



UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Council Offices, Civic Centre
Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 1AE

Tel: (01825) 762774 Fax: (01825) 765757

e-mail: townclerk@uckfieldtc.gov.uk

www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk

Town Clerk – Holly Goring

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO A MEETING OF UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

on

Monday 6 December 2021 at 7.00pm

Weald Hall, Civic Centre, Uckfield

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 MAYOR'S DISCRETION

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

4.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

5.0 MINUTES

5.1 To **RESOLVE** that the minutes of the meetings of Full Council on 25 October 2021 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

5.2 Action list – For information only
(Attached)

6.0 COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| (a) | Plans Committees | 1 and 22 November 2021 |
| (b) | Environment and Leisure Committee | 15 November 2021 |
| (c) | General Purposes Committee | 8 November 2021 |

- 7.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**
- (i) The Uckfield Town Centre Regeneration Joint Committee (nothing to report)
 - (ii) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (nothing to report)
 - (iii) Gatwick Airport Consultation Group (nothing to report)
- 8.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS**
- (i) Civic Centre Working Group (nothing to report)
 - (ii) Uckfield Dementia Forum
 - (iii) Uckfield Events Working Group
- 9.0 TO CONSIDER WORKS TO AN OAK TREE IN THE OLD SECTION OF SNATTS ROAD CEMETERY**
- 10.0 TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WEALDEN PARISH REMUNERATION PANEL ON TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES FOR 2022/23**
- 11.0 TO CONSIDER WHETHER THE SANITISATION OF PLAY AREAS IS REQUIRED DURING THE 2021/22 WINTER SEASON**
- 12.0 TO REVIEW THE 2022/23 PROPOSAL FROM EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL ON THEIR GRASS VERGE CUTTING CONTRACT**
- 13.0 TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT ARRANGEMENTS FOR SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS WITH UCKFIELD VOLUNTEER CENTRE AND WEALDEN CITIZEN'S ADVICE FOR 2022/23**
- 14.0 TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-27**
- 15.0 TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2022/23**
- 16.0 TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT ANNUAL BUDGET FOR 2022/23**
- 17.0 TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR 2022-27**
- 18.0 TO NOTE THE REPORT OF THE INTERNAL AUDITOR (NOV 2021)**
- 19.0 TO UNDERTAKE A REVIEW OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S STANDING ORDERS**
- 20.0 TO CONSIDER THE ADOPTION OF A NEW CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY FOR THE TOWN COUNCIL**
- 21.0 TO CONSIDER A RESPONSE TO THE WASTE & MINERALS LOCAL PLAN – REVISED POLICIES WINTER 2021/22**

22.0 TO CONSIDER THE REMOVAL OF A SIGN USED FOR FLOOD NOTIFICATIONS BY THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

23.0 TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

24.0 SIGNING OF GRAVE CERTIFICATES AND TO NOTE TRANSFERS OF DEEDS OF GRANT

25.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED

26.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

27.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

28.0 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:

28.1 To consider an update on legal advice received for the renewal of the lease agreement for the Signal Box

28.2 To consider the implementation of the WPA Programme (NHS Top-up) for staff



Town Clerk
30 November 2021

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of **UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL** held
on Monday 25 October 2021 at 7.00 pm
in the Weald Hall, Civic Centre, Uckfield

PRESENT: Cllr. K. Bedwell
Cllr. B. Cox
Cllr. H. Firth
Cllr. D. French (Deputy)
Cllr. J. Love (Town Mayor)
Cllr. C. Macve
Cllr. S. Mayhew
Cllr. A. Smith
Becky Ikeson (Youth Member)

IN ATTENDANCE:

1 x member of the press (recorded)
County Councillor Chris Dowling

Holly Goring Town Clerk
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. None were forthcoming.

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.49.10.21 It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to enable members of the public to speak.

Councillor C. Dowling attended the meeting. He understood that UKPN/Kier were planning to finish their Town Centre works the following week. He was hopeful that this was going to happen. He had heard there would still be some snagging works to attend to, but Councillor Dowling had advised that these would have to be carried out in January, after the festive season, to reduce any further disruption to the town, and potential for impact to the retailers.

He had attended a meeting recently of the Newtown Action Group, in addition to

a residents' meeting with Wealden DC officers and Sussex Police regarding Keld Close.

A report had been put forward regarding overgrown vegetation along the narrow footpath on Eastbourne Road between the Fernley Park roundabout and Radjutt Indian Restaurant. This was in hand and landowners were being approached by ES Highways.

Everyone at ESCC was waiting for the announcements in the Chancellor's Budget. ESCC were in the early stages of their budget setting, with a decision due to be taken in February 2022 for 2022/23.

Councillor B. Cox asked what resilience had been put in place for the County Council's budget (i.e. room for contingency and business continuity). Councillor C. Dowling felt that there had been resilience over the past ten years with the substantial impact on local authority budgets, as a result of central government grant funding being reduced and removed. The biggest expense to the County Council was Adult Social Care and Children's Services. Fortunately, funding was ringfenced for these services.

Councillor H. Firth provided an update for Wealden DC. She had also attended the multi-agency meeting relating to Keld Close. More frequent meetings would be arranged with the residents, and Councillor H. Firth expressed her concerns at the lack of communication between certain departments within the health system. Services needed to talk to each other.

Councillor H. Firth was part of a Health & Wellbeing Working Group at Wealden DC. She had recently reminded them that a number of initiatives were online and for those more digitally minded, however a proportion of the district population were still not using smartphones or had broadband, and this should be remembered in future projects.

FC.50.10.21 Councillors were thanked for their input and updates, and members subsequently **RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

4.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillors J. Beesley, D. Bennett, J. Edwards, G. Johnson, P. Sparks, C. Snelgrove, D. Ward and Youth Member Emily McHale. Apologies had also been received from County/District Councillor Claire Dowling.

5.0 MINUTES

5.1 To resolve that the minutes of the meeting of the Full Council on 13 September 2021 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

FC.51.10.21 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of full Council on 13 September 2021 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

5.2 Action List

Members requested that the following actions be removed as they had now been completed:

FC18.05.21 – Red telephone box
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 of the 20 September and 11 October 2021

FC.52.10.21 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Plans Committee of the 20 September and 11 October 2021.

(b) Environment & Leisure Committee of the 18 October 2021

FC.53.10.21 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Environment & Leisure Committees of the 18 October 2021.

(c) General Purposes Committee of the 4 October 2021

FC.54.10.21 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the General Purposes Committees of the 4 October 2021.

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

Nothing to report at present.

9.0 QUARTERLY PROGRESS UPDATE ON UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL'S ANNUAL PRIORITIES FOR 2021/22 (Q2)

Councillor C. Macve wished to record the Town Council's thanks to all of the staff, for their excellent work to keep these projects up to date. The Chair, Councillor J. Love seconded this comment and thought it was brilliant that in such difficult circumstances, staff were still achieving such a lot. Members subsequently noted the report.

10.0 TO NOTE THE REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2020/21

Members were presented with a copy of the notice of conclusion of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2021 which included the response from the External Auditor. Members thought congratulations were in order, especially for completing this so precisely and accurately in extremely difficult circumstances. A big thank you was given to all staff. Members noted the outcome of the conclusion of the Audit.

11.0 TO CONSIDER A MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR DONNA FRENCH

Councillor D. French had picked up during an online information session for clerks and councillors that there might be an opportunity to draw down some

funding for Changing Spaces toilet provision.

Unfortunately the Town Clerk had since found out that the deadline had passed but principal authorities such as East Sussex County Council could apply by 27 September. Councillor D. French's motion referenced that and requested that contact be made with East Sussex County Council to understand if they had submitted an expression of interest.

Councillor D. French explained that Changing Places toilets were larger accessible toilet spaces which had benches and adult changing spaces. There was a network across the country and it was hoped improvements could be made to transport links and networks. Councillor D. French hoped that there might be some opportunity to introduce such a space in Uckfield potentially near to the bus station.

Councillor H. Firth congratulated her colleague on this excellent idea. There were currently very limited facilities for disabled people in Uckfield.

Councillor B. Cox also agreed with the motion being put forward. Councillor K. Bedwell added that perhaps this would also be something that developers could contribute to within Uckfield.

FC.55.10.21

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the motion put forward by Councillor D. French and for staff to make contact with the County Council:

"Uckfield Town Council supports the increase in the provision of Changing Place Toilets across the country, and will approach East Sussex County Council to understand if they:

(i) have submitted an expression of interest to central government to draw down funding to the county of East Sussex, and:

(ii) if ESCC have expressed an interest, that Uckfield Town Council lobby for such facilities to be introduced in Uckfield."

12.0 TO NOTE THE DECISION OF THE URGENT CONSULTATION PANEL

Members of the Urgent Consultation Panel had been approached on 4 October 2021, regarding the calendar competition, as only four entries had been received. A decision was unfortunately taken to not continue with the calendar for 2022, as a result of this and other pressures on staffing and financial resources. Members noted the decision taken by the Urgent Consultation Panel.

13.0 TO NOTE AND CONSIDER THE MARKET TEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST IN THE OPERATION OF HEATHFIELD AND UCKFIELD LEISURE CENTRES

Members considered a report which advised that East Sussex County Council had opened up a tender process to invite expressions of interest for the operation of Heathfield and Uckfield Leisure Centres. They were looking to establish a new 25-year full repairing lease/agreement for the operational management arrangements for the ongoing benefit of the local community and College for which curriculum services were currently provided. The Town Clerk advised that interest was also being invited for the Ringmer swimming pool, as no interest had been received for this building. Expressions of interest could be submitted by 5 November 2021 for one, two or all three venues.

Councillor H. Firth felt that the costs of upkeeping the building could be of concern to the Town Council. Councillor C. Macve agreed and felt that the Town Council did not have the relevant knowledge or expertise to run such a site. It was a very specialist field and covered a number of different areas relating to sports facilities, project management, property management etc. He did however feel we should whatever the Town Council could to support East Sussex County Council and any provider with this hugely valuable asset.

Other members agreed, with both Councillors B. Cox and J. Love supporting these comments that we should support the process but leave the management of the site to expert service providers. Members subsequently noted the report having confirmed that they would be happy to support the process and assist East Sussex County Council with any communication, but would not be putting forward an expression of interest.

14.0 TO CONSIDER THE SOUTH EAST WATER'S DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION PLAN

Members were provided with a copy of the consultation document, which set out South East Water's Draft Climate Change Adaptation Plan.

Councillor C. Macve thought that the document did not make for particularly health reading with many scorings currently not being met. Councillor C. Macve referenced the Arlington Reservoir and any upgrade to this being a number of years away despite numerous homes being built.

Councillor J. Love had also looked at other routes for saving water. It was becoming more apparent that despite the large number of developments being put forward across the district, nothing was included in the planning applications with regarding to the reuse or saving of water, within their sites. South East Water needed to liaise more closely with East Sussex County Council and Wealden District Council as the local planning authority. It was paramount that water supplies were protected.

Reference was made by Councillor H. Firth to a case study seen elsewhere where greywater tanks had been placed under the properties (*greywater was waste water from showers, baths, wash basins, washing machines and kitchen sinks*). All bodies should be insisting on this and more legislation was required from central government to enable the enforcement of this. The Town Clerk noted the feedback received from members.

15.0 TO SIGN AND SEAL THE LICENCE AGREEMENT BETWEEN MANOR PARK & RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION AND UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL FOR BROWN'S LANE ROCKERY

After responding to a query regarding insurance for the trees, members noted the contents of the agreement and

FC.56.10.21 RESOLVED to approve the licence agreement between Uckfield Town Council and the Manor Park & Hempstead Fields Residents' Association for Brown's Lane Rockery, and agreed for two councillors to sign and seal the licence agreement.

16.0 TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

The Town Mayor, Councillor J. Love advised attendees that she had met some incredible people on her civic duties. This had included attending the Uckfield Volunteer Centre awards, learning about the amazing people who volunteered their time to help others, along with celebrating 40 years of dedication to the Uckfield Guides. The opening of the Community Fridge was also a great opportunity to see how it worked and understand more. It was an incredible facility. Members noted the report.

17.0 SIGNING OF GRAVE CERTIFICATES AND TO NOTE TRANSFERS OF DEEDS OF GRANT

Five deed of grants had been received:

Christina Blaber

Mr Derek Gilden

Mr Ryan Deller

Mrs L. Elliott

Emma Holford

FC.57.10.21 It was **RESOLVED** for three councillors to sign the above deeds of grant.

18.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED

None received.

19.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

20.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

The meeting closed at 19:40hours.

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

ACTION LIST – FOR INFORMATION ONLY

FULL COUNCIL

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<p><u>FC.105.02.17</u></p> <p><u>FC.95.01.20</u></p>	<p><u>14.0 To sign and seal the byelaws for Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve and West Park Local Nature Reserve</u> Members RESOLVED to sign and seal the byelaws for Hempstead Meadows and West Park Local Nature Reserves.</p> <p><u>18.0 To sign and seal the Town Council's byelaws for Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve and West Park Local Nature Reserve</u> Members RESOLVED to:</p> <p>(i) authorise the affixing of the common seal to the byelaws for both Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve and West Park Local Nature Reserve and signing by two named councilors, and;</p> <p>(ii) authorise the Town Clerk for Uckfield Town Council to carry out the necessary procedures and apply to the Secretary of State for confirmation.</p>	<p>20.02.17</p> <p>20.01.20</p>	<p>HG</p>	<p>The Council will be advertising its intention to apply for confirmation once covid restrictions have eased. The byelaws must then be held for at least one month at the offices for inspection by the public, before any representations are reported back as part of the package of information, to DEFRA.</p>
<p><u>FC115.04.19</u></p>	<p><u>9.0 To consider a motion submitted by Councillor Donna French</u> It was RESOLVED to support the motion put forward, and; “reinvestigate the possibility of part funding a traffic warden; entering into a discussion with Hailsham, Crowborough and Polegate, with a view to joint funding a shared traffic warden, employed via Sussex Police.”</p>	<p>08.04.19</p>	<p>HG</p>	<p>This matter has been raised with the Wealden Inspector of Sussex Police. It is understood that Sussex Police and Wealden DC were due to hold discussions once again. UTC will await the outcome of these.</p>

<u>Resolution No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Date Raised</u>	<u>Action By</u>	<u>Date Complete</u>
<u>FC32.06.19</u> <u>FC46.08.19</u>	<u>13.0 To consider a motion from Councillor Spike Mayhew</u> Members unanimously RESOLVED to (i) ask the Town Clerk to look into civil orders such as Public Space Protection Orders, and; (ii) for the Town Council to reconsider the role of a Community Warden <u>13.0 To report back to Full Council on Public Space Protection Orders</u> Members RESOLVED to ask the Town Clerk to arrange a meeting with Sussex Police and Wealden District Council.	24.06.19/ 05.08.19	HG	Members considered research into Public Space Protection Orders at the meeting on 9 th December 2019. It was agreed to defer this item until further work had been undertaken on reporting and the new PCSO's had started.
<u>FC57.09.19</u>	<u>10.0 To consider a motion from Councillor Ben Cox</u> With eleven members voting in favour, and one abstaining, it was RESOLVED to accept the report from Councillor Ben Cox in relation to youth food poverty, and take up the recommendations outlined in the above motion, with a caveat that the investigations undertaken at this stage would be at no cost to the Town Council.	16.09.19	HG/ BC	Since this motion was put forward, the Community Fridge initiative has set itself up as a CIC. Further research is however required into food poverty.
<u>FC.30.09.20</u>	<u>12.0 To review a report by Councillor A. Smith on the need for affordable homes in Uckfield</u> After a detailed discussion, it was RESOLVED to request that the Town Clerk write to the Housing Minister Rt Hon Robert Jenrick with a copy of this report and advise Wealden DC's planning department of these discussions along with neighbouring parish councils.	14.09.20	HG	A letter is being drafted and will be circulated to members for approval before sending.
<u>FC.46.09.21</u>	<u>10.0 To formally consider options to increase utilisation of West Park Pavilion</u> With nine votes in favour, and one member abstaining, members RESOLVED to proceed with Option 2 " <i>to lease the entire building on a full repairing lease to a Sports Club for an agreed rental figure per annum</i> ", but for officers to also continue searching for further space which would support local community groups in the town.	13.09.21	HG/MF	The Town Council's solicitors have now been given instruction to draw up a lease agreement with the local sports club. This matter will now be dealt with by GP Committee. NFA.

<u>Resolution No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<u>FC.47.09.21</u>	<p><u>11.0 To consider the proposed way forward and preparation of the dedication agreements for the new footway links to the “land off mallard drive” development</u></p> <p>Members RESOLVED to:</p> <p>(i) note the proposed legal process being taken with regards to the footway link across Uckfield TC land at Harlands Playing Fields, and;</p> <p>(ii) confirmed that the footway link between Framfield Road and Hospital approach should also be placed up for adoption by ESCC at the same time;</p> <p>(iii) request that Persimmon Homes cover the costs of any legal fees incurred</p>	13.09.21	HG	<p>Correspondence is ongoing with Persimmon in relation to the footway links, access points onto the land and current concerns with regard to construction vehicles and timings of works. Wealden DC Planning Enforcement are aware and jointly liaising with contractors.</p>
<u>FC.55.10.21</u>	<p>Members RESOLVED to approve the motion put forward by Councillor D. French and for staff to make contact with the County Council:</p> <p><i>“Uckfield Town Council supports the increase in the provision of Changing Place Toilets across the country, and will approach East Sussex County Council to understand if they:</i></p> <p><i>(i) have submitted an expression of interest to central government to draw down funding to the county of East Sussex, and:</i></p> <p><i>(ii) if ESCC have expressed an interest, that Uckfield Town Council lobby for such facilities to be introduced in Uckfield.”</i></p>	25.10.21	HG	In progress.

Meeting of Full Council

Monday 6 December 2021

Agenda Item 8.0 (ii)

TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM FULL COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS: UCKFIELD DEMENTIA FORUM

The most recent meeting of the Uckfield Dementia Forum took place on Thursday 25 November 2021. The forum was joined by two new members – Abbots Wood Care Home based in Hailsham and Lydsford Care Home, East Hoathly.

Forum members received a thorough update from the Wealden Dementia Action Alliance on the work of dementia forums elsewhere in the district, and the reopening of dementia cafes and activities such as sporting moments. One of the main issues affecting access to support services and activities was transport. A number of care organisations were trying to support the local community with access to these weekly activities in addition to covid vaccinations or medical appointments to ensure those living with dementia and their carers were able to receive support and experience social interaction. It was understood that 3VA were currently trying to bring the relevant agencies together to discuss longer term how transport provision could be made available for vulnerable groups to access community groups and medical appointments.

A number of the care services in attendance discussed how they were also promoting their specialist expertise in supporting those living with Parkinsons.

Forum members discussed potential activities or projects for the local area which were more outdoors focused. This included the potential to set up memory walks, the potential to install a friendly bench, and searching for a plot of open space or allotment land for planting or produce.

Uckfield Dementia Forum wished to also promote its festive event on Wednesday 15 December 2021 at 2.00pm in the Luxford Centre – with a screening of Andre Rieu's Christmas Down Under.

Uckfield Dementia Forum

Christmas Event
Tea and cake followed by a film

Wednesday 15 December 2021
Doors open at 1.40pm for a 2pm start

Free Event **Raffle prizes to be won**

Please register your interest at 01825 747793
or via townclerk@uckfieldtc.gov.uk

Luxfords Centre, Library Way, Uckfield TN22 1AR

Free parking is available next to the centre in Luxfords Car Park

ANDRÉ RIEU
Christmas Down Under

UCKFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL **Wealden District Council**

Meeting of the Full Council

Monday 6 December 2021

Agenda Item 8.0 (iii)

TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM FULL COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS: UCKFIELD – EVENTS WORKING GROUP

The working group held a remote meeting on 9 November 2021 to review the two events of Weald on the Field and Uckfield Revival in 2021.

Weald on the Field was a great success, despite being organised later than usual, and had been well attended by local residents. Working group members were keen for the event to return to the first weekend in August and would therefore seek to plan entertainment for Saturday 6 August 2022. Facilities and music would be provisionally booked before Christmas to ensure everything was in place.

Unfortunately in 2021, the Uckfield Revival event had met with very wet weather. Although the event had still continued and there had been a good turnout, it had affected the length of time people stayed and concerns were raised with vehicles being able to safely leave the field. Working group members were conscious that there were a number of class car events throughout the year and they did not wish to clash with these or the Uckfield Festival Classic Car show in July. It was therefore proposed that the event take place in May 2022, and arrangements would commence in the New Year.

Meeting of the Full Council

Monday 6 December 2021

Agenda Item 9.0

TO CONSIDER WORKS TO AN OAK TREE IN THE OLD SECTION OF SNATTS ROAD CEMETERY

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Earlier in 2021, the Town Council commissioned for a survey to be undertaken on one third of the Town Council's land to assess the condition of the trees by a qualified and independent Arboricultural Consultant. For the purpose of clarity the independent surveyor was an Arboricultural Consultant with a BSc (Hons) in Arboriculture and an MSc in Arboriculture and Urban Forestry. Further surveys would be carried out in 2022/23 and 2023/34 as part of a three-year programme.
- 1.2 With Ash die back making its presence felt in 2020 and more awareness of the diseases that can affect other tree varieties such as Oak, Town Council staff felt this was an important exercise, with the Town Council having responsibility for a large number of open spaces within Uckfield including three ancient woodlands.
- 1.3 The survey highlighted that there were 70 trees identified across the town that needed some attention, with two in particular being considered the highest priority. One was located on the entrance to Victoria Pleasure Ground (which has since been removed) and the second was a large Oak tree in the old (southern) section of Snatts Road Cemetery, on Snatts Road, Uckfield.
- 1.4 The oak tree is located in a very sensitive setting with a number of ashes interments located in the nearby vicinity, but more importantly there are scattered ashes and interments located around the base of the large oak tree. The tree is also in close proximity to a sub-station, a telephone line, a residential property and a road (Snatts Road). It would therefore pose a risk if it were to fall, but also poses a number of challenges to tree surgeons to safely work on the tree.
- 1.5 Town Council staff placed a note on the tree and sent a letter to a number of the relatives early summer, but with limited information available at that stage in the Town Council's investigations, the initial correspondence was quite understandably a shock and caused upset and concern, as information was limited on how the situation would be handled, leading relatives to believe the tree would be felled completely.
- 1.6 A meeting was held with a small number of the relatives at that stage, to talk through the results of the initial tree survey and explain that there were two workstreams under way, (i) tracing the relatives of those who had family members laid to rest around the base of the tree. Some would be ashes interments, some loose interments and some scatterings. This was a lengthy process as some of the people who had made the arrangements may have since passed away themselves or moved from the area. The second line of work involved exploring the options available in relation to the tree.



Height of tree is 22 metres, yellow circle above shows a 22-metre radius of the risk area of falling.

- 1.7 An apology was also provided with the Town Clerk admitting that the content of the notice and letter was premature in its wording, as it suggested that the tree would be removed as a result of its old age. The Clerk apologised for any upset or distress caused by this correspondence, and advised that this was not the Town Council's intention.
- 1.8 Relatives were kept updated with regard to the council's investigations and the further work that would be required (i.e. *potential for more detailed surveys, ecological survey and working with tree surgeons to explore how to safely carry out work on the tree*).
- 1.9 Contact has recently been made with all but three families over the telephone to explain the current position and our proposed next steps, with relatives being invited to a meeting at the Civic Centre on 30 November 2021. Not all relatives could attend but they continue to be kept updated or met with separately in detail by the Town Clerk.

2.0 Surveys of the Oak Tree

- 2.1 The first survey highlighted that there were visible signs that the Oak tree was showing decay with fungal fruiting bodies at the base of the tree.

Tree Survey Action Analysis				
Tree: 1652				
TagNo: 1652				
Common Oak				
Quercus robur				
Tree Comment:				
Survey Comment: Multiple remnants of fungal fruiting bodies at the base of the tree. Decay audible and visible. Consider decay evaluation using sonic tomography to fully inform future management options.				
Action Recommendations:			Done	Priority
Further inspection	On internal trunk decay.		No	3 Months
Remove	Major dead wood		No	6 Months

General Tree Assessment (Detailed)											
Tree ID: 1652		Common Oak <i>Quercus robur</i>			Tag: 1652 TPD: Unknown			Assessor: Date: 27-Jan-21			
Tree Comment: Survey Comment: Multiple remnants of fungal fruiting bodies at the base of the tree. Decay audible and visible. Consider decay evaluation using sonic tomography to fully inform future management options											
Details		Height	Spread	Stems	Ø	Maturity	Bat	Con Area	Prev Insp	Next Due	Condition
		22 m	12 m	1	1500 mm	Over Mature	Yes	No	N/A	27-Apr-21	Fair
Observations		Root			Stem		Branch		Leaf/Bud		
		Fungal or decay			Fungal or decay Ivy covered		Apical die back Major dead wood		Normal		
Work		Category			Action					Priority	Done
		Further inspection			On internal trunk decay.					3 Months	No
		Remove			Major dead wood					6 Months	No

- 2.2 The next steps were to investigate to what extent the tree could be diseased. There were two options to investigate the extent of the disease further: (i) a sonic tomograph of the tree (x-ray); (ii) or to take a fungal core sample. Both of these exercises were costly but on talking to the small number of relatives in the first meeting it was considered that further information would be helpful to understand the extent of the issue.
- 2.3 Over the summer months, further work was undertaken, and a sonic tomograph was commissioned to fully understand the extent of the disease. This was undertaken by an independent professional arboricultural consultant with 31 years of experience in the industry. The full report will be shared with members and extracts for the purpose of the covering report are provided below.
- 2.4 The consultant was instructed to undertake an inspection and decay evaluation of tree no. 1652, a single pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*) located within the curtilage of Snatts Road Cemetery, Uckfield.
- 2.5 *“The tree was initially subject to a ground-based assessment, facilitated using a monocular, using the non-invasive Visual Tree Assessment methodology. The lower stem of the tree was assessed further using a Picus 3 sonic tomography unit. Sonic tomography uses the relative velocity of sound waves induced at measuring points located around the circumference of the stem to compose a colour-shift image. The geometry of the tree at the test level is accurately mapped using digital callipers prior to completing the tomogram. On the tomogram image, dark areas correspond to relative higher velocities and, hence, denser wood. Decay, hollowing and cracks typically results in lower velocities and a shift to lighter colours, with maroon and blue/white indicating lower velocities.”*



Figure 6 basal cavity



Figure 7 fungal fructifications

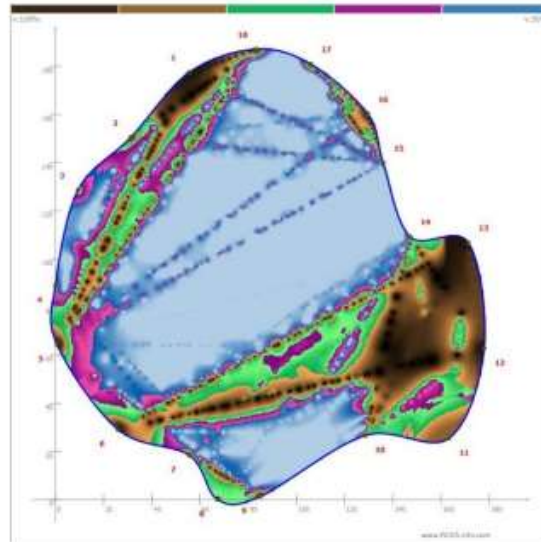


Figure 10 –Tomogram image



- 2.6 The results of this more detailed assessment utilising a variety of tools, identified that unfortunately the tree was in poor health. The sonic tomography exercise indicated that there was a significant area of reduced velocity (i.e. volume/density of oak).
- 2.7 The assessment also provided a number of options for the Town Council to consider:

Management option	Strengths	Weakness
<u>Option 1:</u> Fell the tree to ground level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removes the tree and negates any associated risk. No requirement for further assessment of the tree. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of associated amenity. Costs of removal are likely to be significant. Potential issues with mourners.
<u>Option 2:</u> Fell the tree to a height of 5m and retain as a monolith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removes majority of the tree and largely negates any associated risk. No requirement for further assessment of the tree. Retains a section of the tree suitable for fungal, wildlife and invertebrate habitat. Costs are likely to be significantly less than those associated with option 1. Partially negates potential issues with mourners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of associated amenity. Costs are still likely to be significant. Will look unsightly in the setting. Will retain an element of risk due to collapse. Will still require removal as and when the remaining section becomes unsafe. Potential issues with mourners.
<u>Option 3:</u> Do nothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enables the retention of the tree. No additional financial outlay. Negates potential issues with mourners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirement for further assessment of the tree. Risk of tree failure is retained unmitigated. Failure could result in significant loss and or damage.

3.0 Proposed next steps

- 3.1 When meeting with the relatives and discussing the location of the tree, it was unanimously considered by both officers and relatives that it would not be a viable option to do nothing (option 3). This would pose a risk to the resting place of a number of family members, as well as the potential impact on the road, sub station and adjacent residential property. It would be more concerning if the tree were to uproot itself then for the Town Council to reduce the risk and mitigate the future risk by taking action.
- 3.2 It was also felt that to fell the tree to ground level (option 1) would place the resting place of those whose ashes were scattered or interred directly around the tree, at great risk. It would no longer be the natural resting place that relatives had first desired for their family members.
- 3.3 Staff and relatives discussed the potential for option 2 and the height proposed. It was agreed that the preference would be for the majority of the tree to be removed to reduce the risk of the tree uprooting or being damaged in bad weather. The preferred scenario would be for the trunk that remained to become a wildlife monolith, and then it would still remain a natural feature where relatives had been laid to rest and could continue to rest within this natural environment.
- 3.4 The height proposed of 5metres was however of concern, as this could still be impacted by bad weather. Relatives at the meeting on 30 November 2021 felt that a more sensible height would be in the region of 3.5metres. This would be too high for people to try and climb so as to reduce vandalism but would also reduce the risk of it being damaged in bad weather. Those in attendance did however acknowledge that the height may have to be considered once work was underway, if the tree were in a poor condition, and was at risk of crumbling.

4.0 Ensuring safety and care

- 4.1 Quotations have been received which vary in price from between £3k and £12k and utilise varying techniques taking into the account the sensitive location and nearby substation, cemetery wall, road and residential property. One of the main issues is ensuring safe access into the cemetery for the equipment to safely reduce the height of the tree and having due care for the ashes interments and burial ground leading up to the tree. Relatives of those laid to rest around the base of the tree, will be informed of the dates of the work, so they can remove any loose items or personal effects. The memorial stones will be protected with a cover around the base of the tree and the vicinity around the tree.
- 4.2 Techniques will be used to safely lower branches due to the setting of the tree.

5.0 Use of wood

- 5.1 Talking to a number of the relatives, there is a desire for some of the wood that can be saved to be used for bench(es) within the cemetery. The newer (northern section) of the cemetery has a few benches but this area in the old cemetery (southern section) has limited seating.
- 5.2 Having liaised with an ecologist, it was also suggested that some of the wood saved from the works could be stacked to form wildlife areas in the north and southern sections of the cemetery.
- 5.3 Relatives have also asked if they could be given a piece of the wood to make a feature in their home or garden.
- 5.4 Relatives did not wish for the tree surgeons to make a profit from selling the wood, but also recognised after being informed that it may be possible for the quotations to involve, the tree surgeons taking away part of the wood, and the Town Council retaining part of the wood for the above purposes.

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 Members are asked to consider the contents of the report, and agree for the Town Council to remove the branches and height of the oak tree in the old section of Snatts Road Cemetery to a height of 3.5metres and retain as a wildlife monolith, with part of the wood being retained for relatives' personal use, ecological wildlife areas, and seating.

Contact officer: Holly Goring/Mark Francis

Meeting of the Full Council

Monday 6 December 2021

Agenda Item 10.0

TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WEALDEN PARISH REMUNERATION PANEL ON TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES FOR 2022/23

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The report sets out the recommendations from the Parish Remuneration Panel for Wealden District. As Members will be aware the Panel make recommendations on allowances for Wealden District Council and all of the Town and Parish councils in the Wealden District. All councils are required to take their recommendations into account when setting their allowances. The Panel was established by Wealden District Council under Regulation 27 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, for the Town and Parish Councils in its area.

2.0 Recommendations for 2022/23 allowances

- 2.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel met on 5 November 2021. Their final report is attached for members' consideration in appendix A. A copy of the report is also displayed in the Town Council's noticeboard at the Civic Centre, as required. A copy of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 is available in the office should members wish to read the legislation.
- 2.2 The recommended increase for Level (3) Councils in 2022/23 would be a 3.0% increase on that recommended for 2021/22 and equates to the following allowance per annum before tax:
- **Basic Allowance £1,384** (members currently receiving £1,284)
 - **Chairman's allowance £1,912** (Chairman/Mayor currently receiving £1,773)
- 2.3 Please note that members previously resolved to freeze member allowances for 2021/22 and retain member allowances at the 2020-21 rate previously agreed by Uckfield Town Council.

3.0 Travelling and Subsistence Allowances

- 3.1 Under Regulation 26, Town and Parish Councils may pay travelling and subsistence allowances undertaken or incurred in connection with the performance of any duty within one of more of the categories set out in that regulation. These payments and categories are set out in the Parish Remuneration Panel report in paragraphs 19-23 and it was agreed to fix the travelling allowances in line with HM Revenue & Customs 'Approved Mileage Allowance payment' rates.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 Members are asked to consider the attached report of the Independent Remuneration Panel, and instruct the Clerk accordingly.

Appendices: Appendix A: Final report of the Independent Remuneration Panel
Contact Officer: Holly Goring

Report of the Wealden Parish Independent Remuneration Panel on Town and Parish Councillor Allowances for 2022/2023

Introduction

1. This is the report of the Parish Independent Remuneration Panel for 2022/23. The Panel is established by Wealden District Council under Regulation 27 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, for the Town and Parish Councils in its area (full list of Town and Parish Councils to which the report applies is attached at Appendix A).

Summary

2. The Panel recommends:

- a) That allowances should be paid in accordance with three bands, Levels 1 to 3 as defined in Appendix A;
- b) That there be a 3% increase to all Basic and Chairman's Allowances rounded to the nearest pound.

2022/23	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3
Basic Allowance	£175	£434	£1,384
Chairman's Allowance	£303	£682	£1,912

- c) That the policy to fix Travelling Allowances in line with HM Revenue & Customs 'Approved Mileage Allowance Payment' rates be re-affirmed;
- d) Subsistence Allowance – the following allowances for Councillors to apply:

Breakfast	£6.50	When away from home on approved Council business before 8 a.m.
Lunch	£8.50	When away from home on approved Council business between 12 noon and 2 p.m.
Evening Meal	£15.00	When away from home on approved Council business after 7 p.m.

All claims must be accompanied by a valid receipt and payment is subject to Councillors signing to say they have actually and necessarily incurred the amount being claimed.

- i. Subsistence for Overnight absence – Other than London or specified conferences - £85.
 - ii. Subsistence for Overnight absence – In London or specified conferences - £95.
- e) That the recommendations set out above are all proposed for implementation at the commencement of the financial year 2022/23. However, Town and Parish Councils can choose the extent to which they wish to implement these allowances; and
 - f) The Panel notes with regret that it is still not possible under the current legislation to recommend a Carers' Allowance for Parish/ Town Councillors, but would wish for all Parish and Town Councils to consider adopting a basic allowance to enable Parish/Town Councillors to use this to cover care costs where need be to attend meetings.

Membership of Panel and Meetings

3. The Panel consists of three members – Mr Edward Stone (Chairman), Mr Stephen Hallam and Mr Clive Mills.

4. The Panel met on Friday 5 November 2021. The Panel subsequently dealt with the preparation of this report through discussions by email.

Panel Remit

5. The Panel produces a report in relation to the members of the town and parish councils for which the Wealden District Council is the responsible authority and in respect of which it is established, making recommendations, in accordance with the provisions of regulation 29 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 as to:
 - a) the amount of parish basic allowance payable to members of such town and parish councils;
 - b) the amount of travelling and subsistence allowance payable to members of such town and parish councils;
 - c) whether parish basic allowance should be payable only to the Mayor or Chairman of any such town and parish council or to all of its members;
 - d) whether, if parish basic allowance should be payable to both the Mayor or Chairman and the other members of any such town and parish council, the allowance payable to the Mayor or Chairman should be set at a level higher than that payable to the other members, and, if so, the higher amount so payable (Chairman's Allowance); and
 - e) the responsibilities or duties in respect of which members should receive parish travelling and subsistence allowance.

Parish Basic and Chairman's Allowances

6. As in previous years, the Panel has examined available data in order to assist in determination of a recommendation on parish/town council basic allowance and whether it should be payable to both the Mayor or Chairman and the other elected members of a town or parish council.
7. The Panel has considered last year's report to Town and Parish Councils recommending allowances for 2021/22.
8. The Clerk to the Panel had invited all Town and Parish Councillors, via the clerks, to provide any comments on the allowance scheme. Eight Parish/Town clerks responded on behalf of their council, and twelve Parish/Town Councillors responded individually. A summary is set out below:
 - The majority of Parish/Town Councils that responded had chosen not to operate a remuneration scheme.
 - The Basic Allowance is sufficient, and the Chairman's Allowance and Travelling and Subsistence Allowances are appropriate.
 - The allowance should cover costs for things like caring for dependents, travel, etc.
 - The Basic Allowance should be enough to attract a wide range of people, particularly those of working age.
 - Co-opted Councillors should qualify for the same allowances as elected colleagues.
 - It was felt important to keep the scheme and that it should be made known when advertising vacancies to encourage more financially challenged individuals to feel included in the application process.
 - The difference in allowance between a Level 1 and a Level 3 council is vast and perhaps this should be looked at, regardless of precept or council size, as the work and councillor input is not as disproportionate as the pay is suggesting.
 - The Members' allowance should have no bearing on the decision to stand as councillor - the reasons are to represent and to support the parish.

- Most communication these days is carried out via email rather than post so there is no expense incurred. Most people these days have a mobile phone contract that covers everyday phone calls, therefore expenses should be the exception rather than the rule (i.e for Councillors who do not have an internet connection or a suitable mobile phone contract).
 - Councillors have to pay for phone and broadband anyway so there are almost no expenses incurred. The travel allowances are sufficient.
 - With regard to the subsistence allowance, Councillors should take a packed lunch with them wherever possible.
 - Expenses aren't justified and there shouldn't be any increase in the current year.
 - The current allowance is not sufficient to cover expenses and councillors in some situations would need to subsidise expenditure from their income (e.g pension), particularly if Councillors are expected to serve on more than one committee.
 - The basic allowance does not reimburse for the cost of carrying out this role, thus deterring those who may have the experience and expertise for the job.
 - At a time of severe pay restraint for public sector employees, and the hardships faced by many working people following the protracted disruption to many working lives as a result of the pandemic, increasing any of the allowances paid to Councillors would be inappropriate.
9. In response to the feedback, the Panel felt that it was important to remind all Councillors that this was an **Allowance Scheme**, not a salary, and therefore not intended to compensate the number of hours worked, nor reimburse for the effort they put in.
 10. The Panel is aware that it is common practice to co-opt Parish Councillors to vacancies and acknowledged the responses to the survey that allowances should be given to co-opted members, but confirmed that this was not allowed under the Regulations.
 11. In addition, the comments received about the absence of a Cares' Allowance were noted by the Panel. The Panel reiterated that, under the current regulations, no such allowance was payable. However the Panel acknowledged that an anomaly did exist with respect to Town and Parish Councils but it was outside their terms of reference to adjust this. This was a matter for the Town and Parish Councils to address themselves.
 12. The Panel emphasised that it is keen to see all Parish and Town Councils adopt a scheme of some sort, even if it is normal practice not to claim. This is to ensure that no potential candidate should be put off standing due to the costs of working as a local councillor, and to ensure that Parish and Town Councillors could choose to claim an allowance should they need to do so.
 13. With regard to the comment about the vast difference between the Basic Allowance for a Level 1 and Level 3 council, the Panel confirmed that the size of the council determined the allowance; however parish/town councils could make their own decisions based on their precept.
 14. Following discussion, the Panel **recommends** that a 3% increase in all the basic allowances for levels 1-3 is appropriate, rounded to the nearest £1. This is in line with the Panel's recommendations for Wealden District Council.
 15. Regulation 29(2) requires that recommendations be expressed not only in cash terms but also as a percentage of the amount recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel as the Basic Allowance for Wealden District Councillors. The Panel is recommending that the allowance is increased for District Councillors to £4,870 per annum for the financial year 2022/23. Based on that figure, the percentages have been incorporated into the attached Appendix A.

Chairman's Allowance

16. As indicated in previous reports, individual Town and Parish Councils are free to decide whether an allowance should be payable only to the Mayor or Chairman and/or

to all of its members. The Chairman's Allowance, as recommended by this report, is intended to be paid as a substitute for the Basic Allowance rather than in addition to it, but this is at the discretion of each Town and Parish Council.

17. Town and Parish Councils are reminded that the Chairman's Allowance (again detailed in the attached Appendix A) is an allowance personal to the Parish/Town Councillor elected Mayor or Chairman. It is entirely separate to the allowance under the Local Government Act 1972, Sections 15(5) and 35(5), which is payable as the Parish/Town Council thinks fit to reasonably meet the expenses of the office of Mayor or Chairman.
18. The Panel **recommends** an increase to all Chairman's Allowances in Levels 1 to 3 on the same basis as increases to Parish/Town Council Basic Allowances, as detailed in Appendix A attached.

Travelling Allowance

19. The Panel wanted to clarify that under Regulation 26, Town and Parish Councils may pay travelling and subsistence allowances, including an allowance in respect of travel by bicycle or by any other non-motorised form of transport, undertaken or incurred in connection with the performance of any duty within one or more of the categories set out in that Regulation. This also includes provision for encouraging car sharing.
20. Councillors can receive up to a tax-free approved amount when using their own vehicles in carrying out their duties. These payments are known as Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (**AMAP**), and as from 6 April 2011 the following rules apply:

Car or Van – 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles and 25p per mile thereafter;

Motor Cycle – 24p per mile (all miles);

Cycle – 20p per mile (all miles); and

A 5 pence per mile per passenger supplement for up to four passengers.

21. The Panel confirmed that the Travelling Allowance was in accordance with the official rates published by HM Revenue and Customs and used by the majority of other councils. It was noted that anything paid above this amount would be subject to taxation and would require tax forms to be completed
22. The Panel recommends that travelling allowances continue to be paid in line with the HM Revenue & Customs 'Approved Mileage Allowances Payments' (AMAP). The Panel observed that there was no mention of claims for other travel costs within the Allowance Scheme, such as public transport and taxis. It was suggested that this category be included and reimbursed in full, subject to the Council's approval.
23. The Panel **recommends** that the policy to fix Travelling Allowances in line with AMAP be re-affirmed.

Subsistence Allowance

24. The Panel **recommends** that the current level of subsistence rates for 2022/23 be amended to increase the evening meal allowance and remove the reference to a tea allowance, as follows:

Breakfast	£6.50	When away from home on approved Parish/ Town Council business before 8 am.
Lunch	£8.50	When away from home on approved Parish/ Town Council business between 12 noon and 2 pm.
Evening Meal	£15.00	When away from home on approved Parish/ Town Council business after 7 pm.

In addition, subsistence for overnight absence other than London or specified conferences should remain at £85, and for London or specified conferences should be £95.00.

25. It was confirmed that payment should still be subject to Parish/ Town Councillors certifying that they had actually and necessarily incurred the amount being claimed. The Panel commented that subsistence allowance was a 'top up' on the amount it would cost a councillor to eat at home.

Co-opted Members

26. As set out above, under the relevant legislation co-opted members of Town and Parish Councils are not eligible to be paid Parish/Town Council Basic Allowances nor Chairman's Allowances, but may claim Travelling and Subsistence Allowances. It is not in the Panel's remit to make any recommendations that this change.

Communication of Allowances

27. On receipt of this report, Town and Parish Councils must advertise receipt of the report in line with Regulation 30 (2003 Regulations).
28. In setting the levels of allowances, Town and Parish Councils must show they have regard to the IRP's recommendations, but it is entirely up to each Town and Parish Council what scheme of allowances is adopted. The Panel has expressed its preference that an allowance scheme is adopted by all Councils, even if not claimed by individual Councillors. When adopting a scheme, Parish and Town Councils must under the Regulations publish its scheme by public notice.

Other Business

29. The Panel did not consider that it was appropriate to make a recommendation for more than one year.
30. The Panel would like to express its thanks to the Parish and Town Councils and Officers who had assisted it in its work and the preparation of this report.

Edward Stone
Chairman

Dated: 15 November 2021

	LEVEL1	LEVEL2	LEVEL3	
Basic Allowance	£175	£434	£1,384	
Chairman's Allowance	£ 303	£682	£ 1,912	
PARISH	No. of Cllrs	Maximum Basic Allowance	Maximum Chairman's Allowance	% of Recommended District Basic Allowance
<u>Level 1</u>				
Alciston	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Little Horsted	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Selmeston	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Cuckmere Valley	7	£175	£303	3.59%
Berwick	7	£175	£303	3.59%
Wartling	7	£175	£303	3.59%
Long Man	7	£175	£303	3.59%
Hooe	7	£175	£303	3.59%
Arlington	7	£175	£303	3.59%
Laughton	7	£175	£303	3.59%
Isfield	7	£175	£303	3.59%
Chiddingly	9	£175	£303	3.59%
Hellingly	15	£175	£303	3.59%
Hadlow Down	7	£175	£303	3.59%
Fletching	9	£175	£303	3.59%
Warbleton	11	£175	£303	3.59%
Frant	11	£175	£303	3.59%
Alfriston	7	£175	£303	3.59%
East Hoathly/Halland	9	£175	£303	3.59%
Chalvington/Ripe	7	£175	£303	3.59%
Horam	11	£175	£303	3.59%
East Dean/Friston	9	£175	£303	3.59%
Framfield	11	£175	£303	3.59%
Hartfield	13	£175	£303	3.59%
Ninfield	9	£175	£303	3.59%
Danehill	9	£175	£303	3.59%
Buxted	15	£175	£303	3.59%
Withyham	13	£175	£303	3.59%
Herstmonceux	11	£175	£303	3.59%
Mayfield/ Five Ashes	15	£175	£303	3.59%
Maresfield	14	£175	£303	3.59%
Rotherfield	13	£175	£303	3.59%
Westham	13	£175	£303	3.59%
Pevensay	13	£175	£303	3.59%
Wadhurst	15	£175	£303	3.59%
<u>Level 2</u>				
Forest Row	15	£434	£682	8.91%

Willingdon/Jevington	19	£434	£682	8.91%
Polegate	15	£434	£682	8.91%
Heathfield/Waldron	21	£434	£682	8.91%
<u>Level 3</u>				
Hailsham	24	£1,384	£1,912	28.42%
Uckfield	15	£1,384	£1,912	28.42%
Crowborough	16	£1,384	£1,912	28.42%

Meeting of the Full Council

Monday 6 December 2021

Agenda Item 11.0

TO CONSIDER WHETHER THE SANITISATION OF PLAY AREAS IS REQUIRED DURING THE 2021/22 WINTER SEASON

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Back in July 2020, following announcements from the UK Government it was agreed that play areas could be reopened, but with the caveat that stringent cleaning regimes be put in place to ensure the safety of play area users. The UK Government advised at that time, that children and parents must not interfere with closure measures where a playground remained closed, that social distancing should be maintained and if a playground was too busy, for users to wait or return later.
- 1.2 Nearly 18 months on, quite a lot has developed in terms of UK Government guidance and scientific advice with regard to the transmission of Covid-19, with less emphasis placed on surfaces, and more emphasis placed on transmission through air particles, coughs and sneezes.
- 1.3 The Town Council funded the monthly spraying of Town Council owned play areas up until 28 June 2021. It was then agreed to stop spraying and for the situation to be monitored, with a further review in the winter months.
- 1.4 Framfield Parish Council and Buxted Parish Council have worked in partnership with Uckfield TC throughout this process and this has helped to keep costs reduced.

2.0 Review of play area surfaces

- 2.1 Whilst carrying out the spraying, the company swab tests the play area surfaces before and after spraying, issuing a treatment certificate which provides 30 days protection of 99.998% of known bacteria, viruses and pathogens.
- 2.2 Tables overleaf present the findings of the swab tests, on 30 July 2020, 28 May 2021, 28 July 2021, 28 September 2021 and most recently on 26 November 2021.

30th July 20							
Play area	Hughes Way	Victoria	Hempstead	Oakwood Drive	Ridgewood	Rocks Park	Luxfords Field
Swab test before spraying	1297	925	3160	1478	891	921	NA
Swab test after spraying	49	24	30	20	13	50	NA
28th May 21							
Play area	Hughes Way	Victoria	Hempstead	Oakwood Drive	Ridgewood	Rocks Park	Luxfords Field
Swab test before spraying	63	49	57	62	51	41	88
Swab test after spraying	13	5	13	4	12	7	17
28th July 21							
Play area	Hughes Way	Victoria	Hempstead	Oakwood Drive	Ridgewood	Rocks Park	Luxfords Field
Swab test before spraying	76	93	73	84	66	64	79
Swab test after spraying	14	16	11	15	8	10	16
28th September 21							
Play area	Hughes Way	Victoria	Hempstead	Oakwood Drive	Ridgewood	Rocks Park	Luxfords Field
Swab test	275	352	276	388	437	173	311
26th November 21							
Play area	Hughes Way	Victoria	Hempstead	Oakwood Drive	Ridgewood	Rocks Park	Luxfords Field
Swab test	374	654	398	321	511	401	477

2.3 It should be noted that the swab tests pick up a range of bacteria, not just Covid-19 so this would include E-coli, colds and flus as well, so the above figures could be seen to reflect the current increase in viruses within these winter months. The figures are however still substantially lower than those recorded in July 2020.

3.0 Looking forward

3.1 The Town Council has not received or seen any sight of changes to the UK Government guidance on the management of play areas and outside spaces. For this reason we would recommend continuing to monitor the situation, and if the UK Government guidance changes, for the Town Council to instruct the company to undertake a further swab test of play area equipment before bringing the matter to the relevant committee or Full Council meeting for decision.

4.0 Recommendation

4.1 Members are asked to consider the contents of the report, and agree to continue to review the situation during the winter months based on current UK Government guidance.

Contact officer: Mark Francis

Meeting of the Full Council

Monday 6 December 2021

Agenda item 12.0

TO REVIEW THE 2022/23 PROPOSAL FROM EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL ON THEIR GRASS VERGE CUTTING CONTRACT

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Some members will recall that the Town Council first received contact from East Sussex County Council on Friday 16th February 2018 by email, to advise that reductions were being made to the grass verge cutting contract.
- 1.2 East Sussex County Council considered their draft budget for 2018/19 on Tuesday 6 February 2018. At that meeting, the County Council voted on and agreed the budget for the 2018/19 financial year. The report and minutes can be found on the website at:
<https://democracy.eastsussex.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=2974&Ver=4>
East Sussex County Council explained at the time that they recognised that this was disappointing news but they needed to provide a number of services within very challenging financial constraints whilst at the same time managing demand for important services including schools and social care.
- 1.3 They proposed to reduce the number of urban verge grass cuts from the current six per season (*they are currently required to do a minimum of five cuts per season*), to two per season from 1 April 2018. This meant that their existing policy would need to change. In reducing the urban grass cutting service from six to two cuts per season they would be managing urban grass for safety reasons only. We were advised at the time that rural grass verge cutting would remain as two 1metre swathes plus visibility splay cuts per season.
- 1.4 In 2018, members resolved to pay the £6,009 to maintain service levels for 2019/20, and for 2020/21 and 2021/22 the cost remained the same at £4,271.
- ##### **2.0 2022/23 Proposals for Urban Grass Verge Cuts**
- 2.1 East Sussex County Council have been in contact to set out the options for the next financial year 2022/23:

I am writing in relation to the urban grass cutting service for 2022. East Sussex County Council (ESCC) is continuing to offer the same options as last year and would be grateful if you could let us know which option your Council would like to choose for next year.

Please note, from this year on we will be including an inflationary increase in the prices. This means that what you would pay ESCC for 4 extra cuts or what we would contribute to you to self-deliver will be slightly increased this year and each year going forward.

Option 1 - Standard: Two cuts over the course of a year to be carried out by ESCC at no cost to the Parish/Town Council. Urban grass will be managed for safety purposes only.

Option 2 – Extra cuts: *Parish/Town Councils may fund an additional four cuts to be carried out by ESCC, totaling six cuts (two standard and four extra) over the course of the year. This would cost the Parish/Town Council a total of £4356 for the year.*

Option 3 – Self delivery: *Parish/Town Councils take on responsibility to deliver all urban grass cutting in their area. This must include a minimum of two cuts over the course of the year. ESCC will not carry out any urban grass cutting in the area. ESCC would pay the Parish/Town Council the sum of £2178 to do this.*

It should be noted that any contractor employed must be suitably competent and qualified to work safely on the highway. We also request an agreement to be signed between ESCC and the Parish/Town Council if you opt to self-deliver. Further details are available in the attached document.

*I would be grateful if you could indicate which option your Council would like to choose by **20th December**. Please be aware that if we have not heard back by this date, we will default to Option 1 – two standard cuts.*

- 2.2 The figure proposed for option 2 has remained similar to that of 2021/22, with only an £85.00 increase.
- 2.3 A map of the verges incorporated in Uckfield's urban and rural grass verge cutting contract is attached at appendix A.

3.0 Recommendation

- 3.1 Members are asked to advise the Town Clerk of their decision in regards to the ESCC urban grass verge cutting contract in 2022/23.

Contact Officer: Holly Goring

Appendices: Appendix A: Guidance from ES Highways on self delivery.

Agreement and Evidence Documents

From last year we requested all who decided to self-deliver the Urban Grass Cut to sign an agreement.

The agreement outlines both East Sussex County Councils responsibilities and your own.

You will be asked to sign two copies and send them back to us. We then Seal both and send one copy back to you for your records.

The Agreement must be signed and sent back to us before the contractor commences work on the highway.

Notes on employing a contractor

As noted below, we also request certain documentation to be provided from your contractor. We request this every year as certain documents should be updated each year, such as Risk Assessments and Methods Statements.

When employing a contractor to carry out verge cutting on the highway you must satisfy yourselves of their competence.

Any individual carrying out works on the highway (including grass verges) must comply with all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the [Highways Act, 1980](#) and the [New Roads and Streetworks Act \(NRSWA\), 1991](#).

They must also be trained and competent as required by the [Safety at Streetworks and Roadworks Code of Practice, 2013](#). This includes training in traffic management as well as the use of machinery.

Further information on [Street Works qualifications](#).

In addition they must be able to provide copies of:

- Staff training and qualifications in traffic management including signing and guarding
- Staff training and qualifications in the safe use of machinery
- A formal contract with your Council
- Insurance certificates including a minimum of £10 million public liability insurance
- A health and safety policy
- Risk assessments for carrying out verge cutting on the highway
- Method Statements for carrying out verge cutting on the highway

Copies of evidence **must** be sent to contracts.managementgroup@eastsussex.gov.uk **before** the contractor commences work on the highway.

Meeting of the Full Council

Monday 6 December 2021

Agenda item 14.0

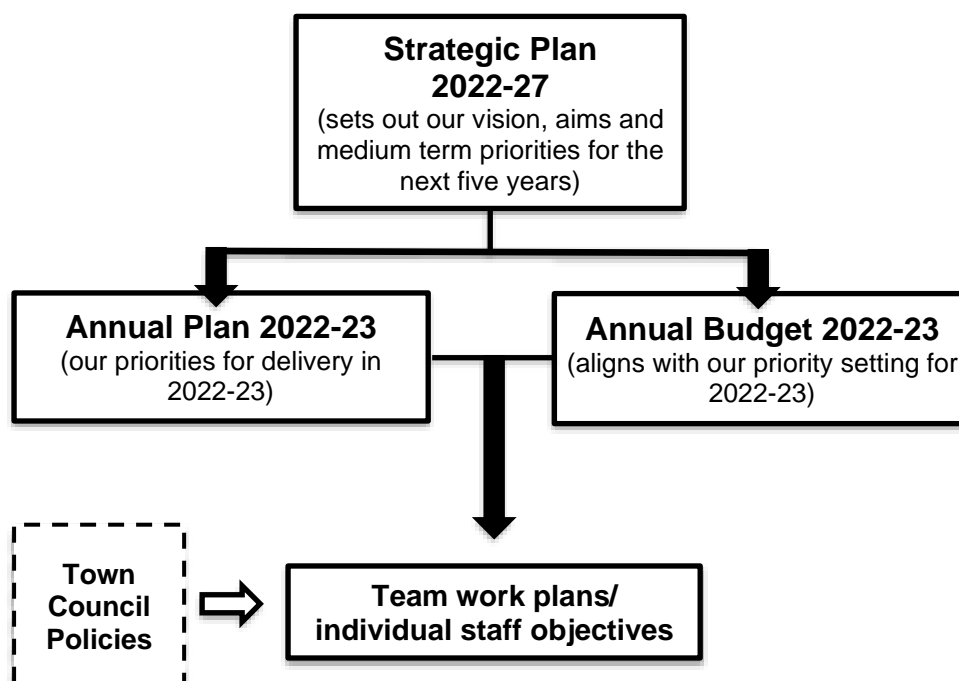
TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2022-27

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The Town Council is required to refresh its priorities on an annual basis as part of the budget setting process.
- 1.2 The Town Council has a suite of business planning documents; a strategic plan which set out the priorities of the Town Council over the next five years, an annual plan which lists the priorities of the Town Council specifically for the next financial year, the draft budget working papers which assist with budget setting and a draft asset management plan, which encourages members to review the Town Council's key assets and their current condition.
- 1.3 This paper presents a refresh of the content within the draft Strategic Plan, and looks ahead to the next five years (see appendix A).

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The draft Strategic Plan for 2022-27 sets out the vision, aims and medium-term priorities of the Town Council over the next five years and forms the overarching strategy of the Town Council.



- 2.2 The draft Strategic Plan 2022-27 identifies the challenges and opportunities for the Town Council and town of Uckfield, and provides information on the key areas that the Town Council wishes to focus on over the next five years.

3.0 Next steps

- 3.1 Once members have considered the draft objectives from the Strategic Plan at Full Council, the full Strategic Plan document will be placed on the Town Council website alongside the draft annual plan and information will be shared with members of the public via the Town Council's social media accounts. Contact will be made with key partner agencies and community groups which the Council works with.
- 3.2 The deadline for comments will be midnight on Sunday 9 January 2022 and any feedback received will be reported to Full Council on Monday 17 January 2022.

4.0 Recommendation

- 4.1 Members are asked to consider the draft objectives for the next five years within the Town Council's Strategic Plan and advise the Town Clerk if they wish to make any amendments or additions.

Contact Officer: Holly Goring

Appendices: Appendix A: Draft Objectives within the Strategic Plan 2022-27

5.0 Our Strategic Objectives

In addition to agreeing a set of specific priorities each year, the Town Council has set out a number of medium term aspirations for the town.

5.1 People

5.1.1 Cultural and related services

By 2027~~6~~, we will have:

- Supported local community and voluntary organisations and sought to assist them with their positive work within the town;
- ~~Explored options for the facilities provided at two town council buildings – Foresters Hall and West Park Pavilion, to see how these buildings can better meet the need of Uckfield's residents and organisations;~~
- Organised events which assist in attracting visitors to the town and support local businesses;
- Established a list of special and important dates or individuals within the town's history and commemorated these on heritage plaques;
- Investigated the viability of providing additional public convenience facilities within the town centre and seeking to obtain a changing spaces facility;
- ~~Restored the traditional red telephone box and brought back into use in a prominent location as a community facility;~~
- Continued to maintain, improve and protect all of our natural areas to accommodate the demands of future growth of the town; encouraging community involvement;
- Explored whether there are opportunities for adding to or improving the existing skatepark facilities, and the drainage in the vicinity of the skate park;
- Supported the partnership work and continuation of the Uckfield Youth Club;
- Explored the issues around food poverty, particularly youth food poverty in Uckfield, and worked with the relevant authorities to try and tackle these local issues;
- Worked with partner agencies, to identify future options for providing more community space within the town to meet the needs of local community groups and organisations.

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5.1.2 Luxfords and Civic Centre

By 2027~~6~~, we will have:

- ~~Increased the capacity of the pellet hopper for the Civic Centre's Bio-mass boiler to reduce increasing costs in the purchase of wood pellets;~~
- ~~Removed the window area in the Civic Centre atrium to reduce water ingress;~~
- Made improvements to the decoration and flooring within the main corridors and meeting rooms;
- Decorated the Weald Hall and undertaken improvements to the venue's performance facilities;
- Considered options for providing a temporary but sound proof partition within the Green Room;
- Updated room facilities in line with the latest modern technologies, continued to improve WI-FI connections and ensured networking ports are of good quality;
- Made improvements to air conditioning within the Civic Centre building;
- Reconfigured the caretaker area within the Civic Centre to provide more secure storage capacity;
- Installed a new internal booking system for use by the Civic Centre for all venue and room hire;
- Implemented the introduction of an online booking facility on the Civic Centre website for the purchase of event tickets;
- Developed and implemented a communications and marketing plan for the Civic Centre, in addition to an annual calendar of events;
- Introduced a number of initiatives and increased takeaway options for customers in Luxfords Restaurant;
- Built a good online and social media presence for both the Civic Centre and Luxfords Restaurant;

5.2 Place

5.2.1 Environmental and regulatory services

By 2026, we will have:

- Maintained a good standard of grounds maintenance within the town to ensure Uckfield remains an attractive place to live;
- Maintained good quality floral displays within the town centre, to ensure Uckfield town centre remains an attractive place to live, work and visit;
- Financially contributed to East Sussex County Council's grass verge cutting contract in 2024/25, to retain a good standard of service and ensured visibility is maintained on pavements and highways;
- ~~Considered in detail, whether the Town Council's open spaces could undertake its open space grass-cutting contract in-house rather than contracting out;~~ Implemented arrangements in-house for cutting the Town Council's open spaces;
- Improved the facilities and surfacing at the Town Council's play areas with plans to upgrade at least one further playground;
- Introduced a number of initiatives to increase the use of our open spaces, and encourage greater physical activity (distance markers, fun games and activities which encourage movement);
- Worked with our partner agencies to increase opportunities for residents of all ages to take part in activities which improve their health and wellbeing;
- ~~Continued working with Sussex Local Nature Partnership as part of their Green Spaces Project to understand the ecological benefits of green spaces as well as the social and health/wellbeing benefits, in order to develop a longer term vision and set of objectives for these sites – particular focus will have been given to Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve and Snatts Road Cemetery;~~
- ~~Reviewed the Town Council's regulations for both allotment sites and Snatts Road Cemetery – providing a clear landlord/tenant style agreement where necessary;~~
- ~~Adopted an action plan for delivery again our carbon audit, in order to reduce our carbon emissions, and undertaken a periodic review of our carbon emissions every to measure change with focus on contracts, buildings, energy sources and management of nature and waste disposal; Completed an audit which has assisted with calculating our carbon footprint;~~
- Implemented the Town Council's Woodland Management Plan to ensure ongoing maintenance and continued the important a tree planting scheme so that for every tree that has been removed, another tree has been planted. We will have also identified suitable sites where additional trees can be planted on Town Council land;
- ~~Supported the set up of the Community Fridge initiative and community herb garden project to encourage the reduction of food waste;~~
- Led by example, to deliver a project with Brighton Uckfield and Uckfield Chamber of Commerce to encourage Uckfield's businesses and organisations to reduce their use of single-use plastic and undertake a review around recycling and re-use;
- Continued to provide burial authority services with responsibility for the maintenance of the Cemetery at Snatts Road and Holy Cross churchyard;
- Continued to work with East Sussex County Council to gradually review street lighting and replace with new columns and LED lighting where necessary;

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5.2.2 Planning and development services

By 2027⁶, we will have:

- Worked closely with the planning authority, Wealden District Council, to understand the latest legislative updates and guidance;
- Fed into Wealden District Council's Local Plan development process, as part of cluster meetings to respond to consultations and raise issues relating to Uckfield;
- Supported the development of a Neighbourhood Plan and worked with Action in Rural Sussex and the local Planning authority to enable this plan to be adopted and utilised alongside the Wealden Local Plan by developers;
- As a member of Uckfield Town Centre Regeneration Committee, we will have worked with our partners (*Wealden District Council and East Sussex County Council*) to explore options for regeneration within the centre of the town, and possibility of expanding the retail and business offer;
- Promoted the need for affordable housing within Uckfield Town, to support those in housing need and first time buyers;
- Considered the infrastructure requirements for the town in terms of sport, leisure, recreation and community facilities through engagement with key stakeholders and local residents and businesses including future demand on Town Council services such as allotment and cemetery provision;
- Worked with Wealden District Council to ensure the Town Council is fully engaged in other regulatory matters such as licensing;
- Developed an annual process by which the Town Council reviews its assets and strategic asset management plan and consideration is given to each of the Town Council's buildings to improve the efficiency and use of these properties
- Delivered a ten year programme of maintenance and decoration to all of the Town Council community buildings through schemes of major and minor works;
- Reviewed the condition of car parks adjacent to Town Council owned buildings and agreed a programme of repairs or resurfacing, with a particular focus given to drainage and repair at Hempstead Recreation Ground, Ridgewood Village Hall car parks and the staff Civic Centre parking area;
- Arranged an annual display of Christmas lights;
- Worked with the Chamber of Commerce to engage with High Street landlords (commercial and residential) to promote and secure improvements to street frontages.

5.2.3 Highways and Transport services

By 2027~~6~~, we will have:

- Identified potential areas within the town which required improvements to pedestrian safety and worked with the relevant agencies to lobby for enhancements;
- Worked with our partner agencies to feed into improvements to the bus station area, to improve accessibility, signage and provide improved facilities such as real time bus information and public convenience(s);
- Worked with our partner agencies to identify highway issues within the access corridors into the town centre and utilised S106 developer contributions or Community Infrastructure Levy to improve the infrastructure and address matters relating to traffic congestion, traffic calming and road safety;
- Worked with the relevant partner agencies to address the danger of speeding vehicles and the possibility of extending the 20mph town centre speed limit;
- Introduced speed reduction initiatives including community speedwatch and behaviour change campaigns, and explored the introduction of installing permanent speed indicator devices;
- Worked with partner agencies to identify and implement solutions for introducing parking controls within the town centre;
- Engaged in discussions to actively promote the re-opening of the Uckfield to Lewes railway line, and a direct route into Brighton;
- Worked with partner agencies to explore whether electric car charging points can be introduced in Uckfield town;
- Organised an annual day with partner agencies to educate young people about key issues – climate change and safety – potentially alternating the subject matter each year;
- Worked with partner agencies and landowners to explore the possibility of improving footway links between Ridgewood Farm, the SANGs and the nature reserves, and explored the possibility of creating a riverside walk;
- Created up to date street maps of the town, which highlight our open spaces and footways including the alleyways and twittens.

5.3 Provision

5.3.1 Central Services

By 2027⁶, we will have:

- Improved communication with residents, businesses and visitors to the town through enhancements to the Town Council website and social media accounts;
- Improved the condition and display of existing noticeboards, and undertaken a review of their location to ensure they are clear and visible;
- Produced the Town Calendar in-house for 2022; working with local businesses to provide greater advertising opportunities and information about voluntary and community organisations.
- Improved accessibility to committee meetings by installing an additional hearing loop in the Council Chamber;
- Increased promotion of the town's key facilities;
- Further reviewed our existing financial processes – including changing from the existing cheque payment method to dual authorisation BACS payments for suppliers, and digitalising our purchase order and invoicing process;
- Encouraged applications from local traders and organisations in the Town Council's procurement procedures for contractual work within the town;
- Provided training and briefings for the Town Councillors and staff, to support them in their learning and development;
- Undertaken an annual periodic review of all key policies to ensure they remain up to date with the latest guidance and best practice;
- Reduced our use of paper within the Town Council office, by reviewing our working practices and procedures with regard to file retention, purchase orders and invoicing and record management;

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DRAFT Annual Plan 2022/23 PRIORITIES

PEOPLE		PROVISION	
	COMMUNITY GRANTS We will award up to £54,500 of community grant funding to local groups and charitable organisations for the period 2021/22 (<i>£27,500 to community groups, and £27,000 through service level agreements</i>)		REDUCING DEPENDENCE ON PAPER We will look to reduce postage and paper usage by increasing correspondence by email with customers and reviewing our current procedures for hire of facilities and purchase order and invoicing.
	PUBLIC EVENTS IN THE TOWN We will work alongside the local business community and local community groups to deliver two free public events within the town; Weald on the Field and Uckfield Revival.		NEW BOOKING SYSTEM We will look to install a new booking system for the internal management of booking enquiries for the Town Council’s rooms and open spaces.
PLACE			
	IMPROVEMENTS TO OPEN SPACES We will undertake repairs and improvements to a number of our open spaces including installing new signage, repairing equipment and investigating drainage issues and respond to enhancements identified through the Green Spaces Project.		TOWN COUNCIL BUILDINGS We will review our older buildings by undertaking repairs and improvements, explore options for vacant premises such as the Hub and explore options for further community space within the town.
	WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN We will commence work on our 10-year woodland management plan to ensure ongoing maintenance and tackle diseased trees as and when appropriate.		ROAD SAFETY We will work with partner organisations such as Sussex Police and East Sussex Highways to re-establish community speedwatch initiative(s) in the town and explore the installation of a speed reduction device.
	GRASS VERGE CUTTING We will continue to contribute to the costs of the East Sussex County Council’s grass verge cutting contract to retain a good standard of service, and ensure visibility is maintained on pavements and highways.		NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN We will support the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to prepare a draft Uckfield Neighbourhood Plan ready for submission to the local planning authority.
	CLIMATE CHANGE We will investigate ways in which we can reduce our impact on climate change by seeking to deliver our climate change policy by reviewing our contracts, buildings and equipment, managing our land for nature, and minimising waste.		INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING We will work with local partner agencies, residents and local businesses to understand the infrastructure requirements for Uckfield, in regards to sport, leisure, recreation and community facilities and future impact on the Town Council’s provision of allotment and cemetery space.

	Proposed Income	Proposed Expenditure	Proposed Income	Proposed Expenditure
	2021/2022	2021/2022	2022/2023	2022/2023
General Purposes				
Revenue	169,172	771,764	177,515	770,825
New Initiatives etc.		63,500		79,800
Earmarked Reserve Projects		33,050		43,300
Sub Totals		868,314		893,925
Environment and Leisure				
Revenue	79,485	249,783	97,125	274,967
New Initiatives etc.		46,880		17,356
Earmarked Reserve Projects		20,500		25,750
Sub Totals		317,163		318,073
Luxfords Restaurant				
Revenue	178,650	197,775	164,500	194,638
Earmarked Reserve Projects		0		0
New Initiatives		0		0
Sub Totals		197,775		194,638
Gross Income/Expenditure	427,307	1,383,252	439,140	1,406,636
		955,945		967,496
Wealden District Grant		0		0
Net Budget Requirement		955,945		967,496
Tax Base	5684.5		5684.5	
Band 'D' Council Tax		£168.17		£170.20

1.21% increase
£2.03 increase

FIRST DRAFT
Environment and Leisure Budget 2022/2023

Committee	Nominal Code		2021/2022 Budget		2022/23 Draft Budget	Notes
		CULTURAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, REGULATORY AND PLANNING SERVICES				
		Cultural and Related Services				
		Recreation and Sport - Leisure and Recreation Grounds				
E & L	5120	Playing Fields and Pitches	21000	0	18,000	
E & L	5176	Play Equipment Repairs/Maintenance	3000	0	3,000	
E & L	5203	Grounds Maintenance - Contract	16500	-	-	In House
E & L	5204	Grounds Maintenance - General	1800	0	2,000	
E & L	5201	General Equipment Repairs and Hire	2000	0	2,000	
E & L	5202	New Equipment	2500	0	2,500	
	5205	Hire of Equipment	100	0	500	
E & L		Vehicle Running Costs				
E & L	5269	* Transit	2000	-	2,000	
E & L	5279	* Movano	2000	-	2,000	
E & L	5275	*Tractor	1500	-	1,500	
E & L	5271	* Ford Ranger	1500	-	1,500	
		TOTAL	53,900	0	35,000	
		Income				
E & L	4110	* Sport Income	-10,500	0	-11,500	
E & L	4120	* Event Income	-3,000	0	-5,500	
		TOTAL	-13,500	0	-17,000	
		Net Expenditure	40,400	0	18,000	
		Public Open Spaces, Planting and Allotments				
E & L	5100	Allotments	2,030	0	1,500	
E & L	5231	Hempstead Meadows and West Park LNRs + sites of conservation interest	2,500	0	3,000	Increase in exp gates & fencing
E & L	5295	Litter Bins	3,000	0	1,000	Reduce minimal exp 2021/22
	5296	Litter Collection, Open Spaces	3,700	0	7,500	Increase in litter collections double since Apr21
E&L	5375	Repair & replacement of street furniture	1,500	0	1,500	
E & L	5330	Corporate Signage	250	0	500	
E & L	5058	Protective Clothing	650	0	650	
E & L	5280	Fencing	750	0	1,000	
E & L	5299	Horticulture - Bedding	300	0	300	
E & L	5285	Tree Works	4,000	0	12,000	Increase due to Ash die back and surveys
E & L	5377	Cleaning Materials GROUND S	150	0	100	
	5033	HMLNR & WPLNR	500		500	
		TOTAL	19,330	0	29,550	
		Income				
E & L	4100	* Allotments	-6,000	0	-6,100	
	4101	*Allotment Deposits	-800	0	-800	
	4275	* Environment Sundry Income	-200	0	-200	
E & L	4123	West Park Culvert Maintenance Agreement with WDC	-360	0	-400	
		TOTAL	-7,360	0	-7,500	
		Net Expenditure	11,970	0	22,050	
		Culture and Heritage				
E & L	5394	Twinning Hospitality	0	0	0	
E & L	5300	Civic Centre Events	13,500	0	15,000	
	5301	Performing Rights Society	500	0	250	
	5302	Event Advertising /Marketing	4,000	0	4,000	
	5078	Weald on the Field and Revival	0		3,000	
		TOTAL	18,000	-	22,250	

FIRST DRAFT
Environment and Leisure Budget 2022/2023

E & L	4050	Civic Centre Events	-17,500	0	-22,000	
		Net Expenditure	500	0	250	
Committee	Nominal Code		2021/2022 Budget			
		Planning and Development Services				
		Economic Development				
E & L	5370	Town Security CCTV	3,000	0	2,200	
E & L	5373	Floral Displays Town Centre Baskets & Troughs	3,500	0	3,500	
		TOTAL	6,500	0	5,700	
E & L	4350	Income - Roundabout	-850	0	-850	
E&L	4390	CCTV - Chamber & Heathfield PC Contribution	-650	0	-600	
		Total	-1500	0	-1450	
		Net Expenditure	5,000	0	4,250	
		Environmental and Regulatory Services				
E & L		Cemetery Services				
	5181	* Grave Digging	5,200	0	6,500	
	5180	* Rates/Water	1,800	0	2,000	11% increase anticipated in water rates
	5182	*Litter	1,600	0	1,800	
	5186	* Maintenance	400	0	400	
		TOTAL	9,000	0	10,700	
		Income				
E & L	4180	* Cemetery - Interments	-29,000	0	-37,500	Anticipating continued increase in burial/interments in 2022/23
	4181	* Cemetery - Memorials	-6,000	0	-6,000	
	4182	* Cemetery - Sundry Income	-300	0	-200	
	4183	* Cemetery - Maintenance Charge	-3,000	0	-4,000	
		TOTAL	-38,300		-47,700	
		Net Expenditure	-29,300	0	-37,000	
		HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SERVICES				
		Highways and Transportation				
		Street Lights - Supply, Maintenance and Repairs				
E & L	5080	* Supply & Maintenance	10,000	0	11,000	
E & L	5081	* Repairs	2,500	0	3,000	Does this need to go up more?
E & L	5082	* New Lights	0	0	0	
E & L	5372	Road Safety Week (rename to Climate Change EXPO Week)	0	0	0	Utilising carry forward from 2020/21
E & L	5086	Bus Shelters	100	0	100	
	5053	New Bus Shelter	0	0	0	
E&L	5350	Roundabout Expenditure	100	0	100	
		TOTAL	12,700	0	14,200	
		Income				
E & L	4370	* Road Safety Week	0	0	-150	Bookings for EXPO will start in Jan 2022, but anticipate some income from Apr onwards
E & L	4295/4240	* Delegated Functions	-1,325	0	-1,325	
		TOTAL	-1,325	0	-1,475	
		Net Expenditure	11,375	0	12,725	
		Other Buildings and Services to the Public				
E & L	5294	Graffiti Removal	50	0	50	
		TOTAL	50	0	50	

FIRST DRAFT
Environment and Leisure Budget 2022/2023

E & L	5360	Salaries Groundsmen	80,163	0	103,140	Increase due to taking on grass cutting inhouse saving £16.5k
	5361	Groundsmen - NI	6,239	0	7,447	
	5362	Groundsmen - Pension	17,241	0	18,978	
	5230	Salary Ranger	26,660	0	27,952	
		TOTAL	130,303	0	157,517	
		TOTAL REVENUE EXPENDITURE	249,783	-	274,967	
		TOTAL INCOME	-79,485	0	-97,125	
		TOTAL	170,298	-	177,842	

Committee	Nominal Code	2021/2022 Budget			
	Long Term Earmarked Reserve Projects				
	Old Timbers Lane	500	0	250	
	Vehicle Replacement	5,000	0	5,000	
	Street Light replacement SOX lanterns	2,000	0	2,500	Increase 1x column roughly £2k plus cont
	Streetlighting repairs			5,000	
	Upgrade Victoria Pleasure Ground facilities	10,000		10,000	
	Saving for future Town Centre CCTV Upgrade of cameras			1,000	
	Saving for future puppy park			0	Not current priority due to other pressing priorities re: tree works etc
	Potential to introduce small number of recycling bins			0	Not current priority due to other pressing priorities re: tree works etc
	Saving for drainage improvements to Skatepark at Victoria			0	
	Future land expansion HMLNR & Snatts Road Cemetery			2,000	
	Grasscutting - Ride on Mower	3,000		0	
	Total Long Term Earmarked Projects	20,500	0	25,750	
	TOTAL				
	New initiatives for 2022/23				
	Victoria & Ridgewood signage			1,000	
	ESCC Grass Verge cutting contribution			4,356	As per report to Full Council on 6 Dec 2021
	Grasscutting - Ride on Mower			4,000	
	Replacement grounds tools & equipment			2,000	
	Speed reduction initiatives			2,000	
	Platinum Jubilee Celebrations			500	
	Purchase of more animal friendly bins			1,500	
	Tree for a tree planting programme			2,000	
				17,356	
	TOTAL	2021/22		2022/23	

	Total Revenue Expenditure	249,783	-	274,967
	Total Long Term Earmarked Reserve Projects	20,500	0	25,750
	Total New Initiatives	46,880	0	17,356
	Total Budget Expenditure	317,163	0	318,073
	Total Income	-79,485	0	-97,125
	Net Expenditure	237,678	0	220,948

FIRST DRAFT
Luxfords Budget 2022/2023

Committee	Nominal Code		2021/2022 Budget		2022/2023 Budget	Notes
		OTHER SERVICES				
GP		Luxfords				
	5810	* Food Purchases	37,500		36,000	
	5820	* Bar Purchases Non Alcoholic	2,700		1,800	
	5825	* Bar Purchases Alcoholic	5,000		6,000	
	5840	* Paper Consumables	2,600		1,500	
	5845	* Maintenance & Repairs	2,000		2,000	
	5850	Equipment	2,000		2,000	
	5855	Luxfords equipment hire	250		200	
	5860	Luxford Postage	100		0	
	5870	Stationery	50		70	
	5865	Luxford Telephone	175		170	
	5875	Luxford Recruitment Advertising	0		0	
	5880	Luxfords General Advertising	1,500		1,500	
	5890	* Uniforms & Protective Clothing	200		200	
	5895	* Training	0		0	
	5980	* Credit Charges	1,500		1,500	
	5861	* Rates	9,500		8,500	
	5862	Electricity	6,200		9,900	
	5863	Gas	600		1,150	
	5864	Water	1,300		1,200	
	5866	* Litter Collection	1,200		1,200	
	5867	* Stock Taker	780		780	
	5940	Luxfords salaries	94,727		93,176	
	5941	Luxfords National Insurance	4,386		3,953	
	5942	Luxfords Pension	17,507		15,339	
	5945	Luxfords Casual wages	6,000		6,000	
		*Management costs	0		0	
		TOTAL	197,775		194,138	
GP		Income				
	4810	* Restaurant Food Sales	-122,800		-118,000	
	4820	* Restaurant Bar Sales	-8,000		-7,000	
	4825	* Takeway	0		-1,000	
	4910	* Function Food Sales	-26,500		-20,000	
	4920	* Function Bar Sales	-17,500		-15,000	
	4850	*General equipment hire	0		0	
	4940	*Hire of Equipment	-1,100		-1,000	
	4840	*Hire of Luxfords	-2,250		-2,000	
	4950	*Sundry Income	-500		-500	
		TOTAL	-178,650		-164,500	
		Net Expenditure	19,125		29,638	
		Long Term Earmarked Projects				
		New dishwasher	0		500	Saving or funding towards new commercial dishwasher. They cost in the region of £1k
		Total	0		500	

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Luxfords Budget 2022/2023

		Total Budget Expenditure	197,775		194,138
		Income	-178,650		-164,500
		Net Expenditure	19,125		29,638

<u>TOTAL 2022/23</u>				
Total Revenue Expenditure	197,775		194,138	
New Initiatives	0		0	
Total Long Term Earmarked Reserve Projects	0		500	
Total Budget Expenditure	197,775		194,638	
Total Income	- 178,650		-164,500	
Net Expenditure	19,125		30,138	

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GP Budget 2022/2023

Committee	Nominal Code		2021/2022 Budget		2022/2023 Budget	Notes
		CULTURAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, REGULATORY AND PLANNING SERVICES				
		Cultural and Related Services				
		Recreation and Sport - Community Centres				
	5609	C/C Wood Pellets	10,500		10,000	May possibly be able to reduce.
	5610	C/C rates	38,800		39,500	
	5611	C/C electricity	6,000		9,600	60% increase
	5612	C/C gas	2,750		5,250	90% increase
	5613	C/C water	3,000		3,120	4% increase
	5617	C/C Refuse collection	1,730		1,750	
	5620	C/C regular maintenance contracts	12,000		10,000	Reduce £2k based on previous years expenditure
	5650	C/C publicity	500		0	Can use events advertising budget under E&L Committee
	5660	C/C repairs and renewals	30,000		25,000	Reduce for saving of Weald Hall floor
GP	5610 - 5676	Civic Centre	105,280	0	104,220	
	5743	The Hub	6,500		5,000	
	5744	The Hub rates	0		0	
GP	5743 - 5747	The Hub	6,500	0	5,000	
	5760	F/H rates	2,920		3,000	
	5761	F/H electricity	665		1,065	60% increase
	5762	F/H gas	3,360		3,685	90% increase
	5763	F/H water	300		312	4% increase
	5765	F/H regular maintenance	1,500		1,500	
	5766	F/H repairs	2,500		2,500	
GP	5760 - 5769	Foresters Hall	11,245	0	12,062	
	5720	Victoria Pavilion rates	4,100		4,200	
	5721	V/P electricity	3,270		4,962	60% increase
	5722	V/P gas	3,161		6,005	90% increase
	5723	V/P water	1,691		1,758	4% increase
	5725	V/P regular maintenance	2,500		2,750	New CCTV installed annual maintenance
	5726	V/P repairs	3,000		3,250	
GP	5719 - 5729	Victoria Pavilion	17,722	0	22,925	
GP		Ridgewood Village Hall	0		0	
	5711	W/P Pavilion electricity	610		976	60% increase - will recharge back to leaseholder
	5713	W/P Pavilion water	550		572	Will recharge back to leaseholder
	5715	W/P Pavilion regular maintenance	2,000		0	Building leased for 2022 onwards
	5716	W/P Pavilion repairs	2,000		0	Building leased for 2022 onwards
GP	5709 - 5718	West Park Pavilion	0		0	
		TOTAL	5,160	0	1,548	
		Income				
	4610	Weald Hall	-20,650		-21,000	
	4615	Weald Hall - Commercial	-840		-1,000	
	4620	Council Chambers	-9,400		-10,000	
	4625	Council Chambers - Commercial	-200		-100	
	4630	Ashdown Room	-12,112		-12,000	
	4635	Ashdown Room - Commercial	-3,600		-3,500	
	4640	Green Room	-12,400		-12,000	
	4650	Oakleaf Room	-9,500		-7,000	

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GP Budget 2022/2023

	4660	Mayors Parlour	-3,000		-12,000	
	4670	Equipment hire	-1,000		-500	
	4671	Martlets Room	-9,500		-7,000	
	4673	Community Toilet scheme	-1,100		-1,100	
GP	4610 - 4700	* Civic Centre	-83,302	0	-87,200	
	4690	*Quickborn Suite	-8,500		-8,500	
	4796	CAB rent	0		0	
	4797	CAB re-charge of services	0		0	
	4798	Source re-charge of services	-1,350		-1,400	
		Source rent	-2,400		-2,400	
GP	4796 - 4798	* The Hub	-3,750	0	-3,800	
	4760	F/H regular users	-17,500		-15,000	Reduce Debs dancers moving venue 2022 6.5hr week loss
	4761	F/H ocassional users	-100		-100	
	4762	F/H commercial	-50		-50	
GP	4760 - 4763	* Foresters Hall	-17,650	0	-15,150	
	4719	V.P Sussex Support Service Rent	-10,500		-10,500	
	4720	Victoria Pavilion	-260		-260	
	4721	V/P repayment of electricity	-1,025		-1,500	
	4726	Victoria Garages (Cricket, Ensemble)	-240		-240	
	4723	V/P repayment of gas	-850		-1,200	
GP	4720 - 4723	* Victoria Pavilion	-12,875	0	-13,700	
GP	4781	* Ridgewood Village Hall	-750		-900	Awaiting insurance premium breakdown for exact income
GP	4710	* West Park Pavilion	-150		-6,600	
GP	4677	* FiT Payments - Civic Centre	-5,000		-5,000	
		* RHI Payments - Civic Centre	-10,000		-10,000	
		TOTAL	-15,900	0	-22,500	
		Net Expenditure				
		Planning and Development Services				
		Economic Development				
GP	5530/5532	Festive Lights				
	5530	Festive Lights	12,000		15,000	Increased to diversify
	5532	Festive lights electricity	300		480	60% increase
		TOTAL	12,300	0	15,480	
		Income				
GP	4530	* Festive Lights	-2,000		-2,200	
		Net Expenditure	10,300	0	13,280	
		CENTRAL SERVICES				
		Corporate and Democratic Core				
		Corporate Management				
		Administration and Hospitality				
	5410	Admin - general	2,150		2,000	
	5412	Admin - telephones	3,500		5,000	Broadband increase with VP
	5413	Admin - photocopier	3,500		4,000	
	5415	Postage	400		300	
	5416	Stationary	2,250		2,000	
GP	5410- 5417	* Administration	11,800	0	13,300	
GP	5435	* Hospitality	0		0	
GP	5455	Health and Safety	2,000		2,000	

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GP Budget 2022/2023

GP	5425	* Recruitment	200		200	
GP	5425	* General	250		250	
		Accountant, Audit and Internal Audit Fees	0		0	
GP	5475	* Accountant Fees	4,600		4,700	
GP	5495	* External Audit Fees	2,400		2,500	
GP	5494	* Internal Audit Fees	1,800		1,950	
GP	5497	Professional Fees	10,500		10,000	£5788 in EMR if required?
GP	5793	Subscriptions	4,000		4,500	
GP	5794	Training	5,500		5,500	£724 in EMR plus underspend in 2021/22
GP	5430	Office Equipment	9,500		9,500	
GP	5460	Insurances	35,000		36,500	
GP	5577	Newsletter	5,100		5,100	
GP	5490	Protective Clothing	400		400	
GP	7903. 2300	Loan Costs	61,600		60,910	
GP	5580 - 5590	Bank and Credit Charges	0		0	
	5581	Bank charges	550		600	
		TOTAL	143,400	0	144,610	
		Income				
GP	4403/4410	* Training/Administration	-100		-100	
	4414	Luxfords - re-allocation administration charges	0		0	
GP	4579 - 4583	* Bank Interest				
	4579	Special Int, Bearing Interest (Now Business Reserve)	-120		-90	
	4583	Interest Misc (Fixed rate bond)	-900		-200	
		TOTAL	-1,120	0	-390	
		Net Expenditure				
		Democratic Representation and Management				
GP	5543	Members Allowances	19,260		20,030	Additional 4% no increase for 2 years
GP	5544	Members Expenses	100		104	Additional 4% no increase for 2 years
GP	5465	Mayors Allowance	1,773		1,844	Additional 4% no increase for 2 years
GP	5470	Elections	0		0	
		TOTAL	21,133	0	21,978	
		Income	0			
		Net Expenditure				
		Grants and Partnerships				
GP	5480	Grants Section 142	19,500		19,000	
GP	5485	Grants - Power of Well Being	27,500		27,500	
GP	5487	Volunteer Bureau Service Level Agreement	8,000		8,000	
		TOTAL	55,000	0	54,500	
		Income	0			
		Net Expenditure				
		Other Buildings and Services to the Public				
GP	5730-5732	Cemetery Buildings East & West	0	0	0	
	5730	Cemetary Buildings rates	1,800		1,850	
	5732	Cemetary Buildings repairs/contracts	900		750	
GP		Signal Box, Osborn Hall, Foresters Hall Chapel	0		0	
	5735	Signal Box Repairs/contracts	1,500		1,500	

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GP Budget 2022/2023

		* Osborn Hall	0	0	0	
	5750	All buildings cleaning materials	2,000		2,000	
	5770	* Foresters Hall Chapel	0	0	0	
GP	5772-5774	2a Vernon Road	200		200	
GP	5790	Bridge Cottage	0	0	0	
		TOTAL	6,400	0	6,300	
		Income				
GP	4730	* Cemetery Building East	-5,500		-5,500	
GP	4775-4776	* Signal Box + Insurance recharge	-4,600		-4,600	
		Signal Box, Osborn Hall, Foresters Hall Chapel				
GP	4780	* Osborn Hall	-425		-425	Awaiting insurance premium breakdown for exact income
GP		* Foresters Hall Chapel	-1,150		-1,150	
GP	4771	* 2a Vernon Road	-7,200		-7,200	
GP	4783	* Bridge Cottage + Insurance recharge	-5,200		-5,200	Awaiting insurance premium breakdown for exact income
		TOTAL	-24,075	0	-24,075	
		Net Expenditure	-17,675		-17,775	
		SALARIES				
GP	5680 - 5682, 5795	Caretakers/Other Buildings				
	5680	Caretakers - salaries	78,233		70,669	
	5686	Casual Caretakers	500		250	Reduce
	5681	Caretakers - National Insurance	3,511		3,314	
		Caretakers - Pension	19,878		15,736	
	5795	Other building - salaries	5,653		4,940	Other buildings' cleaner
GP	5540 - 5542	Administration				
	5540	Office staff - salaries	204,500		214,042	
	5541	Office staff - National Insurance	19,125		20,567	
	5542	Office staff - pension	44,424		39,384	
		TOTAL	375,824	0	368,902	
		Total Revenue Expenditure	771,764		770,825	
		Total Income	-169,172		-177,515	
			602,592	0	593,310	
		Saving for Long Term Earmarked Projects				
		Elections	5,000		5,000	
		W Hall Floor	5,000		5,000	
		Signal Box replacement boiler	250		0	Project Complete
		Civic Centre communal carpet - 10 year project	0		500	
		5 yearly EICR's for all outlets	2,800		2,800	
		Future reconfiguration or renovations to existing buildings	20,000		15,000	Could be removed if budget tight
		Civic centre lift upgrade	0		5,000	
		Climate change carbon emissions reduction projects	0		10,000	£8,150 minimum if needs reducing
			33,050	0	43,300	
		Total New Initiatives 2022/23				
		Building Maintenance	0		63,000	See breakdown

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GP Budget 2022/2023

		Victoria Pavilion additional CCTV	0		2,000	
		Civic Centre gutter clearance and bird netting	0		7,000	
		Civic Centre signage	0		2,000	
		262 Bus Service	0		3,900	
		WPA NHS Top-Up	0		1,900	
			0		79,800	
			868,314		893,925	

<u>Total</u>	<u>2021/22</u>		<u>2022/23</u>
Total Revenue Expenditure	771,764		770,825
Total Long Term Earmarked Reserve Projects	33,050		43,300
Total New Initiatives	63,500		79,800
Total Budget Expenditure	868,314		893,925
Total Income	-169,172		-177,515
Net Expenditure	699,142		716,410

Agenda Item 16.0 - Appendix A

Proposed expenditure on Building Maintenance Fund 2022/23		
Year 8	Estimate	Actual
Signal Box refurb windows ext decoration	5000	
Victoria workshop lighting	1000	
Civic Centre storage solution caretaker station	10000	
Foresters Hall render repairs	3000	
Osborn & Ridgewood car park drainage	30000	
Civic Centre parking resurface, repair drainage and parking markings	7500	
Foresters Kitchen fittings	4000	
Contingency	2500	
Total	63000	



UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

DRAFT - Property Asset Management Plan

2022- 27

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1.0 Purpose of the Asset Management Plan

Uckfield Town Council first drafted an Asset Management Plan in 2001 in line with guidance from the Department of the Environment and Transport, and the Regions. It provided details of the operational assets at that time in terms of land and buildings, vehicles and non-operational assets which were leased out to other parties. However, this document did not closely align with the Town Council's strategic documents at that time nor was it referred to on a regular basis.

The Town Council produced a new Asset Management Plan in 2017. The Town Council recognised the important role that property plays in supporting the Town Council to deliver its strategic and annual plans and wants to provide a clear and accessible statement of its intentions for the portfolio both in the immediate year and over the next five years. The Asset Management Plan has been written in accordance with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Public Sector Property Asset Management Guidelines and further reflects good practice as recognised by Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. It provides a clear, approved strategy for the management of the Town Council's property assets.

2.0 Function of the Asset Management Plan

1. To manage the asset portfolio in support of the Town Council's Annual Plan and Strategic Plan;
2. To define the property portfolio, its value, condition and suitability to deliver the Town Council's priorities;
3. To outline the policy for holding, acquiring and disposing of the property assets;
4. To identify opportunities to rationalise, invest or develop the property portfolio to support the Town Council's corporate priorities and the need for financial return;
5. To raise awareness of property as a valuable and workable asset in support of the Town Council's corporate priorities;
6. To manage the asset portfolio to deliver the needs of the Town Council's services;
7. To maximise asset value and asset use through strategic maintenance and operational planning;

The property assets are managed both individually and as an entire portfolio to maximise operational value, income generation and capital value at all times whilst complying with the requirements for commercial sensitivity, economic viability, best value and probity.

The Asset Management Plan (AMP) identifies the anticipated maintenance budget requirement over a five to ten-year period for the building assets. This is used to assist in financial planning and to indicate ongoing costs related to the individual assets to inform strategic decisions on their future.

The AMP is subject to consultation processes which are summarised at Appendix 1.

The management of the property assets is subject to external and internal influences which are summarised at Appendix 2.

The AMP will support the Council in the delivery of its corporate priorities through ensuring that the portfolio is dynamically managed with focus directed towards priority areas, maintenance costs kept to a sustainable level and strategic decisions based on delivering services and optimising financial return.

3.0 The Town Council's Asset Portfolio

The Portfolio comprises 65 land and property assets. These assets comprise buildings, land, recreation grounds and playing fields, woodland, cemeteries, allotments, playgrounds and a signal box. In addition, the Town Council holds a number of wayleaves, licences and leases and street furniture.

Asset Type	Number of Assets
Allotment	7
Building	13
Cemetery	2
Land	16
Nature Reserve	3
Path	1
Playground	8
Pond	2
Recreation Ground	7
Woodland	6
Total	65

The assets are summarised in the Asset Register at Appendix 3 in accordance with these categories.

A number of the Town Council's assets were last valued in 31 March 2019. This exercise is typically undertaken every five years and will next be carried out in April 2024. The values given are made for capital accounting purposes in accordance with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Valuation Standards and with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

The basis of the value used for each property depended upon the type of asset held and whether it is used by the Council or held for investment purposes. The uses were categorised into:

Operational (specialised) – used by Council/purpose built properties

Operational (non-specialised) – used by Council/more general use

Non-Operational – usually held for investment

Heritage – a historic building held for its cultural, educational and environmental values

Please note that the most recent market valuation classified Bridge Cottage as a heritage asset. This is a change from the March 2014 asset valuation, as at that time, it was categorised as a non-operational asset held for investment purposes.

In March 2014, the asset portfolio was valued at £4,513,250 ^[1] (March 2014) with an annual rental income of £52,658 (*which includes all income from building rents and other rents and wayleaves at Nov 2018*) and an annual maintenance budget which has recently been in the region of £70-£100k to work through some major works required.

In March 2019, the asset portfolio was valued at £5,823,050 with an annual rental income of £55,271 (*which includes all income from lease/licence agreement rental payments and wayleaves only at December 2019*) and an annual maintenance budget which has recently been in the region of £60k to 70k per annum.

The works and servicing requirement for the buildings is prioritised to ensure that all legislative compliance needs are met followed by maintaining a 'fitness for purpose' to deliver the operational need and to maintain the asset value.

In 2014, a Building Maintenance Programme was commissioned which is now moving into its eighth year. The plan details the work needed on the building assets where the Town Council has a maintenance responsibility and provides an estimate of the cost of the work. A new stock condition survey was carried out in 2019, which identified future works to be carried out over the next five years.

The Town Council reviews the building maintenance programme on an annual basis in order to prioritise works in accordance with the condition of all buildings. The Town Council has also recently reviewed works, to see what works can be carried out by local contractors and smaller firms in contrast to larger scale or specialist works.

Up to date rebuild valuations have also been undertaken of all Town Council buildings in 2019 and 2020 to inform the Town Council's building insurance policy. These may need to be reviewed in 2022/23 as a result of building material costs increasing.

4.0 Asset Management Strategy 2022-27

The Asset Management Strategy defines the framework for the property portfolio management over the next three to five years. The Town Council will:

- ☐ Manage the assets to support the objectives of the Strategic Plan;
- ☐ Manage the assets in accordance with relevant legislation;
- ☐ Undertake a review of existing land use;
- ☐ Consider the acquisition and disposal of assets to support the strategic priorities;
- ☐ Undertake a full review of leases, licences and other land interests to ensure that they are up to date and that all occupations are properly regularised;
- ☐ Review statutory compliance of the Town Council's buildings to ensure that proper procedures are in place to comply with Health and Safety requirements;
- ☐ Produce and update a Maintenance Strategy to support the Asset Management Strategy which, when combined will jointly assist in the delivery of the corporate priorities. The maintenance plan will identify the annual actions that will need to be carried out from year to year to achieve the Maintenance Strategy;
- ☐ Identify opportunities to work with partners to support wider public sector real estate strategies.

5.0 Asset Management Strategy Delivery 2022-23

The Asset Management Plan underpins the five-year property asset strategy and also breaks this down into stages to be achieved in each financial year of the Asset Management Plan. Over the next financial year, the Town Council will:

- ☐ Review and confirm the Maintenance Strategy for the next 5 years;
- ☐ Consider options for delivering the backlog of maintenance;
- ☐ Deliver year 8 of the planned maintenance programme;
- ☐ Develop a programme and commence the review of the leases, licences and land titles;
- ☐ Consider initiatives listed within the Town Council's strategic plan to upgrade or improve the facilities offered by the Town Council such as West Park Pavilion etc. This will be considered in the context of the overall property portfolio;
- ☐ Explore options for creating further recreational facilities;
- ☐ Land holdings will be reviewed to reflect the Town Council's people and financial objectives;
- ☐ Manage consultants and contractors to deliver the asset management objectives;
- ☐ Report six monthly on the delivery of the asset management plan objectives.

6.0 Process for Adoption and Operation

The Town Clerk will present the Asset Management Plan to the Town Council for approval and adoption.

If approved, the Asset Management Plan will form the strategy under which the property portfolio is managed by the Town Clerk on behalf of the Town Council. The Town Clerk will agree targets for the delivery of the strategy over the forthcoming financial year and will report at the end of the financial year as part of the asset management plan annual review.

7.0 Appendices:

Appendix 1: Consultation and protocols

Appendix 2: External Influences

Appendix 3: Asset Register

Appendix 1 - Consultation and Protocols

The draft Asset Management Plan will be presented to the Town Council for consideration with a recommendation that it be accepted and formalised into the Final Asset Management Plan subject to any amendments that the Town Council wish to see included into the final document.

The AMP will then be amended to reflect the Town Council's decision and the final document will be published and will confirm the strategy upon which the property assets will be managed for the period of the Asset Management Plan.

The AMP will be presented to the Town Council each year in draft alongside the draft budget and draft priorities to summarise progress over the outgoing financial year and to identify targets for the forthcoming financial year. The Town Council will be invited to review progress and approve the following year's targets.

The Town Clerk will report to the Town Council on the progress of the Asset Management Plan on a six-monthly basis via Full Council and the delivery of the objectives for the specific financial year.

Appendix 2 – External Influences

Legislation

The property portfolio will be managed and maintained in accordance with relevant legislation to ensure compliance with Health and Safety, Landlord and Tenant, Planning and environmental legislation.

Best Practice

In addition, the portfolio will be managed in accordance with best practice following relevant industry guidelines and guidelines and policies from Central Government.

New leases will be let in accordance with RICS best practice; Asset maintenance will follow the RICS best practice on maintenance management as outlined in Strategic Facilities Management Guidance Note.

Where appropriate the Town Council will follow the Government's Transparency Code for recording asset database details.

Property Market

Recommendations for the strategic and operational management and maintenance of the Town Council's property assets will be made having regard to the nature of the property market at the relevant time.

Appendix 3 - Asset Register

Allotment

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS13	Ridgewood Allotments (i)	Allotment land, declared Town Council land 1978. Members agreed in 2009 (FC.082.03.09) during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment that no allotment sites should be offered for housing development.	Allotment	Freehold	0.72ha
OS27	West Park Allotments	Allotment land, transferred from developer in 1987 with restrictive covenants in place. As per FC.082.03.09 above.	Allotment	Freehold	0.36ha
OS30	Bell Lane Allotments	Allotments leased from ESCC in 1995. As per FC.082.03.09 above.	Allotment	Leasehold	0.19ha
OS32	Bird-in-Eye Allotments	Allotment land purchased in 1932 with restrictive covenants. As per FC.082.03.09 above.	Allotment	Freehold	0.85ha
OS39	Framfield Road Allotments (i)	Allotment land purchased in 1932, divided by road to hospital in 1992. As per FC.082.03.09 above.	Allotment	Freehold	0.86ha

OS40	Framfield Road Allotments (ii)	Allotment land purchased in 1932, divided by road to hospital in 1992. As per FC.082.03.09 above.	Allotment	Freehold	0.43ha
OS48	Ridgewood Allotments (ii)	Allotment land, declared Town Council land 1978.	Allotment	Freehold	0.76ha

Building

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS16	Ridgewood Village Hall	Hall leased on full repairing lease to Ridgewood Village Hall Management Committee. (25 year term from April 2010)	Building	Freehold, leased out	0.21ha
OS24	2A Vernon Road	Flat and garden to the rear of Foresters Hall. Purchased in 1994, rented out.	Building	Freehold, leased out	0.06ha
OS38	Foresters Hall	Community hall and associated land/car park purchased in 1986 and available for hire to community groups and individuals.	Building	Freehold	0.10ha
OS45	Victoria Pavilion	Pavilion building adjacent to Victoria Pleasure Ground. Ground floor of pavilion available for hire by recreation ground users or organisations. First floor of pavilion leased to Sussex Support Services. (5 year term from due for renewal Aug 2025)	Building	Freehold, leased out	0.03ha

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS49	West Park Pavilion	<p>Pavilion building adjacent to West Park recreation ground. Pavilion is available for hire by recreation ground users or organisations.</p> <p>The building was transferred from developer in 1987 with restrictive covenants in place. Previously reviewed for redevelopment.</p> <p>Currently working with a local sports club to transfer the building to their management under a full repairing lease agreement for five years.</p>	Building	Freehold	0.02ha
OS50	The Hub	<p>Building purchased from ESCC in 2007.</p> <p>Citizens Advice Bureau moved to Uckfield Library in 2020.</p> <p>Northern side of building (the Source) is leased to The Baptist Church on a two year lease agreement due for renewal early 2023.</p>	Building	Freehold	0.03ha
OS51	Civic Centre	<p>Building housing Town Council Offices, meeting rooms, function rooms and restaurant. Opened in 1991 by the Mayor.</p>	Building	Freehold	0.12ha

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS55	Bridge Cottage	Historic building purchased from ESCC in 1984. Leased to Uckfield and District Preservation Society (25 year full repairing lease from December 2015). Previously reviewed for redevelopment.	Building	Freehold, leased out	0.01ha
OS55a	Bridge Cottage - Shop Adjacent	Building adjacent to Bridge Cottage and associated land. Purchased in 2010. Forms part of above lease arrangements with Uckfield and District Preservation Society.	Building	Freehold, leased out	
OS56	Signal Box	Former Signal Box building, purchased from British Railways Board in 1993. Leased out to commercial tenant (lease due for renewal in Dec 2021).	Building	Freehold, leased out	
OS57	Osborn Hall	Community hall leased out to Guide Association on a full repairing lease. (20 year term from Jan 2006 – review to be undertaken every five years).	Building	Freehold, leased out	0.02ha
OS63	Large storage unit - Victoria Pleasure Ground	Building used to store grounds equipment and vehicles. Completed in 2012.	Building	Freehold	

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS64	Double garage storage - Victoria Pleasure Ground	Set of double garages. One leased to Anderida Cricket Club and one is leased to Uckfield Performance Ensemble on full repairing leases. Currently due for renewal.	Building	Freehold, leased out	

Cemetery

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS34	Snatts Road Cemetery and Chapel	Cemetery (new section) purchased in 1942.	Cemetery	Freehold	1.33ha
OS35	Snatts Road Cemetery and Chapel	Cemetery and Chapel (Consecration of chapel removed by Lord Bishop of Chichester in 1999). One chapel and part of second chapel leased to commercial tenant – lease agreements due for renewal in Aug 2022). Part of second chapel utilised by Uckfield Town Council.	Cemetery	Freehold	1.19ha

Land

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS1	Land to the north of Hart Close	Open land adjacent to road, transferred to Town Council by developer. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was considered unsuitable at the time.	Land	Freehold	0.22ha
OS2	Hempstead Fields	Open land adjacent to recreation ground, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1991. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.	Land	Freehold	1.69ha
OS6	Hunters Way	Open land with footpaths and tree planting, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1973. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was considered unsuitable at the time.	Land	Freehold	0.36ha

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS7	Linnet Green	Open land adjacent to road, acquired by Town Council in 1955. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was considered unsuitable at the time.	Land	Freehold	0.05ha
OS9	Land at Harlands Farm	Open land and woods, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1989. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was considered unsuitable at the time.	Land	Freehold	0.30ha
OS10	New Barn Farm	Open land, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1990. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was agreed it was not appropriate at that time.	Land	Freehold	3.24ha
OS11	Oaklea Way	Open land adjacent to road, previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.	Land	Freehold	0.11ha

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS18	Rocks Park Bank	Open land adjacent to road junction. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was considered unsuitable at the time.	Land	Freehold	0.07ha
OS19	Rocks Park Flats	Open land with footpaths and tree planting, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1990. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.	Land	Freehold	0.28ha
OS21	Land at Selby Road (Selby Meadows)	Open land under 10 year licence from December 2020 for community use with New Town Action Group. Land in process of being re-registered as an Asset of Community Value.	Land	Freehold, licenced out	0.13ha
OS22	Shepherds Gate	Open land, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1995. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was considered unsuitable.	Land	Freehold	0.16ha

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS23	Swallow Court	Open land, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1955. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was considered unsuitable.	Land	Freehold	0.03ha
OS31	Bellbrook Open Space	Open land, transferred from developer in 1995 with restrictive covenants. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. Considered unsuitable as currently a de facto Nature Reserve.	Land	Freehold	1.46ha
OS33	Browns Lane Rockery and Path	Open land, transferred from developer in 1991 with restrictive covenants. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was considered unsuitable.	Land	Freehold	0.08ha
OS37	Elizabeth Gardens	Open land with footpath. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was considered unsuitable.	Land	Freehold	0.14ha

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS52	Land and woods at Harlands Farm	Land and woods, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1989, adjacent to Harlands Farm. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.	Land	Freehold	0.03ha

Nature Reserve

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS20	Hempstead Meadows LNR	Open land established as a nature reserve in 2002. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was agreed that none should be released.	Nature Reserve	Freehold	1.60ha
OS58	HMLNR extension	Open land adjacent to Hempstead Lane Local Nature Reserve, transferred to the Town Council by developer in 2008. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was agreed that none should be released.	Nature Reserve	Freehold	2.42ha

OS29	West Park Local Nature Reserve	Open land, transferred from developer in 1990 with agreement to create local nature reserve. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was agreed that none should be released.	Land	Freehold	11.04ha
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Path

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS62	Land on South side of 32 Keld Drive and North side of 33 Keld Drive	Access path to the Bird-in-Eye allotments	Path		

Playground

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS5	Hughes Way	Playground with play equipment, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1998. New play equipment installed in Feb 2018.	Playground	Freehold	0.09ha

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS12	Oakwood Drive	Playground with play equipment, transferred from developer in 1987.	Playground	Freehold	0.09ha
OS15	Ridgewood Play Area	Playground with play equipment, declared Town Council land 1978. New play equipment & MUGA installed in Oct 2016.	Playground	Freehold	0.03ha
OS17	Rocks/West Park Play Area	Playground with play equipment.	Playground	Freehold	0.33ha
OS36	Downland Copse	Playground with basketball court, transferred from developer in 1993.	Playground	Freehold	0.15ha
OS44	Luxford Field Play Area	Playground with play equipment, transferred to Town Council from ESCC in 1983. Play area shape redesigned and full play area upgraded with accessibility in Sept 2020.	Playground	Freehold	0.13ha
OS46	Hempstead Play Area	Playground with play equipment, acquired by Town Council in 1932. New play equipment installed in August 2013.	Playground	Freehold	0.02ha
OS47	Victoria Play Area	Play area, part of Victoria Pleasure Ground, leased from Richard James Streatfield in 1897 for 999 years. New surfacing added in 2017.	Playground	Leasehold	0.09ha

Pond

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS53	Harlands Farm Pond	Pond, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1989, adjacent to Harlands Farm.	Pond	Freehold	0.16ha
OS61	Balancing Pond at Harlands	Balancing pond behind pumping station on Mallard Drive, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1989, adjacent to Harlands Farm.	Pond	Freehold	0.21ha

Recreation Ground

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS3	Hempstead Lane Recreation Ground	Recreation ground, acquired in 1932, with some restrictions.	Recreation Ground	Freehold	0.76ha
OS8	Luxford Field	Open land for recreation open space, public recreation ground or a site of a community building, transferred from ESCC in 1983. Requirements are in place that need to be observed.	Land	Freehold	1.13ha
OS14	Ridgewood Recreation Ground	Open land used as recreation area, declared Town Council land 1978.	Recreation Ground	Freehold	1.94ha

OS25	Victoria Pleasure Ground Tennis Courts	Tennis Court, part of Victoria Pleasure Ground, leased from Richard James Streatfield in 1897 for 999 years.	Recreation Ground	Leasehold	0.12ha
OS26	Victoria Pleasure Ground	Recreation ground, leased from Richard James Streatfield in 1897 for 999 years.	Recreation Ground	Leasehold	3.37ha
OS28	West Park Playing Fields	Recreation ground, transferred from developer in 1987 with restrictive covenants in place.	Recreation Ground	Freehold	2.97ha
OS42	Harlands Farm playing fields	Open recreation ground, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1989, adjacent to Harlands Farm.	Recreation Ground	Freehold	2.07ha

Woodland

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS4	Boothland Wood	Woodland transferred to Town Council by developer with restrictive covenants. .	Woodland	Freehold	4.99ha
OS41	Nightingale Wood	Woodland, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1989, adjacent to Harlands Farm.	Woodland	Freehold	2.00ha
OS43	Bridge Farm Road Wood	Woodland, transferred to Town Council by developer in 2002 with restrictive covenants.	Woodland	Freehold	0.66ha

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS54	Harlands Farm woods	Woodland, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1989, adjacent to Harlands Farm.	Woodland	Freehold	0.16ha
OS59	Nightingale Wood (extension)	Woodland, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1989, adjacent to Harlands Farm.	Woodland	Freehold	0.31ha
OS60	Nightingale Wood (extension)	Woodland, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1989, adjacent to Harlands Farm.	Woodland	Freehold	0.46ha

Uckfield Town Council

Internal Audit Report 2021-22 (First interim)

Stuart J Pollard

Director
Auditing Solutions Ltd

Background and Scope

Statute requires all town and parish councils to arrange for an independent Internal Audit (IA) examination of their accounting records and systems of internal control and for the conclusions to be reported each year in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

This report sets out those areas examined during the course of our first interim review for 2021-22, which we are pleased to have been able to undertake on site on 18th & 19th November 2021. The report will be updated following our interim update review which will be undertaken on a date to be agreed in early 2022. We thank the Clerk and her colleagues for their assistance in progressing this initial review for the year.

Internal Audit Approach

In undertaking our review, we have as in previous years had regard to the materiality of transactions and their susceptibility to potential mis-recording or misrepresentation in the year-end Statement of Accounts / AGAR. Our programme of cover, as applied to all clients, is designed to afford appropriate assurance that the Council's financial systems are robust and operate in a manner to ensure effective probity of transactions and to afford a reasonable probability of identifying any material errors or possible abuse of the Council's own and the national statutory regulatory framework. The programme is also designed to facilitate our completion of the 'IA Certificate' in the Council's AGAR, which requires independent assurance over a selection of internal control objectives.

Overall Conclusion

The work undertaken to date on the Council's accounting and other records is set out in the following detailed report with a few matters identified warranting appropriate recommendations which are further summarised in the appended Action Plan.

Detailed Report

Maintenance of Accounting Records & Bank Reconciliations

The Council uses the Sage accounting software to maintain its accounting records, with annual support currently provided by third party contract accountants (Acuity). The Council operates Current and Business Reserve accounts with NatWest Bank, supplemented by occasional Term deposits with 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. Consequently, we have: -

- Verified that an appropriate cost centre and nominal ledger structure remains in place for 2021-22;
- Agreed the opening Trial Balance in the accounting software for 2021-22 to the closing Financial Statements for 2020-21 ensuring that all balances have been properly rolled forward with no matters arising;
- Checked and agreed two sample months' receipts and payments transactions (April and September 2021) on the Current and Business Reserve bank account cashbooks to relevant statements noting that daily "sweeps" to and from the Reserve account continue to be in place to retain an overnight total in the former at £200,000; and
- Checked that appropriate reconciliations are being retained and signed off at the end of each month by the RFO with further subsequent scrutiny by a councillor nominated as the internal checker.

Conclusions

There are no matters arising in this area warranting formal comment or recommendation currently: we shall examine one or two further months' transactions at future visits, also ensuring the accurate disclosure of the combined cash and bank account balances in the year's AGAR at Section 2, Box 8.

Review of Corporate Governance

Our objective here 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 (SOs) and that, as far as we are reasonably able to ascertain as we do not attend meetings, no actions of a potentially unlawful nature have been or are being considered for implementation.

We note that the Council's extant corporate documentation such as the SOs, Financial Regulations (FRs) and Members' Code of Conduct are subject to periodic review. The most recent review of SOs took place in 2018 with the FRs subjected to further review and re-adoption in March 2020. Examination of their content indicates that they are not wholly in line with the latest published NALC model documents and, consequently we urge that, in line with best practice, they be subjected to further review, update and greater alignment to the NALC model documents, electronic copies of which we have provided to the Clerk to assist the process.

We have, in advance of our visit, reviewed the Council's minutes, examining those for the Full Council and its Standing Committee meetings (with the exception of Planning) as posted on the website to establish 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: we are pleased to record that no such issues appear to exist currently and will continue to review future meetings' minutes for the remainder of the financial year.

We have previously noted that the Council meets all necessary criteria to adopt the General Power of Competence, which was last re-affirmed in May 2019 following the election of the new Council at that time.

We again acknowledge the existence of a plethora of relevant, formally adopted Policies and Procedures, together with more detailed written operating procedures that we consider to be in line with best working practice.

Finally in this area, we are pleased to note that the external auditors issued a "clean" certificate on the 2020-21 AGAR.

Conclusions and recommendation

There are no significant matters of concern arising in this area currently, although we suggest that the extant SOs and FRs are potentially overdue for further scrutiny and update and urge that, when next reviewed, they are more closely aligned to the NALC model documents. We shall continue to monitor the Council's approach to governance matters at future visits, recording our conclusions accordingly.

R1. The Council's extant Standing Orders and Financial Regulations should be subjected to periodic review and be aligned more closely to the latest NALC model documents.

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 noted in our final 2020-21 report that the Council was to implement online processing of purchase payments: appropriate action has now been taken with the RFO setting up the

payments and members now visiting the offices and releasing the payments after checking detail to invoices and initialling the latter, together with the various BACS processing documentation, as evidence of their review. We are pleased to record that we consider the processes in place both adequate and providing effective control over the release of Council funds.

We have selected a sample of 32 payments totalling £235,370 processed in the year to 31st October 2021 for compliance with the above criteria, including all transactions individually in excess of £4,000 plus every 40th transaction as recorded in the Sage “cashbook”. Our test sample to date equates to 68% of non-pay related payments.

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that no issues arise in this area warranting formal comment or recommendation currently: we will extend our test sample at future visits applying the same criteria, also examining the year’s VAT reclaims.

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 as part of a long-term agreement with Zurich supplemented by separate property cover provided by QBE. We have examined the current year’s Zurich policy schedule noting that Public and Employer’s Liability stand at £15 million and £10 million respectively, together with Fidelity Guarantee cover at £1 million and Loss of Revenue cover at £400,000 for the Civic Centre and £34,000 across other locations all of which we consider appropriate for the Council’s present requirements.

We noted in last year’s report that the Council had a formal Strategic Risk Management Policy in place, which was last adopted by the General Purposes Committee in January 2021 and, by subsequent minute approval, Full Council in March 2021.

We again also note that weekly control registers are in place to record the outcome of ground staff health and safety inspections of the Council’s various play areas and associated facilities.

Conclusions

There are no matters arising in this area currently warranting formal comment or recommendation: however, we take this opportunity to remind officers and members of the requirement for risk registers to be subjected to at least once annual review and formal adoption (The Governance and Accountability Manual – Practitioner’s Guide refers).

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.

This review took place in advance of the Council's formal deliberation and determination of the budgetary and precept requirements for 2022-23: consequently, we shall revisit this area as part of our next review.

We are pleased to note from our review of minutes to date in the year that members continue to receive periodic budget management reports at Committee level. We have reviewed the most recent report as at 30th September 2021 with no significant variances existing other than the understandable loss of income impact due to Covid resulting in the closure of Luxfords in the early months of the year, also noting that this has, to an extent been offset by the receipt of a Covid relief grant and government furlough funding.

Conclusions

No issues arise in this area currently: we shall ensure at our next review visit that the 2022-23 budget and precept have been discussed and adopted formally, also continuing to review budget reports and following up any significant variances that might arise. We shall also, as in previous years, assess the appropriateness of the level of retained reserves at the financial year-end to meet the Council's ongoing revenue spending requirements and potential development aspirations.

Review of Income

The Council receives income from a variety of sources including hire fees for use of the Civic Centre, the Luxfords 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.

We are pleased to note that the Council has again, as required by the adopted FRs, reviewed fees and charges at the Council's various facilities to be applied from 1st April 2021.

We have, as part of this first interim review examined income arising from burial and associated fees. We have selected a sample of entries in the Council's various Burial Registers for the year to date ensuring that each was duly supported by funeral directors' application forms, the legally required burial / cremation certificates and that appropriately priced invoices have been raised for each in the test sample.

In doing so, we noted one instance where the fee charged was at the in-parish rate, although the supporting documentation indicated that it related to a non-parishioner (ref GW 41). We also noted one instance (Invoice no. 39559) where the VAT element on the cemetery maintenance fee was not charged: we have, consequently, reviewed the file of invoices raised noting that this is an isolated instance.

Additionally, in examining the file of burial and associated fee invoices raised, we noted that not all bore indication of the date of settlement, which should ideally be recorded to provide clear evidence of the status of individual invoices. We have also suggested to the Clerk and RFO that, to simplify identification of unpaid invoices that, when payment is received the top corner of the relevant invoice is cut off.

We note that the allotment rental year commences on 1st October with invoices due to be raised imminently: we understand that there has been a delay due to awaiting receipt of water charges detail from the supplier. We will, consequently, examine this and other income streams, including Luxfords' catering sales at our interim update review visit.

Whilst we note that officers and members continue to review the position in relation to any long-standing and potential bad debts, we have examined the Sage Sales Ledger – Aged Debtors Analysis (Detailed) report noting a number of instances where either over-payments have been received or income has not been matched to the relevant invoice. These mainly appear to relate to allotment rental fees, in one case dating back to 2017! We also noted a few debts dating back to 2020, which are now long overdue for settlement.

We have discussed the position with the Clerk and RFO suggesting that the overpaid amounts be cleared by, in the case of allotment rents, adjusting the 2021-22 tenancy invoices by the value of overpayments received or, if from other sources and not to be refunded, by transferring the value of the overpayments to the relevant nominal account code as miscellaneous receipts, thereby clearing them from the Sales Ledger.

Conclusions and recommendations

Whilst acknowledging the overview of outstanding debt undertaken by officers and members, we consider that appropriate action should be taken to clear all unmatched receipts or overpayments received from the Sales ledger as indicated above. Whilst appreciating the potential impact of Covid on individuals to settle their accounts, positive action should be taken to routinely pursue all debts of six months or more to ensure recovery.

- R2. Positive action should be taken to pursue all unpaid debts of six months or older.*
- R3. The position on all “unmatched” receipts should be reviewed with appropriate action taken to, in the case of allotment tenants, adjust their 2021-22 invoices by the value of any prior year overpayments. Where other overpayments or “unmatched” receipts exist, they should be reviewed and appropriate action be taken to clear them from the Sales Ledger.*
- R4. Ideally, where payment of invoices raised is received the invoices should be annotated to record the date of receipt and the top corner of the invoice cut off to provide clear indication on the file of any unpaid invoices.*

Petty Cash Accounts

We are required, as part of the IA certification process in the AGAR to assess and give a view on the effectiveness of control over any petty cash account in use by the Council.

The Council operates two “office based” petty cash accounts in the Administration office and at Luxfords, both being “topped up” as and when required. These are maintained on a day-to-day basis for the separate use of Administration and Luxfords expenses using separate Sage

cashbooks for transaction processing with the accounts. Separate hand-written records of both are maintained, listing each individual or a group of transactions accordingly. We have examined transactions recorded therein for October and to date in November 2021 on the office account and November on the Luxfords' account, noting that all transactions in our test samples are appropriately supported by invoices or till receipts.

Whilst no significant issues or concerns arise in this respect, we have suggested to the Clerk and RFO that both handwritten records be expanded to provide further columns to record the receipt of "top-ups" and the reducing balance after each payment is recorded, which should be coordinated with the Sage account balance.

We have checked both cash holdings at the time of this initial review for the year and are pleased to report that in both cases the physical holding equates to the Sage balances.

Conclusions and recommendation

There are no significant issues arising in this area currently, although, as indicated above, we suggest that the manuscript transaction record maintained for the office-based account be expanded to provide the reducing balance after each transaction.

R5. The manuscript records of office and Luxfords based petty cash transactions should be expanded by the inclusion of additional columns recording the receipt of cash "top-ups" and the resultant balance after each transaction (receipt and / or payment).

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 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 in relation to the staff salary contribution bandings.

We have examined the payroll procedures in place together with the physical payments made to staff in September 2021 by reference to the supporting payslips, which are produced "in house" by the RFO using bespoke SAGE payroll software. Consequently, we have: -

- Ensured that staff gross payments for the above month for each employee are in line with the RFO's schedule of staff in post, which identifies either the point on the national NJC salary scale or the appropriate hourly / fixed payment rate and contracted weekly hours payable;
- Ensured that, where enhance / overtime hours have been paid in September, they are supported by appropriately signed and certified time records;
- Checked deductions of tax by reference to staff Tax Codes, as advised by HMRC and recorded on payslips also ensuring the appropriate NI deductions and employer's contributions have been calculated and applied;
- Ensured the appropriate pension contribution percentages have been applied; and finally
- Noted that electronic monthly returns are made in a timely and accurate manner in accord with current HMRC legislation (aka Real Time Initiative).

Conclusions

We are pleased to record that there are no matters arising in this area warranting formal comment or recommendation currently.

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.

We note that the Council has re-invested in an annual Term deposit with Lloyds Bank ending in July 2022 and also, as noted earlier in this report, holds “surplus” funds in an Interest-Bearing account at NatWest.

Statutory guidance on local government investments, issued under section 15(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 2003, was revised for financial years commencing on or after 1st April 2018 now requiring all councils with funds held in excess of £100,000 to develop and formally adopt an appropriate Investment Strategy / Policy. To assist the Council, we have provided the Clerk with sample copies of documents in place at a couple of our other clients and urge that an appropriate document be prepared and submitted to Council for formal adoption as soon as is practicable.

The Council has loans in existence with PWLB repayable at half-yearly intervals by direct debit. liabilities and we have examined their third party, on-line repayment demands for the first repayment in 2021-22 as part of our above expenditure test sample.

Conclusions and recommendation

There are no significant matters arising in this area currently, although we suggest that an appropriate Investment Strategy / Policy be developed and adopted by the Council in line with the requirements of the 2018 update in statutory legislation in this respect. We shall undertake further work in this area at future visits, also ensuring the accurate disclosure of the residual loan liability balance at 31st March 2022 by reference to the UK Debt Agency website, which records the value of all local government outstanding loans.

R6. *The Council should ensure compliance with the requirements of the 2018 statutory updated guidance on Investments developing and adopting an appropriate Investment Strategy / Policy.*

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Response
Review of Corporate Governance		
R1	The Council's extant Standing Orders and Financial Regulations should be subjected to periodic review and be aligned more closely to the latest NALC model documents.	
Review of Income		
R2	Positive action should be taken to pursue all unpaid debts of six months or older.	
R3	The position on all "unmatched" receipts should be reviewed with appropriate action taken to, in the case of allotment tenants, adjust their 2021-22 invoices by the value of any prior year overpayments. Where other overpayments or "unmatched" receipts exist, they should be reviewed and appropriate action be taken to clear them from the Sales Ledger.	
R4	Ideally, where payment of invoices raised is received the invoices should be annotated to record the date of receipt and the top corner of the invoice cut off to provide clear indication on the file of any unpaid invoices.	
Review of Petty Cash Accounts		
R5	The manuscript records of office and Luxfords based petty cash transactions should be expanded by the inclusion of additional columns recording the receipt of cash "top-ups" and the resultant balance after each transaction (receipt and / or payment).	
Investments & Loans		
R6	The Council should ensure compliance with the requirements of the 2018 statutory updated guidance on Investments developing and adopting an appropriate Investment Strategy / Policy.	

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Climate Change Policy

Policy Number 80		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	27.07.2021	Draft prepared for Climate Change Working Group
2	06.12.2021	Policy prepared for adoption at Full Council

1.0. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy details the background and manner in which Uckfield Town Council is managing its contribution to climate change.

2.0. Background

- 2.1 Uckfield Town Council resolved to support a motion put forward in August 2019, which sought to support the Climate Emergency declared by Wealden District Council.

Details of the Full Council meeting are listed below:

“TO CONSIDER A MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR PAUL SPARKS

Councillor P. Sparks informed members that scientific evidence was now fairly clear in suggesting that we were experiencing global warming. Last month was the warmest month in some years, and something had to be done to slow the speed of warming. Some may argue that we have left it too late.

Wealden District Council had recently passed a motion to become carbon neutral by 2050 and they felt that parish and town councils could play a key role. In the motion it mentioned electric vehicles but he understood that it may not be possible for this to happen at this time. A comment had also been put forward on social media to suggest the planting of more trees in the town. Councillor P. Sparks suggested that a working party be set up within the Town Council to address these issues.

The Town Clerk confirmed that it would not be possible to look at electric vehicles at present, as the infrastructure would need to be in place such as electric charging points, to enable the grounds staff to move freely around the town. The Town Clerk also noted that working parties were not always effective and low interest led to office staff delivering the majority of the work. She therefore advised that this should be re-considered.

A lengthy debate took place whilst all members put their views forward. In summary the comments included:

- *the need to find out what Wealden DC planned to do, before we commenced work;*
- *often members felt that there were double standards – i.e. Wealden DC signing up to a Climate Emergency but enabling a large number of trees to be felled as part of a development in Crowborough;*
- *electric vehicles were expensive, so for now when purchasing new vehicles we should make sure they were the most efficient and do a bit more research when purchasing items;*
- *some felt ‘emergency’ was too strong a phrase, some felt that it was an understatement;*
- *questioned whether Wealden District Council had considered placing solar panels on their new builds and were they going to help parishes with funding towards the campaign?*

- reference was made to the previous campaign Agenda 21 – act global, think local – the importance of leading from the grass roots
- if a working group was set up – to keep things small, realistic and achievable, and most importantly take account of what people can afford in this area;
- a suggestion was made that the tree planting could be linked to the 75th Anniversary of VE day in 2020 to plant a tree for every soldier from Uckfield;
- by supporting the motion more pressure could be placed on Wealden DC;
- need to consider resources local to Uckfield. There were three water mills along the River Uck (two in Uckfield, one in Isfield), these could be refurbished to generate power.

Further to the debate, an amendment was proposed to the existing motion to include the proposal to set up a working party.

The new motion with amendment read “Uckfield Town Council will support the Climate Emergency declared by Wealden District Council and will examine measures to reduce emissions including replacing motorised vehicles with electric powered ones wherever possible, through the setting up of a working party.”

FC.42.08.19 With eleven votes out of 15 in favour of the amended motion, and two members abstaining, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the motion “to support the Climate Emergency declared by Wealden District Council and examine measures to reduce emissions including replacing motorised vehicles with electric powered ones wherever possible, through the setting up of a working party.”

3.0 Working towards becoming “plastic-free”

3.1 Since this time, Uckfield Town Council has helped Uckfield work towards becoming “plastic free” with the installation of a water cooler at the Civic Centre to encourage people to utilise their own water bottles rather than purchasing plastic bottles one-off. This led the Town Council to register with the national “refill scheme” and is listed as one of many organisations now in the town:

<https://www.refill.org.uk/>

3.2 The Town Council has also been working hard to reduce the use of single-use plastic within the Civic Centre and Luxfords Restaurant with changes in refuse collections, changes in refuse bags used within the Civic Centre, and changes in the restaurant to products used every day (event beakers, straws, sauces, etc) supporting the town’s plastic free working group with their initial campaigns.

3.3 In May 2019, Uckfield Town Council also stated its support for the local town campaign and more specifically the ‘Surfers Against Sewage’ objectives.

“TO CONFIRM SUPPORT TOWARDS THE TOWN’S PLASTIC FREE CAMPAIGN AND SPECIFICALLY THE SURFERS AGAINST SEWAGE OBJECTIVES FOR A PLASTIC FREE COMMUNITY

Members were provided with an update on the work of Brighter Uckfield, voluntary support within the town and Town Council staff to start up a Plastic Free campaign in Uckfield.

Members were advised that in the region of 20 volunteers had come forward to support the campaign following information sessions at the end of March 2019, and the group were keen to deliver the Surfers against Sewage Plastic Free Community Toolkit and set up a Refill campaign in Uckfield. In order to support these initiatives, the Town Council was asked to confirm its commitment to the project.

FC24.05.19 Members *RESOLVED* to:

- (i) to note the report;*
- (ii) to note the objectives of the Surfers against Sewage Plastic Free Community Toolkit and confirm Uckfield Town Council’s commitment to supporting the journey to make Uckfield a Plastic Free Community, and;*
- (iii) in line with the Surfers against Sewage Plastic Free Toolkit, to continue to lead by example by removing single-use plastic items from the Town Council’s premises and support local campaigns and events.”*

4.0 Climate Change Working Group

4.1 The Climate Change Working Group first met on 25 September 2019.

They were particularly keen to look at two areas initially:

- (i) how Uckfield Town Council can adapt and improve its carbon neutral workings;
- (ii) for Uckfield Town Council to be an influencer and role model and develop ideas to be a focus for the town to encourage local residents and businesses to reduce their carbon emissions, and develop and improve their carbon neutral practices.

4.2 This would involve arranging Climate Change EXPOs to promote green technology and initiatives to local residents and businesses. It also encouraged councillors to start reviewing how we could better manage land for nature. This included considering river walks and extensions of the Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve along with the possibility of creating a community garden elsewhere in the town.

5.0 Managing land for nature

5.1 Uckfield Town Council’s Tree Policy was updated in November 2019 to introduce a ‘Tree for Tree scheme,’ whereby if a tree had to be removed due to being dead, dying or decaying, a new tree would be sought and planted in a suitable location, whether it be in the vicinity of the same location, or a more appropriate location across the town, on Uckfield town Council Land.

5.2 In 2020/21, 277 trees were planted on Town Council land. Plans are underway for further planting in the winter of 2021/22.

6.0 Measuring our carbon footprint

- 6.1 Uckfield Town Council commissioned specialists to undertake a carbon footprint audit carried out for the period January 2020 – December 2020. This survey involved reviewing utility and vehicle information, such as Gas and electricity supplies, Biomass, supply & waste water, town refuse, town streetlighting and company vehicles.
- 6.2 The survey was carried out across the following buildings –
- Civic Centre;
 - Foresters Hall;
 - Victoria Pavilion;
 - West Park Pavilion;
- 6.3 The survey took into consideration fuel consumption from the following vehicles and equipment:
- Tractor;
 - Ford Transit;
 - Ford Ranger;
 - Vauxhall Movano;
 - Grounds power tools (chain saws/Brushcutters etc);
- 6.4 The Town Council's footprint total was 90.2 tonnes of carbon. This was carried out during nine months of a pandemic where the majority of staff were at home and buildings were closed for some of this time. This survey did not take into account other Town Council owned buildings which are leased out such as – Signal Box, Osborn Hall, Ridgewood Village Hall, Snatts Road Chapels. It did also not have consideration for staff commuting distances to work, and their mode of travel.

7.0 Our priorities

- 7.1 This report provides a good baseline upon which to make progress, and Uckfield Town Council should use the results of the carbon audit upon which to set out a clear action plan, and make progress towards our overall aim:

“For Uckfield Town Council to work towards a target of net zero by 2050, in line with the UK Government”

- 7.2 Focus will be given to the following areas, in line with recommendations by the Centre for Sustainable Energy:
- (i) Managing issues within Uckfield Town Council's direct control (land/property);
 - (ii) Managing issues within procurement (consideration given to service provision and contractor arrangements);
 - (iii) Managing land for nature and minimising waste;
 - (iv) Place shaping – educating and engaging the community;
- 7.3 The action plan overleaf will assist the Town Council in reducing emissions and assisting the town's biodiversity:

8.0 Action Plan

8.1

Area of focus	Actions
Direct control	Ensure annual savings are put aside to work towards specific action plans for the Town council's buildings which seek to reduce individual building carbon footprints i.e. solar panels, replacing boilers at end of life with heat source pumps, replacement of existing lighting to LED lighting etc Est £8,500pa
	Change utility suppliers to 100% green energy
	Replace vehicles at end of life with hybrid or electric where available
Procurement	Continue rolling replacement of old street lights with new LED
	When reviewing tenders consider organisations' commitments to climate change and sustainability
Minimising waste	Reduce use of paper within office administration with a move to digitalised bookings and purchase order/invoicing procedures
Managing land for nature	Continue tree for a tree scheme and continue planting trees
	Replace fences with hedges around the town as and when required/applicable
Place-shaping	Organisation of a Climate Change EXPO 2022 for residents and local businesses to learn about green technologies and initiatives
	Develop the Green Partnership with key stakeholders for Uckfield

- 8.2 This policy recommends for Uckfield Town Council to carry out the carbon footprint survey every three to five years to monitor progress and include items omitted from the 2021 survey, as outlined in para. 3.2.

Meeting of the Full Council

Monday 6 December 2021

Agenda item 21.0

TO CONSIDER A RESPONSE TO THE WASTE & MINERALS LOCAL PLAN – REVISED POLICIES WINTER 2021/22

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Key stakeholders and members of the public are being asked to review the soundness and legal compliance of the proposed revised policies within the Waste and Minerals Local Plan (revised policies documentation for Winter 2021/22).
- 1.2 East Sussex County Council, the South Downs National Park Authority and Brighton and Hove City Council work jointly to prepare this Local Plan for these areas. The plan is used when deciding whether to grant or refuse planning permission, and guides where development happens with regard to waste and minerals. This process seeks to consult on their revised policies as part of their periodic review of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.
- 1.3 The consultation remains open until 4 January 2022. A copy of the information factsheet can be found in appendix A of this report which provides an overview.
- 1.4 To review the full consultation document (revised policies – proposed submission consultation document) and proposed map amendments , please click on the weblink below:
<https://eastsussex-consult.objective.co.uk/kse/event/36561>

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to advise the Town Clerk if they wish to provide a response on behalf of Uckfield Town Council before the deadline.

Contact Officer: Holly Goring

Appendices: Appendix A: Information sheet on the consultation (October 2021)



East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Local Plan

Revised Policies Document Proposed Submission Plan Consultation Information Sheet October 2021

East Sussex County Council, Brighton & Hove City Council and the South Downs National Park Authority (the Authorities) have responsibility for planning for the future management of waste and production of minerals. The Authorities are required to prepare a Waste and Minerals Local Plan which contains policies that are used to make decisions on planning applications for waste and minerals development within East Sussex, Brighton & Hove and the part of the South Downs National Park within the County and City (the Plan Area). The policies in the Waste and Minerals Local Plan are also applicable to the District and Borough Councils within the Plan Area as local planning authorities.

The Authorities are proposing changes to parts of the existing Waste and Minerals Local Plan (WMLP) to update a limited number of policies, as set out within the Revised Policies Document (RPD). The main area of focus of the current review is the provision of minerals. The Authorities will commit to a future full Plan review which will reassess the whole Local Plan, including in the context of climate change.

A review of the Waste and Minerals Local Plan began with public consultation on a Scoping document for the review, and a Call for Minerals Sites in 2017. Having reviewed the responses to that consultation, the Authorities produced a draft Revised Policies document which contained proposed amendments to the Local Plan. The draft document was published for public consultation in 2020. After reviewing the comments received during the 2020 consultation and making amendments to the Revised Policies, a Proposed Submission Revised Policies document (2021) has now been published for consultation.

Why are we proposing changes to the Waste and Minerals Local Plan?

Minerals are necessary for the construction, maintenance and improvement of infrastructure, housing, roads and other development. Government policy states that it is essential that there is a sufficient supply of minerals to provide for the country's needs.

Minerals such as sand and gravel which are used in construction are known as aggregates. The current supply of aggregates in the Plan Area is made up of limited land-won (quarried) aggregates, with the majority sourced from marine sources, some recycled and secondary aggregates and some imported from other areas. The reserves of aggregates that can be quarried within the Plan Area are reducing, and the Authorities consider that there are no suitable locations for new quarries. In order to make sure that there will be a sufficient ongoing supply of aggregates to provide for future development in the Plan Area, the Authorities have proposed changes to the existing Waste and Minerals Local Plan strategy.

What changes to the Waste and Minerals Local Plan are proposed?

The Authorities are proposing the following changes:

- To increase the Plan Area's supply of aggregates from recycled, secondary and marine sources (either dredged or imported by sea) and other sources outside the Plan Area. It is proposed that these aggregates from marine sources are landed at existing ports and wharves (at Shoreham, Newhaven and Rye) and railheads which already have the capacity to bring in larger amounts of material than they currently do.
- To provide increased protection (known as safeguarding) for existing minerals and minerals related infrastructure (such as minerals wharves, railheads or minerals processing facilities) against inappropriate development being located nearby which could compromise the production and supply of minerals.

A number of updates to clarify and consolidate existing policies are also proposed.

What changes have we made to the Revised Policies since the 2020 Consultation?

Following the comments received during the 2020 consultation, a number of changes were made to the Revised Policies, the most notable of which are set out below:

- The emphasis of the Plan was changed, to make it clear that recycled and secondary aggregates will be prioritised over primary materials where possible.
- A new policy was added to encourage the sustainable use of aggregates.
- Supporting text was added, committing the Authorities to a future full Plan review which will address climate change.
- An allocation for a new clay working area at Aldershaw was removed and replaced with a criteria-based policy for extraction in that area.

A number of other amendments and clarifications were also made.

What are we consulting on this time?

National policy requires local plans to be ‘sound’ and legally compliant in order to be ‘adopted’ into local policy and used in the determination of planning applications. The tests of soundness are set out in the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#), and state that the Plan must be:

- Positively prepared;
- Justified;
- Effective; and
- Consistent with national policy.

The Authorities have prepared a Proposed Submission Revised Policies document (2021) which they consider to meet these requirements.

Most of the legal requirements that the Plan must meet are set out in the [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 \(as amended\)](#) and the [Town and County Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#).

We are now seeking comments on whether the Plan is ‘sound’ and whether it is legally compliant. Consultation on the Proposed Submission Revised Policies document will run from the **29th October 2021 to the 4th January 2022**.

How do I comment on the Plan?

- Read the Proposed Submission Revised Policies document and any relevant supporting documents carefully.
- All comments at this stage of the Plan process must be related to the ‘soundness’ or legal compliance of the Plan. Your comment should clearly state:
 - whether it relates to the legal compliance and / or soundness of the plan;
 - the issue(s) that you wish to raise;
 - and in the case of comments relating to soundness, how the plan should be altered to make it sound.
- Comments can be made by email or by post using the contact details on the final page of this factsheet, or online at <https://eastsussex-consult.objective.co.uk/>. Make sure that all comments are submitted by the consultation deadline of **the 4th January 2022**.
- You must include your name and your address in any response. For details on how we will use your data please see our [privacy notice](#).

What happens next?

Comments received will be submitted, together with the Plan, to be considered by an independent Planning Inspector during a Public Examination process.

If the Inspector finds that the Revised Policies document is ‘sound’, it can then be ‘adopted’ by the Authorities, becoming part of the Waste and Minerals Local Plan, and replacing parts of the existing Local Plan. The Revised Policies can then be used in the determination of planning applications for waste and minerals development and other developments.

More details on the consultation can be found at <https://eastsussex-consult.objective.co.uk/>. If you are unable to view the documents online, please contact us.

Contact us

For further information, or to make a comment, please contact us using the details below:

Website:	https://eastsussex-consult.objective.co.uk/
Email:	East Sussex County Council - wasteandmineralsdf@eastsussex.gov.uk Brighton & Hove City Council - planningpolicy@brighton-hove.gov.uk South Downs National Park Authority - planningpolicy@southdowns.gov.uk
Phone:	East Sussex County Council - 01273 481846
Address:	RPD Consultation 2021, Planning Policy & Development Management, Communities, Economy and Transport, East Sussex County Council, County Hall, St Anne’s Crescent, Lewes, BN7 1UE

Meeting of the Full Council

Monday 6 December 2021

Agenda Item 22.0

TO CONSIDER THE REMOVAL OF A SIGN USED FOR FLOOD NOTIFICATIONS BY THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Town Clerk was approached by the Environment Agency a few weeks back regarding a Flood Warning Sign located in Uckfield Town Centre.
- 1.2 The Town Clerk sought further information on the location of the sign and its purpose. The sign referenced was that located in the bottom of the High Street on the eastern side by Peacocks/Best Heath Food Shop



- 1.3 The Environment Agency are asking if this sign can be removed. The sign has not been working for a considerable time.
- 1.4 The sign was installed post 2000 flooding and I believe the street furniture was upgraded in the 2016 High Street improvements.

- 1.5 Since then residents utilise the Environment Agency's flood alert system that notifies all residents that are signed up to it. A large proportion of the population are also now connected to mobile devices and people being connected via mobile devices and are notified through these means or by home telephone. In addition Uckfield has specific flood/bad weather based Facebook accounts.
- 1.6 The Environment Agency also had a sign in Lewes High Street that has since been removed. The cost/benefit analysis of repair or replacement were not viable. That's why we're proposing to remove or can hand over to yourselves.
- 1.7 Members are being asked whether they support the sign's removal within the High Street by the Environment Agency, or if they wish for it to remain, that the sign move to the Town Council's ownership and responsibility for repair and maintenance.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to advise the Town Clerk accordingly.

Contact officer: Holly Goring

Meeting of the Full Council

Monday 6 December 2021

Agenda Item 23.0

TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The report sets out the engagements of the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor.
- 1.2 Please note that the Mayor, Councillor J. Love and Deputy Mayor, Councillor D. French were elected on 24 May 2021.

TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

- 06 November 2021 Uckfield Art Group. Luxford Centre, Uckfield.
- 11 November 2021 Armistice Day Service. Holy Cross Church, Uckfield.
- 14 November 2021 Remembrance Day Parade and Service. Holy Cross Church, Uckfield.
- 19 November 2021 Lions Fun Day. Belmont Centre, Uckfield.
- 20 November 2021 Awash with Dogs, Grand Opening. Crockstead Farm, Halland.
- 25 November 2021 Switching on of Christmas Tree Lights. Uckfield.
- 03 December 2021 Uckfield Late Night Shopping. Uckfield.

TO NOTE THE DEPUTY MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

- 30 October 2021 East Sussex Prayer Breakfast. East Sussex National Hotel Resort, Uckfield.
- 11 November 2021 Armistice Day Service. Holy Cross Church, Uckfield.
- 14 November 2021 Remembrance Day Parade and Service. Holy Cross Church, Uckfield.
- 20 November 2021 Awash with Dogs, Grand Opening. Crockstead Farm, Halland.