

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the **General Purposes Committee** held in the Weald Hall, Civic Centre, Uckfield on Tuesday 1 June 2021 at 7.00pm

PRESENT:

Cllr. P. Sparks (Chair)	Cllr. J. Love
Cllr. J. Edwards (Vice-Chair)	Cllr. C. Macve
Cllr. H. Firth	Cllr. A. Smith
Cllr. G. Johnson	Cllr. C. Snelgrove

IN ATTENDANCE:

No members of the public
1 member of the press

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 D. Ward who had been unwell. Councillor P. Sparks hoped members would join him in sending the committee's best wishes.

4.0 MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on the 19 April 2021

GP03.06.21 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee on 19 April 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. Members subsequently noted the report.

GP32.01.18 – Community Speedwatch equipment

GP13.10.20 – Town Council's Annual Maintenance Programme

- 4.3 Project list
Members were happy for project no. 61 (Annual Maintenance Programme – Victoria Pavilion toilets) 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 No income and expenditure reports are available due to year end processes.
- 5.3. Bad Debts
Members noted the report.
- 5.4 To note the report of the Internal Auditor report (March 2021)
The Chairman, Councillor P. Sparks wished to draw members' attention to the overall conclusion which highlighted that no significant concerns or issues had been identified and it had not been necessary to append an action plan. The Town Clerk and her team were commended on this wonderful achievement, and members noted the report.

6.0 BUILDINGS

- 6.1 To note the current position with the Council's buildings
The Estates & Facilities Manager advised members that although the Civic Centre Atrium works had been completed, there were still some remedial works outstanding (snagging). He had also arranged a drone survey to be undertaken of the Civic Centre roof, to review the impact of the birds nesting around the solar panels.

Councillor H. Firth was pleased to see Foresters Hall back in use again, and things getting back to normal.
Members subsequently noted the report.

- 6.2 To review an update from the Uckfield Community Fridge CIC
Members were presented with a detailed report from the Uckfield Community Fridge CIC which highlighted their work to date, their plans going forward, and the costs involved. It specified their plans for ensuring high standards of food health and hygiene as well as their proposals for working with the Town Council to temporarily utilise some of the land at the Hub and cover the costs of the waste collection and access to electricity. Members felt the report was comprehensive and had no further questions.

GP04.06.21 Members **RESOLVED** to:
(i) note the report and its contents, and;
(ii) agree to Uckfield Town Council invoicing for an annual charge up to the amount of £250 per annum, to cover the cost of waste collection and electricity.

- 6.3 To consider an update on the proposed works to the Civic Centre Hopper (Biomass boiler)
Members were presented with a report which provided an update on a previously discussed increase in capacity to the Civic Centre pellet hopper. The Estates & Facilities Manager noted that the only difficulty with this expansion would be finding alternative storage space for equipment within the Civic Centre. The Estates & Facilities Manager explained that he was currently looking at a

project for reconfiguring the caretaker area, to provide more storage space and longer term, to gain access to the Civic Centre's void area, but at present they had purchased some racking and were placing all of the Luxfords additional crockery and equipment in one area of the building.

The expansion of the hopper would save 10 deliveries each winter and as a result, expenditure. Councillor A. Smith had calculated that by carrying out this work, it could save the council in the region of £1,400 each winter, so it was a sensible option.

GP05.06.21 Members **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the report and its contents, and;
- (ii) agree to install the larger hopper, and to fund the additional expenditure from earmarked reserves (Building Maintenance Fund).

6.4 **To consider a request from the Ridgewood Village Hall Management Committee for additional storage**

Members were presented with a report which set out a request from the RVH Management Committee to place a storage unit/shed on the recreation ground side of the building.

Currently RVH committee members were having to gain access to the basement via some very steep steps to reach any tables, chairs or equipment for events. This was a health and safety risk. Councillor J. Edwards as a UTC representative on the RVH Committee, confirmed this.

Although the reasoning behind the request made sense, there were some concerns raised by officers as a result of advice from Wealden DC planning department and the Town Council's solicitors. Although the Town Council have permitted development rights, the RVH Committee do not, so it might be prudent for them to liaise with Wealden DC's planning department. The Solicitors also reminded Uckfield Town Council that the recreation ground on the eastern side of the hall had village green status, and if the shed was not used in connection with the Village Green (for recreational purposes) this also needed taking into account.

The Estates & Facilities Manager suggested that the car park might be more suitable but members were aware that there would be further distance and difficulties in moving this equipment. It was suggested that the area at the front of the building to the right hand side of the steps might be more suitable.

GP06.06.21 Members **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the report, and;
- (ii) request that the RVH Committee invite a Wealden DC Planning Officer to visit the site and provide advice on the installation of a shed, and the best way forward, as well as giving consideration to security.

7.0 POLICY

7.1 **To review the Member Audit Policy (Policy No. 63)**

Members considered the amendments which had been made in response to the changes to supplier payments, which were now made by BACs rather than cheque.

GP07.06.21 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to the revisions made and approve the latest version of the Member Audit Policy (No. 63).

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 February and March 2021.

9.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

9.1 To consider reports from:-

(i) Citizens Advice Bureau
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

The Chairman, Councillor P. Sparks, advised how he had very big shoes to fill after a wonderful chairmanship from Councillor C. Macve. Councillor Sparks hoped to achieve a lot of good things in the next year with committee members.

11.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcement made.

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

GP08.06.21

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 an update on Luxfords Restaurant
Members noted the report.

The meeting closed at 7.40pm.