

# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** held on  
**Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 7.00pm**  
**in the Weald Hall, Civic Centre**

**PRESENT:**

Cllr. S. Mayhew (Chairman)  
Cllr. D. Bennett  
Cllr. D. French

Cllr. J. Beesley  
Cllr. J. Edwards

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

One member of the press (recorded meeting)  
One member of the public  
Councillor C. Macve

Holly Goring – Town Clerk  
Rachel Newton – Senior Administrative Officer  
Minutes taken by Rachel Newton

**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. No declarations of interest were announced.

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

None received.

**3.0. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received in advance from Cllr. K. Bedwell, Cllr. A. Smith and Cllr. B. Cox.

**4.0. MINUTES**

4.1. Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021

**EL.49.01.22** It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2. Action list

Members considered the action list which had been previously circulated and agreed to remove the following item which had been completed:

EL.29.09.21 – To consider installing a new litter bin along Streatfield Road  
The ES Highways Licensing Team had been contacted to request a new licence for this bin to be placed next to the bench. In progress. No further action.

4.3. Project Monitoring List – For information only

Members noted the report and agreed to remove the following items:

FC.64.01.21 – Ridgewood Play Area patch resurfacing

Ridgewood play area patch repairs had been completed at a cost of £11,975. No further action.

FC.64.01.21 – Tree planting programme

Trees have been ordered at a cost of £974 for the planting season during Winter 2021/22. No further action.

**5.0. FINANCE**

5.1. To note bills paid

Members noted the report.

5.2. To note the Income and Expenditure report ending 31 December 2021

Members noted the report – no comments.

**6.0. ADMINISTRATION**

6.1 Nothing to report at this time.

**7.0 ENVIRONMENT**

7.1 To note the current position of the Town Council's Estates

Members noted the report.

7.2 To consider a street lamp outside 21 Mount Pleasant

Since this was an unadopted road, one member asked if it would be necessary for the purpose of repair on this lamp to meet the new criteria for East Sussex Highways. It was pointed out that this lamp did not meet the required specifications and would therefore need to be replaced, or taken away.

Members had already been informed in a previous meeting that any lamp installation would now require a new lighting design and the Town Council would need to meet those costs which could result in the need for three to five further replacements within this vicinity.

Although this was an unadopted road, this stock was managed by East Sussex Highways (ESH) and so in terms of reducing risk with liability, with a new lighting design they would have to treat this lamp as any other and would be responsible if anything were to happen.

ESH had recently advised however that there could be issues with increasing the number of columns in this area due to permissions and restrictions of space. The difficulty could be that this particular residential area was a very small area behind the main road, although it was near to the footpath off Framfield Road so there could be a concern for residents' safety going to their cars after dark.

Members agreed that the preseding factor must be residents' safety against the cost of a new lighting survey. Also, it was argued that if the light were to be taken down and nothing considered in its place, liability would come back to the Town Council, although ultimately it was a shame that the lamp could not be replaced like for like.

Members proposed that since we had a duty of care, we should consult with the residents first with a local survey to asked for any suggestions before any decision is made. It was also highlighted however that residents needed to be

made aware that if a lighting survey were to be carried out, we may be legally bound to then apply that lighting so they could end up with more lighting that we were obligated to provide which might not be the wishes of all residents to have community LED lighting, for example. If residents were against this then perhaps something outside of the norm could be discussed instead.

Other suggestions included maybe finding out if there was any room to remove and replace the lamp with some kind of art installation such as a Victorian style lamp, or, maybe working with that particular resident who resides on that gable end and having some kind of sensor light and asking them to pay something towards the electricity.

The Town Clerk pointed out that so far, two different households had reported the lights out with concern that this was taking a long time to be remedied and had been advised that the procedures had changed with ESH and we had to take this further. One property backed on to the light and the other was nearby.

The Chairman concluded that the report had provided the basis of what was being asked and so this could be used to inform local residents why we were contacting them and to ask them for a reply.

**EL.50.01.22** Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** to:

(i) agree to a local survey being sent to residents who live at Mount Pleasant in the first instance (with a set deadline) asking if they can provide any thoughts and suggestions on the street lighting in this area.

7.3 To consider enquiry relating to litter left at the Ridgewood MUGA

The report mentioned that potential litterers could be members of clubs in the town so whilst we could contact Uckfield College, one member said that local sports clubs such as the Uckfield Grasshoppers may have a code of conduct that also included behaviour outside of the club which could be impressed upon for social misbehaviour. Although this kind of threat would be a last resort it was thought that this may help to increase the pressure on social responsibility.

Another member said that he had been a football coach for both Grasshoppers and Maresfield football clubs and that both clubs would have had their own code of conduct but did not necessarily stretch to make use of areas that were not particular training grounds, although he agreed that it might be worth just reminding club members to be aware of their surrounding areas and take their litter home if no bin was provided.

Members also asked if other social media platforms such as Active Uckfield could be invited to remind their members to use the town's facilities across the town (not just Ridgewood) including assistance from local press coverage in The Voice asking people to either take their rubbish home or use a bin provided.

With regard to the request for signage at the Ridgewood play area and timber shelter, members discussed whether this would be enforceable and that residents could not be asked to leave play parks at certain times. There was no byelaw to suggest that this would even be enforceable and we did not have park attendants like in some other areas of the country.

One member suggested it might be better just to ask users to be mindful and considerate to local residents on all of our open spaces since the Town Council had spent a lot of money on our local parks.

Another member highlighted said that we would have to consider fairness to all our residents and that trying to stop teenagers congregating in local parks on a summer's evening would not be at all fair to their sector of the community.

The cost of signage was considered a bit of an overkill in the first instance by one council member who proposed placing a memo instead to local primary and secondary schools asking them to pass on the local Town Council's concerns and wishes that users treat the parks with respect and be considerate of its neighbours.

The Chairman agreed and pointed out that it largely came down to respect for others which is something that seemed to have been lost since the days of the 'Keep Britain Tidy' campaign and that we did not seem to have a problem in some parks and more others.

Members also requested for officers to find out the cost of having two signs (at Ridgewood) and to decide this at a later date.

**EL.51.01.22** Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) agree to apply for a licence for a bin to be installed at the Ridgewood MUGA, and;
- (ii) ask local sports clubs and schools to ask their members to be mindful and respectful of litter and to either take their rubbish home or use the bins provided in the town, and;
- (iii) request officers to find out the cost of signage for Ridgewood play area.

7.4 To consider a request for a litter bin from the Scarlett's Close Residents' Association

One member said he often went on walks in this area and did not recall there being much litter around although another member said that it might be wise to reinstate a bin here for dog walkers.

Members agreed on balance that we could not just keep installing extra bins around the town as we had to be mindful of the increased collections and costs involved. Also, given that this bin had been removed previously, we may be provided with reasons for this whilst applying for a new bin in this location.

**EL.52.01.22** Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) agree to seek costs for the installation and emptying of a new bin on the ESH verge adjacent to the Bell Lane allotments, provided that permission was sought.

**8.0 LEISURE**

8.1 Revised proposals for changes to the Allotment fees and charges from 1 April 2023

One council member, Cllr D. Bennett, declared an interest as an allotment holder and so he was excluded from taking part in these discussions.

Having reviewed the contents of the report and accompanying powerpoint presentation from the allotment conference on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021, these recommendations had highlighted the true costs of managing the allotments which had been heavily subsidised by the Town Council over the past few years. Members agreed that this was not sustainable.

Although there had been one or two concerns received from tenants, overall the response from tenants about the new proposals had been more positive with a

clear view of the problems being faced by the Town Council whilst trying to cover its various running costs.

A member of the Allotment Working Group explained that they had recognised that better communication was needed with our allotment tenants going forward and that lessons had been learnt.

Members were in support of the new set of proposals. There would be a fee for each plot based on plot size and separate water charge (as it is now) but the new structure would include an additional administration charge of £15 per plot (per annum), regardless of size. This would come into effect on 1 April 2023 and run for that financial year, with invoices then being sent out every April. This would include an interim charging period between October 2022 and 1 April 2023 (with no administrative charge).

**EL.53.01.22** Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** to:

(i) agree to the proposed changes for fees and charges for allotments from 1 April 2023 as set at the Allotment Conference on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

8.2 To consider if Uckfield Town Council wishes to hold an event which can be incorporated within Uckfield Festival week 2022

The Chairman announced that as he was the Town Council representative on the Festival Committee, although he liked the idea of getting involved with the festival, he felt that this year was not the right time as the Town Council had committed to two events already; Weald On The Field and Uckfield Revival. He said that unfortunately it would be difficult to fully commit to this taking into account starting issues and the budget and suggested for members to perhaps revisit this next year instead once they were in a better position.

Members agreed that this was a sensible suggestion as the Queen's Platinum Jubilee was set for this year, although this did not prevent them thinking about ideas and proposals in September in time for the budget setting.

The only issue raised was that Uckfield Festival committee would have their AGM committee in November when new members might join up and decide not to go ahead, although this was stipulated to be too late now to provide any new ideas for this year.

The Chairman proposed that he would report back to the Festival Committee this week and re-look at this in September with the understanding that if they wanted some proposals that members would have ideas in mind by then.

**EL.54.01.22** Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** to:

(i) agree to the Chairman's proposal to re-look at ideas and come up with any proposals this September for Uckfield Festival Week 2023.

**9.0 REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS**

Nothing to report at this time.

**10.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

10.1 Active Uckfield

Nothing to report at this time.

10.2 Age Concern

Members noted the report.

- 10.3 All Weather Pitch Operational Group  
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.4 Conservators of Ashdown Forest  
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.5 West Park LNR and Hempstead Meadows LNR – Supporters Group  
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.6 Luxford Centre Management Committee  
Members noted the report.
- 10.7 Uckfield and District Twinning Association  
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.8 Uckfield Festival Association  
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.9 Uckfield Parkrun Board  
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.10 Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee  
Members noted the report.
- 10.11 Uckfield Youth Club Board  
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.12 Wealden Bus Alliance/Weald Link  
Nothing to report at this time.

#### **11.0 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman asked for residents to bear in mind that council officers were still under a lot of pressure with the effects of the pandemic still very much with us, especially with staff shortages. He added that if anything needed to be clarified or discussed prior to meetings, members could approach him first in order to deal with any issues and he also asked for members to send in their apologies prior to any upcoming meetings.

#### **12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

**EL.55.01.22** It was **RESOLVED** that pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it was advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

- 12.1 To consider a report on the Marketing programme  
Members noted the report.

The meeting finished at 20:52pm