

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the **General Purposes Committee** held remotely via Zoom on Monday 19 April 2021 at 7.00pm

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

2 members of the public
1 member of the press

Sarah D'Alessio – Assistant Town Clerk & RFO
Mark Francis – Estates & Facilities Manager
Holly Goring – Town Clerk
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. None were received.

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

No statements were forthcoming.

3.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were recorded from Councillor A. Smith

4.0 MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on the 8 March 2021

GP36.04.21 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee on 8 March 2021 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2 Action list

Members reviewed and noted the updates provided within the action list. They agreed to remove the following actions from the list as this work had now been completed or superseded by another resolution. Members subsequently noted the report.

GP28.03.21 – Review previous request for support from Uckfield Phab for 20/21

- 4.3 Project list
Members were happy for project no. 62 (262 Saturday bus service) to be removed from the project list, and subsequently noted the report.

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 2020/21 (provisional year end)
Councillor P. Sparks wished to make reference to the figures for Luxfords Restaurant. The figures were extremely encouraging as a result of the income received through covid related grant funding and the UK Government furlough scheme, despite the impact of the pandemic and numerous national and localised lockdowns. He wished to record his thanks to the staff and record the Town Council's appreciation for the time it would have taken to submit these claims and for officers' careful administration.

The Town Clerk also echoed these comments and highlighted that despite the deficits in both General Purposes Committee and Luxfords Restaurant, the initial view of financial year end, highlighted some underspend under Environment & Leisure Committee which would hopefully assist with covering these deficits.

Members agreed and noted both reports.

- 5.3. Bad Debts
Members noted the report.
- 5.4 To consider carry forwards of unspent revenue budget from 2020/21
Members were provided with a list of funds which had been set aside in 2020/21 for activities which were either cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic or were new initiatives where work had not been completed.

GP37.04.21 Members **RESOLVED** that the following unspent sums be carried forward from the 2020/21 financial year to 2021/22:

Environment & Leisure Committee Revenue budget 2020/21 – funds unspent

Weald on the Field/ Uckfield Revival	£3,000	Due to Covid-19, the events did not take place. A sum of £3,000 remains unspent, and it is being requested to carry forward these funds into earmarked reserves for future events.
Town Twinning Hospitality	£100	No visits were made by our twin towns due to the pandemic. It is being recommended that these funds be transferred into earmarked reserves for future events.
LNRS & Sites of Interest	£394	These funds remain unspent. It is being suggested they be transferred into earmarked reserves to enable additional funding to be used to top up the costs of installing the memorial granite bench for Geoff Pollard.

Environment & Leisure Committee New initiatives 2020/21 – projects not yet complete

Additional tree planting	£700	A total of £1,742 was spent from the budget set aside of £2,500. It is being requested to transfer remaining funds to earmarked reserves towards future planting.
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Bench on London Road by Southview	£1,000	Due to other priorities, this project was not completed. It is being requested to transfer funds to earmarked reserves for future delivery/covid memorial bench.
Memorial plaques/art project	£1,500	Due to other priorities, this project was not completed. It is being requested to transfer funds to earmarked reserves for future delivery/covid memorial bench.

General Purposes Committee Revenue budget 2020/21 – funds unspent

General Power of Competence funding	£2,000	A total of £22,841 was spent from a budget of £27,500 in 2020/21. To assist with the delivery and cost of any future town events post covid, it is being requested whether a sum of £2,000 could be transferred into earmarked reserves towards Weald on the Field (town events).
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General Purposes Committee New initiatives 2020/21 – projects not yet complete

West Park Pavilion	£20,000	Due to other priorities, this project was not completed. It is being requested to transfer funds to earmarked reserves for future delivery.
262 Saturday Bus service	£1,800	A total of £2,016.47 was spent from a budget of £3,900. In the 2021/22 budget setting members agreed to set aside less contribution for the 262 Saturday bus service in 2021/22, as they knew there would be underspend in 2020/21 that could be carried forward due to the pandemic. We are requesting that £1,800 be carried forward to earmarked reserves to help cover the costs in 2021/22.
Weald Hall replacement backdrops	£2,500	Due to other priorities, this project was not completed. It is being requested to transfer funds to earmarked reserves for future delivery.
Climate Change initiatives	£7,500	Due to other priorities, this project was not completed. It is being requested to transfer funds to earmarked reserves for future delivery. A great deal of research and investigation was however carried out into future initiatives.

5.5 To write off small under and over payments on the Town Council's accounts
Members reviewed the report which explained that over a period of time some customers under or overpay invoices; usually this would be 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

GP38.04.21 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to write off the three small underpayment amounts listed and one overpayment detailed in the report.

5.6 To note the report of the Internal Auditor report (March 2021)
This item was deferred as the report had not been received in time for the meeting.

6.0 BUILDINGS

6.1 To note the current position with the Council's buildings
The Estates & Facilities Manager advised members that one of the toilet doors at Victoria Pavilion had been fitted at the weekend and the second was being

installed this week. 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 report from January 2021.

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

Members noted the report.

(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

Chairman of General Purposes Committee, Councillor C. Macve advised that this was his last meeting as Chair in this municipal year. He wished to thank all staff for their hard work and support, and was very grateful to the Town Clerk for leading members and keeping them on a straight pathway. Despite Covid-19, the Town Council had achieved a huge amount.

11.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Clerk advised that an application had been made the previous week for the Covid-19 restart grant funding for hospitality and retail businesses. Only one application could be made, as a result of Luxfords Restaurant being located

within the Civic Centre and under the Civic Centre's business rates. It was hoped that the application would be successful. In the meantime, work was underway to source outside restaurant furniture and accessories to improve the facilities for customers. Funding would be used initially from the Civic Centre running costs, and if successful a virement would be carried out to transfer the grant funding back to that budget code. If for any reason funding was required to get the hospitality businesses back up and running and other routes had been unsuccessful, the Town Clerk would appoint the Urgent Consultation Panel to take a decision.

The meeting closed at 19.19pm.