

# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of **UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL** held as a  
REMOTE meeting via ZOOM,  
on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020 at 7.00 pm.

**PRESENT:** Cllr. K. Bedwell  
Cllr. J. Beesley  
Cllr. B. Cox  
Cllr. J. Edwards  
Cllr. D. French  
Cllr. J. Love (Deputy Mayor)  
Cllr. C. Macve  
Cllr. S. Mayhew (Town Mayor)  
Cllr. C. Snelgrove  
Cllr. P. Sparks  
Mr. A. Brunsdon  
Mr. L. Westwood Flood

## **IN ATTENDANCE:**

2 members of the public  
2 members of the press (recording)  
County Councillor Chris Dowling  
County and District Councillor Claire Dowling

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

Minutes taken by Holly Goring

## **1.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members and officers were reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on the agenda. They were advised that notice should be given at this part of the meeting of any intended declaration and that the nature of the interest should then be declared later at the commencement of the item or when the interest became apparent.

Councillor K. Bedwell declared an interest in agenda item 10.0 as Chair of the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee.

## **2.0 STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON MATTERS ON THE AGENDA AT THE MAYOR'S DISCRETION**

None received.

## **3.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL AND WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**FC.01.06.20** It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to enable updates to be provided by District and County Councillors.

Councillor Chris Dowling advised that he had liaised regularly with the Deputy Mayor in the previous few weeks on local matters relating to East Sussex Highways, including a footpath matter between the north of Uckfield and Maresfield.

Councillor Chris Dowling commented that it was very good to see the High Street reopen and it was up to all of us to help where you could and support local businesses during this difficult time.

Councillor Claire Dowling advised that East Sussex County Council had produced a survey for residents, on the impact of Coronavirus, how it had changed their day to day lifestyles and what people's priorities were going forward. This would be circulated to all organisations.

The latest figures from the Department for Education (as of 16<sup>th</sup> June 2020) showed that out of 187 state funded schools, 169 had reopened across all sectors. As of that afternoon, there were 774 confirmed cases of Covid-19 in East Sussex. The feeling was at that time, that they wanted all schools to be back open as soon as possible as the mental health of youngsters was really important.

A new toolkit was available on the East Sussex County Council website for businesses. This would be sent onto the Chamber of Commerce.

Councillor P. Sparks had attended a meeting at Wealden District Council where an update had been provided on the Local Plan. They were planning to increase engagement with neighbouring authorities and engage as much as they could with local communities including local residents and parish and town councils.

Councillor J. Love wished to thank Councillors C & C Dowling, for their regular updates during lockdown and since, and for assisting with the footpath matter.

**FC.02.06.20** Councillors were thanked for their input and updates, and subsequently **RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

#### **4.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from Councillors D. Bennett, H. Firth, G. Johnson, A. Smith and D. Ward.

#### **5.0 MINUTES**

5.1 To resolve that the minutes of the meetings of Full Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> March and 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

**FC.03.06.20** It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meetings of Full Council on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March and 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

#### **5.2 Action List**

Members requested that the following action be removed  
'FC104.02.19 – to consider providing financial support to Ridgewood Village Hall

Committee' as this had been completed and the remaining work was being carried out by the General Purposes Committee.

Members subsequently noted the action list.

## **6.0 COMMITTEE MINUTES**

6.1 To note the acts and proceedings of the following committee meetings:-

(a) Plans Committee

No meetings had taken place.

(b) Environment & Leisure Committee of the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2020

**FC.04.06.20** It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Environment & Leisure Committee of the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

(c) General Purposes Committee of the 20<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020

**FC.05.06.20** It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the General Purposes Committees of the 20<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020.

## **7.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

(i) The Uckfield Town Centre Regeneration Joint Committee

Nothing to report at present.

(ii) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Nothing to report at present.

(iii) Gatwick Airport Consultation Panel

Nothing to report at present.

## **8.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM FULL COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS**

(i) Civic Centre Working Group

Nothing to report at present.

(ii) Uckfield – Events Working Group

Nothing to report at present.

(iii) Uckfield Dementia Forum

Councillor P. Sparks provided an update from the most recent dementia forum meeting, which had been very productive. Further to discussions around those who may need more assistance within the Town Centre and when venturing out post lockdown (either with visual or physical impairments, dementia, anxiety), it was thought some may struggle with the new stipulations with regards to mask wearing and social distancing. As a result, the forum agreed to purchase a supply of 'sunflower lanyards' and leaflets and work with local businesses to educate them on how best to respond and also ensure those who need support, receive it.

Members thought this sounded good and subsequently noted the report.

## **9.0 TO APPOINT A NEW MEMBER TO SERVE ON THE UNDER MENTIONED STANDING COMMITTEE**

(a) **Plans (7 Members)**

Members had been advised that Councillor D. French wished to stand down from Plans Committee due to personal commitments, which left one vacancy on the

committee, and the need for a newly appointed Chair person.

One expression of interest was received from Councillor K. Bedwell for the vacant position which was voted upon, and voted in favour.

Plans - 7 members

**FC.06.06.20** It was therefore **RESOLVED** that the seven members of the Plans Committee for 2020/21 be as follows:-  
Cllrs. K. Bedwell, J. Beesley, D. Bennett, B. Cox, J. Love, C. Macve and S. Mayhew.

Members discussed whether to appoint a new Chairman. At this time, no meetings of Plans Committee were taking place, and planning applications were being viewed and responses provided in the same manner as applications would normally be considered outside of the planning cycle.

**FC.07.06.20** Members **RESOLVED** that any election and appointment of a new Chair for Plans Committee would wait until a physical meeting of Plans Committee took place.

Councillor D. French wished to thank the Administrative Officer (Mrs Lewis) who clerked the Plan Committees, and the Town Clerk for all their work behind the scenes, and help and assistance.

**10.0 TO APPOINT AN ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATIVE TO OUTSIDE BODY (RIDGEWOOD VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE)**

At the meeting of General Purposes Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2020, members resolved to carry out a number of actions in response to a letter which had been received from the Chair of the Ridgewood Village Hall Committee.

One of the resolutions included:

*(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;*

As the Annual Statutory meeting of the Council was cancelled in May 2020, the item was brought to the June meeting of Full Council. Councillor J. Edwards was already a representative for Uckfield Town Council. Councillor J. Beesley expressed an interest in the position of substitute representative.

**FC.08.06.20** Members **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor J. Beesley as the substitute representative for Uckfield Town Council on the list of Outside Bodies, for Ridgewood Village Hall Committee during 2020/21.

**11.0 TO NOTE THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO COMPLETE AUDITS UNTIL THE ANNUAL STATUTORY MEETING IN MAY 2021**

A new schedule of member audits were listed for the financial year 2020/21.

**FC.09.06.20** Members **RESOLVED** to:  
(i) note the report, and;  
(ii) approve the proposed schedule for member audits in 2020/21 and to make appropriate arrangements with the Assistant Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer, to carry these out.

## **12.0 TO CONSIDER A RESPONSE TO LGA'S CONSULTATION ON A NEW MODEL MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT**

Members reviewed the draft consultation document set out by the Local Government Association on a new Member Code of Conduct.

One member felt that the document was very good, but disappointed that the tone was not more forceful. He thought it was imperative that people complied with the code and it should be enforceable in law, so should be made stronger.

A second member, felt the above point was well made and felt that members should respond individually to the consultation.

### **FC.10.06.20 Members **RESOLVED** to:**

- (i) note the draft consultation document, and;
- (ii) request that members respond individually to the consultation.

## **13.0 TO CONSIDER WEALDEN DC'S STRATEGIC HOUSING AND ECONOMIC LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT (SHELAA) – CALL FOR SITES AND BROAD LOCATIONS**

Members were given an opportunity to comment on the methodology used for the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA).

Following on from earlier comments relating to the Local Plan, one member noted that Eastbourne and Tunbridge Wells had been mentioned as important neighbouring authorities in the methodology for consideration, but there was no mention of Lewes or Mid Sussex. They did not know if there was a particular reason that Lewes had been excluded.

They were also keen to understand how small sites contributed to the overall housing figures, as if these were multiplied out, they would create quite a considerable contribution.

A second member questioned whether the exclusion of Lewes was due to the South Downs National Park. They had also noted reference to occupational land which was useful, as the Chamber of Commerce had previously been critical of the lack of reference to employment land. The methodology excluded flood zone 3B (Hempstead Meadows) and excluded local green spaces but not nature reserves.

Councillor C. Snelgrove arrived to the meeting at 7.36pm.

### **FC.11.06.20 Members **RESOLVED** to:**

- (i) note the report;
- (ii) request that the Town Clerk respond to the consultation on the SHELAA methodology to the Wealden District Council's planning department, and;
- (iii) appoint Councillors P. Sparks, C. Macve and B. Cox to convene together regarding the 'call for sites and broad locations' enquiry, to consider if a response should be provided.

**14.0 TO CONSIDER A RESPONSE TO THE WASTE AND MINERALS LOCAL PLAN REVIEW – REVISED POLICIES DOCUMENT**

East Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council and the South Downs National Park Authority advised that they were proposing changes to their adopted Waste and Minerals Local Plan (WMLP). Members were asked whether they wished to these proposed changes.

Following a couple of queries being answered, members did not wish to formally respond and noted the report.

**15.0 TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS**

Members noted the engagements listed.

**16.0 SIGNING OF GRAVE CERTIFICATES AND TO NOTE TRANSFERS OF DEEDS OF GRANT**

Six deed of grants had been received:

Andrea Hook, Christopher Hook and Karen Ohuz

Philip David Booth

Mitch Raymond Hazelden

Mrs Lisa Wills

Mrs Mavis Lou Watts, Karen Brooker and Martin Watts

Jane Sarah Brooker

**FC.12.06.20** It was **RESOLVED** for three councillors to sign the above deeds of grant.

**17.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED**

None received.

**18.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

**19.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman, Councillor S. Mayhew said well done to everyone for carrying on with the remote meetings via zoom. He thanked members of the press and public for their attendance and expressed that it was great to have them joining the meetings.

**20.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

**FC.13.06.20** 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.

**20.1 To consider a letter received from a Town Council leaseholder**

Councillor P. Sparks provided a last minute declaration of interest (personal interest) in this item as a result of knowing the leaseholder well.

Members discussed the letter and its contents and requested that the Town Clerk seek further information. Members noted the report.

The meeting closed at 7.48pm.