

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of **UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL** held
on Monday 11 April 2022 at 7.00 pm
in the Weald Hall, Civic Centre

PRESENT: Cllr. K. Bedwell
Cllr. J. Beesley
Cllr. B. Cox
Cllr. J. Edwards
Cllr. D. French (Deputy Mayor)

Cllr. J. Love (Town Mayor)
Cllr. C. Macve
Cllr. S. Mayhew
Cllr. P. Sparks
Cllr. A. Smith
Cllr. D. Ward

IN ATTENDANCE:

No members of the public
No members of the press
County Councillor Chris Dowling
County and District Councillor Claire Dowling

Sarah D'Alessio Assistant Town Clerk & RFO
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. Councillor J. Love declared a personal interest in confidential agenda item 17.1.

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.96.04.22 It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to enable Council representatives to speak.

Councillor Claire Dowling updated members on matters which may have already been circulated via East Sussex County Council e-bulletins but were positive news stories so worth sharing.

Members had been previously advised of the UK Govt programme pushing for more investment in bus services and public transport. All local transport

authorities had to produce a bus service improvement plan to receive the grant funding, and the plan had to be ambitious. DfT thought it was one of the most ambitious of 70 bids, and East Sussex County Council was one of the six or seventh highest awardees in terms of financial contribution. East Sussex County Council would be receiving £41million pounds to support the delivery of the plan. East Sussex County Council were conscious that the rural hinterland needed attention, not just the coast as these were often areas, more affected by limited access to services.

East Sussex County Council were in the process of producing an app to help residents prepare for the future; specifically managing significant changes in later life.

Members would be aware of the work of East Sussex County Council, East Sussex Fire & Rescue and the district authorities to welcome and support Ukrainian refugees. It was important that refugees were being placed in safe homes and homes that had been checked.

A new remote reading programme had also been launched to support struggling young readers and a partnership agreement had been put in place between ESCC and DWP to improve referrals and improve local skill and abilities. Local resident issues also remained ongoing.

Councillor Chris Dowling updated members on the snagging works being undertaken by Kier near the bridge at New Town. He had kept in contact with Kier and a six day permit had been granted by East Sussex Highways. The works were dependent on weather conditions and one or two small jobs were yet to be done.

The previous week, the drainage works had been carried out in Lewes Road. East Sussex Highways would now monitor this section of road to see how it responded to varying weather conditions.

Councillor Edwards referred to a call he had received from resident on Horsted Pond Lane, who had been experiencing a number of boundary issues adjacent to Horsted Green Park. They were due to obtain a more robust boundary fence as part of the arrangements, but were yet to hear. Councillor Dowling was familiar with the case, but stressed that this was a District Council matter as they were the landowner of the park, and these issues had been ongoing for some time.

FC.97.04.22 Councillors were thanked for their input and updates, and subsequently **RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

Councillor P. Sparks provided an update on behalf of Wealden District Council. He advised that a Hailsham resident had raised the question once more with Wealden District Council with regard to civil parking enforcement, as Wealden District was now only one in five in the whole country who did not have payment parking. The Leader of the Council responded, to say that at present they were not in favour of civil parking enforcement as they believed its introduction would be detrimental to the local economy in the market towns. It continued to remain a very big issue in Wealden District, dangerous parking on double yellow lines, obstructions at junctions, pavement parking was restricting access for

pedestrians and this related to Councillor French's motion which was still detailed within the action list. If Uckfield could find a way, it would be a major step forward.

Councillor H. Firth, updated members on the potential strike of waste collection staff by Biffa in April/May. It would start on 25 April for possibly two weeks. They were trying to ensure minimal impact on households but it would depend on the outcome of discussions.

Councillor B. Cox referred to strikes elsewhere. The Worthing area were in their fifth week of strikes, so he was keen to understand what Wealden DC's strategy would be. Worthing BC had placed skips in local areas to help. Councillor H. Firth advised that officers were currently considering all options.

The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council had a commercial contract with Biffa both at the Civic Centre and for the town's litter collections. Officers were just checking whether the strike would have any impact on commercial service provision.

4.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillors D. Bennett, G. Johnson and C. Snelgrove, and Youth Member Emily McHale.

5.0 MINUTES

5.1 To resolve that the minutes of the meeting of Full Council on 28 February 2022 to be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

FC.98.04.22 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of Full Council on the 28 February 2022 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

5.2 Action List

Members reviewed the action list and agreed that the following actions could now be removed:

FC85.01.22 – 20s Plenty Campaign

FC93.02.22 – Letter regarding health and leisure facilities

Members subsequently noted the report.

6.0 COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

(a) Plans Committee of the 7 and 28 March 2022

FC.99.04.22 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Plans Committees of the 7 and 28 March 2022.

(b) Environment & Leisure Committee of the 4 April 2022

FC.100.04.22 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Environment and Leisure Committee of the 4 April 2022.

(c) General Purposes Committee of the 14 March 2022

FC.101.04.22 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the General Purposes Committee of the 14 March 2022

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

Councillor Bedwell asked if members could let her know who was able to help in terms of timings between 6.00pm and 10.30pm for the beacon lighting event on Thursday 2 June 2022. Members subsequently noted the report.

(iii) Uckfield Dementia Forum

Members noted the report.

9.0 END OF PROGRESS UPDATE ON UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL'S ANNUAL PRIORITIES FOR 2021/22

Members were presented with a report outlining the progress made towards delivery of the Town Council's Annual Plan during 2021/22. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the Town Council had achieved a great deal and done well to keep progressing important projects for the town's residents and town council's grounds and buildings.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor D. French commented that on behalf of the Town Council, she wished to thank all of the officers involved in delivering these actions along with the Town Clerk and for the progress they had made despite the difficulties of the pandemic. Members noted the report.

10.0 TO CONSIDER AN ENQUIRY FROM GLADMAN DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING THE DISCHARGE OF WATER FROM LAND OFF EASTBOURNE ROAD

The Town Council had been approached by Gladman Developments asking for permission to discharge water into a drain which was located at the very back of the Ridgewood allotments near Shipreed Lane. The drain was in the form of a ditch and a detailed report had been prepared by officers alongside a powerpoint presentation which incorporated key photographs and maps to explain the proposal and anticipated water flow from the development proposed off Eastbourne Road.

Councillor Macve thought that the developers must have known that the site was heavy clay, the previous brickworks in the area were an indication of this. The ditch/drain looked rather small and raised his concerns with its ability to accommodate this level of water. Water fed into this drain from the nearby industrial estate and was being already undermined. He was also concerned with the detrimental impact this could have on the allotments. This would require an

ongoing commitment, as there was already quite a bit of debris in the drain.

Councillor Bedwell was curious to understand the volume of water that would be released from the attenuation ponds into this drain/ditch. The Environment Agency were not looking at all of the development sites together and their cumulative impact if there was heavy rainfall. It was important that expert advice be sought with regards to drainage engineering in Uckfield.

Councillor French agreed with these points. Councillor French felt that it would be useful to meet with the developers onsite to understand the details of the proposal.

Councillor B. Cox noted that we did not know what the weather conditions and flood risk would be like in 10 years.

Councillor A. Smith enquired about agencies such as Sussex Flow, who might be able to provide some advice.

Councillor K. Bedwell confirmed that an independent view on drainage within the town would be helpful.

Councillor J. Edwards also enquired as to the plans for surface water run-off at the north of the site onto Eastbourne Road, as Uckfield Town Council had only been notified of their proposals for the south of the site as a result of being an adjacent landowner.

It was proposed to work with the developers to further discussions, as well as taking advice independently on drainage within the town.

FC.102.04.22 Members **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) work with Gladman Developments and arrange a meeting onsite to understand the full details of their proposal;
- (ii) obtain independent advice with regards to drainage engineering within Uckfield and the cumulative impact of the water run-off from proposed development sites into Framfield and Ridgewood Stream, and;
- (iii) obtain more detail on the proposals for the discharge of water from the northern attenuation pond onto Eastbourne Road.

11.0 TO CONSIDER PROVIDING A FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO UCKFIELD FESTIVAL'S CLASSIC CAR SHOW

FC.103.04.22 Members **RESOLVED** for the matter to be presented to the forthcoming Finance-Sub Committee, for consideration prior to General Purposes Committee on 25 April 2022

12.0 TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

Members noted the update.

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

Four deeds of grant had been received:

Mr Bryan Frederick Green

Mr Brian Hart

Claire Izzard and James Joseph Devlin
Mr Peter Siggs

FC.104.04.22 It was **RESOLVED** for three councillors to sign the above deeds of grant.

14.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED
None received.

15.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Clerk advised members that she had been working closely with Action in Rural Sussex one day each week to pull together the Neighbourhood Plan information that had been prepared to date. They were planning on running public consultation sessions early to mid-May to check in on where the group were with their work and obtain resident input on the information collated. This included local green spaces, community facilities, views, character profiles and draft policies.

The Town Clerk advised that there was a lot of mapping work to complete as part of the preparation for the draft plan and consultation sessions. Action in Rural Sussex were familiar with using Parish Online. Although Uckfield Town Council had Pear Technology mapping software, the annual subscription for Parish Online was only £450 per annum. This was less complex than Pear Technology and would mean that she could get straight on with this work. The Town Clerk asked for member approval to proceed with obtaining an annual subscription with Parish Online specifically for the purpose of developing the Neighbourhood Plan.

FC.105.04.22 Members **RESOLVED** for an annual subscription to be purchased with Parish Online to complete the mapping required for the development of the Uckfield Neighbourhood Plan.

16.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor, Councillor Jackie Love updated members on the work that had been undertaken at the rear of Rose Cottage (CPJ Field's Cooper & Sons office on New Town). The rear of the property had not previously been useable, but had recently been cleared with the help of Kier operatives to make way for a garden space where people could sit and talk when coping with bereavement. Everything grown in the garden would be passed to the Uckfield Community Fridge and any contributions for the hard landscaping would be welcomed.

17.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

FC106.04.22 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.

17.1 S.85 of the Local Government Act 1972

FC107.04.22 With three votes in favour and eight against, it was **RESOLVED** not to extend Councillor C. Snelgrove's period of absence, based on his current health condition.

Members wished to thank him for his service and hoped to see him well and back in the elections in 2023.

The meeting closed at 8.37pm.