Councils – Management Committee
Nothing to report at this time.

(ix) Wealden District Association of Local Councils – Planning Panel
Nothing to report at this time.

10.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

11.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

GP44.03.20

It was **RESOLVED** that pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it was advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

12.1 Action list (confidential business)
Noted.

12.2 Update report on the Town Council's lease agreements
GP45.03.20 Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** to arrange an extraordinary meeting of General Purposes Committee if details required further consideration before the next meeting.

12.3 To consider an update on Luxfords Restaurant
Members discussed the Town Council's ongoing risk assessments and considerations regarding the Coronavirus.

Members subsequently noted the report.

The meeting closed at 8.02pm

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the **General Purposes Committee** held remotely via Zoom on Monday 20th April 2020 at 7.00pm

PRESENT:

Cllr. C. Macve (Chair)	Cllr. H. Firth
Cllr. D. Ward (Vice-Chair)	Cllr. J. Love
Cllr. B. Cox	Cllr. A. Smith
Cllr. J. Edwards	Cllr. C. Snelgrove
	Cllr. P. Sparks

IN ATTENDANCE:

2 members of the press (recorded the meeting)
2 members of the public

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

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 the agenda.

Councillor P. Sparks declared his interest in agenda item 5.5 which related to discussions regarding community grant applicants, as he was the Chair of Manor Park & Hempstead Fields Residents' Association.

Councillor J. Love also declared an interest in agenda item 5.5 as a result of being the Chair of the Uckfield Bonfire & Carnival Society.

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

None received.

3.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

4.0 MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on the 9th March 2020 will be taken to the next physical meeting held in person

4.2 Action list

Members made reference to a couple of the actions listed, with one suggestion being made to the red telephone box, which could be made into a temporary food store, for emergency food supplies.

It was also noted that the Churchcoombe Residents' Association were still keen to set up a Community speedwatch group.

Members noted the action list and agreed to remove GP29.12.19/GP36.01.20 from the action list relating to Ridgewood Village Hall, as the action had been superseded by GP42.03.20.

4.3 Project list

Members agreed to remove project no. 54 (262 Saturday bus service) as the four quarters of financial contributions had now been paid to support the service during 2019/20 and the project was complete. Members subsequently noted the remainder of the project list.

5.0 **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

5.1 To note bills paid

Members noted the bills paid.

5.2 To note the income and expenditure reports for 2019/20

One member noted that the reports already highlighted the drop in income in March as a result of closure of the Civic Centre and Luxfords Restaurant and cancelled bookings due to the Covid-19 lockdown.

5.3. Bad Debts

Members noted the current bad debts recorded and reasons for this.

5.4 To consider the Town Council's Financial Regulations and Committee Terms of Reference in light of the current circumstances

A brief review had been undertaken and it was not considered necessary now meetings were resuming remotely and the Town Council had the Urgent Consultation Panel in place.

5.5 To review community grant funding allocations for 2020-21 and potential support for community groups.

Members considered a report which provided them with an update in the present circumstances of Covid -19 and the monies already committed for payment in 2020-21 through the community grant funding scheme. The report sought to consider whether subject to some events and activities being postponed or cancelled whether the funding would still be required by recipients. The report also asked whether members wished to explore other ways of supporting the community.

It was thought that the majority of community grant recipients would still need the funds at this time. Although the Uckfield Festival had already cancelled, the timing of other events were uncertain, and organisations may decide to do things differently in the present circumstances.

GP46.04.20

Members therefore **RESOLVED** to approve to request the Town Clerk to write to grant recipients to understand what funds they need from the grant applied for, and the timescales in which they require the funding during 2020-21.

In terms of the second part of the report which related to whether the Town Council should start fundraising to provide additional financial support to the community, members discussed the matter at some length.

Members were concerned due to the amount of uncertainty at that early stage of lockdown - how long social distancing would be in place and the impact of Covid-19. They also questioned who to support. Local businesses and community groups may need support, but so would some individuals and households. It was felt that the principle and idea of crowdfunding was good, but at this moment in time, many households were struggling financially themselves and it would be very difficult to find out how and who were the deserving causes. Members felt that they should come back to this suggestion at a later date.

GP47.04.20

Members **RESOLVED** to revisit this item (*considering the provision of additional financial support to those who need it*) in three months.

- 5.6 To note the end of year statement for Community Infrastructure Levy
This item was deferred as the Town Council was still awaiting information from Wealden DC.

6.0 BUILDINGS

- 6.1 To note the current position with the Council's buildings
Members reviewed the regular update on works and repairs within the Town Council's buildings.

One member raised their concerns with people using the play areas despite signage being present. It was confirmed that contact had been made with Sussex Police and any areas where members of the public were considered to be flouting the rules and UK Govt guidance, would be regularly patrolled. Particular areas that had been noted by members and staff as hotspots included Ridgewood Recreation Ground, Hempstead Recreation Ground, Hempstead Meadows Nature Reserve and Selby Gardens.

Members subsequently noted the report.

7.0 POLICY

None.

8.0 ADMINISTRATION

- 8.1 To receive a report on Health and Safety within the Council
Members reviewed the report circulated and noted the contents.

- 8.2 To receive Members' audit reports
Members noted the reports received and were advised that there were four reports outstanding for 2019-20 that would need completing once lockdown had eased.

9.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

9.1 To consider reports from:-

- (i) Citizens Advice Bureau
Nothing to report at this time.
- (ii) East Sussex Association of Local Councils AGM
Nothing to report at this time.
- (iii) Ridgewood Village Hall Management Committee
Nothing to report at this time.
- (iv) Uckfield & District Housing Association Ltd Management Committee
Nothing to report at this time.
- (v) Uckfield & District Preservation Society
Nothing to report at this time.
- (vi) Uckfield Volunteer Centre
Nothing to report at this time.
- (vii) Wealden Works
Nothing to report at this time.
- (viii) Wealden District Association of Local Councils – Management Committee
Nothing to report at this time.
- (ix) Wealden District Association of Local Councils – Planning Panel
Nothing to report at this time.

10.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman, Councillor C. Macve thanked all in attendance for their patience during the meeting that evening. The remote meetings were working well, but it took a few minutes to scan the screen for any questions or when recording a vote.

11.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

GP48.04.20

It was **RESOLVED** that pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it was advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

12.1 To consider the Town Council's lease agreements and the impact of Covid-19 on leaseholders

GP49.04.20

Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** to request that the Estates & Facilities Manager seek further advice from the Town Council's solicitors, and agree that any enquiries received from leaseholders should be dealt with on a case by case basis.

12.2 To consider the advice and guidance by HMRC for employers in response to Covid-19

GP50.04.20 Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** to request that the Town Council attempt to make an application through the Job Retention Scheme for those staff who were unable to work, in particular in the hospitality sector of the business.

12.3 To consider introducing a salary sacrifice scheme (Department for Transport Cycle to Work scheme)

GP51.04.20 Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** to request that the Assistant Town Clerk investigate this scheme further.

12.4 To note a brief update on Luxfords Restaurant
Members noted the report.

The meeting closed at 8.38pm

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 commence later in 2020 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>

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Completed
<u>GP48.04.19</u>	<p><u>6.2 To review request from Sussex Support Services Ltd to place a noticeboard at the front entrance to the ramp of Victoria Pavilion</u></p> <p>Members RESOLVED to support this request and agree for Sussex Support Services Ltd to place a small noticeboard at the front entrance to the ramp of Victoria Pavilion.</p>	01.04.19	Tenant	Awaiting update from the tenant as and when they are ready.
<u>GP14.08.19</u>	<p><u>6.1 Current position with the Council's buildings</u></p> <p>Members RESOLVED to:</p> <p>(i) note the report;</p> <p>(ii) approve the recommendation to change the doors of the public toilets at Victoria Pavilion, from existing coin-operated mechanisms to standard closing doors, and keep these doors locked outside of staff hours.</p>	12.08.19	MF	This forms part of the annual maintenance programme for 2020/21.
<u>GP41.03.20</u>	<p><u>5.5 To consider the recommendations of the Financial Sub-Committee held on 27th February 2020</u></p> <p>Members voted unanimously and RESOLVED to approve the recommendation of the Finance Sub-Committee to authorise for:</p> <p>(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, and;</p> <p>(ii) the Uckfield Community Orchestra to still receive the community grant that had been allocated to them for 2020/21, subject to the updated information received.</p>	09.03.20	SD/HG	<p>Due to Covid-19 the introduction of the BACs payments to suppliers has been delayed but the Assistant Town Clerk & RFO has made the necessary preparations with the Town Council's bank to ensure the relevant members have the correct authority to authorise payments.</p> <p>All groups due to receive grant funding will be contacted for an update.</p>

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Completed
<u>GP42.03.20</u>	<p><u>6.2 To consider an update from the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee</u> With five votes in favour and one member abstaining on recommendation (iii) in particular, members RESOLVED 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) allocate one UTC representative plus a substitute 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) agree to hold off on the extension of the lease agreement until after the October AGM meeting of the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee.</p>	09.03.20	MF/HG	<p>Stage 1 of the works on the car park have been delayed as a result of Covid-19 but will be actioned as soon as possible.</p> <p>The resolution to add a substitute member to the Outside Body representation on the RVH Committee will be taken to Full Council in June. The Town Council has been kept informed by the RVH Committee and their decision to commence the internal refurbishment works whilst the building is closed, which makes sense financially for the hall.</p>
<u>GP46.04.20</u>	<p><u>5.5 To review community grant funding allocations for 2020-21 and potential support for community groups</u> Members therefore RESOLVED to approve to request the Town Clerk to write to grant recipients to understand what funds they need from the grant applied for, and the timescales in which they require the funding during 2020-21.</p>	20.04.20	HG	In progress
<u>GP47.04.20</u>	<p>Members RESOLVED to revisit this item (<i>considering the provision of additional financial support to those who need it</i>) in three months.</p>			

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
PROJECT MONITORING – OVERALL STATUS

Date of Report	May 2020
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Outstanding initiatives from 2018/19

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.
	£20,000	20.01.20	A further £20k was added to the 2020/21 budget towards improvements to this building.

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
PROJECT MONITORING – OVERALL STATUS

Outstanding initiatives from 2019/20

Committee	General Purposes		
Project Name	Replacement of Civic Centre booking system		Project Number 59
Resolution Number	Funds	Date	Commentary
FC93.01.19		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.

Project Name	Online event ticket system		Project Number 60
Resolution Number	Funds	Date	Commentary
FC93.01.19	£1,500	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.
	(minus £1,365.00) = £135.00 remaining	15.04.20	Local web developers were commissioned to set up the online event ticket software and embed into the Civic Centre Website. The works have now been completed and tested. The only element still to complete is the method of payment, to attach to this software before going live this summer.

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
PROJECT MONITORING – OVERALL STATUS

New initiatives for 2020/21

Committee		General Purposes		
Project Name		Annual Maintenance Programme (Year 6)		Project Number 61
Resolution Number	Funds	Date	Commentary	
FC.92.01.20	£77,000	20.01.20	<p>A programme of works were agreed for delivery in 2020/21 to the Town Council's buildings. This included:</p> <p><u>Civic Centre</u> Council Chamber - smoke detection upgrade, ceilings and lighting upgrade Oakleaf Room ceiling Increase hopper capacity for bio boiler New carpet in Green Room Upgrade of lighting to LED in Weald Hall – COMPLETED Weald Hall Stage Light trussing/health and safety</p> <p><u>Elsewhere</u> Snatts Road Cemetery Chapel roof – WORKS UNDERWAY Victoria Pavilion public toilet replacement doors with manual locking Foresters Hall – blinds and tap replacements including heaters Osborn Hall - bitumen felt roof Ridgewood – fire protection upgrade As per the buildings update in agenda item 6.1, the Estates & Facilities Manager has been looking at projects which are low priority for completion in 2020/21.</p>	
Project Name		262 Saturday Bus Service Contribution		Project Number 62
Resolution Number	Funds	Date	Commentary	
FC.92.01.20	£3,900	20.01.20	<p>A sum of £3,900 was set aside to help contribute to the 262 Saturday Bus Service between the Ashdown Forest, Maresfield, Uckfield, Framfield and Heathfield. At present, the service is not running due to Covid-19 and the North Wealden Community Transport Partnership will be keeping us updated on services once they recommence, and whether the impact of Covid-19 further affects usage.</p>	

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
PROJECT MONITORING – OVERALL STATUS

Committee	General Purposes		
Project Name	Replacement back drops – Weald Hall		Project Number 63
Resolution Number	Funds	Date	Commentary
FC.92.01.20	£2,500	20.01.20	Gradually we are replacing the black back drops around the stage in the Weald Hall. No back drops have been purchased at present.
Project Name	Climate Change Initiatives		Project Number 64
Resolution Number	Funds	Date	Commentary
FC.92.01.20	£7,500	20.01.20	No projects have commenced at present.
Project Name	Rebuild Valuation Exercise		Project Number 65
Resolution Number	Funds	Date	Commentary
FC.92.01.20	£4,500	20.01.20	For the purpose of updating our insurance requirements and policy, the Town Council is required to obtain regular rebuild valuations of its properties. A number were completed before year end, and now the remaining nine properties require up to date rebuild valuations.

Meeting of the General Purposes Committee

Monday 1st June 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. Statements have been sent out to ALL those with monies outstanding for room hire, pitch hire or catering in 2019/20. And chase up statements will be sent out this week:

- Ceroc Zeal – currently liaising with debt collector to obtain an update on amount outstanding;
- CGL Finance;
- Emma Naylor Fitness;
- ESCC CRD;
- NHS High Weald;
- NRCorp;
- Hotshots;

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: Holly Goring

Meeting of the General Purposes Committee

Monday 1st June 2020

Agenda Item 5.4

TO CONSIDER CARRY FORWARD OF UNSPENT REVENUE BUDGET FROM 2019-20

1.0. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out variances in the 2019/20 budgets and a request to carry forward monies from the 2019/20 financial year into the 2020/21 financial year.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 As in previous years some monies in the revenue budgets for 2019/20 remain unspent due to late invoices, goods yet to be received, projects not yet complete etc. and rather than return these to general reserves as a matter of course, it is suggested that it would be prudent to carry forward these amounts to the 2020/21 financial year; allocated to specific budget areas/earmarked reserves.

3.0 Specific Budget Request for the Environment & Leisure Committee

3.1 Safety Surface Hempstead Lane Play Area - £6,500

Safety surfacing was replaced for a fee of £5,938 from a budget set aside for this new initiative in 2019/20 of £12,500. The remaining unspent new initiative revenue budget is requested to be carried forward for future works identified in Luxfords Play Area.

4.0 Specific Budget Request for the General Purposes Committee

4.1 West Park Pavilion - £10,000

Funding was set aside at the beginning of the year for a new initiative to make improvements to the Pavilion with the Town Council gradually saving each year. These unspent funds should be carried forward into earmarked reserves specifically for improvements at West Park Pavilion.

4.2 Data Protection - £900

Unspent budget to be carried forward into earmarked reserves specifically for work and training undertaken to deliver actions identified within the data protection audit.

4.3 Replace Civic Centre booking system - £8,000

This was a new initiative for completion in 2019/20 but due to a number of staff changes, it was not possible to introduce such a large project to the office at that time. This unspent new initiative revenue budget is requested to be carried forward into earmarked reserves specifically to deliver this initiative and hopefully in 2020/21.

5.0 Recommendation

- 5.1 Members are asked to resolve that the following sums be carried forward from the 2019/20 financial year to the 2020/21 financial year.

Contact Officer: Holly Goring

Meeting of the General Purposes Committee

Monday 1st June 2020

Agenda Item No. 5.5

TO WRITE OFF SMALL UNDER AND OVER PAYMENTS ON THE TOWN COUNCIL ACCOUNTS

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out details of small under or overpayments by customers that require writing off in the Town Council accounts, and a cheque that has never been banked.

2.0 Background

- 2.1. Over a period of time some customers under or overpay invoices; usually this is adjusted when settling current invoices however in some instances the hirer does not return to the Civic Centre and the amounts are too small to justify a refund or to chase payment.
- 2.2. A purchase for the refurbishment of the Luxfords Restaurant was made in October 2018 for £152.25. A cheque was issued to The Pubshop Catalogue Ltd and goods were received. The cheque has never been banked and contact has been unsuccessful. It is therefore proposed that the cheque is cancelled.

3.0. Amount details

- 3.1. Detailed below are the amounts to be written off or cheques cancelled:

	<u>Overpayment</u>	<u>Underpayment</u>
L Newton-Palmer – December 2017		.60p
M.Cosham – November 2017		.60p

- 3.2. Cheque No. 114640 for £152.25 made payable to The Pubshop Catalogue Ltd.

4.0 Recommendation

- 4.1. Members are asked to note the report and agree to write off/cancel the above amounts.

Contact Officer: Sarah D'Alessio

Meeting of the General Purposes Committee

Monday 1st June 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 – checked frequently whilst on lockdown.

The Civic Centre

- Water ingress has been noted above the foyer atrium in the main entrance. Investigations are ongoing by Estates & Facilities Manager; this will involve hire of a scissor lift or similar;
- Front internal stairwell has recently been redecorated;
- Six-monthly LOLER inspection (Lifting operations and lifting equipment regulations) has been carried out on the lift;
- Weald Hall ceiling lights have been replaced including an emergency light. This has increased lighting levels from 80 lux to 350-500lux. Awaiting order for replacement wall lights;
- Oakleaf room has been part decorated, carried out by staff;
- Building is being more frequently used for NHS blood donor sessions, due to lack of venues at other areas.
- "Cough screens" have been ordered for the council office, caretakers' station and between desks where social distancing is unable to be safely maintained, in readiness for when lockdown is relaxed further.

Victoria Pavilion

- Nothing to report.

The Signal Box

- Nothing to report.

Foresters Hall

- Decoration works almost complete, with two small areas to be completed, delays experienced due to lockdown.

Snatts Road, Chapel

- Works to the remainder of the roof are currently underway using the revenue budget set aside.

Osborn Hall/Hempstead Lane car park

- Nothing to report.

West Park

- Increasing issues with the intruder alarm needing resetting due to age.

2A Vernon Road.

- Nothing to report.

Ridgewood Village Hall

- Estates & Facilities Manager continues to liaise with the Chair of RVH Committee to ensure health and safety compliance;
- Phase one of the car park works have been delayed due to Covid-19 lockdown and works have commenced on the internal refurbishment of the hall.

3.0 Annual Maintenance Programme

- 3.1 The Estates & Facilities Manager has been reviewing the annual maintenance programme for 2020/21 and works scheduled for completion. In particular a review has been undertaken of works that are less urgent and can be postponed until the latter six months of 2020/21 or early 2021/22, to support the Town Council's budgets and financial position.

It is therefore suggested that we postpone the following works until later in 2020/21 or hold off until the next financial year (2021/22), which would create a saving of £19,450 from the 2020/21 revenue budget.

These include –

Replacement Blinds Foresters Hall	£2,400
Roof works Osborn Hall	£7,200
Weald Hall light trussing	£9,850

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 Members are asked to
- (i) note the report;
 - (ii) consider whether they wish to delay the highlighted works above and review the council's budgets mid-way through this current financial year or delay the works altogether until 2021/22.

Contact Officers: Mark Francis

Meeting of the General Purposes Committee

Monday 1st June 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 for the start of the new financial year in comparison with the same period in 2019. To confirm, the Town Council has received NO reports of Covid-19 related symptoms from staff members during this period.

	As at 25.05.20 (sickness recorded since 1 April 2020 (29 staff)	Cumulative total for the year 2020/21	As at 25.06.19 (27 staff)
Actual days taken as short-term Doctors' certificate	0.0 days	0.0 days	5.0 days
Actual days taken as self-certificated sick leave	5.0 days	5.0 days	11.0 days
Average number of days self-certificated sick leave per person	0.17 days	0.17 days	0.41 days
Actual days taken as long-term sick leave	0.0 days	0.0 days	52.0 days
Average number of days sickness per person	0.17 days	0.17 days	2.52 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 First aid kits in all buildings are being monitored and updated regularly.
- 4.3 The Estates & Facilities Manager is carrying out regular water monitoring of each building to ensure Uckfield Town Council remains compliant.
- 4.4 The Estates & Facilities Manager has been liaising with Uckfield Lions on maintenance for the Towns Defibrillators specifically on Town Council Buildings.

5.0 Fire Safety

- 5.1 The Estates & Facilities Manager has requested reviewed fire risk assessments from all tenants for this year 2020.

6.0 Cleaning

- 6.1 The Estates & Facilities 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 1 (2020/21)

- 7.1 No incidents to report.

Contact Officers: Mark Francis/Holly Goring

Meeting of the General Purposes Committee

Monday 1st June 2020

Agenda Item 8.3

TO CONSIDER THE DETAILS OF THE EAST SUSSEX FIRE & RESCUE'S PUBLIC CONSULTATION "PLANNING FOR A SAFER FUTURE"

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 East Sussex Fire & Rescue have recently published a draft consultation document which sets out their plan for the next five years.
- 1.2 The document explains that *"every fire and rescue service is required to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). It outlines how they will meet the Government's expectations of Fire and Rescue Authorities as described in the Fire and Rescue National Framework 2018. It is a key planning document and describes how they will keep their residents, and those that work or travel through the area, safe over the coming years. It describes the main risks to our communities and how they are proposing to use our available resources efficiently to reduce those risks. The plan is their public consultation document which starts on 24 April 2020 until 19 June 2020."*
- 1.3 Normally we would take such items to Full Council but the Full Council meeting falls after the deadline for the consultation (22nd June). As it is such an important matter, it was considered useful to bring the consultation to General Purposes Committee on 1st June, to enable members to discuss.

2.0 Key principles of the consultation

- 2.1 At the heart of the plans is a robust and detailed Operational Response Review. Through this process, they have assessed the community risks, using a range of sophisticated analytical tools to identify where incidents such as fires or flooding might happen, when they might occur and how serious they could be. This has allowed them to target their resources, including firefighters and fire engines, most effectively, bringing about a better balance of prevention, protection and response.

Prevention – This is about reducing the risk to our communities through education and engagement, the delivery of Home Safety Visits and through directing our resources to those identified at highest risk.

Protection – This is about reducing the risk to our communities by ensuring that premises covered under fire safety legislation, mainly businesses, are operating safely and within the law.

Response – This is about responding to fires, road traffic collisions, rescues, flooding and other emergencies efficiently and effectively.

- 2.2 There are seven key areas of proposed change which are being put before the Fire Authority:
 1. *Operational Resilience Plan (ORP)*
 2. *Changes to day-crewed duty stations*
 3. *Removal of second fire engines at day-crewed and on-call stations and reclassification of three "maxi-cab" stations*
 4. *Changes to the resources in Hastings*
 5. *Special vehicles – including aerials (high-reach vehicles)*
 6. *Review of previous IRMP proposals*
 7. *Changes to full-time staff duty systems.*

- 2.3 The full consultation document has been attached as a pdf in appendix A for members, and the weblink to the relevant and full documentation is available here: <https://www.esfrs.org/safer-future/>

3.0 Suggested response by Councillor B. Cox

- 3.1 Councillor Ben Cox had originally wished to take a motion to Full Council about this subject but due to the timescales, has put forward a suggested response for consideration by members at General Purposes Committee:
- 3.2 *“Uckfield has two fire engines. A crew run one engine during the daytime. This is managed by full-time firefighters. They are required to live in the town and are on call during the nights of their working days. This is standard practice and it guarantees sufficient personnel for at least one fire engine in the town 24/7. We also have a second fire engine, this is crewed by on-call firefighters during the day, if sufficient personnel are available. Both are crewed at night by a hybrid of both full-time and on-call firefighters and this common practice too.*

East Sussex and West Sussex Fire and Rescue have seen some very challenging issues over the years. Eastbourne Pier - 31 July 2014, Eastbourne Claremont Hotel - 22 November 2019, 2015 Shoreham Air Show crash and a number of fires on the Ashdown forest including one in May 2020.

All the issues outlined have put the Fire and Rescue service to maximum capacity and this is with nearby West Sussex already having cuts since 2006. The proposals include major cuts to the number of fire engines, staffing levels, and night time fire cover.

The proposals include:

- *Cutting 10 fire engines across the county from Battle, Bexhill, Crowborough, Lewes, Newhaven, Rye, Uckfield, Seaford, Heathfield and Wadhurst stations;*
- *Cutting dedicated crews for high-reaching aerial fire appliance;*
- *Cutting wholtime staffing levels across the county, particularly at stations in Lewes, Newhaven, Uckfield, Crowborough, Battle and Bexhill stations;*
- *Reducing night time fire cover at The Ridge fire station;*

*Since 2011, fire and rescue services in the UK have had 11,500 firefighters cut from their staff, and since 2013 have seen real-terms spending on their service slashed by 38%. **Suggested response:***

“To stand by and allow the cuts to take place without question will be a dereliction of duty by the councillors to put the safety of the community first. This council believes that the proposed cuts will put the town and its villages at risk and in danger. The council wholeheartedly disagrees with the cuts and will push back at East Sussex County Council on the proposal. And to our best endeavours fight to keep the high standards and first rate fire service that the people of Uckfield deserve.”

Potential actions as a result of our response:

- (i) Request a comprehensive risk assessment of the impact of the cuts to all South East fire and rescue services have in dealing with capacity for East Sussex;*
- (ii) Modelling of issues that are common for Wealden like bush fires on the forest and the effects to capacity on Uckfield's Fire station;*
- (iii) We request a full explanation from East Sussex County Council on the proposed cuts.”*

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 Members are asked to

- (i) note the report;
- (ii) consider the suggested response put forward by Councillor B. Cox and whether the General Purposes Committee wish to agree to submit this response;
- (iii) consider whether there are any additional points that members would like to include in a response by Uckfield Town Council to the consultation.

Appendices: Appendix A: Draft Consultation Document

Contact Officers: Holly Goring

Meeting of the General Purposes Committee

Monday 1st June 2020

Agenda Item 9.1 (iv)

REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES: UCKFIELD VOLUNTEER CENTRE – MEETING ON 21ST MAY 2020

Update from the Manager's report included:

The full team were still working but with Covid-19 in mind, with two members currently off on compassionate leave. Since the Covid-19 restrictions had been in place it had been hard to recruit new volunteers, but new younger volunteers had recently come on board. The Volunteer Centre had also been contacted by people around the world to help people and family members in Uckfield.

The High Sheriff of East Sussex had presented an award to the Uckfield Volunteer Centre for their youth volunteering project in the past financial year. They had also recently received offers of support from the Uckfield Chamber of Commerce and Uckfield Rugby Club.

Newsletters had been circulated more regularly during the lockdown period, to ensure key contacts, voluntary and support groups were well promoted.

In terms of planning ahead for reopening – plans had been changed for the summer in terms of activities and public engagement, and they had planned to change the function of the office – looking at risk assessments and the number of staff working in the office at one time.

The website was recently invested in and updated. In the office, their radiators had been upgraded. The Volunteer Centre was financially sound but funds were expected to be lower in 2021 due to the impact of Covid-19. The Volunteer Centre does however have reserves to support them through this time.

Councillor B. Cox