

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of **UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL** held
on Monday 27 June 2022 at 7.45 pm
in the Weald Hall, Civic Centre, Uckfield

PRESENT: Cllr. K. Bedwell
Cllr. J. Beesley
Cllr. D. Bennett
Cllr. B. Cox
Cllr. J. Edwards
Cllr. H. Firth
Cllr. D. French (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr. J. Love (Town Mayor)
Cllr. C. Macve
Cllr. S. Mayhew
Cllr. A. Smith
Cllr. D. Ward

IN ATTENDANCE:

1 member of the public

Holly Goring Town Clerk
Sarah D'Alessio Assistant Town Clerk & RFO
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.

No interests were declared.

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.21.06.22 It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to enable updates to be provided by a District Council representative.

Councillor H. Firth advised that Wealden DC were currently consulting on their Housing Allocations Policy. The deadline for feedback was 31 July 2022 and the consultation could be found on the Wealden DC website at:
<https://www.wealden.gov.uk/consultations/housing-allocations-policy/>

Councillors J. Edwards and B. Cox were keen to hear more about this consultation and requested that information be circulated to members. This has

since been incorporated in the above minutes and circulated by the Town Clerk.

Councillor D. Ward had recently seen a press release which discussed the community safety initiatives being undertaken in Hailsham with Sussex Police as part of the Safer Streets campaign, and felt once again that other areas of the district should be considered for initiatives and were of equal importance.

Reference was also made to the Uckfield Leisure Centre. The Town Clerk clarified that the existing lease agreement between Wealden District Council and East Sussex County Council was being extended for a further 12 months to July 2023, to provide more time for the tender process to plan for the next steps and find a suitable leaseholder for the future management of the site.

Communications with regard to the leisure centre would be released shortly, but communications were being prepared, first for Heathfield Leisure Centre as their timescales were much tighter.

FC.22.06.22 The Councillor was thanked for their input and update, and subsequently **RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

4.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillors G. Johnson and P. Sparks. Apologies were also received from County Councillor Chris Dowling and District Councillor Claire Dowling.

5.0 MINUTES

5.1 To resolve that the minutes of the Annual Statutory meeting of the Council on 23 May 2022 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

FC.23.06.22 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Annual Statutory meeting of the Council 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:
FC92.02.22 – draft service level agreements
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 30 May and 20 June 2022

FC.24.06.22 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Plans Committee of the 30 May and 20 June 2022.

(b) Environment & Leisure Committee of the 27 June 2022

FC.25.06.22 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Environment & Leisure Committees of the 27 June 2022.

(c) General Purposes Committee of the 6 June 2022

FC.26.06.22 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the General Purposes Committees of the 6 June 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

Members noted the report and were encouraged to respond to the consultation.

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

The Town Mayor highlighted that the artwork on the report promoted the music acts booked for this year's Weald on the Field on 13 August 2022 on Luxfords Field. The artwork also promoted the various sponsorship opportunities available for local businesses. Members noted the report.

(iii) Uckfield Dementia Forum

Nothing to report at present.

9.0 TO RECEIVE, CONSIDER AND NOTE THE INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2022

Members were directed to the Annual Internal Audit Report 2021/22 as contained within the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and the contents of this paper.

The Internal Auditor had also carried out their full year end review. This demonstrated that the minor issues that had been picked up throughout the financial year, had been addressed by year end. A copy of their full report was also incorporated within the agenda papers.

Councillor D. Ward wished to thank the Responsible Financial Officer and all other staff involved in delivering strong financial and governance arrangements. Councillor C. Macve felt the report was very encouraging, and noted that action had been taken to address the very minor issues identified.

Councillor A. Smith enquired about risk mitigation. The Town Clerk agreed and explained that this would be reflected more within a mid-level report between the Annual Risk Register Policy and specific project and service risk assessments. This would also reflect business continuity planning in the future.

Members received, considered and noted the Annual Internal Audit Report 2021/22 within the AGAR, and wished to thank officers for all of their hard work.

10.0 TO RECEIVE, CONSIDER AND APPROVE SECTION 1 – THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2022

Members reviewed the Annual Governance Statement for the period 2021/22 which formed part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) on page four of six.

FC.27.06.22 Members reviewed the contents of Section 1 (Annual Governance Statement 2020/21) and **RESOLVED** to receive, consider and approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22, and authorised for the Town Mayor as Chairman of the meeting and the Town Clerk to sign and date this statement on behalf of the Town Council.

11.0 TO RECEIVE, CONSIDER AND APPROVE SECTION 2 – THE TOWN COUNCIL’S DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2022

Members reviewed a summary of the Town Council’s accounting statements, as presented on page five of six, in the draft Annual Governance and Accountability Return ending 31 March 2022, and a set of financial statements prepared by the Town Council’s accountants at the end of March 2022.

The Town Mayor wished to thank the Assistant Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer for their hard work, and to everyone in the office who made this happen.

FC.28.06.22 Members **RESOLVED** to receive, consider and approve the draft annual governance and accountability return, and financial statements for the year ending 31 March 2022, and authorised for the Town Mayor as Chairman of the meeting to sign and date this return, on behalf of the Town Council.

12.0 TO CONSIDER THE LATEST AMENDMENTS TO THE TOWN COUNCIL’S STANDING ORDERS IN RESPONSE TO A RECENT NALC UPDATE

Members were provided with a revised copy of the Standing Orders as a result of changes being made to the contract procedures within the NALC (National Association of Local Councils) Model Standing Orders. The Standing Orders had only recently received a full review, but this was a recent change.

One member queried the financial requirements for the different levels of procurement, to which the Town Clerk confirmed that all three levels were still in place but less emphasis was now being placed on the finer details of procurement for works or contracts over £25,000, and staff and councillors were being guided to the relevant procurement guidance at this time. This was likely to be due to changes since Brexit.

FC.29.06.22 Members **RESOLVED** to approve the revised Standing Orders for Uckfield Town Council.

13.0 TO CONSIDER THE AGREEMENT WITH GLADMAN DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING THE DISCHARGE OF WATER FROM LAND OFF EASTBOURNE ROAD

Members subsequently noted the report, which provided an update on the legal arrangements.

14.0 TO NOTE THE DECISION OF THE URGENT CONSULTATION PANEL

Members considered a report previously circulated

15.0 TO NOTE THE MAYOR’S ENGAGEMENTS

The Town Mayor, advised that there was one typo within the report, whereby the visit to the Police station event would be taking place in July, rather than June. Members subsequently noted the engagements listed.

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

Two deed of grants had been received:

Clive Miller

Mrs Pamela Doreen Crowhurst

FC.30.06.22 It was **RESOLVED** for three councillors to sign the above deeds of grant.

17.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED

None received.

18.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Clerk raised the issue of land, named the Dene, which was located on Manor Park estate and owned by Buxted Parish Council.

Buxted Parish Council were exploring options to dispose of the land. The land had been registered as an Asset of Community Value with Wealden DC five years ago by Manor Park & Hempstead Fields Residents' Association. As a result of this registration, the community group would be given six weeks to consider if they wished to express an interest in purchasing the land. If they did choose to do so, they would then be given six months in which to raise the funds.

It was understood that the Dene, was one of a couple of sites that Buxted Parish Council were considering for future disposal. The process was in the early stages and the Town Clerk wished to make members aware, as the Dene was an important green space with the Manor Park estate, and captured incredible views north east looking out of the town from Brown's Lane.

Members felt it was important to keep a watching brief on the situation and, the interest of both parties (Buxted Parish Council and Residents' Association) for the Town Council to consider its options, should the site become available.

FC.31.06.22 Members **RESOLVED** to instruct the Town Clerk to maintain discussions with Buxted Parish Council with a view to registering our interest in this piece of land, should the opportunity arise.

19.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor, Councillor J. Love did not have any announcements at this meeting.

20.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

FC.32.06.22 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.

20.1 Briefing session by Town Clerk – Events Management Plan:

A refresher was given on events management whereby the Town Clerk reported back on the recent Beacon Lighting event, discussed the Town Council's Event management procedures, the management plan template, risk assessment template and hourly checklist whilst undertaking an event. The Town Clerk also advised members of the key considerations before deciding to take on an event. The templates would be uploaded to a specific webpage on the Town Council

website so staff, councillors and local community groups could access these documents in the form of a toolkit. Members noted the information shared.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.