

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the **General Purposes Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield on Monday 6 June 2022 at 7.00pm

PRESENT:

Cllr. D. Ward (Chair)	Cllr. J. Love
Cllr. P. Sparks (Vice-Chair)	Cllr. C. Macve
Cllr. J. Edwards	Cllr. A. Smith
Cllr. H. Firth	

IN ATTENDANCE:

2 members of the public

Holly Goring – Town Clerk
Minutes taken by Holly Goring

1.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members and officers were reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on the agenda.

None were forthcoming at the start of the meeting, but Councillor C. Macve declared a personal interest in agenda 12.2 at the start of confidential business as a result of knowing a relative, who worked for the Town Council.

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

None.

3.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence recorded but Councillors B. Cox and G. Johnson were not in attendance. Councillor G. Johnson later sent his apologies as he was stuck in traffic en route home from London.

4.0 MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on the 25 April 2022

GP03.06.22 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee on 25 April 2022 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2 Action list

Members noted the updates provided within the action list and agreed to remove the following action:

GP37.04.21 – Recommendations of Finance Sub-Committee (remove completed section of action)

4.3 Project list
Members agreed to remove completed projects – 65 (262 Bus Service 2021/22) and 69 – Victoria Pavilion additional CCTV, and noted the contents of the report.

5.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS

5.1 To note bills paid
Members noted the bills paid.

5.2 No income and expenditure reports are available due to year end processes.

5.3. Bad Debts
Members noted the update received.

5.4 To consider carry forwards of unspent revenue budgets from 2021/22
Members were provided with a list of funds which had been set aside in 2021/22 for activities but funding was left over after completion of the project, or had yet to be spent.

GP04.06.22 Members **RESOLVED** that the following unspent sums be carried forward from the 2021/22 financial year to 2022/23:

Environment & Leisure Committee New initiatives 2021/22

Project	Amount	Reason
Ridgewood Play Area Re-surfacing	£1,525	The new initiative project was completed in 2021/22. Of the £13,500 budget set aside, £1,525 was left over after completion. This should be transferred to 'Play Area enhancements' in earmarked reserves for future repairs.
Green Projects	£18,000	Funding was only used from the GP earmarked reserve pot named 'Climate Change Initiatives' to fund the carbon audit. No works were undertaken in 2021/22 utilising these funds. These funds should be transferred into 'Climate Change initiatives' in earmarked reserves to combine the two funding pots for ease of use and understanding.

5.5 To write off small under and over payments on the Town Council's accounts
Members reviewed the report which explained that over a period of time some customers under or overpaid invoices; usually this would be adjusted when settling current invoices however in some instances the hirer might not return to the Civic Centre and the amounts were too small to justify a refund or to chase payment.

GP05.06.22 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to write off five overpayments and one underpayment listed within the report.

5.6 To note the end of year statement for Community Infrastructure Levy funding for 2021/22
Members were provided with a report which detailed the funds received through community infrastructure levy funding in the financial year 2021/22, as well as the funds spent. As the report identified, CIL funding had been utilised for streetlighting repairs or replacements within the past financial year.

One member enquired about the scale of the streetlighting repairs required in the town. This was quite a large liability, with the Town Clerk explaining that the Town Council owned in the region of 192 streetlights, a number of which were still

concrete and required replacement and a number requiring repair or replacement as a result of their age. The Town Clerk agreed that it would be good if the CIL funding could be utilised for a variety of infrastructure projects, not just streetlighting, but at present, this had been a priority. Members subsequently noted the total amount of CIL funding received in 2021/22 and the way in which these funds had been utilised.

6.0 BUILDINGS

6.1 To note the current position with the Council's buildings

Members noted the contents of the report.

6.2 To consider an upgrade to the Town Council Server Cabinet and Network Security

Members were provided with a report which advised that the Estates & Facilities Manager had been investigating ways to improve network security for the Town Council. The Town Council's current network support specialists recommended an additional layer of software which would back up current security features. This layer of software would filter out dubious websites/browsers from all PCs/mobiles connecting through the network. The server cabinet also needed upgrading. The cost of the works was quoted at £3,187 plus VAT.

GP06.06.22

Members **RESOLVED** to agree for works to be carried out to further improve network security, utilising earmarked reserves allocated for professional fees.

6.3 To receive an update from the Hub Working Group on the Hub site

An update was provided from the Hub Working Group's first meeting on 23 May 2022. This detailed a number of actions, which both councillors and staff would be progressing in due course. Members noted the helpful update.

6.4 To consider registering key buildings within Uckfield Town, as assets of community value

The Town Clerk had provided members with a report, which explained the process for registering Assets of Community Value with Wealden District Council. Currently, two sites were registered in Uckfield – the Dene and Land at Selby Road. Residents and councillors had approached the Town Clerk in previous weeks to ask if further assets could be registered, including the Brickmakers Arms, Eugene Seghers Memorial and Ridgewood Village Post Office. Members were advised of the procedures to register an asset and asked if they wished the Town Clerk to proceed.

Members felt that the memorial was of particular importance and it was questioned whether it could even be registered or identified under the 'war graves' remit.

GP07.06.22

Members **RESOLVED** for the Town Clerk to proceed with exploring the registration of further assets of community value with Wealden District Council and to explore options for the Eugene Seghers Memorial.

7.0 POLICY

None.

8.0 ADMINISTRATION

8.1 To receive a report on Health and Safety within the Council

Members reviewed and noted the report circulated, which highlighted that there

had been low levels of staff sickness since 1 April 2022.

8.2 To receive Members' audit reports

None received. Audits were booked in the diary.

8.3 To consider the renewal of the existing Insurance contract for public liability, employer liability and vehicle insurances

Members felt that the contract being proposed looked fine, and the insurance company selected were a first-class insurance company. It was advised that the Town Council should remain with this insurance company and renew for a further two years due to the level of cover being provided and value of the contract.

GP08.06.22

Members noted the contents of the report, and **RESOLVED** to proceed with the renewal of the existing insurance contract for two years until June 2024.

9.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

9.1 To consider reports from:-

(i) Citizens Advice Bureau

Nothing to report at this time.

(ii) East Sussex Association of Local Councils AGM

Nothing to report at this time.

(iii) Ridgewood Village Hall Management Committee

Nothing to report at this time.

(iv) Uckfield & District Preservation Society

Nothing to report at this time.

(v) Uckfield Volunteer Centre

Nothing to report at this time.

(vi) Wealden Works

Nothing to report at this time.

(vii) Wealden District Association of Local Councils – Management Committee

Nothing to report at this time.

(viii) Wealden District Association of Local Councils – Planning Panel

Nothing to report at this time.

10.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair, Councillor D. Ward expressed her thanks to the town for everything that had been arranged during the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Weekend. The amount of people that attended the lighting of the beacon was amazing and it was lovely to meet the High Sheriff. The following day at West Park was an absolutely fantastic day out, and she also understood that the Uckfield & Districts Lion's event had been very well attended. A big thank you to everyone who spent time organising the events and congratulations to the Queen on her 70 years.

11.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Clerk, advised members that it was Councillor Firth's birthday and everyone wished her Happy Birthday.

The Town Clerk advised that legal discussions were ongoing to draw up the lease agreement for West Park Pavilion with the Uckfield Grasshoppers. An enquiry had been received as to whether the Uckfield Grasshoppers could be allocated a couple of parking spaces in the adjacent car park for their use. The Town Clerk advised that she could not see an issue with this, but that they would need to install posts or some kind of device to reduce the risk of others using those two bays. Members were generally in support of the idea, and did not raise any concerns, at this stage.

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

GP09.06.22

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 an update on Luxfords Restaurant
Members noted the contents of the report.

12.2 To consider a proposal with regards to staffing

GP10.06.22

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the proposals with regards to staffing within the Grounds Maintenance Team.

The meeting closed at 7.43pm.