



# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Council Offices, Civic Centre  
Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 1AE  
Tel: (01825) 762774 Fax: (01825) 765757  
e-mail: [townclerk@uckfieldtc.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@uckfieldtc.gov.uk)  
[www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk](http://www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk)

**Town Clerk – Holly Goring**

**YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO THE ANNUAL STATUTORY MEETING OF  
UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL  
Weald Hall, Civic Centre, Uckfield  
on  
Monday 15 May 2023 at 7.00pm  
AGENDA**

**1.0 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR**

1.1 The Town Mayor to receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

**2.0 ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR**

**3.0 TO CO-OPT TO THREE VACANCIES ON UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL**

3.1 To receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

**4.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**5.0 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.

**6.0 MINUTES**

6.1 To **RESOLVE** that the minutes of the Full Council meeting of the 6 March 2023 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

6.2 To note the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of the 15 April 2023, previously circulated, and for the Town Council's committees to take forward the issues raised as appropriate.

6.3 Action List

**7.0 COMMITTEE MINUTES**

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

- |     |                                 |               |
|-----|---------------------------------|---------------|
| (a) | Environment & Leisure Committee | 20 March 2023 |
| (b) | Plans Committee                 | 24 April 2023 |
| (c) | General Purposes Committee      | 11 April 2023 |

**8.0 TO REVIEW THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE TOWN COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES**

**9.0 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE UNDER MENTIONED STANDING COMMITTEES**

- (a) General Purposes (9 Members)
- (b) Environment and Leisure (9 Members)
- (c) Plans (7 Members)

(The meeting will now adjourn to allow the committees to meet and elect a Chairman and Vice-chairman, following which the meeting will reconvene.)

Standing Orders state:-

*15.3 - "Chairmen of committees and sub-committees should not serve as Chairmen longer than three consecutive years. Nor should any Member of the Council be Chairman of more than one committee or sub-committee at any one time."*

*15.4 - "Neither shall the Deputy Mayor be Chairman of a full committee."*

**10.0 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE UNDER MENTIONED SUB-COMMITTEES AND THE VOICE EDITORIAL PANEL**

(Standing Order No. 19.1.8 states that, "*The Chairman or in their absence the Vice-chairman of the committee shall be members of every sub-committee reporting to it unless they signify that they do not wish to serve.*")

- (d) Personnel (5 Members)
  - (e) Finance (5 Members)
- (Both reporting to the General Purposes Committee)

(The meeting will now adjourn to allow the sub-committees to meet and elect a Chairman and Vice-chairman following which the meeting will reconvene.)

- (f) The Voice Editorial Panel (3 Members)

**11.0 TO APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

**12.0 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO FULL COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS**

**13.0 TO REVIEW AND ADOPT THE TOWN COUNCIL'S STANDING ORDERS**

**14.0 TO REVIEW AND ADOPT THE TOWN COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

**15.0 TO REVIEW AND ADOPT THE TOWN COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY**

**16.0 TO CONFIRM THAT THE CRITERIA FOR THE GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE HAVE BEEN MET AND TO THEN ADOPT THE GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE**

**17.0 STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON MATTERS ON THE AGENDA AT THE MAYOR'S DISCRETION**

**18.0 SIGNING OF GRAVE CERTIFICATES AND TO NOTE TRANSFERS OF DEEDS OF GRANT**

**19.0 TO NOTE THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO COMPLETE AUDITS UNTIL THE ANNUAL STATUTORY MEETING IN MAY 2024**

**20.0 TO RECEIVE UPDATES FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

- (i) The Uckfield Town Centre Regeneration Joint Committee
- (ii) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
- (iii) Gatwick Airport Consultation Panel

**21.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM FULL COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS**

- (i) Uckfield – Events Working Group
- (ii) Uckfield Dementia Forum
- (iii) Civic Centre Working Group
- (iv) Infrastructure Working Group

**22.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED**

(No questions received by the deadline)

**23.0 TO CONFIRM APPROVAL OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY (Jan 2023)**

**24.0 TO CONSIDER A MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR D. MANVELL**

**25.0 TO CONSIDER THE TOWN COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE ESCC CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE OF UCKFIELD LEISURE CENTRE**

**26.0 TOWN MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**27.0 TOWN CLERK'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 commissioning a light-touch external review of council services and existing resources



**Town Clerk**  
9 May 2023

## Annual Statutory meeting of the Council

Monday 15 May 2023

### Agenda item 1.0

#### NOMINATIONS FOR ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR

##### 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 We received four nominations in advance of the meeting for the election of Town Mayor.
- 1.2 We received two nominations in advance of the meeting for the election of Deputy Mayor.
- 1.3 Nominations were invited as per the Standing Orders from 12 Town Councillors (three seats are currently vacant). Once the Town Mayor has been elected, if more than one nomination is received, those who are unsuccessful for Town Mayor will be offered the opportunity to stand for Deputy Mayor.

##### 2.0 Nominations for Town Mayor

- 2.1 The names put forward for nomination for Town Mayor, in alphabetical order, are:

Councillor Jackie Love

- 2.2 The table below provides the reasons why nominations were submitted for the above individual:

Cllr Jackie Love	<p>Jackie has been a great Mayor for two years and deserves to finish her three years in the role. She is a great ambassador for our town.</p> <p>I'd like to propose Jackie Love to stand again as our Mayor. She has been outstanding in the role and is a huge asset to the Town.</p> <p>I'm happy to back Jackie for Mayor again.</p> <p>Jackie has been an excellent Mayor for the last two years and I would like to see her continue in this role.</p>
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##### 3.0 Nominations for Deputy Mayor

- 3.1 The names put forward for nomination for Deputy Mayor, in alphabetical order, are:

Councillor Donna French

- 3.2 The table below provides the reasons why nominations were submitted for the above individuals:

Cllr Donna French	<p>I am happy to support Donna French in her role as Deputy Mayor.</p> <p>I'm happy for Donna as Deputy.</p>
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## **Annual Statutory meeting of the Council**

**Monday 15 May 2023**

### **Agenda item 3.0**

#### **APPLICATIONS FOR THREE VACANCIES**

##### **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 Uckfield Town Council received two applications for the three vacancies for Town Councillor on Uckfield Town Council by the initial deadline of Tuesday 9 May 2023. If further interest is received between then and the meeting on Monday 15 May 2023, the Town Clerk will notify Town Councillors by email before the meeting and will read out the details at the meeting.
- 1.2 One application was received for the ward of Uckfield Ridgewood:  
Mrs Bernadette Reed
- 1.3 One application was received for the ward of Uckfield West:  
Mrs Val Frost
- 1.4 An expression of interest was received for the ward of Uckfield New Town, but the potential co-optee has since declined interest in the position. If further interest is received before the meeting, the Town Clerk will inform Town Councillors and notify those in attendance at the Annual Statutory meeting of the Council.

##### **2.0 Co-option Policy**

The Town Council's Co-option Policy in the year of an election, is as follows so we will be following these procedures on the night:

###### **4.0 POLICY IN ELECTION YEARS**

- 4.1 *In the event of the need for co-option in an election year, the following process will be undertaken:-*
- 4.2 *If following the close of nominations at an Ordinary Election, there is a quorum of Elected Members, but some outstanding vacancies, the Clerk will advertise for interested candidates by placing notices at various locations in the Town, on the Council's website on social media and by placing an advertisement in a local paper.*
- 4.3 *The Clerk will require prospective candidates to:-*
  - *complete a form providing confirmation that each candidate is both qualified and not disqualified from holding office,*
  - *attend a meeting of the Full Council and*
  - *provide a one page 'manifesto' to assist Members in reaching a decision.*
- 4.4 *Prospective candidates will be provided with relevant information on the responsibilities of being a Town Councillor and the nature of their duties and will also be advised that the Town Council are not obliged to co-opt any Member, if it is felt that candidates are not suitable.*

4.5 *The closing date for nominations will be noon on the Monday (Tuesday in May 2023 due to bank holiday) after the election takes place and co-options will be considered at the first meeting of the Full Council following the election, (usually the Annual Statutory Meeting), and will be the first business to be considered after the Election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.*

#### **5.0 AT THE CO-OPTION MEETING**

5.1 *At the co-option meeting, candidates will have two minutes to introduce themselves to members, give information on their background and experience, and explain why they wish to become a member of Uckfield Town Council;*

5.2 *After presentations, members may ask candidates a few questions before proceeding to vote. (If a candidate is unable to attend the meeting, this process will still take place and voting will subsequently be based on this meeting and the application form);*

5.3 *The process will be carried out in the public session and there will be no private discussions between members prior to a vote being taken. However, where the Council is discussing the merits of candidates and inevitably their personal attributes, this could be prejudicial and the Council should resolve to exclude the members of the press and public.*

5.4 *If a candidate is a relative of a Councillor, that Councillor should declare a prejudicial interest and withdraw from the meeting.*

#### **6.0 VOTING PROCEDURE**

6.1 *As soon as all candidates have finished giving their submissions, the council will proceed to a vote with each candidate being proposed and seconded by the councillors in attendance (as defined in the Standing Orders) and a vote by a show of hands (LGA 1972 Sch. 12. Para 39). At the request of two Councillors, voting can be carried out by a signed ballot.*

6.2 *In order for a candidate to be elected to the Council, it will be necessary for them to obtain 50% + 1 of the votes available at the meeting.*

6.3 *Voting will be according to the agreed procedure in standing orders, namely: 'Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman's casting vote.'*

6.4 *After the vote has been concluded, the Chairman will declare the successful candidate(s) duly elected.*

#### **7.0 ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

7.1 *The successful candidate must sign their Declaration of Acceptance of Office before they can act as a councillor. The Register of Members Interests form must be completed within 28 days and the Clerk will forward a copy to the Monitoring Officer at the District Council.*

**3.0 Manifestos**

3.1 Applicants will be reading out their manifestos at the meeting on Monday 15 May 2023.

**4.0 Recommendations**

4.1 Members are asked to consider the manifestos of those standing for co-option and advise the Town Clerk of their decision.

# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

## ACTION LIST – FOR INFORMATION ONLY

### FULL COUNCIL

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<p><b><u>FC.105.02.17</u></b></p> <p><b><u>FC.95.01.20</u></b></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 <b>RESOLVED</b> 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; (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><b><u>FC115.04.19</u></b></p>	<p><u>9.0 To consider a motion submitted by Councillor Donna French</u> It was <b>RESOLVED</b> 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>
<b><u>FC.30.09.20</u></b>	<p><u>12.0 To review a report by Councillor A. Smith on the need for affordable homes in Uckfield</u></p> <p>After a detailed discussion, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> 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.</p>	14.09.20	HG	The data is being updated ready for compiling into a letter to the new Minister for Housing.
<b><u>FC.55.10.21</u></b>	<p>Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the motion put forward by Councillor D. French and for staff to make contact with the County Council: <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	Having understood the requirements from the recent funding round we now have time to prepare for the next funding round and have the necessary evidence and associated costs available.
<b><u>FC.94.02.22</u></b>	<p><u>11.0 To consider a further motion by Councillor B. Cox, relating to food poverty</u></p> <p>Members unanimously <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the motion put forward by Councillor B. Cox to:</p> <p><b>What the council still needs to do</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on the results of the schools' questionnaire and review the recommendations;</li> <li>• Be open to any new ways to offer 'out of term' food for young people and where needed, push the higher tiers of local government to back schemes;</li> <li>• Review and offer a final report on food poverty in March 2023 before the end of the term of this Town Council;</li> </ul> <p><b>Summary.</b></p> <p><i>Food poverty in Uckfield is an issue that is growing still. However, Uckfield Town Council have done a number of things to help ease the issue. The next year will see some very challenging times and it is important that the Council keep up the work in highlighting and where possible, easing food poverty. A review is needed in 2023 and a final report offered to the Town Council. The attached report within appendix A contains statistics for Uckfield in terms of earnings and age by ward should be offered to our local authorities (District and County) to highlight some local needs.</i></p>	28.02.22	All	In progress.

<u>Resolution No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Date Raised</u>	<u>Action By</u>	<u>Date Complete</u>
<b><u>FC.82.01.23</u></b>	<p><u>9.0 To consider a response from Buxted Parish Council regarding the purchase of the Dene, Uckfield</u>  Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to support the inclusion of an overage clause in the purchase of the land, the Dene, Brown's Lane, Uckfield but requested that the Town Clerk return to Buxted Parish Council to request whether they could contribute towards the legal fees.</p>	23.01.23	HG	<p>The purchase is underway with Solicitors acting behalf of both parties. The terms of the overage clause have been drafted and sent to Buxted Parish Council.  In progress.</p>

# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



## COUNCIL COMMITTEES

The following Terms of Reference were ~~agreed at~~presented for review at the Annual Statutory meeting of the ~~Full Council held on 5th December 2016~~15 May 2023.

### GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

#### 9 MEMBERS

(Reporting to Full Council)

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE

The committee is responsible for the strategic and corporate development of the Council and its built facilities, for example by: -

- (i) Ensuring sound financial management of the Town Council for endorsement of Full Council;
- (ii) Promoting effective use of modern technology to secure better service delivery;
- (iii) Supporting the career potential of all staff with an emphasis on effective management and empowerment.
- (iv) Developing effective mechanisms for cultural change and organisational development;
- (v) Promoting a culture of customer focus, responsiveness and continuous improvement;
- (vi) Promoting and developing facilities for the benefit of the residents, businesses and visitors to the Town:

#### 1.0 Financial Matters

To undertake the detailed consideration of all financial matters affecting the Town Council, including:-

- 1.1 Amending the Council's Financial Regulations when necessary;
- 1.2 Approving the allocation of community and other grants, including the setting of appropriate criteria for their award;
- 1.3 Making arrangements for appropriate insurance cover;

- 1.4 Having responsibility for the Council's draft annual accounts and any subsequent recommendation of acceptance to Full Council, including compliance with financial audit;
- 1.5 Having responsibility for considering recommendations from other committees for non-budgeted expenditure;
- 1.6 Establishing and maintaining a revenue budget for areas that are the responsibility of this committee;
- 1.7 Having consideration of capital programmes, new initiatives or the establishment of funds for future responsibilities and liabilities.

## **2.0 Buildings**

To manage and oversee the maintenance of all Council buildings, including buildings and associated structures in open spaces: -

- 2.1 Ensuring that adequate provision is made for their repair and maintenance and such works are carried out in a timely manner;
- 2.2 That, where appropriate, fees and terms and conditions are set for their hire;
- 2.3 That, where appropriate, leases, licences and agreements are considered for use of buildings;
- 2.4 Overseeing the running of the Luxfords Restaurant.

(The buildings and associated structures under these terms include those in the ownership of the Town Council and leased by the Town Council. This includes the Civic Centre, Foresters Hall, Bridge Cottage, the Signal Box, West Park Pavilion, Osborn Hall, Victoria Pavilion, including the social area, grounds depot, toilets and storage area, [Quickborn Suite, Ridgewood Village Hall](#) and Snatts Road Cemetery [buildingsChapels](#).)

## **3.0 Policy**

To consider the Council's strategic and corporate development including: -

- 3.1 Making recommendations to Full Council for changes to the Council's Standing Orders;
- 3.2 Making appointments for representatives to outside organisations where their work is allied to the responsibilities of the committee and to receive feedback from those representatives;
- 3.3 Undertaking an annual review of the Town Council's key policy documents to ensure they reflect the current circumstances, legislative updates and guidance and partnership opportunities;
- 3.4 Organising public meetings to inform residents of major issues affecting the Town and to further engage the public in the work of the Council;
- 3.5 Receiving the minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee and Finance Sub-Committee;
- 3.6 Considering the recommendations from the meetings of Personnel Sub-Committee and Finance Sub-Committee;
- 3.7 Strengthening strategic partnership arrangements with key partner agencies and responding to consultations from services in the Health, Education, Social Services sectors and other consultations relevant to the work of the committee;

#### **4.0 Administration**

To deal with all matters relating to the general day to day administration of the Council, including: -

- 4.1 The establishment, review and enforcement of bylaws for areas within the control of the committee;
- 4.2 Making arrangements for the production and editing of the Town Guide;
- 4.3 Making arrangements for the production and editing of 'The Voice,' the Council's newsletter to ensure that residents are informed of the work of the Council and issues that affect the Town;
- 4.4 Making arrangements for the provision and maintenance of the Town Council's website [and Civic Centre website](#);
- 4.5 Overseeing the payment of professional fees and subscriptions;
- 4.6 Arranging training courses, seminars, conferences etc., for both Officers and Members.

### **ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE**

#### **9 MEMBERS**

(Reporting to Full Council)

#### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The committee is responsible for delivery and strategic development of the Council's environment and leisure services, for example by: -

- (i) Ensuring sound financial management of matters relating to this Committee;
- (ii) Promoting effective use of modern technology to secure better service delivery;
- (iii) Developing effective mechanisms for cultural change and service development;
- (iv) Promoting a culture of customer focus, responsiveness and continuous improvement;
- (v) Improving and developing services for the benefit of the residents, businesses and visitors to the Town.

#### **1.0 Environment**

To co-ordinate and direct environmental improvements and related initiatives throughout the Town, including:-

- 1.1 The consideration and implementation of Town and other developmental plans where appropriate;
- 1.2 In conjunction with our partner agencies, consideration of utilities for the Town;
- 1.3 Liaising with Sussex Police and other partner agencies to assist in the enhancement of community safety;
- 1.4 Promoting [Climate Change initiatives and the green agenda](#);

1.5 ~~T~~Road Safety Week and the deployment of road safety devices to appropriate locations in the Town and support of Community Speedwatch initiatives;

- 1.5 In conjunction with other partner agencies, consideration of strategic and amenity highway matters, including public transport services;
- 1.6 The provision of street furniture, (litter bins, seats and signage etc.) where appropriate;
- 1.7 The consideration of requests for litter bins and provision of litter bins in line with the Town Council's litter bin policy.
- 1.8 Removing litter and waste on land owned or maintained by the Town Council;
- 1.9 Seeking sponsorship of roundabouts and other Town improvements where appropriate;
- 1.10 In partnership with others, enabling the provision and maintenance of hanging baskets and floral displays in the Town and in open spaces where appropriate;
- 1.11 Maintaining and upgrading the Town Council's remaining street lighting stock to appropriate standards.

## **2.0 Leisure**

To provide active and passive leisure opportunities and facilities for residents of and visitors to the Town, including: -

- 2.1 The maintenance and management of public open spaces, Local Nature Reserves, ancient woodlands allotments, sports pitches and play areas;
- 2.2 The provision of and assistance with arts, entertainments and events in the Town;
- 2.3 The promotion of sustainable transport within the Town;
- 2.4 Lobbying for the improvement of local transport services which includes support for re-opening of the railway between Uckfield and Lewes;
- 2.5 The provision of Christmas lights in conjunction with the Uckfield Chamber of Commerce.

## **3.0 Administration**

To deal with all matters relating to the administration of the committee's services, including:-

- 3.1 Establishing a revenue budget including the setting of fees and charges for services that are the responsibility of this committee (allotments, open spaces and seasonal sport fees);
- 3.2 Consideration of capital programmes, new initiatives or the establishment of funds for future responsibilities and liabilities;
- 3.3 Management of grounds maintenance and other contracts;
- 3.4 The administration of interments for Snatts Road cemetery and the maintenance of the cemetery and Holy Cross closed churchyard;
- 3.5 Making appointments for representatives to outside organisations where their work is allied to the responsibilities of the committee and to receive feedback from those representatives;

- 3.6 The establishment, review and enforcement of bylaws for areas within the control of the committee;
- 3.7 The provision of notice boards at specific locations to promote Town Council meetings and initiatives;
- 3.8 Maintenance of the Town clock.

## **PLANS COMMITTEE**

### **7 MEMBERS**

(Reporting to Full Council)

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The committee is responsible for making representations to the appropriate authorities in response to planning applications in the Town, specifically: -

- (i) Considering and responding to all planning applications within the town boundary of Uckfield and/or adjacent land, whether notified under the Local Government Act 1972, Section 20, Schedule 16 or not;
- (ii) To be responsible for recommending the placing of Tree Preservation Orders where appropriate;
- (iii) Commenting on licensing applications as and when necessary;
- (iv) Commenting on street naming where requested.

## **PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE**

### **5 MEMBERS**

(Reporting to the General Purposes Committee)

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The sub-committee is responsible for making recommendations to the General Purposes Committee on staff matters including: -

- (i) Consideration of staffing levels;
- (ii) Consideration of policies relating to personnel matters including recruitment, Equal Opportunities, the Disability Discrimination Act and other 'staff' matters;
- (iii) Consultation on senior staff appointments;
- (iv) Support the work-based pension reforms to auto enrol staff onto the Local Government Pension Scheme;
- (v) Consideration of staff terms and conditions including special conditions;
- (vi) Convening panels for hearing appeals from staff against grievance and disciplinary procedures;
- (vii) Convening panels for grievances and disciplinary procedures against the Town Clerk.

## **FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE**

### **5 MEMBERS**

(Reporting to the General Purposes Committee)

#### **TERMS OF REFERENCE:**

The sub committee is responsible for making recommendations to the General Purposes Committee on financial and associated matters including:-

- (i) Considering and reviewing of the Council's Financial Regulations in response to legislative changes and best practice; making recommendations to General Purposes Committee where required;
- (ii) Considering and reviewing of the Council's Insurances and level of cover required.
- (iii) Considering of the Council's grants criteria;
- (iv) Reviewing the Council's grant allocations and making recommendations to General Purposes Committee on the proposed annual allocation;
- (v) Considering up to date information and undertake periodic reviews of the Council's budgets in line with the five year Strategic Plan; recommending amendments where required.
- (vi) Conducting periodic reviews of the Council's arrangements for banking, loans, asset management and pension policies;
- (vii) Recommending arrangements for dealing with bad debts as they arise.

## **URGENT CONSULTATION PANEL**

**MEMBERS** – The Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chairmen of the General Purposes, Environment and Leisure and Plans Committees.

#### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The panel is responsible for: -

- (i) Providing urgent decisions and actions where recourse to the appropriate committee or Full Council meeting is not possible;
- (ii) Reporting such decisions and actions to the next appropriate meeting of the relevant committee.

## **NEWSLETTER EDITORIAL PANEL**

### **3 MEMBERS**

(Reporting to the General Purpose Committee)

#### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The panel is responsible for:-

- (i) Producing and editing the Council's newsletter, 'The Voice' in conjunction with the Town Council Office.



# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



## COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP 2023-24

<b>GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE (9)</b> (Reports to Full Council)			<b>ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE (9)</b> (Reports to Full Council)		
1.			1.		
2.			2.		
3.			3.		
4.			4.		
5.			5.		
6.			6.		
7.			7.		
8.			8.		
9.			9.		
<b>PLANS COMMITTEE (7)</b> (Reports to Full Council)			<b>FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE (5)</b> (Reports to General Purposes Committee)		
1.			1.		
2.			2.		
3.			3.		
4.			4.		
5.			5.		
6.					
7.					
<b>PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE (5)</b> (Reports to General Purposes Committee)			<b>THE VOICE EDITORIAL PANEL (3)</b> (Reports to General Purposes Committee)		
1.			1.		
2.			2.		
3.			3.		
4.					
5.					

# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

## REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES 2023-24

### FULL COUNCIL

Organisation	No. Required	
Uckfield Town Centre Regeneration Joint Committee	<b>2</b>	
Uckfield Town Centre Regeneration Joint Committee – Substitute Members	<b>2</b>	
Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group	<b>4</b>	
Gatwick Airport Consultation Group	<b>(2)</b> 1 member and 1 substitute	

### GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Wealden Citizens Advice	<b>1</b>	
East Sussex Association of Local Councils	<b>1</b>	
Emergency Planning Co-ordinators	<b>2</b>	
Uckfield Volunteer Centre	<b>1</b>	
Wealden District Association of Local Councils	<b>1</b>	
Wealden District Association of Local Councils Parish Planning Panel/ Local Plan Engagement Cluster	<b>(2)</b> 1 member and 1 substitute	

### AGM meetings only:

Ridgewood Village Hall Management Committee	<b>1</b>	
Uckfield & District Preservation Society - Bridge Cottage	<b>1</b>	

## ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

Organisation	No. Required	
Active Uckfield	<b>2</b>	
All Weather Pitch Operational Advisory Group	<b>(2)</b> (1 member and 1 substitute)	
Conservators of Ashdown Forest	<b>(2)</b> (1 member and 1 substitute)	
Local Nature Reserve Supporters Group	<b>(2)</b> (1 member and 1 substitute)	<i>To be appointed at first E&amp;L Committee after Annual Stat meeting</i>
Luxford Centre Management Committee	<b>1</b>	
Stakeholder Group exploring provision of Tennis facilities in Uckfield with Uckfield College	<b>(2)</b> (1 member and 1 substitute)	
Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee	<b>1</b>	
Uckfield Youth Club Board	<b>1</b>	
Wealden Bus Alliance/Weald Link Forum	<b>1</b>	

### AGM meetings only:

Uckfield & District Twinning Association	<b>1</b>	
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# **Annual Statutory meeting of the Council**

**Monday 15 May 2023**

## **Agenda item 12.0**

### **TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO FULL COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS**

#### **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 At each Annual Statutory meeting of the Council, appointments are made to the council's committees, outside bodies, and working groups which sit under Full Council. Any working groups which report to the standing committees of General Purposes or Environment & Leisure will be appointed at these committee's first meetings.
- 1.2 Some working groups are already underway, but due to the change in Town Councillors in this round of elections, it would be prudent to refresh the membership of these working groups and invite councillors to put themselves forward:  
Civic Centre Working Group;  
Events Working Group;  
Infrastructure Working Group;

#### **2.0 Background to these working groups**

- 2.1 The Civic Centre Working Group last met before the pandemic. With a change in Hospitality Manager during the pandemic and a push to rebuild the hospitality businesses following the national lockdowns, the focus of the Town Council staff and rebuilding the business has been the day to day priority. Looking ahead however it would be good for the group to reconvene and discuss future projects and plans for the facilities:  
Previously the Civic Centre Working Group was set up with the following members appointed:  
Councillors D. Bennett, H. Firth, D. French, S. Mayhew, and D. Ward.
- 2.2 The Events Working Group was set up predominantly to plan for events such as Weald on the Field and Uckfield Revival. This year it has been involved in organising the King's Coronation Celebration in May 2023, and will be organising Weald on the Field on 12 August 2023:  
Previous members included: Councillors D. French, J. Love, C. Macve, S. Mayhew  
Councillor K. Bedwell joined the group in 2022 to organise the Beacon Lighting event on 2 June 2022, and supported events such as the Revival.
- 2.3 The Infrastructure Working Group was set up by Full Council on 1 March 2021 to explore the infrastructure requirements for the town in order to better inform the Town Council when responding to planning applications, and assist with building information for the Neighbourhood Plan. Previous members included:  
Councillors K. Bedwell, J. Beesley, B. Cox, J. Edwards, S. Mayhew and A. Smith.

#### **3.0 Recommendations**

- 3.1 Members are asked to confirm the appointment of 'no less than three and no more than five members' per working group, as per the working group policy for the following working groups:  
(i) Civic Centre Working Group;  
(ii) Events Working Group  
(iii) Infrastructure Working Group

Background paper: Policy No. 39 - Working Group Policy  
Contact Officer: Holly Goring

# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



## STANDING ORDERS

Issue No.	Date Agreed	Details of amendments
1	2 <sup>nd</sup> May 2006	Reissued in new format
2	25 <sup>th</sup> March 2008	General Purposes (GP.070.03.08)
3	28 <sup>th</sup> April 2008	Full Council (FC.096.04.08)
4	6 <sup>th</sup> July 2009	Full Council (FC.018.07.09)
5	10 <sup>th</sup> January 2011	Complete reissue of document at Full Council in accordance with revised NALC Model Standing Orders. (FC.049.01.11)
6	16 <sup>th</sup> May 2011	Annual Statutory Meeting – Review of SO 34.2
7	11 <sup>th</sup> November 2013	Full Council (FC.55.11.13) Comprehensive amendments following introduction of Localism Act 2011
8	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2014	Amendments to start times of meetings.
9	20 <sup>th</sup> April 2015	FC - General review and update
10	4 <sup>th</sup> July 2016	FC – General review and update
11	22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2016	FC – Minor amendment to 9.3. Plus amendments to Section 34 (Financial Matters) following update to financial regulations approved by GP Committee on 15 <sup>th</sup> August 2016.
12	30 <sup>th</sup> July 2018	Refresh in line with NALC Model Standing Orders (revised 2018)
13	17 January 2022	FC - Full review in line with NALC Model Standing Orders (revised 2020)
14	27 June 2022	FC – review in line with NALC Model Standing Orders (2018) Version 2 (April 2022) – Financial

		Controls and Procurement (Section 34) (FC.29.06.22)-
15	15 May 2023	FC – Annual statutory meeting annual review

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## STANDING ORDERS

Standing Orders set out how all committees, sub-committees and associated groups of the Council conduct their business and should be read in conjunction with the Council's

- Financial Regulations
- Code of Conduct Policy (No. 43).

**Reference to the masculine gender should also be construed as a reference to the feminine gender except where the context suggests otherwise.**

Reference to, 'the Mayor', should also be construed as reference to the Chairman of any committee or sub-committee, except that of Full Council.

### 1.0 ROLE OF STANDING ORDERS

- 1.1 The Town Clerk shall provide a copy of the Council's Standing Orders to a Councillor upon delivery of his declaration of acceptance of office.
- 1.2 The Chairman's decision as to the application of Standing Orders at meetings shall be final.
- 1.3 A Councillor's failure to observe Standing Orders more than three times in one meeting may result in him being excluded from the meeting in accordance with Standing Orders.

### 2.0 VARIATION, REVOCATION AND SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

- 2.1 Any or every part of these Standing Orders except those printed in **bold type** may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business. Standing Orders printed in **bold type** cannot be altered.
- 2.2 A resolution permanently to add, vary or revoke a Standing Order shall when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

### 3.0 MEETINGS

#### Timing and Business

- 3.1 **Full Council - meetings shall not take place in premises, which at the time of the meeting, are used for the supply of alcohol unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- 3.2(a) **Full Council - the minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- 3.2(b) **Committee meetings - the minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice OR (*the minimum three clear days' public notice of a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issues or the day of the meeting*)**

3.3 The duration of all Council committee or sub-committee meetings shall not exceed two hours, unless before this period is exceeded a proposal to suspend this Standing Order for a nominated length of maximum time receives a majority vote from those present. After this time the meeting shall be adjourned and any business not completed shall be completed at a resumed meeting to be notified by the Clerk; such resumed meeting shall be held before the next scheduled meeting. At the resumption, only the business not completed at the previous meeting shall be considered.

3.4 Meetings of the Council and its committees shall be held at the Uckfield Civic Centre normally from 7.00 pm on such dates as the Council may direct.

**Questions by the Public**

3.5 **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion by means of the following resolution:-**

*"That in view of the special or confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960".*

3.6 Subject to Standing Order 3.5 above, members of the public are permitted to make representations, statements, ask or answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda.

3.7 The period of time which is at the Mayor's discretion shall not exceed fifteen minutes.

3.8 Subject to Standing Order 3.6 above, each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than three minutes.

3.9 In accordance with Standing Order 3.6 above, a question asked by a member of the public during a public participation session at a meeting shall not require a response or debate.

3.10 In accordance with Standing Order 3.9 above, the Mayor may direct that a response to a question posed by a member of the public be referred to a Councillor for an oral response or to an employee for a written or oral response.

3.11 A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.

3.12 A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort). The Mayor may at any time permit an individual to be seated when speaking.

3.13 Any person speaking at a meeting shall address his comments to the Mayor.

3.14 Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak, the Mayor shall direct the order of speaking.



**Press and public attending and reporting on meetings**

- 3.15(a) **Subject to standing order 3.5, a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To “report” means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to the persons not present.**
- 3.15(b) **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**
- 3.15(c) **Filming and recording of all Council, committee and sub-committee meetings open to the public is welcomed but restrictions do apply to protect confidential information and those individuals who do not wish to be recorded. The Town Council will provide assistance to anyone who wishes to carry out any recording in accordance with its Recording of Meetings Policy. (No. 72)**
- 3.16 **The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**

**Members’ conduct at meetings**

- 3.17 **Subject to Standing Orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Mayor may in his absence be done by, to or before the Deputy Mayor.**
- 3.18 **The Mayor, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Mayor is absent from a meeting, the Deputy Mayor, if present, shall preside. If both the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor are absent from a meeting, a Councillor as chosen by the Councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- 3.19 **When a Member speaks at Full Council, and the Town Council’s standing committees (General Purposes, Environment & Leisure and Plans), they must address the meeting through the Chairman and use the microphone. If more than one Member indicates that they wish to speak, the Chairman will ask one to speak and the others must wait in the order in which they notified the Chairman of their intention to speak, unless in the case of paragraph 8.16 when a Councillor wishes to interrupt on a point of order.**
- 3.20 **Subject to Standing Order 3.26 below, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting thereon.**
- 3.21 **The Mayor may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.**
- 3.22 **Members shall vote by a show of hands or, if at least two Councillors so request, by signed ballot. At the request of a Councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each Councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.**

- 3.23 The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:
- (i) the time and place of the meeting;
  - (ii) record the names of Councillors who are present and the names of the councillors who are absent;
  - (iii) interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights (as detailed below);
  - (iv) the grant of dispensations to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
  - (v) whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
  - (vi) if there was a public participation session; and
  - (vii) the resolutions made
- 3.24(a) **The Code of Conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to Councillors in respect of the entire meeting.**
- 3.24(b) **A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable prejudicial interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter.**
- 3.25 **An interest arising from the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council, the existence and nature of which is required to be disclosed by a Councillor at a meeting shall be recorded in the minutes.**
- 3.26 **Five Members or one-third of the total membership, whichever is the greater, shall constitute a quorum at meetings of the Council.**
- (For a quorum relating to committees, sub-committees and other meetings, please refer to Standing Order 19.1.9)
- 3.27 **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be adjourned.** Any outstanding business of a meeting so adjourned shall be completed at a resumed meeting to be notified by the Clerk; such resumed meeting shall be held before the next scheduled meeting. At the resumption, only the business not completed at the previous meeting shall be considered.
- 4.0 ORDINARY MEETINGS**
- 4.1 **In an election year, the Annual Meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new Councillors elected take office.**
- 4.2 **In a year which is not an election year, the Annual Meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.**
- 4.3 **The Annual Meeting of the Council shall take place at 7.00pm.**
- 4.4 **In addition to the Annual Meeting of the Council, at least five other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council directs.**
- 4.5 **The election of the Mayor of the Council and Deputy Mayor shall be the first business conducted at the Annual Meeting of the Council.**

- 4.6 **The Mayor, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the Annual Meeting until his successor is elected at the next Annual Meeting of the Council.**
- 4.7 **The Deputy Mayor of the Council, if any, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Mayor at the next Annual Meeting of the Council.**
- 4.8 **In an election year, if the current Mayor has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a successor Mayor has been elected. The current Mayor shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Mayor but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- 4.9 **In an election year, if the current Mayor has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a new Mayor has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the Mayor and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- 4.10 Following the election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Council at the Annual Meeting of the Council, the order of business shall be as follows.
- 4.10.1 **In an election year, delivery by the Mayor and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his acceptance of office form unless the Council resolved for this to be done at a later date;**
- 4.10.2 To elect a Deputy Town Mayor.
- 4.10.3 **In the ordinary year of election of the Council to fill any vacancies left unfilled at the election by reason of insufficient nominations.**  
(Co-option Policy No. 44)
- 4.10.4 **To decide when any declarations of acceptance of office which have not been received as provided by law shall be received.**
- 4.10.5 Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
- 4.10.6 Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee
- 4.10.7 Consider the recommendations made by a committee
- 4.10.8 Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities
- 4.10.9 Review of the terms of reference for committees
- 4.10.10 To appoint committees, sub-committees and other groups as necessary.
- 4.10.11 To appoint any new committees in accordance with standing order 19.0

- 4.10.12 Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations
- 4.10.13 Review of arrangements with other local authorities, not for profit bodies and businesses
- 4.10.14 Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back
- 4.10.15 In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
- 4.10.16 Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment;
- 4.10.17 Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of insurable risks;
- 4.10.18 Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
- 4.10.19 Review of the Council's complaints procedure
- 4.10.20 Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation
- 4.10.21 Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media
- 4.10.22 Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures
- 4.10.23 Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence
- 4.10.24 Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council
- 4.10.25 **Business as specified in the summons including:-**
- 4.10.26 **To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done.**
- 4.10.27 To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
- 4.10.28 To receive such communications as the person presiding may wish to lay before the Council.
- 4.10.29 To answer previously notified questions from Councillors.
- 4.10.30 To receive the minutes and consider reports and recommendations of committees.
- 4.10.31 To consider resolutions or recommendations in the order in which they have been notified.

- 4.10.32 To receive and consider reports from officers of the Council.
- 4.10.33 To authorise the sealing of documents.
- 4.10.34 Councillors may request an item to be placed on an agenda of the relevant committee at least seven days prior to the publication of the agenda supported by a written report. Questions do not require a seconder but the Chairman of the committee would use their discretion as to the inclusion of an item.
- 4.10.35 Any other business specified in the summons.

## **5.0 PROPER OFFICER**

- 5.1 The Council's Proper Officer shall be either:
  - (i) the Clerk or such other employee as may be nominated by the Council from time to time or
  - (ii) such other employee appointed by the Council to undertake the role of the Proper Officer during the Proper Officer's absence.

The Proper Officer and the employee appointed to act as such during the Proper Officer's absence shall fulfil the duties assigned to the Proper Officer in Standing Orders.

- 5.2 The Council's Proper Officer shall do the following:
  - 5.2.1 **At least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee, - Sign and serve on Councillors electronically if agreed, by delivery or post at their residences a signed summons confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda, and ;**
  - 5.2.2 **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by Councillors is signed by them).**
  - 5.2.3 Subject to Standing Orders 6.1 – 6.5 below, include in the agenda all motions in the order received unless a Councillor has given written notice at least five days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it.
  - 5.2.4 **Convene a meeting of Full Council for the election of a new Mayor of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office, in accordance with Standing Order 5.2.1 above.**

To receive nominations for the position of Mayor and Deputy Mayor by a deadline of seven working days prior to the Annual Statutory Meeting of full Council. Any nominations put forward must include a short paragraph on why they would be suitable i.e. their background, desires etc.

If no nominations are received prior to the meeting, nominations are entitled to be put forward at the Annual Statutory meeting of Council.

If during the Municipal Year, the office of Town Mayor becomes vacant, then the Deputy Mayor will normally become Mayor for the remainder of that year.

- 5.2.5 **Make available for inspection the minutes of meetings.**
- 5.2.6 **Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities.**
- 5.2.7 Hold declarations of acceptance of office forms from Councillors.
- 5.2.8 Hold a copy of every Councillor's register of interests and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection.
- 5.2.9 Keep proper records required before and after meetings.
- 5.2.10 Assist with responding to all requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998, in accordance with and subject to the Council's procedures relating to the same.
- 5.2.11 Liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer (if there is one)
- 5.2.12 Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary.
- 5.2.13 assist in the organisation of, storage of and access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).
- 5.2.14 Arrange for legal deeds to be executed (signed and sealed using the Council's common seal).
- 5.2.15 Arrange for the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.
- 5.2.16 Record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose.
- 5.2.17 Refer any planning application received by the Council outside the normal Plans Committee cycle to the Chairman or in their absence the Vice chairman of the Plans Committee for consideration in accordance with the Council's Late Planning Applications Policy. (No. 74)
- 5.2.18 manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
- 5.2.19 Retain custody of the seal of the Council which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.

5.2.20 Action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in Standing Orders.

**6.0 MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER**

- 6.1 A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- 6.2 Except as provided by these Standing Orders, no resolution may be moved unless the business to which it relates has been put on the agenda by the Town Clerk or the mover has given notice in writing of its terms and has delivered the notice to the Town Clerk at least seven clear days before the next meeting of the Council.
- 6.3 The Town Council may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 6.2, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- 6.4 If the Town Clerk considers the wording of the motion received in accordance with 6.2 is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, so that it can be understood, in writing to the Proper Officer, at least seven clear days before the meeting.
- 6.5 If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- 6.6 The decision of the Town Clerk as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- 6.7 The Town Clerk shall record in the summons for every meeting, all notices of motion or recommendation properly given in the order in which they have been received unless the Councillor giving a notice of motion has stated in writing that he intends to move at some later meeting or that he withdraws it.
- 6.8 Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Town Clerk of the reason for rejection.

**7.0 MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE**

- 7.1 Motions in respect of the following matters may be moved without written notice.
- 7.1.1 To appoint a person to preside at a meeting.
- 7.1.2 To approve the absences of Councillors.
- 7.1.3 To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.
- 7.1.4 To correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of the previous meeting.
- 7.1.5 To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.

- 7.1.6 To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience.
- 7.1.7 To proceed to the next business on the agenda.
- 7.1.8 To close or adjourn debate.
- 7.1.9 To refer by formal delegation a matter to a committee or to a sub-committee or an employee.
- 7.1.10 To appoint a committee or sub-committee or any Councillors (including substitutes) thereto.
- 7.1.11 To receive nominations to a committee or sub-committee.
- 7.1.12 To dissolve a committee or sub-committee.
- 7.1.13 To note the minutes of a meeting of a committee or sub-committee.
- 7.1.14 To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a committee or a sub-committee or an employee.
- 7.1.15 To consider a report and/or recommendations made by an employee, professional advisor, expert or consultant.
- 7.1.16 To authorise legal deeds to be sealed by the Council's common seal and witnessed.
- 7.1.17 To authorise the payment of monies in accordance with Financial Regulations.
- 7.1.18 To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under consideration which shall not have the effect of nullifying it.
- 7.1.19 To extend the time limit for speeches.
- 7.1.20 To exclude the press and public for all or part of a meeting.
- 7.1.21 To silence or exclude from the meeting a Councillor or a member of the public for disorderly conduct.
- 7.1.22 To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by Standing Orders.
- 7.1.23 **To suspend any Standing Order except those which are mandatory by law.**
- 7.1.24 To adjourn the meeting.
- 7.1.25 To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies.
- 7.1.26 To answer questions from Councillors.



- 7.1.27 To require a written report
- 7.1.28 To defer consideration of a motion;
- 7.1.29 To refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee

## **8.0 RULES OF DEBATE**

- 8.1 Motions included in an agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda unless the order is changed at the Chairman's direction for reasons of expedience.
- 8.2 Subject to Standing Orders 6.1 - 6.5 above, a motion shall not be considered unless it has been proposed and seconded.
- 8.3 Subject to Standing Order 5.2.3 above, a motion included in an agenda not moved by the Councillor who tabled it, may be treated as withdrawn.
- 8.4 A motion to amend an original or substantive motion shall not be considered unless proper notice has been given after the original or substantive motion has been seconded and notice of such amendment, shall, if required by the Chairman, be reduced to writing and handed to the Chairman who shall determine the order in which they are considered.
- 8.5 A Councillor may move amendments to his own motion. If a motion has already been seconded, an amendment to it shall be with the consent of the seconder.
- 8.6 Any amendment to a motion shall be either:
  - 8.6.1 to remove words;
  - 8.6.2 to add words;
  - 8.6.3 to remove words and add other words, it shall not negate the motion
- 8.7 A proposed or carried amendment to a motion shall not have the effect of rescinding the original or substantive motion under consideration.
- 8.8 Only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chairman. No further amendment to a motion shall be moved until the previous amendment has been disposed of.
- 8.9 Subject to Standing Order 8.8 above, one or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chairman considers this expedient but shall be voted upon separately.
- 8.10 Pursuant to Standing Order 8.8 above, the number of amendments to an original or substantive motion, which may be moved by a Councillor, is limited to one.
- 8.11 If an amendment is not carried, other amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chairman.

- 8.12 If an amendment is carried, the original motion, as amended, shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the substantive motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.
- 8.13 The mover of a motion or the mover of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding three minutes.
- 8.14 Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply in respect of the substantive motion at the very end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of the debate on the final substantive motion and immediately before it is put to the vote.
- 8.15 Subject to Standing Orders 8.13 and 8.14 above, a Councillor may not speak further in respect of any one motion except to speak once on an amendment moved by another Councillor or to make a point of order or to give a personal explanation.
- 8.16 During the debate of a motion, a Councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the Councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A Councillor raising a point of order shall identify the Standing Order which he considers has been breached or specify the irregularity in the meeting he is concerned by.
- 8.17 A point of order shall be decided by the Chairman and his decision shall be final.
- 8.18 With the consent of the seconder and/or of the meeting, a motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer. A Councillor shall not speak upon the said motion or amendment unless permission for the withdrawal of the motion or amendment has been refused.
- 8.19 Subject to Standing Order 8.15 above, when a Councillor's motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except:
- 8.19.1 to amend the motion;
  - 8.19.2 to proceed to the next business;
  - 8.19.3 to adjourn the debate;
  - 8.19.4 to put the motion to a vote;
  - 8.19.5 to ask a person to be silent or for him to leave the meeting;
  - 8.19.6 to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
  - 8.19.7 to exclude the public and press;
  - 8.19.8 to adjourn the meeting;
  - 8.19.9 to suspend any Standing Order, except those which are mandatory.
- 8.20 In respect of Standing Order 8.19.4 above, the Chairman shall first be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated before it is seconded and put to the vote. The Chairman shall call upon the mover of the motion under debate to exercise or

waive his right of reply and shall put the motion to the vote after that right has been exercised or waived.

At the end of any speech a Councillor may, without comment, move "*that the question be now put*", "*that the debate be now adjourned*" or "*that the Council do now adjourn*". If such motion is seconded, the Mayor shall put the motion but, in the case of a motion "*that the question be now put*", only if they are of the opinion that the question before the Council has been sufficiently debated. If the motion "*that the question be now put*" is carried, they shall call upon the mover to exercise or waive their right of reply and shall put the question immediately after that right has been exercised or waived. The adjournment of a debate or of the meeting shall not prejudice the mover's right of reply at the resumption.

## **9.0 CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS**

### **9.1 All Councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council. (Policy No. 43)**

9.2 All Councillors shall undertake training in the Code of Conduct within 6 months of the delivery of their declaration of acceptance of office.

9.3 Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a Councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary (prejudicial) interest. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest. In all cases the Councillor must leave the room and not take part in any debate or vote unless a dispensation has been authorised by the Clerk.

**9.4 An interest arising from the Code of Conduct shall be recorded in the minutes.**

**9.5 Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Town Clerk as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.**

9.6 A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Town Clerk and that decision is final.

9.7 A dispensation request shall confirm:

- (i) the description and the nature of the prejudicial interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
- (ii) whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
- (iii) the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
- (iv) an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought

9.8 The Clerk, may authorise a dispensation for Councillors under the Code of Conduct, if having regard for all relevant circumstances, any of the following apply:-

- 9.8.1 without the dispensation, the number of persons prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business; or**

9.8.2 without the dispensation the representation of different political groups on the meeting transacting any particular business would be so upset as to alter the likely outcome of any vote relating to the business; or

**9.8.3 granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area; or**

**9.8.4 it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

9.9 A dispensation granted under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 must specify the period for which it has effect, and that period may not exceed four years.

#### **10.0 CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS**

10.1 On receipt of a notification by the District Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Code of Conduct, the Clerk shall report this to the council.

10.2 Where the notification in standing order 10.1 relates to a complaint made by the Clerk, the Clerk shall notify the Chairman of the Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Clerk in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the Council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 10.4.

10.3 The Council may:  
(i) provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement;  
(ii) seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter. .

**10.4 Upon notification by the District Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

#### **11.0 QUESTIONS**

11.1 A Councillor may seek an answer to a question concerning any business of the Council provided seven clear days notice of the question has been given to the Proper Officer.

11.2 Questions not related to items of business on the agenda for a meeting shall only be asked during the part of the meeting set aside for such questions.

11.3 Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.

#### **12.0 DRAFT MINUTES**

12.1 If a copy of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting has been circulated to Councillors no later than the day of service of the summons to attend the scheduled meeting they shall be taken as read.

12.2 No discussion of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting shall take place except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the minutes shall be raised in accordance with Standing Order 7.1.4 above.

12.3 Minutes, including any amendment to correct their accuracy, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.

12.4 Upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, any previous draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

12.5 If the Chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, he shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms of to the same effect:

*“The Chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the () held on (date) in respect of () were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.*

### **13.0 DISORDERLY CONDUCT**

13.1 No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the Chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.

13.2 If, in the opinion of the Chairman, there has been a breach of Standing Order 13.1 above, the Chairman shall express that opinion and thereafter any Councillor (including the Chairman) may move that the person no longer be heard or be excluded from the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion.

13.3 If a resolution made in accordance with Standing Order 13.2 above, is ignored, the Chairman may take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

### **14.0 RESCISSION OF PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS**

14.1 A resolution (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within six months except either by a proposal, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least five members of the Council, or by a resolution moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a Committee.

14.2 When a resolution moved under the provision of Standing Order 14.1 above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further six months.

14.3 Any resolution passed by a committee reporting to Full Council may be placed on the next Full Council agenda for discussion in its own right if so requested in writing by at least five members of the Council. Once such a request has been received, further activities, clarification and information gathering excepted, shall cease on the original resolution

### **15.0 VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS**

15.1 Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a

majority of votes is given in favour of one person. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman's casting vote.

- 15.2 The Mayor and Deputy Mayor should not serve longer than three complete consecutive municipal years in their respective offices.
- 15.3 Chairmen of committees and sub-committees should not serve as Chairmen longer than three consecutive years. Nor should any member of the Council be Chairman of more than one committee or sub-committee at any one time.
- 15.4 Neither shall the Mayor or Deputy Mayor be Chairman of a full committee.

#### **16.0 EXPENDITURE**

- 16.1 Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.
- 16.2 **The Council's Financial Regulations shall be reviewed once a year.**
- 16.3 **The Council's Financial Regulations may make provision for the authorisation of the payment of money in exercise of any of the Council's functions to be delegated to a committee, sub-committee or to an employee.**

#### **17.0 RESOLUTIONS ON EXPENDITURE**

- 17.1 A resolution, by any committee, which would increase the expenditure upon any service which is under the management of that committee, or which would reduce the revenue at the disposal of the Council, or which would involve capital expenditure, shall be referred to the General Purposes Committee for decision.

#### **18.0 EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS**

- 18.1 A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless the same has been authorised by a resolution.
- 18.2 **In accordance with a resolution made under Standing Order 18.1 above, the Council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Proper Officer in the presence of two councillors of the Council who shall sign the deed as witnesses.**

#### **19.0 COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES**

- 19.1 The Council may at its Annual Statutory Meeting, appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as are necessary, but subject to any statutory provision in that behalf:-
  - 19.1.1 Shall not appoint any member of a committee so as to hold office later than the next Annual Statutory Meeting.
  - 19.1.2(a) **Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
  - 19.1.2(b) **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.** Such appointed members will have no voting rights.

19.1.2(c) **Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**

19.1.3 The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and;

(i) shall determine their terms of reference;

(ii) shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;

(iii) shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;

(iv) shall, subject to standing orders 19.1.2(b) and (c) appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee

(v) may, subject to standing orders 19.1.2(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer five days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;

(vi) shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chairman of a standing committee;

(vii) shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chairman at the first meeting of the committee;

(viii) shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee, and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be no less than three or one third of its members;

(ix) shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;

(x) shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;

(xi) shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend and:

19.1.4 May, subject to the provisions of Standing Order No.14, at any time dissolve or alter the membership of a committee;

19.1.5 Every committee shall at its first meeting before proceeding to any other business, elect a Chairman and may elect a Vice-chairman who shall hold office until the next Annual Statutory Meeting of the Council;

19.1.6 In the event of the ballot failing to determine the Chairman and Vice-chairman because of an equality of votes the candidate or candidates to be elected from those having an equal number of votes shall be determined at the first committee meeting which will be chaired by the Mayor. Any tie may then be settled by the Chairman's casting vote;

19.1.7 The Chairman of a committee or the Mayor of the Council may summon an additional meeting of that committee at any time. An additional meeting shall also be summoned on the requisition in writing of not less than a third of the members of the committee. The summons shall set out

the business to be considered at the special meeting and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting;

19.1.8 Each committee may appoint working groups or steering groups for purposes specified by the committee. Sub-committees will be appointed by Full Council;

19.1.9 The Standing Orders on rules of debate, (except those parts relating to standing and speaking more than once), and the Standing Order on interests of Councillors in contracts and other matters shall apply to committees, sub-committees.

## **20.0 WORKING GROUPS AND STEERING GROUPS**

20.1 Any committee may create working or steering groups, whose name and number of members and the bodies to be invited to nominate members shall be specified.

20.2 The working and steering groups will conduct their business in accordance with Working Group Policy No. 39 and Steering Group Policy No. 57.

20.3 Working and steering groups may make recommendations and give notice thereof to the parent committee.

20.4 Working and steering groups may consist wholly of persons who are not members of the Council.

## **21.0 EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES**

21.1 **The Mayor of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**

21.2 **If the Mayor of the Council does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested to do so by two Councillors, those two Councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two Councillors.**

21.3 The Chairman of a Committee (or a sub-committee) may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee (or sub-committee) at any time;

21.4 If the Chairman of a committee (or a sub-committee) does not call an extraordinary meeting within seven days of having been requested to do so by two members of the committee (or sub-committee), any two members of the committee (or sub-committee) may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee (or sub-committee).

## **22.0 ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS**

22.1 The Council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

22.2 "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of the "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioner's Guide"

22.3 All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's Financial Regulations.



22.4 The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each Councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to General Purposes Committee or Environment & Leisure Committee to summarise:

- (i) the Council's income and expenditure for that committee;
- (ii) the Council's aggregate income and expenditure for the year to date;
- (iii) the balances held at the end of that period being reported;

which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends (these are reported at each committee meeting so more frequently than quarterly).

22.5 As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:

- (i) each councillor with a statement summarising the council's income and expenditure for the last quarter and the year to date for information, and;
- (ii) to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.

22.6 The year-end statement of accounts shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the council for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors at least 14 days prior to the anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

### **23.0 ESTIMATES AND PRECEPTS**

23.1 **The Council shall review the estimates not later than the end of January each year and shall fix the precept to be levied for the ensuing financial year. The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply each Councillor with a copy of the approved estimates.**

23.2 Any committee desiring to incur expenditure shall give the Proper Officer a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year no later than the end of November each year.

23.3 The annual capital and revenue expenditures shall form the Council's budgets and the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

### **24.0 INTERESTS**

24.1 **If a Councillor has a personal interest as defined by the Code of Conduct (Policy No. 43) then they shall declare such interest as soon as it becomes apparent, disclosing the existence and nature of that interest as required which shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.**

24.2 **If a Councillor who has declared a personal interest then considers the interest to be a disclosable interest, they must withdraw from the room during consideration of the item to which the interest relates unless a dispensation has been authorised by the Clerk in advance of the meeting.**

- 24.3 **The Clerk may be required to compile and hold a register of Councillors' interests in accordance with any agreement with the Monitoring Officer of Wealden District Council and/or as required by statute.**
- 24.4 If a candidate for any appointment under the Council is to their knowledge related to any Councillor or the holder of any office under the Council, they and the person to whom they are related shall disclose the relationship in writing to the Clerk. A candidate who fails so to do, shall be disqualified for such appointment, and, if appointed, may be dismissed without notice. The Clerk shall report to the Council or to the appropriate committee any such disclosure. Where relationship to a Councillor is disclosed, Standing Orders No. 24.1 and 24.2 shall apply. The Clerk shall make known the significance of this Standing Order to every candidate.
- 25.0 CANVASSING OF AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY COUNCILLORS**
- 25.1 Canvassing Councillors or the members of a committee or sub-committee, directly or indirectly, for appointment to or by the Council shall disqualify the candidate from such an appointment. The Clerk shall disclose the requirements of this Standing Order to every candidate.
- 25.2 A Councillor or a member of a committee or sub-committee shall not solicit a person for appointment to or by the Council or recommend a person for such appointment or for promotion; however any such person may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.
- 25.3 This Standing Order shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.
- 26.0 INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS**
- 26.1 Subject to Standing Orders to the contrary or in respect of matters which are confidential, a Councillor may, for the purpose of his official duties (but not otherwise), inspect any document in the possession of the Council or a committee or a sub-committee, and request a copy for the same purpose. The minutes of meetings of the Council, its committees or sub-committees shall be available for inspection by Councillors.
- 27.0 RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES**
- 27.1 Unless specifically authorised to do so by the Council or relevant committee or sub-committee by a resolution, no individual Councillor shall in the name or on behalf of the Council, a committee or a sub-committee:
- 27.1.1 inspect any lands or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect;
- 27.1.2 issue orders, instructions or directions
- 28.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**
- 28.1 **No member of the Council or of any committee, sub-committee, working or steering group shall disclose to any person not a member of the Council any business declared to be confidential by the Council, the committee, sub-committee, working or steering group as the case may be.**

28.2 **Any Councillor in breach of the provisions of paragraph 28.1 of this Standing Order shall be removed from any committee, sub-committee, working or steering group of the Council by the Council and reported to the Standards Committee.**

**29.0 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE**

29.1 **Before exercising the General Power of Competence, a meeting of the Full Council shall have passed a resolution to confirm that it has satisfied the prescribed statutory criteria required to qualify as an eligible Council. The prescribed statutory criteria are:-**

29.1.1 **the number of ordinary members of the Council that have been declared to be elected, whether at ordinary elections or at a by-election, is equal or greater than two-thirds of the total number of members of the Council;**

29.1.2 **the Clerk to the Town Council holds an appropriate qualification;**

and

29.1.3 **the Clerk to the Town Council has completed the relevant training, unless such training was required for the purpose of obtaining a qualification of a description mentioned in paragraph 29.1.2.**

**30.0 HANDLING STAFF MATTERS**

30.1 If a meeting considers any matter personal to a Council employee, it shall not be considered until the Council, committee or sub-committee, (as the case may be), has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded pursuant to Standing Order 3.5 above.

30.2 Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of Council employees shall keep written records confidential of all meetings relating to their performance, and capabilities, grievance and disciplinary matters.

30.3 The Council shall keep written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured under lock and electronic records shall be password protected.

30.4 Records documenting reasons for an employee's absence due to ill health or details of a medical condition shall be made available only to those persons with responsibility for the same.

30.5 Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to employee records referred to in Standing Orders 30.3 and 30.4 above if so justified.

30.6 Access and means of access by computer passwords to detailed personnel records of employment referred to in Standing Orders 30.3 and 30.4 above shall be provided only to The Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer. Access to the personnel files of direct reports only, shall be made available to the Estates & Facilities Manager and Hospitality Manager in addition to the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk & RFO.

30.7 Subject to the Town Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's Assistant Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer shall notify the Chairman of

the Personnel Sub-Committee, or if they are not available, the Vice Chairman, of frequent or continued absence.

- 30.8 Subject to the Town Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Assistant Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer shall contact the Chairman of the Personnel Sub-Committee in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed in accordance with the Town Council's policy.
- 30.9 Subject to the Town Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter is raised by a member of the management team of Uckfield Town Council which relates to the Mayor or Deputy Mayor of the Town Council, this shall be communicated to the Chair of General Purposes Committee, which shall be reported back and progressed in accordance with existing HR policies.
- 31.0 RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION**
- 31.1 **In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme (policy no. 54) and respond to requests for information held by the Council as per the Council's policy 'Handling Access to Information' requests (Policy No. 16)**
- 31.2 **The Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements)(England) Regulations 2015.**
- 32.0 RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS AND MEDIA**
- 32.1 All requests from the press or other media for an oral or written statement or comment from the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media. (Policy No 26)
- 33.0 COMMUNICATING WITH DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS**
- 33.1 An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the Councillors of the District and County Council representing their electoral wards.
- 33.2 When requested, letters ordered to be sent to the County or District Council shall be transmitted to the County Councillors for the division or to the District Councillors for the ward as the case may be.
- 34.0 FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT**
- 34.1 The Council shall consider and approve Financial Regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
- 34.1.1 the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal control;
- 34.1.2 the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
- 34.1.3 the work of the internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;

- 34.1.4 the inspection and copying by Councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments;
  - 34.1.5 procurement policies (subject to Standing Order 34.2 below) including the setting of values for different procedures;
  - 34.1.6 whether contracts with an estimated value below £25,000 due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
  - 34.1.7 financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for the fitness of purpose.
- 34.2 For any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value between £10,000 but not exceeding £25,000, the Town Clerk shall invite quotations from at least three appropriate firms from a preferred list of contractors as set out in the Financial Regulations.**
- 34.3 A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in 34.0 (financial regulations) is subject to the 'light touch' arrangements under Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement);**
- 34.4 Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services, or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
- (i) a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
  - (ii) an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification, (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
  - (iii) the invitation shall be advertised in the local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;
  - (iv) tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Estates & Facilities Manager;
  - (v) tenders shall be opened by the Estates & Facilities Manager in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
  - (vi) tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the council or committee, with delegated responsibility.
- 34.5 Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- 34.6 Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time, the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 apply to the contract and, if either of**

**those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.**

### **35.0 TRAINING**

35.1 All Councillors appointed to the Council will attend appropriate training courses.

35.2 Chairmen shall be expected to undertake appropriate training courses.

### **36.0 URGENT BUSINESS**

36.1 If a matter is deemed "urgent" and if outside scheduled committee meetings or Full Council and with the consent of the Mayor and Chairman of committee, it can be agreed by the use of an Urgent Consultation Panel. The Panel will consist of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and Chairmen of committees. All decisions agreed by the panel will be reported to Full Council or the appropriate standing committee at the earliest opportunity.

### **37.0 MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION**

37.1 See also standing order 31.0

**The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.**

37.2 **The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).**

37.3 **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

37.4 **Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

### **38.0 RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION**

38.1 The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.

38.2 **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning his personal data.**

38.3 **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**

- 38.4 The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.**
- 38.5 The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.**
- 38.6 The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



## FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Issue No.	Date Agreed	Details of amendments
1	11 October 2005	Reissued in new format
2		Draft 6 (13 <sup>th</sup> May 2008)
3	27 May 2008	General Purposes Minute No. GP.010.05.08
4	17 August 2009	General Purposes Minute No. GP.017.08.09
5	18 April 2011	General Purposes Minute No. GP.104.04.11 Full review undertaken
6	13 April 2015	GP.70.04.15 Review and Update
7	15 August 2016	Amendment in response to updated model financial regulations
8	5 November 2018	Amendment in line with revised Standing Orders – GP Committee
9	9 March 2020	Proposed amendments in line with changes to NALC's Model Financial Regulations in 2019
10	25 April 2022	GP41.04.22 Approval of amendments presented to GP Committee in line with NALC Model Regulations
<u>11</u>	<u>15 May 2023</u>	<u>Annual review – Annual Statutory meeting of the Council</u>



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## **1.0 GENERAL**

- 1.1 These Financial Regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council. Financial regulations are one of the council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the council's standing orders and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts. The Council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of financial control which facilitates the effective exercise of its functions, including arrangements for the management of risk and for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption. These Financial Regulations are designed to demonstrate how the Council meets these responsibilities.
- 1.2 The post of Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) is a statutory office under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and shall be appointed by the Council. The RFO, acting under the policy direction of the Council, shall administer the Council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices. The RFO shall determine on behalf of the Council its accounting records and accounting control systems. The RFO shall ensure that the accounting control systems are observed and that the accounting records of the Council are maintained and kept up to date in accordance with proper practices. The RFO shall assist the council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources.
- 1.3 The RFO shall produce financial management information as required by the Council.
- 1.4 At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, and annual accounts, the Council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.5 In these Financial Regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in 'Governance and Accountability in Local Councils - A Practitioners' Guide (England)' issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and SLCC.
- 1.6 In these Financial Regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or 'the regulations' shall mean the Regulations issued under the provisions of Section 27 the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation and then in force unless otherwise specified.
- 1.7 Section 150(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 which governed the stewardship of money held by local councils has been repealed. It required that 'every cheque or other order for the payment of money be signed by two members of the Council'. Although this requirement has been repealed it is felt that it still remains good practice and will be retained by the Council, for the relevant method of payment.

- 1.8 Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.9 Members of the council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.10 The council's accounting control systems must include measures:
- for the timely production of accounts;
  - that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money;
  - to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud;
  - identifying the duties of officers.
- 1.11 The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the council's transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management information prepared for the council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations. Accounting records shall in particular contain:
- entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the council, and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate;
  - a record of assets and liabilities of the council, and;
  - wherever relevant, a record of the council's income and expenditure in relation to the claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.
- 1.12 The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:
- procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the council are recorded as soon as practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible;
  - procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct lost records;
  - identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions;
  - procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the council for approval to be written off expect with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records, and measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.
- 1.13 The council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified decisions. In particular any decision regarding:
- setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);
  - approving accounting statements;
  - approving an annual governance statement;
  - borrowing;
  - writing off bad debts;
  - declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence;
  - addressing recommendations in any report from the internal and external

auditors, shall be a matter for General Purposes Committee/Full Council accordingly.

- 1.14 In addition, the council must:
- determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
  - in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to the recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant committee in accordance with its terms of reference.

## **2.0 ANNUAL ESTIMATES**

- 2.1 Each committee shall formulate and submit annual budget proposals to the Council in respect of revenue and capital expenditure for the following financial year, not later than the end of January each year. Including recommendations for the use of reserves, sources of funding and update the forecast accordingly.
- 2.2 Detailed estimates of income and expenditure on revenue services and receipts and payments on capital accounts shall be prepared each year by the RFO.
- 2.3 The Council shall review the estimates not later than the end of January each year and shall fix the precept to be levied for the ensuing financial year. The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each Member with a copy of the approved budget.
- 2.4 The annual capital and revenue expenditure shall form the Council's budgets and the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.
- 2.5 In considering its annual estimates the Council shall have regard to its current five year Strategic Plan, and Annual Plan.

## **3.0 BUDGETARY CONTROL**

- 3.1 Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included in the approved budget, and detailed in the regulations.
- 3.2 No expenditure may be incurred that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that item of expenditure, unless first approved by the General Purposes Committee or the Urgent Consultation Panel. Unspent provisions in the revenue budget shall not be carried forward to a new financial year, unless moved to other budget headings or placed in an earmarked reserve by resolution of the General Purposes Committee.
- 3.3 The RFO shall regularly provide each committee with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose "material" shall be in excess of [15%?] of the budget.
- 3.4 The Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk & RFO and Estates & Facilities Manager

may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council which is necessary to carry out any repair, replacement, Health and Safety or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £5,000. The Clerk shall report the action to the appropriate committee as soon as possible thereafter.

- 3.5 Where expenditure is incurred in accordance with Regulation 3.4 above such sums shall be approved by the General Purposes Committee at the next available meeting.
- 3.6 No expenditure shall be incurred in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure, unless the relevant committee is satisfied that it is contained in the capital programme and that the necessary capital funds are available, or the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained. Such authority is to be evidenced by a minute or by an authorisation slip duly signed by the Clerk and where necessary also by the appropriate Chairman.
- 3.7 All capital works relating to contracts shall be administered in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these regulations/
- 3.8 Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by the relevant committee as part of the budgetary control process.
- 3.9 The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually for the following financial year (as part of the budget setting process) and such review shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and Chair. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.
- 4.0 ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT**
- 4.1 All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 4.2 The RFO shall be responsible for completing the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the Council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them to and report thereon to the Council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 4.3 Anti-Fraud and Corruption
  - 4.3.1 In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations the separation of duties of Officers dealing with financial transactions shall be carried out wherever practical, thus reducing the risk of fraud or suspicion of fraud.
  - 4.3.2 Wherever possible arrangement shall be made to ensure that the same

two Officers carry out no more than two of the following:-

- (a) The ordering of works, goods or services.
- (b) The acknowledgement of their receipt,
- and
- (c) The examination and certification of invoices and accounts.

4.3.3 Wherever possible, Officers responsible for the examination and checking of records of cash transactions shall not be engaged in any of these transactions.

#### 4.4 Audit

4.4.1 The RFO shall complete the Annual Accounts of the Council and shall submit the accounts for approval and authorisation by the Council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

4.4.2 The RFO shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the Council's accounting, financial and other operations in accordance with proper practices. Any Officer or Member shall, if the RFO or Internal Auditor requires, make available such documents of the Council which appear to the RFO or Internal Auditor to be necessary for the purpose of the internal audit and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, Internal Auditor or External Auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary for that purpose.

4.4.3 The Internal Auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work required by the Council in accordance with proper practices. The Internal Auditor, who shall be competent and independent of the operations of the Council, shall report to the General Purposes Committee in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report in respect of each financial year. In order to demonstrate objectivity and independence, the Internal Auditor shall be free from any conflicts of interest and have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the Council.

4.4.4 The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to accounts including the opportunity for inspection of the accounts, books, and vouchers, and associated documents for the display or publication of any notices and statements of account required by the relevant Acts and Regulations.

4.4.5 The RFO shall, as soon as practicable, bring to the attention of all Members any correspondence or report from the Internal or External Auditor, unless the correspondence is of a purely administrative nature.

- 4.4.6 Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
- perform any operational duties;- initiate or approve accounting transactions, or;
  - direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor-

4.5 Members' Audit

On a monthly basis one Member of the Council will carry out an audit in accordance with the Members' Audit Policy No. 63 and will report their findings to the next meeting of the General Purposes Committee. This audit incorporates spot checks of supplier invoices, customer invoices, timesheets, and bank reconciliation and verification to nominal code, as well as the petty cash for both Uckfield Town Council and Luxfords Restaurant.

- 4.6 At least once a quarter and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chairman shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and be noted by the Council. This can form part of the existing member audit procedures.

**5.0 BANKING ARRANGEMENTS, BACS AND ELECTRONIC BANKING**

- 5.1 The Council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the Council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for efficiency.

- 5.2 All monies received by the Council, including Luxford's takings, shall be banked daily and a full record made on the reverse of the paying-in slip. From 8 March 2023, the local branch to Uckfield Town Council closed down, which has required new paying-in procedures to be followed. The paying-in and withdrawal of funds is now processed through the Post Office. A limit is set at £1k per day for paying-in cash to the Post Office. The Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk were issued with debit cards by the bank for withdrawing funds from the Clerk account, in addition to 'change giving' cards to authorise the withdrawal of monies for petty cash purposes only.

- 5.3 With the exception of the arrangements set out in Regulation 6.1, all certified invoices and payments shall be paid by BACs, drawn on the Council's accounts and all BACs payments shall be signed by two members of the Council. A schedule of payments, listed by committee heading, and signed by the same two Members of the Council, shall be provided and presented at the next meeting of the committee. A member who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment in question.

- 5.4 Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the

council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have disclosable prejudicial interest or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.

- 5.5 The council will aim to rotate the duties of member in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.

## **6.0 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

- 6.1 The council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.
- 6.2 Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5, the council, a duly delegated committee or the Clerk or RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.
- 6.3 Apart from petty cash, payments shall be effected by BACs or other order drawn on the Council's bankers.
- 6.4 All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the Officer issuing the order. Before certifying an invoice, the Officer shall be satisfied that the works, goods or services to which the invoice relates have been received, carried out, examined and approved.
- 6.5 Duly certified invoices shall be examined in relation to arithmetical accuracy and authorisation, and shall be coded to the appropriate expenditure head. The RFO or appropriate Officer shall take all possible steps to settle all invoices or statements submitted, and which are in order, within 30 days of their receipt, or earlier, or in such manner, (e.g. standing order, direct debit etc), if such payment results in benefit to the Council, subject to any initial instruction forms or letters being signed by two Members of the Council.
- 6.6 All duly certified invoices will then be entered on the schedule of payments made and presented to the next meeting of the appropriate committee in accordance with Regulation 5.3.
- 6.7 The RFO or other appropriate Officer may authorise petty cash to Officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers, relevant receipts or other supporting documentary evidence for payments made shall be forwarded to the RFO with a claim for reimbursement.
- (a) The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of no more than £200 for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses incurred by the Council.
- (b) The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of no more than £250 for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses incurred by Luxfords Restaurant.



- (c) Re-imburement for sums over £50 from any petty cash float shall only be made by cheque.
  - (d) Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked as provided in Regulation 9.
  - (e) Management of petty cash will be in accordance with internal audit procedures.
- 6.8 Corporate credit card accounts must be set up to operate within defined limits and be specifically restricted to use by the Town Clerk, RFO and Estates & Facilities Manager. The credit card will be subject to automatic payment by direct debit in full from the main bank account each month Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.
- 6.9 If thought appropriate by the council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by ~ variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by two members and any payments are reported to the relevant committee. The approval of the use of a variable direct debit shall be renewed by resolution by the relevant committee at least every two years.
- 6.10 If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items (principally salaries) may be made by banker's standing order provided that the instructions are signed, or otherwise evidenced by two members are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.11 If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items may be made by BACs or CHAPS methods provided that the instructions for each payment are signed, or otherwise evidenced, by two authorised bank signatories, are retained and any payments are reported to the council as made. The approval of the use of BACs or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.12 If thought appropriate by the council payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained showing which members approved the payment.
- 6.13 Where a computer requires use of a PIN number or other passwords, for access to the council's records on that computer, a note shall be made of the ~ PIN and passwords, and shall be handed to and retained by the Chair of the Council in a sealed dated envelope. This envelope may not be opened, other than in the presence of two other councillors. After the envelope has been opened, in any circumstances, the PIN/or passwords shall be changed as soon as practicable. The fact that the sealed envelope has been opened, in whatever circumstances, shall be reported to all members immediately and formally to the next available meeting of the council. This will not be required for a

member's personal computer used only for remote authorisation of bank payments.

- 6.14 No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the council or duly delegated committee.
- 6.15 Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away from the computer and preferably off site.
- 6.16 The council, and any members using computers for the council's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.
- 6.17 Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as Service Administrator, alongside the Town Clerk. The bank mandate approved by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts. The bank mandate will state clearly the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the use of the Service Administrator alone, or by the Service Administrator with a stated number of approvals.
- 6.18 Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page, and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved password facilities must not be used on any computer used for council banking work. Breach of this regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.
- 6.19 Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written hard copy notification by the supplier and supported by hard copy authority for change signed by two signatories (Town Clerk/RFO or authorised member signatory). A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.

## **7.0 PAYMENT OF SALARIES AND WAGES**

- 7.1 As an employer, the Council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salaries shall be as agreed by the Council.
- 7.2 Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be made for tax, National Insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions may be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to the next available council meeting, as set out in these regulations above.
- 7.3 No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and

conditions of employment without the prior consent of General Purposes Committee.

- 7.4 All time sheets where applicable shall be in a form prescribed by the RFO and certified as to their accuracy by the member of staff and countersigned by the appropriate manager.
- 7.5 Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record. This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise), other than:
- (a) by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;
  - (b) by the internal auditor;
  - (c) by the external auditor;
  - (d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.
- 7.6 Appropriate Officers shall notify the RFO as soon as possible of all matters affecting the payment of salaries and wages and in particular:-
- Appointments, resignations, retirements, dismissals, suspensions, secondments and all other staff movements.
  - Absences from duty for sickness or other reasons.
  - Information necessary to maintain records of service for superannuation, income tax and national insurance.
  - Changes in remuneration, allowances or working times.
- 7.7 The RFO and the Town Clerk are authorised to make payments of salaries and wages through 'Bankline' subject to such initial permission being signed by two Members of the Council. The total of such payments in each calendar month shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations, to ensure that only payments due for the period have actually been paid.
- 7.8 In the event of emergencies where no two authorised Officers are available to make such payments, the RFO or Town Clerk shall request two Members of the Council to be present.
- 7.9 The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually for the following financial year and such review shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chairman of the Council or relevant committee. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time. This forms part of the annual budget setting process.

- 7.10 An effective system of personal performance management should be maintained for the senior officers.
- 7.11 Termination payments shall only be authorised by General Purposes Committee and before employing interim staff, General Purposes Committee must consider a full business case.

## **8.0 LOANS AND INVESTMENTS**

- 8.1 All loans and investments shall be negotiated by the RFO in the name of the Council, and shall be for a set period of time in accordance with any appropriate Council Policy. Changes to loans and investments should be reported to the General Purposes Committee at the earliest opportunity.
- 8.2 Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible assets) shall be subject to approval by General Purposes Committee. In each case a report in writing shall be provided, in respect of value for money for the proposed transaction.
- 8.3 The Council's Investment Policy (No. 45) shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance and reviewed at least annually. Prior to the receipt of the precept instalment every six months, the Finance Sub-committee may if required, provide information to the General Purposes Committee on the possible investment of these funds.
- 8.4 All investments of money under the control of the Council shall be in the name of the Council.
- 8.5 All borrowings shall be affected in the name of the Council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose and subsequent arrangements for the loan shall only be approved by full council. The terms and conditions of borrowings shall be reviewed at least annually.
- 8.6 All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 8.7 Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with Regulation 5 (Banking arrangements) and Regulation 6 (payment of accounts).

## **9.0 INCOME**

- 9.1 The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of, and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 9.2 Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be ultimately responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Council.

- 9.3 Appropriate committees will review their fees and charges annually following a report by the RFO or other appropriate Officer.
- 9.4 All accounts due will be collected in accordance with these Regulations and any sums found to be irrecoverable or any subsequent bad debts shall be reported to the General Purposes Committee.
- Overdue accounts and bad debts shall be treated in the following manner:-
- (i) Customers with outstanding accounts at 90 days shall be passed to a registered debt collector following a final seven day warning at the discretion of the RFO or appropriate Officer of the Town Council.
  - (ii) Any bad debts that cannot be recovered shall be referred to the General Purposes Committee for authorisation to be written off or for authorisation to make arrangements to collect the debt in other ways.
- 9.5 All sums received on behalf of the Council shall either be submitted to the RFO for banking or to the appropriate Officer collecting the money as directed by the RFO. In all cases all receipts shall be deposited with the Council's bankers in accordance with Regulation 5.2 or in such manner as subsequently directed by the Council's Internal Auditor.
- 9.6 A reference to the related invoice, or otherwise, indicating the origin of each receipt, shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 9.7. All sums received by BACS will be made available for scrutiny for subsequent audits.
- 9.8 Every transfer of official money from one member of staff to another shall be checked and signed for by the receiving Officer.
- 9.9 The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.
- 9.10 Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the Council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the General Purposes Committee to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.
- 9.11 Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.

## **10.0 ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES**

- 10.1 An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate, e.g. petty cash purchases. Where an order number is given verbally, a written order must be raised. Copies of all orders issued shall be retained.
- 10.2 Access to the ordering programme shall be controlled by the RFO.
- 10.3 All Members of the Council and Officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An Officer issuing an official order is to ensure as far as reasonable and practicable, that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimis provisions in Regulation 11.1 below
- 10.4 Only the Town Clerk, RFO, Estates & Facilities Manager or Hospitality Manager, may initiate orders which shall be endorsed by a second Officer. A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.
- 10.5 Goods and services received shall be checked against the relevant copy of the purchase order.
- 10.6 The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the minutes can record the power being used.

## **11.0 CONTRACTS**

- 11.1 Every contract, whether made by the Council or by a committee to which the power of making contracts has been delegated, shall comply with these Financial Regulations and no exception from any of the following provisions of these Regulations shall be made other than in an emergency, provided that these Regulations shall not apply to the contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:-
- (i) For the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services.
  - (ii) For specialist services such as are provided by legal professionals acting in disputes (solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants or other services) identifies to be of a specialist nature by the Town Clerk, RFO or Estates & Facilities Manager;
  - (iii) For work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;
  - (iv) For work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council;

- (v) For additional audit work of the external auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of council), and;
  - (vi) for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and/or are only sold at a fixed prices
- 11.2 Where it is intended to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract:-
- (i) For expenditure of £10,000 or less in value, the Town Clerk or a duly approved Officer shall have authorisation to obtain such goods or services from an appropriate firm.
  - (ii) For any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works or specialist services with an estimated value between £10,000 but not exceeding £25,000, the Town Clerk or RFO shall invite quotations from at least three appropriate firms from a preferred list of contractors as set out in the Financial Regulations.
  - (iii) For expenditure which is valued at £25,000 or more, the council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations (requiring the Council to use the Contracts Finder Website to advertise contract opportunities, set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the aware of new contracts).
  - (iv) The full requirements of the Regulations [The Public Contracts Regulations 2015], as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public services contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time). (
  - (v) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Order 34.3 and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 11.3 Invitations to tender shall state the period and the general nature of the intended contract and the Town Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. In addition, the invitation shall state that tenders must be addressed to the Town Clerk and the last date by which such tenders should reach the Town Clerk. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specially marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.
- 11.4 All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Town Clerk or other appropriate Officer in the presence of at least two Members of the Council.

- 11.5 The Town Clerk or other appropriate Officer shall record the details of the tender, the names and addresses of each tenderer, the amount or price of the tender, the time and place of opening, and the names and signatures of those present at the opening of the tenders. The above details shall be reported to the Council, or where the tenders have been sought by a committee to that committee.
- 11.6 If fewer than three tenders are received for contracts valued above £50,000 or if all the tenders are identical, the Council may make such arrangements as it thinks fit for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works.
- 11.7 Any invitation to tender issued under this Regulation shall contain a statement of the effect of Standing Orders Nos: 25.1. 25.2 and 25.3.
- 11.8 When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable tenders to be negotiated without competition, the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the General Purposes Committee.
- 11.9 Neither the Council, nor any committee is bound to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate
- 11.10 Should it occur that the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, that the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was undertaken.

## **12.0 PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS**

- 12.1 Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract, by the RFO upon receipt of authorised certificates issued by the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract and a valid claim for payment from the contractor. (Subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).
- 12.2 Where contracts provide for payments by instalments, the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case when it is estimated that the total cost of the work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum by five per cent or more, a report shall be submitted to the Council or relevant committee.
- 12.3 Any variation to a contract, or addition to, or omission from a contract must be approved by the Town Clerk to the contractor in writing. The Council or appropriate committee should be informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

## **13.0 STOCKS, STORES AND EQUIPMENT**

- 13.1 The Officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and security of all relevant buildings, furniture, equipment, cash, stocks and stores



in that section.

- 13.2 Appropriate Officers shall ensure that all conditions of insurance are complied with in respect of cash, valuables and property.
- 13.3 Delivery notes or invoices must be obtained in respect of all goods received, and goods must be checked as to quantity and quality against the purchase orders at the time delivery is made.
- 13.4 Stocks and stores shall generally be maintained at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 13.5 The RFO or appropriate Officer shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

#### **14.0 ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES**

- 14.1 The Town Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties owned by the Council. The Estates & Facilities Manager and RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all assets owned by the Council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, (where possible), nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held, in accordance with the current Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 14.2 The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate register of assets and investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown on the register shall be verified at least annually with a safety inspection of assets.
- 14.3 No property shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the Council, together with any other consent required by law. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.4 No property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 14.5 No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible moveable property does not exceed £500.
- 14.6 Subject only to the limit set in Regulation 14.5 above, no tangible moveable property shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council.

In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council with a full business case.

## **15.0 INSURANCE**

- 15.1 Following the annual risk assessment (Financial Regulations 16.1 and 16.2), the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers.
- 15.2 The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report to the appropriate committee at the next available meeting.
- 15.3 The appropriate Officer shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations effecting existing insurances.
- 15.4 The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances affected by the Council and the property and risks covered and annually review the Council's insurance requirements.
- 15.5 All appropriate members and employees of the Council shall be included in suitable fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined by the Council or relevant committee.

## **16.0 RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 16.1 The Council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The RFO or appropriate Officer shall prepare, for approval by the Council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the Council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the General Purposes Committee at least annually.
- 16.2 When considering any new activity, the RFO or appropriate Officer shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the General Purposes Committee.

## **17.0 SECURITY AND MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION**

- 17.1 Records of a financial nature shall be retained in accordance with a schedule of minimum periods to comply with tax and insurance requirements or other instructions or advice received from the appropriate authorities. Regardless of the above all records must be retained, as a minimum, until after the completion of each year's external audit.
- 17.2 The Council will comply with the Freedom of Information Act and any other appropriate Council policy or other applicable legislation that may be introduced or amended from time to time.

**18.0 REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

- 18.1 It shall be the duty of the General Purposes Committee to review these Financial Regulations from time to time. The Town Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the General Purposes Committee of any requirement for a consequential amendment to them.
- 18.2 The council, may, by resolution of the council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of the council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all members of the council.

# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



## CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

Policy Number 43		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	May 2007	FC.011.05.07
2.	28.04.08	FC.092.04.08
3.	09.07.12	FC.25.07.12 – Complete revision of the Code
4.	13.01.14	FC.70.01.14 - Revisions as suggested by WDC
5.	03.10.15	GP – for noting following review of Standing Orders at Full Council.
6.	15.05.23	For review – Annual Statutory meeting of the Council

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## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

As a Member or co-opted Member of Uckfield Town Council I have a responsibility to represent the community and work constructively with our staff and partner organisations to secure better social, economic and environmental outcomes for all.

In accordance with the Localism Act provisions, when acting in this capacity I am committed to behaving in a manner that is consistent with the following principles to achieve best value for our residents and maintain public confidence in this Council.

### The Seven Principles of Public Life

1. Selflessness  
Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
2. Integrity  
Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
3. Objectivity  
Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
4. Accountability  
Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
5. Openness  
Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
6. Honesty  
Holders of public office should be truthful.
7. Leadership  
Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

On their election or co-option to Uckfield Town Council, Members are required to sign an undertaking to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct.

This Code of Conduct, adopted by the Council on the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2014 is set out below. It is made under Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011 and includes, as standing orders made under Chapter 7 of that Act and Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972, provisions which require Members to leave meetings in appropriate circumstances, while matters in which they have a personal interest are being considered.

## **PART 1 – GENERAL PROVISIONS**

### **Introduction and interpretation**

1. (1) This Code applies to **you** as a member of the Council when acting in that capacity.
- (2) This Code is based upon seven principles fundamental to public service, which are set out above. You should have regard to these principles as they will help you to comply with the Code.
- (3) If you need guidance on any matter under this Code you should seek it from the Council's Proper Officer, the authority's Monitoring Officer or your own legal adviser – but it is entirely your responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code.
- (4) It is a criminal offence to fail to notify the Council's Proper Officer or the authority's Monitoring Officer of a disclosable pecuniary interest, to take part in discussions or votes at meetings, or to take a decision where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, without reasonable excuse. It is also an offence to knowingly or recklessly to provide false or misleading information to the Council's Proper Officer or the authority's Monitoring Officer.
- (5) Any written allegation received by the authority that you have failed to comply with this Code will be dealt with by the Monitoring Officer and District Council's Standards Committee under the arrangements which it has adopted for such purposes. If it is found that you have failed to comply with the Code, the Monitoring Officer and Standards Committee have the right to have regard to this failure in deciding -
  - (a) whether to take action in relation to you; and
  - (b) what action to take.
- (6) In this Code —
  - “Authority” means Wealden District Council.
  - “Code” means this Code of Conduct.
  - “Co-opted Member” means a person who is not a member of the Council but who -
    - (a) is a member of any committee, sub-committee, working group or steering group of the Council, or

- (b) is a member of, and represents the Council on, any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Council,

and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee, sub-committee working group or steering group.

“Council” means Uckfield Town Council.

“Meeting” means any meeting of —

- (a) the Council;
- (b) any of the Council’s committees, sub-committees, working groups or steering groups.

“Member” includes a co-opted Member.

“Monitoring Officer” for the authority means the Monitoring Officer who is the Monitoring Officer for Wealden District Council and all Parish and Town Councils in the District Council area.

“Register of Members’ Interests” means the Council’s Register of Members’ Pecuniary and other Interests established and maintained by the authority’s Monitoring Officer under section 29 of the Localism Act 2011.

## **Scope**

2. (1) Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) and (3), you must comply with this Code whenever you -
- (a) conduct the business of your Council (which, in this Code, includes the business of the office to which you are elected or appointed); or
  - (b) act, claim to act or give the impression you are acting as a representative of your Council,
- and references to your official capacity are construed accordingly.
- (2) This Code does not have effect in relation to your conduct other than where it is in your official capacity.
- (3) Where you act as a representative of your Council –
- (a) on another relevant authority, you must, when acting for that other authority, comply with that other authority’s Code of Conduct; or
  - (b) on any other body, you must, when acting for that other body, comply with your Council’s Code of Conduct, except and insofar as it conflicts with any other lawful obligations to which that other body may be subject.

### **General obligations**

3. (1) You must treat others with respect
- (2) You must not -
  - (a) do anything which may cause your Council to breach any of its equality duties (in particular as set out in the Equality Act 2010);
  - (b) bully any person;
  - (c) intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is or is likely to be -
    - (i) a complainant,
    - (ii) a witness, or
    - (iii) involved in the administration of any investigation or proceedings, in relation to an allegation that a Member (including yourself) has failed to comply with his or her Council's Code of Conduct; or
  - (d) do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, your Council.
4. You must not -
  - (a) disclose information given to you in confidence by anyone, or information acquired by you which you believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, except where -
    - (i) you have the consent of a person authorised to give it;
    - (ii) you are required by law to do so;
    - (iii) the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or
    - (iv) the disclosure is -
      - (a) reasonable and in the public interest; and
      - (b) made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the Council;
  - (b) prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.
5. You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or Council into disrepute.



**6. You -**

- (a) must not use or attempt to use your position as a Member improperly to confer on or secure for yourself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage;
- (b) must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of your Council -
  - (i) act in accordance with your Council's reasonable requirements;
  - (ii) ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes); and
- (c) must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.

**7. (1) When reaching decisions on any matter you must have regard to any relevant advice provided to you by -**

- (a) your Council's Proper Officer; or
- (b) your Council's Responsible Finance Officer,

where that officer is acting pursuant to his or her statutory duties.

- (2) You must give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any statutory requirements and any reasonable additional requirements imposed by your Council.

**PART 2 – INTERESTS**

**Personal interests**

- 8. (1)** The interests described in paragraphs 8(3) and 8(5) are your personal interests and the interests in paragraph 8(5) are your pecuniary interests which are disclosable pecuniary interests as defined by section 30 of the Localism Act 2011.
- (2) If you fail to observe Parts 2 and 3 of the Code in relation to your personal interests -
- (a) the authority may deal with the matter as mentioned in paragraph 1(5) and
  - (b) if the failure relates to a disclosable pecuniary interest, you may also become subject to criminal proceedings as mentioned in paragraph 1(4).
- (3) You have a personal interest in any business of your Council where either -
- (a) it relates to or is likely to affect -

- (i) any body of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by your Council;
  - (ii) any body -
    - (a) exercising functions of a public nature;
    - (b) directed to charitable purposes; or
    - (c) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union),
 of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management;
  - (iii) the interests of any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50
- (b) a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well-being or financial position or the well-being or financial position of a relevant person to a greater extent than the majority of (in the case of Councils with electoral divisions or wards) other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the electoral division or ward, as the case may be, affected by the decision;
- (4) In sub-paragraph (3)(b), a relevant person is -
- (a) a member of your family or a close associate; or
  - (b) any person or body who employs or has appointed such persons, any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are directors;
  - (c) any person or body in whom such persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or
  - (d) any body of a type described in sub-paragraph (3)(a)(i) or (ii).
- (5) Subject to sub-paragraph (6), you have a personal interest which is also a disclosable pecuniary interest as defined by Section 30 of the Localism Act 2011 in any business of your Council where:
- (i) you or
  - (ii) your partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners) have any interest within the following descriptions:

Interest	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	<p>Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant Council) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by M in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of M.</p> <p>This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.</p>
Contracts	<p>Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant Council -</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant Council.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant Council for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	<p>Any tenancy where (to M's knowledge) –</p> <p>(a) the landlord is the relevant Council; and</p> <p>(b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.</p>

Interest	Description
Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where –</p> <p>(a) that body (to M's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant Council; and</p> <p>(b) either –</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class</p>

- (6) In sub-paragraph (5), any interest which your partner may have is only treated as your interest if you are aware that that your partner has the interest.

**Disclosure of personal interests (See also Part 3)**

8. (1) Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) to (6), where you have a personal interest in any business of your Council and you attend a meeting of your Council at which any matter relating to the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.
- (2) If the personal interest is entered on the Council's register there is no requirement for you to disclose the interest to that meeting, but you should do so if you wish a disclosure to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- (3) Sub-paragraph (1) only applies where you are aware or ought reasonably to be aware of the existence of the personal interest.
- (4) Where you have a personal interest but, by virtue of paragraph 14, sensitive information relating to it is not registered in your Council's register of Members' interests, you must indicate to the meeting that you have a personal interest and, if also applicable, that it is a disclosable pecuniary interest, but need not disclose the sensitive information to the meeting.

**Prejudicial interest generally**

9. (1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), where you have a personal interest in any business of your Council you also have a prejudicial interest in that business where either -

- (a) the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest as described in paragraph 8(5), or
  - (b) the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.
- (2) For the purposes of sub-paragraph (1)(b), you do not have a prejudicial interest in any business of the Council where that business -
- (a) does not affect your financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in paragraph 8;
  - (b) does not relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or any person or body described in paragraph 8; or
  - (c) relates to the functions of your Council in respect of -
    - (i) housing, where you are a tenant of your Council provided that those functions do not relate particularly to your tenancy or lease;
    - (ii) school meals or school transport and travelling expenses, where you are a parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or are a parent governor of a school, unless it relates particularly to the school which the child attends;
    - (iii) statutory sick pay under Part XI of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, where you are in receipt of, or are entitled to the receipt of, such pay;
    - (iv) an allowance, payment or indemnity given to Members;
    - (v) any ceremonial honour given to Members; and
    - (vi) setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

**Effect of prejudicial interests on participation**

10. (1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2) and (3), where you have a prejudicial interest in any matter in relation to the business of your Council -
- (a) you must not participate, or participate further, in any discussion of the matter at any meeting, or participate in any vote, or further vote, taken on the matter at the meeting and must withdraw from the room or chamber where the meeting considering the matter is being held -
    - (i) in a case where sub-paragraph (2) applies, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence;

- (ii) in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the matter is being considered at that meeting;
- unless you have obtained a dispensation from your Council's Proper Officer or the authority's Monitoring Officer;
- (b) you must not exercise executive functions in relation to that matter; and
  - (c) you must not seek improperly to influence a decision about that matter.
- (2) Where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of your Council which is not a disclosable pecuniary interest as described in paragraph 8(5), you may attend a meeting (including a meeting of the overview and scrutiny committee of your Council or of a sub-committee of such a committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.
- (3) Where you have a prejudicial interest which is not a disclosable pecuniary interest as described in paragraph 8(5), arising solely from membership of any body described 8(3)(a)(i) or 8(3)(a)(ii)(a) then you do not have to withdraw from the room or chamber and may make representations to the committee but may not participate in the vote.

### **PART 3 – REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS**

#### **Registration of Members' interests**

11. (1) Subject to paragraph 12, you must, within 28 days of -
- (a) this Code being adopted by the Council; or
  - (b) your election or appointment to office (where that is later), register in the register of Members' interests details of -
    - (i) your personal interests where they fall within a category mentioned in paragraph 8(3)(a) and
    - (ii) your personal interests which are also disclosable pecuniary interests where they fall within a category mentioned in paragraph 8(5)
- by providing written notification to your Council's Proper Officer.
- (2) Subject to paragraph 12, you must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new personal interest falling within sub-paragraphs (1)(b)(i) or (1)(b)(ii) or any change to any personal interest registered under sub-paragraphs (1)(b)(i) or (1)(b)(ii), register details of that new personal interest or change by providing written notification to your Council's Proper Officer.

### **Sensitive information**

- 12.** (1) Where you consider that the information relating to any of your personal interests is sensitive information, and your authority's Monitoring Officer agrees, the Monitoring Officer shall not include details of the interest on any copies of the register of Members' interests which are made available for inspection or any published version of the register, but may include a statement that you have an interest, the details of which are withheld under this paragraph.
- (2) You must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any change of circumstances which means that information excluded under paragraph (1) is no longer sensitive information, notify your authority's Monitoring Officer asking that the information be included in the register of Members' interests.
- (3) In this Code, "sensitive information" means information, the details of which, if disclosed, could lead to you or a person connected with you being subject to violence or intimidation.

### **Dispensations**

- 15** (1) The District Council's Standards Committee, Monitoring Officer or the Council's Proper Officer may, on a written request made by a Member, grant a dispensation relieving the Member from either or both of the restrictions in paragraph 10(1)(a) (restrictions on participating in discussions and in voting), in cases described in the dispensation.
- (2) A dispensation may be granted only if, after having had regard to all relevant circumstances, the District Council's Standards Committee, Monitoring Officer or the Council's Proper Officer -
- (a) considers that without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited by paragraph 10 from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business,
  - (b) considers that without the dispensation the representation of different political groups on the body transacting any particular business would be so upset as to alter the likely outcome of any vote relating to the business,
  - (c) considers that granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area,
  - (d) considers that it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.
- (2) A dispensation must specify the period for which it has effect, and the period specified may not exceed four years.
- (3) Paragraph 10 does not apply in relation to anything done for the purpose of deciding whether to grant a dispensation under this paragraph.



## **Local Government Association**

### **Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020**

#### **Joint statement**

The role of councillor across all tiers of local government is a vital part of our country's system of democracy. It is important that as councillors we can be held accountable and all adopt the behaviors and responsibilities associated with the role. Our conduct as an individual councillor affects the reputation of all councillors. We want the role of councillor to be one that people aspire to. We also want individuals from a range of backgrounds and circumstances to be putting themselves forward to become councillors.

As councillors, we represent local residents, work to develop better services and deliver local change. The public have high expectations of us and entrust us to represent our local area, taking decisions fairly, openly, and transparently. We have both an individual and collective responsibility to meet these expectations by maintaining high standards and demonstrating good conduct, and by challenging behaviour which falls below expectations.

Importantly, we should be able to undertake our role as a councillor without being intimidated, abused, bullied, or threatened by anyone, including the general public.

This Code has been designed to protect our democratic role, encourage good conduct and safeguard the public's trust in local government.



## **Introduction**

The Local Government Association (LGA) has developed this Model Councillor Code of Conduct, in association with key partners and after extensive consultation with the sector, as part of its work on supporting all tiers of local government to continue to aspire to high standards of leadership and performance. It is a template for councils to adopt in whole and/or with local amendments.

All councils are required to have a local Councillor Code of Conduct.

The LGA will undertake an annual review of this Code to ensure it continues to be fit-for-purpose, incorporating advances in technology, social media and changes in legislation. The LGA can also offer support, training and mediation to councils and councillors on the application of the Code and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the county associations of local councils can offer advice and support to town and parish councils.

## **Definitions**

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a “councillor” means a member or co-opted member of a local authority or a directly elected mayor. A “co-opted member” is defined in the Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4) as “a person who is not a member of the authority but who

- a) is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or;
- b) is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the authority;

and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee”.

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, “local authority” includes county councils, district councils, London borough councils, parish councils, town councils, fire and rescue authorities, police authorities, joint authorities, economic prosperity boards, combined authorities and National Park authorities.

## **Purpose of the Code of Conduct**

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a councillor, in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow councillors, local authority officers and the reputation of local government. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all councillors and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The LGA encourages the use of support, training and mediation prior to action being taken using the Code. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of councillor and local government.

## **General principles of councillor conduct**

Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, councillors and local authority officers; should uphold the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#), also known as the Nolan Principles.

Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of councillor.

In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- I act with integrity and honesty
- I act lawfully
- I treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
- I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of councillor.

In undertaking my role:

- I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
- I avoid conflicts of interest
- I exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
- I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with my local authority's requirements and in the public interest.

## **Application of the Code of Conduct**

This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you sign your declaration of acceptance of the office of councillor or attend your first meeting as a co-opted member and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a councillor.

This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a councillor which may include when:

- you misuse your position as a councillor
- Your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a councillor;

The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- at face-to-face meetings
- at online or telephone meetings
- in written communication
- in verbal communication
- in non-verbal communication
- in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.

You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times when acting as a councillor.

Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from your Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct. Town and parish councillors are encouraged to seek advice from their Clerk, who may refer matters to the Monitoring

Officer.

## **Standards of councillor conduct**

This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a councillor. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.

Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

### **General Conduct**

#### **1. Respect**

##### **As a councillor:**

**1.1 I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.**

**1.2 I treat local authority employees, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the local authority with respect and respect the role they play.**

Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a councillor, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in councillors.

In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the local authority, the relevant social media provider or the police. This also applies to fellow councillors, where action could then be taken under the Councillor Code of Conduct, and local authority employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the local authority's councillor-officer protocol.

#### **2. Bullying, harassment and discrimination**

##### **As a councillor:**

**2.1 I do not bully any person.**

**2.2 I do not harass any person.**

**2.3 I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person.**

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and

contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Councillors have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the local authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

### **3. Impartiality of officers of the council**

**As a councillor:**

#### **3.1 I do not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the local authority.**

Officers work for the local authority as a whole and must be politically neutral (unless they are political assistants). They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

### **4. Confidentiality and access to information**

**As a councillor:**

#### **4.1 I do not disclose information:**

- a. given to me in confidence by anyone**
- b. acquired by me which I believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless**
  - i. I have received the consent of a person authorised to give it;**
  - ii. I am required by law to do so;**
  - iii. the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or**
  - iv. the disclosure is:**
    - 1. reasonable and in the public interest; and**
    - 2. made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the local authority; and**
    - 3. I have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.**

#### **4.2 I do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a councillor for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer or my business interests.**

#### **4.3 I do not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.**

Local authorities must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by the local authority must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

## **5. Disrepute**

**As a councillor:**

### **5.1 I do not bring my role or local authority into disrepute.**

As a Councillor, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other councillors and/or your local authority and may lower the public's confidence in you or your local authority's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring your local authority into disrepute.

You are able to hold the local authority and fellow councillors to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the council whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

## **6. Use of position**

**As a councillor:**

### **6.1 I do not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of myself or anyone else.**

Your position as a member of the local authority provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities, and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

## **7. Use of local authority resources and facilities**

**As a councillor:**

### **7.1 I do not misuse council resources.**

### **7.2 I will, when using the resources of the local authority or authorising their use by others:**

- a. act in accordance with the local authority's requirements; and**
- b. ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the local authority or of the office to which I have been elected or appointed.**

You may be provided with resources and facilities by the local authority to assist you in carrying out your duties as a councillor.

Examples include:

- office support
- stationery
- equipment such as phones, and computers
- transport

- access and use of local authority buildings and rooms.

These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a councillor more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the local authority's own policies regarding their use.

## **8. Complying with the Code of Conduct**

### **As a Councillor:**

**8.1 I undertake Code of Conduct training provided by my local authority.**

**8.2 I cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.**

**8.3 I do not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.**

**8.4 I comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct.**

It is extremely important for you as a councillor to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the local authority or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the local authority's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with your Monitoring Officer.

### **Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the local authority**

## **9. Interests**

### **As a councillor:**

**9.1 I register and disclose my interests.**

Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of members of the authority .

You need to register your interests so that the public, local authority employees and fellow councillors know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other councillors when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

You should note that failure to register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest as set out in **Table 1**, is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

**Appendix B sets** out the detailed provisions on registering and disclosing interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from your Monitoring Officer.

## **10. Gifts and hospitality**

### **As a councillor:**

- 10.1 I do not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the local authority or from persons who may apply to the local authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.**
  
- 10.2 I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.**
  
- 10.3 I register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality that I have been offered but have refused to accept.**

In order to protect your position and the reputation of the local authority, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a councillor. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a councillor, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a councillor. If you are unsure, do contact your Monitoring Officer for guidance.

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A – The Seven Principles of Public Life**

The principles are:

#### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

#### **Integrity**

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

#### **Objectivity**

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

#### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

#### **Openness**

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

#### **Honesty**

Holders of public office should be truthful.

#### **Leadership**

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.



## Appendix B Registering interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests)**.

**"Disclosable Pecuniary Interest"** means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

**"Partner"** means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.
2. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.
3. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

### Non participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.
5. [Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it ]

### Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in **Table 2**), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

## Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in Table 1) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.
8. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –
  - a. your own financial interest or well-being;
  - b. a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate; or
  - c. a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registerable Interests as set out in **Table 2**

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied

9. Where a matter (referred to in paragraph 8 above) **affects** the financial interest or well-being:
  - a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
  - b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

10. [Where you have an Other Registerable Interest or Non-Registerable Interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it]

### Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#).

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation</b>	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
<b>Sponsorship</b>	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
<b>Contracts</b>	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the

	<p>councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council —</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
<b>Land and Property</b>	<p>Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council.</p> <p>‘Land’ excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.</p>
<b>Licenses</b>	<p>Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer</p>
<b>Corporate tenancies</b>	<p>Any tenancy where (to the councillor’s knowledge)—</p> <p>(a) the landlord is the council; and</p> <p>(b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.</p>
<b>Securities</b>	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where—</p> <p>(a) that body (to the councillor’s knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and</p> <p>(b) either—</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were</p>

	spouses/civil partners have a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.
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\* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

\* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

## **Table 2: Other Registrable Interests**

You must register as an Other Registrable Interest :

- a) any unpaid directorships
- b) any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
- c) any body
  - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
  - (ii) directed to charitable purposes or
  - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management

## Appendix C – the Committee on Standards in Public Life

The LGA has undertaken this review whilst the Government continues to consider the recommendations made by the Committee on Standards in Public Life in their report on [Local Government Ethical Standards](#). If the Government chooses to implement any of the recommendations, this could require a change to this Code.

The recommendations cover:

- Recommendations for changes to the Localism Act 2011 to clarify in law when the Code of Conduct applies
- The introduction of sanctions
- An appeals process through the Local Government Ombudsman
- Changes to the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012
- Updates to the Local Government Transparency Code
- Changes to the role and responsibilities of the Independent Person
- That the criminal offences in the Localism Act 2011 relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests should be abolished

The Local Government Ethical Standards report also includes Best Practice recommendations. These are:

**Best practice 1:** Local authorities should include prohibitions on bullying and harassment in codes of conduct. These should include a definition of bullying and harassment, supplemented with a list of examples of the sort of behaviour covered by such a definition.

**Best practice 2:** Councils should include provisions in their code of conduct requiring councillors to comply with any formal standards investigation and prohibiting trivial or malicious allegations by councillors.

**Best practice 3:** Principal authorities should review their code of conduct each year and regularly seek, where possible, the views of the public, community organisations and neighbouring authorities.

**Best practice 4:** An authority's code should be readily accessible to both councillors and the public, in a prominent position on a council's website and available in council premises.

**Best practice 5:** Local authorities should update their gifts and hospitality register at least once per quarter, and publish it in an accessible format, such as CSV.

**Best practice 6:** Councils should publish a clear and straightforward public interest test against which allegations are filtered.

**Best practice 7:** Local authorities should have access to at least two Independent Persons.

**Best practice 8:** An Independent Person should be consulted as to whether to undertake a formal investigation on an allegation, and should be given the option to

review and comment on allegations which the responsible officer is minded to dismiss as being without merit, vexatious, or trivial.

**Best practice 9:** Where a local authority makes a decision on an allegation of misconduct following a formal investigation, a decision notice should be published as soon as possible on its website, including a brief statement of facts, the provisions of the code engaged by the allegations, the view of the Independent Person, the reasoning of the decision-maker, and any sanction applied.

**Best practice 10:** A local authority should have straightforward and accessible guidance on its website on how to make a complaint under the code of conduct, the process for handling complaints, and estimated timescales for investigations and outcomes.

**Best practice 11:** Formal standards complaints about the conduct of a parish councillor towards a clerk should be made by the chair or by the parish council, rather than the clerk in all but exceptional circumstances.

**Best practice 12:** Monitoring Officers' roles should include providing advice, support and management of investigations and adjudications on alleged breaches to parish councils within the remit of the principal authority. They should be provided with adequate training, corporate support and resources to undertake this work.

**Best practice 13:** A local authority should have procedures in place to address any conflicts of interest when undertaking a standards investigation. Possible steps should include asking the Monitoring Officer from a different authority to undertake the investigation.

**Best practice 14:** Councils should report on separate bodies they have set up or which they own as part of their annual governance statement and give a full picture of their relationship with those bodies. Separate bodies created by local authorities should abide by the Nolan principle of openness and publish their board agendas and minutes and annual reports in an accessible place.

**Best practice 15:** Senior officers should meet regularly with political group leaders or group whips to discuss standards issues.

***The LGA has committed to reviewing the Code on an annual basis to ensure it is still fit for purpose.***

## **The Annual Statutory meeting of the Council**

**Monday 15 May 2023**

### **Agenda Item 16.0**

#### **TO CONFIRM THAT THE CRITERIA FOR THE GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE HAVE BEEN MET AND TO THEN ADOPT THE GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE**

##### **1.0 Summary**

1.1 The report provides the background and history to the General Power of Competence and sets out the criteria that needs to be met for the Town Council to adopt the power.

##### **2.0 Background and History**

2.1 Town and Parish Councils are corporate bodies and their powers have accumulated through legislation since 1894. Councils at this level can rely on general powers to act and spend money unless they are restricted from doing so. The main two powers available to a Town Council are:

- S.137 of the Local Government Act 1972, and;
- The General Power of Competence

2.2 Monies that can be spent under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 are limited and have to be budgeted for separately. They are restricted in that they cannot be used to give money to individuals and expenditure must be commensurate with the benefit. Section 137 is a power of last resort.

2.3 A Council that is eligible to use the General Power of Competence can no longer use Section 137 as a power for taking action for the benefit of the area or its community except Section 137 (3) which remains in place and which permits the Council to contribute to UK charities, public sector funds and public appeals.

2.4 Town and Parish Council powers were constrained to specific and appropriate legislation until 2008 when they could, if eligible, exercise the Power of Well-being 2008 Order made under Sec 1 (2) of Local Government Act 2000, for the benefit of their community.

2.5 Part 1 of the Localism Act 2011 has provided Town and Parish Councils with a General Power of Competence, which is a wide-ranging power which replaced the Power of Well-being. The General Power of Competence was brought into force through the Localism Act 2011 (Consequential Amendments) Order 2012 on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

##### **3.0 The extent of the power**

3.1 The Explanatory Memorandum to The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 No. 965 says that:-

*“The Government’s intention in providing eligible parish councils with the general power of competence is to better enable them to take on their enhanced role and allow them to do the things they have previously been unable to do under their existing powers”*



3.2 The General Power of Competence,) gives eligible Councils, “*the power to do anything that individuals generally may do*” as long as they do not break other laws. It is intended to be a power of first, not last, resort like the powers under Section 137. The Council has to ask itself whether an individual is allowed to do it and if the answer is ‘yes’, then the Council is normally permitted to act in the same way. Accordingly the Council could:-

- lend or invest money
- it could set up a company or co-operative society to trade and engage in commercial activity
- it could run a community shop or post office
- the power is not restricted to use within the parish it can be used anywhere.

#### **4.0 Risks and restrictions**

4.1 The General Power of Competence is a power; it cannot be used to raise the precept. The Council can seek other sources of funding such as loans, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), sponsorship, commercial activity and agreements with other authorities. Councils can receive income as a consequence of using the power. They could lend money to support a local activity and earn interest on the loan, and could purchase shares in a struggling local enterprise.

4.2 However, to use the power the Council must have the support of the local community. Whilst Councils are being encouraged to be innovative they should be aware of the risk of:

- being challenged
- their trading activities damaging other competing local enterprises
- damage to the Council’s reputation and public money if a project goes wrong.

4.3 Existing duties remain in place, such as having regard to the likely effect on crime and disorder, biodiversity and the duty to provide allotments. Existing financial and procedural duties remain in place for regulating governance for example, no delegation to a single Councillor. In addition Councils must continue to comply with relevant existing legislation such as employment law, Health and Safety legislation, equality legislation and duties related to data protection and information governance.

4.4 If another authority has a statutory duty to provide a service (e.g. education) it remains their duty to provide it but the Town Council may assist. The Council needs to ask itself whether an individual, private company or community trust could help, if the answer is ‘yes’, then the Council can assist but in this example an appropriate delivery body may need to be set up.

4.5 If the action the Council wishes to take is also covered by a specific power then any restrictions that apply to the overlapping power remain in place. So if existing legislation requires the Council to ask permission before acting, then it must do so. For example, the Council asks permission of the Highways Authority before doing work on roadside verges.

## 5.0 Eligibility criteria

5.1 The prescribed criteria which the Town Council is required to fulfil in order to become an eligible Council is set out in the Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 which came into force on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2012. It confirms that the Town Council is eligible to use the General Power of Competence if it has passed a resolution at a meeting of the Full Council which confirms:-

- it has a qualified clerk;
- a minimum of two-thirds of vacancies were filled at the last ordinary elections; and;
- it has resolved at a meeting of the Council and each subsequent relevant annual meeting that it meets these conditions (*that is, an annual meeting that takes place in a year of ordinary elections of parish councillors*) that it meets these conditions.

5.2 If the Council loses its qualified clerk or has insufficient elected Councillors then it must record its ineligibility at the next 'relevant' annual meeting of the Council (after the ordinary election). If it has already started an activity it can finish that but not start anything new.

5.3 The current Town Clerk, Miss Goring was awarded the full Level 3 Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) in June 2017 (*a copy of the certificate has been provided in appendix A*). This qualification included a module specifically on the General Power of Competence within Unit 2.

5.4 The Town Council currently has five town wards. The number of candidates who have been elected to the seats on the Town Council is listed below, which demonstrates that 12 of the 15 seats were filled in the 2023 election.

Uckfield North Ward	3 seats	3 candidates
Uckfield East Ward	3 seats	3 candidates
Uckfield West Ward	2 seats	1 candidate (1 vacancy)
Uckfield New Town Ward	4 seats	3 candidates (1 vacancy)
Uckfield Ridgewood Ward	3 seats	2 candidates (1 vacancy)

## 6.0 Recommendations

6.1 If members are satisfied that the Town Council achieves the necessary criteria, they are asked to consider the above report and **RESOLVE** that:-

- (i) the criteria to adopt the General Power of Competence has been met and;
- (ii) Uckfield Town Council adopts the General Power of Competence

Contact Officer: Holly Goring

Appendices: Appendix A: Copy of the Town Clerk's certificate

## Annual Statutory meeting of the Council

Monday 15 May 2023

### Agenda item 19.0

#### **TO NOTE THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO COMPLETE AUDITS UNTIL THE ANNUAL STATUTORY MEETING IN MAY 2024**

##### **1.0 Summary**

1.1 This report sets out the rota for member audits for the coming municipal year.

##### **2.0 Background**

2.1 In order to obtain all the relevant background information relating to the completion of the monthly audit, Members are asked to refer to the 'Members' Audit Policy No. 63' which states:

*2.1.1 At each Annual Statutory Meeting, the Clerk will provide a schedule of Members who will be required to undertake the Members' Audit for a particular month. Such Audit will be required to be completed within the first two weeks of the following month and individual Members will be required to make an appropriate appointment with the Responsible Financial Officer accordingly.*

*2.1.2 Should any Member not be able to make the date set out for them in the schedule, it will be their responsibility to make alternative arrangements with another Member to fulfil their obligations for that month.*

2.2 The following members undertook an audit in 2022/23. These have been completed on schedule. February, March and April 2023 are still due to be undertaken, and have therefore been added to the schedule for the new municipal year. Thank you to those members who undertook these audits.

<b>Month 2022/23</b>	<b>Councillor</b>
May	Cllr. J. Love
June	Cllr. C. Macve
July	Cllr. S. Mayhew
August	Cllr. H. Firth
September	Cllr. D. French
October	Cllr. D. Ward
November	Cllr. K. Bedwell
December	Cllr. P. Sparks
January	Cllr. D. Bennett

2.3 The Town Clerk reminds councillors at the beginning of each month to make contact with the office to arrange a time to carry out these audits. The audit does not have to be a long process. For those members in full time employment it could even be carried out prior to a committee meeting one evening with the Assistant Town Clerk or Town Clerk. It must be stressed that the process should be adhered to and procedures maintained, as these audits continue to ensure independent checks of our accounting and ensure any minor corrections are identified early on.

2.4 A new schedule has been prepared for 2023/24. Members are asked to place a note in their diary to make contact with the Town Clerk or Assistant Town Clerk to make the necessary arrangements. Audits are undertaken after the full month has ended. For example, the audit for the month of May 2023 can usually be undertaken from July once the bank reconciliations have been processed.

<b>Month 2023/24</b>	<b>Councillor</b>
February	Cllr. B. Cox
March	Cllr. A. Smith
April	Cllr. D. Manvell
May	Cllr. P. Selby
June	Cllr. M. McClafferty
July	Newly co-opted member
August	Newly co-opted member
September	Newly co-opted member
October	Cllr. J. Love
November	Cllr. C. Macve
December	Cllr. S. Mayhew
January	Cllr. D. French
February	Cllr. D. Ward
March	Cllr. K. Bedwell
April	Cllr. D. Bennett

### **3.0 Recommendations**

3.1 Members are asked to:

- (i) complete audits for outstanding member audits from 2022/23, and;
- (ii) approve the proposed schedule of member audits for the financial year of 2023/24.

Background Papers: Members' Audit Policy No. 63

Contact Officer: Sarah D'Alessio/Holly Goring

## **Annual Statutory meeting of the Council**

**Monday 15 May 2023**

### **Agenda Item 21.0 (ii)**

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

Uckfield Dementia Forum last met on 20 April 2023, via Zoom. The forum enables organisations, local agencies and community groups to share key information on current ways of working and to promote initiatives taking place in the Uckfield area, to support those living with the dementia as well as their carers and families.

At this meeting, the Social Prescriber working for Age UK in the Uckfield area, explained that their role covered both surgeries. GPs would refer to them. Anyone over 50 years of age was eligible. The initial prescription was usually for a period of 12 weeks, and would cover four to six hours in total, through various means of communication such as face to face or telephone. New arrivals to care homes were considered eligible, via their GP. Links would be made to the Dementia Support Team through Adult Social Care. Referrals need to be made through the GP only.

Attendees shared current updates on their work. Know Dementia explained that they were the NHS Pathway for Dementia Support services, with weekly events. There were 11 memory moment cafes running across Sussex, and a Choir in Hassocks. They wanted to extend more into the Wealden area as a number of initiatives slowed down or stopped altogether during the pandemic.

Sussex Support Services had a newsletter on their website which explained the various activities now taking place at Victoria Pavilion throughout the week:  
<https://sussexsupportservice.com/index.html>

The next meeting was due to take place on Thursday 20 July 2023 at 2.00pm, and will be taking place at Lydfords Care Home, East Hoathly, BN8 6DR.

# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



## RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

Policy Number 29		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	01.12.14	GP.39.12.14 – Adopted at General Purposes Committee
2	18.01.16	Reviewed at General Purpose Committee GP.50.01.16
3	06.03.17	GP.42.03.17
4	01.03.18	Finance Sub Committee review of draft amendments
5	09.01.19	Finance Sub Committee review of draft amendments
6	18.02.19	Reviewed Finance Sub-Committee recommendation at GP (18.02.19)
7	12.08.19	GP Committee to review updates – approved.
8	13.02.20	Finance Sub-Committee view of draft amendments
9	09.03.20	GP Committee reviewed updates
10	06.01.21	Finance Sub-Committee view of draft amendments
11	25.01.21	GP Committee 25.01.21
12	25.01.22	Finance Sub-Committee review
13	31.01.22	Adoption of revised Risk Management Policy
14	16.01.23	<u>Review</u> by General Purposes Committee <u>GP23.01.23</u>
<u>15</u>	<u>15.05.23</u>	<u>Adoption by Full Council</u>

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Uckfield Town Council is aware of its responsibility to manage risk to ensure it achieves its objectives to deliver a high quality of public services and to ensure it provides good governance.

The Council has various policies in place to ensure significant risks are controlled, reviewed and monitored. This document forms the Town Council's Risk Management Strategy, it provides an overview of risk management and how it will be monitored.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Finance Sub-committee.

The tables below detail the controls in place for the main service areas at risk

- Insurances
- Working with others
- Self-managed risk

<b>Insurances</b>			
<b>Risk Identification</b>			
<u>Insurance Cover</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Review Date</u>
Protection of physical assets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buildings, and contents (where applicable)</li> <li>• Business interruption</li> <li>• Stock</li> <li>• Computer Equipment</li> <li>• UTC Building CCTV (on premise)</li> <li>• Town Centre CCTV</li> <li>• Terrorism</li> <li>• Some specified Grounds equipment</li> </ul>	Company: Commercial Combined QBE Ins (Europe) Ltd Policy No: Y126862QBE0122A  Optional Marsh Commercial Claims Assist  Combined Engineering (British Engineering Services Contract No. EIP000843  Flood Excess Insurance (Signal Box) Policy Excess Ltd (Policy No. FE243625  Flood Excess (Bridge Cottage) Policy Excess Ltd (Policy No. FE243626  Period of cover: 19 <sup>th</sup> October 2022 - 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	Arrangement reviewed annually by the Town Clerk	August to October 2023

<p>Public Liability Insurance including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employers Liability</li> <li>• Libel and Slander</li> <li>• Motor Vehicles</li> <li>• Fidelity Guarantee</li> <li>• Personal Accident</li> <li>• Legal Expenses</li> <li>• Money</li> <li>• Civic Regalia</li> <li>• Litter Bins</li> <li>• Bus Shelters</li> <li>• Tennis courts to include Victoria</li> <li>• Large Grounds Equipment</li> <li>• Town Centre CCTV</li> </ul>	<p>Company: Zurich Municipal</p> <p>Policy No: YLL-272007-6913</p> <p>Period of cover 20 June 2022- 19 June 2023</p>	<p>Public Liability £15M</p> <p>Products and Employers Liability £10M</p> <p>Hirers Liability £2M</p> <p>Libel and Slander £250,000</p> <p>Employers Liability No less than £5M</p>	<p>Reviewed annually by Assistant Town Clerk &amp; Town Clerk</p>
<p><b>Internal controls</b></p>			
<p>Up to date register of assets</p> <p>Regular maintenance arrangements for physical assets.</p> <p>Annual review of risk and adequacy of cover</p> <p>Ensuring robustness in insurance provider</p>		<p>✓</p> <p>Budgets in place, maintained by staff and outside contractors in line with annual building maintenance programme.</p> <p>✓</p> <p>Review other service providers as part of annual review with brokers</p>	<p>Ongoing. Reviewed at Full Council in December and January each year as part of annual review of Asset Management Plan. Adopted by Full Council on 23 January 2023.</p> <p>Ongoing and Building Maintenance Programme reviewed annually as part of budget setting process.</p> <p>Annual review – to assess contract and action plan.</p>



<p>Ensuring we comply with new requirements set out in the EU General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)</p>	<p>A Town Council may appoint an independent Data Protection Officer</p> <p>Audit undertaken of current practices, with action plan of areas to focus attention</p>	<p>GDPR-Info were re-appointed DPO for Uckfield Town Council in May 2019</p> <p>GDPR-Info visited premises on 28 June 2018 and carried out full one day audit.</p>	<p>Review to be undertaken in 2023.</p>
<p>Ensuring we have adequate network security and firewalls in place</p>	<p>Uckfield Town Council Civic Centre Wi-Fi. A feature was added to the public Wi-Fi, which each client has to accept prior to joining the Wi-Fi, giving protection for Uckfield Town Council from misuse.</p> <p>Uckfield Town Council has installed a tailor-made Network fire wall with VPN capabilities to further strengthen network security and only allow traffic that is pre-authorised.</p>	<p>Redway Networks</p> <p>Redway Networks</p>	<p>Wi-Fi to be upgraded in 2023, in line with upgrade of technology.</p> <p>Further works were undertaken to security in 2022.</p>
<p><b>Internal audit assurance</b></p>			
<p>Internal auditor testing includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Review of internal controls in place and their documentation.</li> <li>✓ Review of management arrangements regarding insurance cover.</li> <li>✓ Testing of specific internal controls and report findings to the General Purposes Committee.</li> </ul>			

**Working with others**

**Risk Identification**

	<u>Details</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Review Date</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Security of vulnerable buildings, amenities or equipment</li> </ul>	<p>Civic Centre, The Hub, West Park and Victoria pavilions and the garage store alarmed and maintained by outside contractors.</p>	<p>Security Alarms - Innovation                      Period of cover: April 202<del>3</del><sup>2</sup> – March 202<del>4</del><sup>3</sup></p>	<p>All security alarm companies to be accredited to the Security Systems and Alarms Inspection Board(SSAIB) and or the National Security Inspectorate (NSI)</p>
	<p>Civic Centre, The Hub, West Park and Victoria pavilions and Foresters Hall maintained by outside contractors.</p>	<p>Fire Alarms – Sovereign                       All expire September 2023</p>	
		<p>Redway Networks/Focus telephones/</p>	<p>Telephone system <del>wasis</del> moved from analogue to digital on 16 Jan 2023.</p>
		<p>Brighton CCTV</p>	<p>Victoria Pavilion now connected to enhance CCTV provision</p>

	<u>Details</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Review Date</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of services being carried out by others</li> </ul>	Town Centre CCTV	<p>Town Centre CCTV system in place since Nov. 2018– Six cameras. i-witness partnership with Sussex Police</p> <p><u>New maintenance programme in place for Town CCTV with ChromaVision from May 2023.</u></p>	<p>Sussex Police are currently reviewing maintenance contract with BT Redcare.</p> <p><del>Review Feb 2023.</del></p>
	Civic Centre	Civic Centre own CCTV system - Brighton CCTV Feb 2022	<del>Annual review by Town Clerk</del>
	Banking arrangements, including borrowing	Banking arrangements reviewed every two years by Finance Sub-committee.	All supplier payments were moved to BACs in February 2021. Two Councillors authorise supplier payments and payroll.
	Credit card/Worldpay transactions	PCI Compliance surveys undertaken as required to confirm no detailed personal	Civic Centre completed in Jan 2022, Luxfords Restaurant <del>due to be was</del> undertaken April 2022.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional services (architects, project managers etc.)</li> </ul>	<p>To use specialist when required.</p>	<p>financial data held by the Town Council.</p>	<p>Review to be undertaken as and when required on a project by project basis and in line with procurement regulations.</p>
<p><b>Internal controls by Internal Auditor</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standing Orders</li> <li>Annual review of contracts</li> <li>Clear statements of management responsibility for each service.</li> <li>Adoption and adherence to codes of practice</li> <li>Arrangements to detect and deter fraud and/or corruption</li> <li>Regular bank reconciliation, independently reviewed.</li> </ul>	<p>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</p>		
<p><b>Internal audit assurance</b></p>			
<p>Internal Auditor testing includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Review of internal controls in place and their documentation.</li> <li>✓ Review of management arrangements regarding insurance cover.</li> <li>✓ Testing of specific internal controls and report findings to the General Purposes Committee.</li> </ul>			

**Self-managed risk**

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- o Regular scrutiny of financial records and proper arrangement for the approval of expenditure
- o Regular budget monitoring statements
- o Minutes properly numbered and paginated with a master copy for safe keeping
- o Regular returns to HM Revenue and Customs; contracts of employment for all staff, systems of updating records for any changes in relevant legislation
- o Regular returns of VAT, relevant officer training
- o Procedures for dealing with and monitoring grants made
- o Procedure in place for recording and monitoring Members' interests and gift and hospitality received
- o Adoption of codes of conduct for Members and employees
- o Developing systems of performance measurement
- o Documented procedures to deal with enquiries from the public
- o Documented procedure to deal with responses to consultation requests
- o Monitoring arrangements by the Council regarding Quality status
- o Dual member authorisation of BACs payments entered by Assistant Town Clerk for supplier payments from February 2021 (members have access to authorisation only and will not be able to enter funds nor issue payments).
- o Recognition of changes for new paying-in procedures as a result of the Town Council's bank closing in Uckfield. The paying-in and withdrawal of funds is now processed through the Post Office. A limit is set at £1k per day for paying-in cash to the Post Office. The Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk have been issued with debit cards for the Clerk account, and 'change giving' cards to authorise the withdrawal of monies for petty cash purposes only.

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**Covid-19 Pandemic – self managed risk**

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- ~~o At least one senior manager present in the Town Council office each day with administrative staff member during national lockdowns and since then on a rota basis which ensures proper arrangements of financial records, safety for staff and presence in the building should an incident arise. It also ensures any risk of theft or emergency is mitigated;~~
- ~~o Caretakers and Grounds staff working on a rota basis, to ensure maintenance and security of Town Council buildings and open spaces.~~
- ~~o Risk Assessments and procedures outlined under the Town Council's Health & Safety Policy.~~
- o All procedures for staff and members of the public are reviewed frequently in line with covid rates, seasonal considerations, and UK Government guidance.

**Internal audit assurance**

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- ✓ Review of internal controls in place and their documentation
- ✓ Review of minutes to ensure legal powers in place recorded and correctly applied
- ✓ Testing of income and expenditure from minutes to cashbook, from bank statements to cashbook, from, minutes to statements etc. including petty cash transactions
- ✓ Review and testing of arrangements to prevent and detect fraud and corruption
- ✓ Testing of disclosures
- ✓ Testing of specific internal controls and report findings to the General Purposes Committee

## **Annual Statutory meeting of the Council**

**Monday 15 May 2023**

### **Agenda Item No. 24.0**

#### **TO CONSIDER A MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR DAN MANVELL**

##### **1.0 Summary**

1.1 This report sets out a motion submitted by Councillor Manvell in accordance with the Town Council's Standing Orders.

##### **2.0 The motion for consideration**

2.1 Councillor Manvell gave written notice of the following motion which was received on 7 May 2023 and before the required deadline:-

##### **2.2 Uckfield Leisure Centre and swimming pool**

A motion has been submitted resolving Uckfield Town Council to respond to the Uckfield Leisure Centre Consultation and to submit a nomination for Uckfield Leisure Centre to be listed as an Asset of Community Value

Following the opening of East Sussex County Council's consultation into the future of Uckfield Leisure Centre, Uckfield Town Council resolves to:

- (i) Respond to the consultation, opposing any loss of community access to the 'wetside' or 'dryside' facilities including the pool, gym, sports hall, squash court, sauna, studios, creche, café, etc;
- (ii) Include comments made at the Full Council meeting on 15 May 2023 and those submitted in writing by Town Councillors before Wednesday 17 May;
- (iii) Encourage all residents of Uckfield and the surrounding towns and villages to respond to the consultation before the deadline of 27 May;
- (iv) Submit a nomination to Wealden District Council for Uckfield Leisure Centre to be listed as an Asset of Community Value;

##### **3.0 Recommendations**

3.1 Members are asked to consider the motion and advise the Clerk accordingly.

Contact Officer: Holly Goring

## **Annual Statutory meeting of the Council**

**Monday 15 May 2023**

### **Agenda item 25.0**

#### **TO CONSIDER THE TOWN COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE ESCC CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE OF UCKFIELD LEISURE CENTRE**

##### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 At the meeting of full Council in March 2023, members were informed that the Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change at East Sussex County Council had resolved for a 10-week public consultation to be undertaken on the options for Uckfield Leisure Centre (including Uckfield swimming pool). This would commence in March 2023.
- 1.2 Wealden District Council had confirmed that it was not their intention to renew the lease for the Leisure Centre in July 2023, and following an unsuccessful tendering exercise (expression of interest based marketing exercise in 2022), East Sussex County Council were keen to seek the views of stakeholders and consider any new ideas or proposals.
- 1.3 East Sussex County Council have advised that following the end of the public consultation survey on 27 May 2023, there would be a full assessment of the responses received as well as a full Equalities Impact Assessment. A summary of the consultation findings would then be set out in an ESCC Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change report to be presented at the June 2023 Full Council meeting. A recommendation regarding the way forward would then follow.
- 1.4 We are aware that the UK Government announced on 15 March 2023, funding for £63 million for public owned leisure centres including swimming pools. When details of the grant become available, we understand that Wealden DC and ESCC will liaise with regards to any application for Uckfield Leisure Centre.
- 1.5 The deadline for responses to the consultation is Saturday 27 May 2023. Members are encouraged to share the weblink with residents, friends, family, businesses and colleagues. Hard copies of the consultation are available at the Uckfield Library and Civic Centre, Uckfield. If returned to the Town Clerk, the Town Clerk will ensure they are delivered to County Hall in Lewes.

<https://consultation.eastsussex.gov.uk/business-services/consultation-on-future-options-for-uckfield-leisur/>

##### **2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the above update, subject to discussions held in response to the motion at agenda item 24.0 and to advise the Town Clerk of any further action required.

**Appendices:** Appendix A: Copy of the consultation

**Contact Officer:** Holly Goring

# Consultation on Future Options for Uckfield Leisure Centre

## Overview

This consultation seeks views regarding the future of Uckfield Leisure Centre ("the Leisure Centre") from local residents, staff, pupils and parents/carers at Uckfield Community College ("the College"); and other stakeholders.

The Leisure Centre offers the following **dryside community** facilities: (i) fitness suite; (ii) studio; (iii) two squash courts; (iv) café; (v) creche and (vi) sports hall

The Leisure Centre is adjacent to the main College buildings.

It offers the following **dryside College curriculum** facilities: (i) fitness suite; (ii) studio; (iii) two squash courts and (iv) sports hall.

The Leisure Centre offers **wetside community** facilities including a leisure swimming pool, sauna, steam room, flume and separate splash pool.

The Leisure Centre does provide a café facility.

Local primary schools have access to the Leisure Centre's swimming pool for Key Stage 1 and 2 swimming lessons. Other swimming facilities are available in key locations in East Sussex, e.g., Hailsham and Crowborough, which are provided by Wealden District Council. Uckfield College does not require wetside facilities for curriculum use, but it does currently make use of the pool.

East Sussex County Council ("the County Council") currently leases the Leisure Centre to Wealden District Council. Wealden District Council has leased the Leisure Centre from the County Council from 2002. Both East Sussex County Council and Wealden jointly agreed in June 2022, to extend the lease for 12 months. The lease will end in July 2023. The Leisure Centre is currently managed by a leisure services provider, Freedom Leisure Limited, under a contract between Wealden District Council and Freedom Leisure Limited. Wealden District Council has decided not to extend further those current arrangements and now the County Council is considering the Leisure Centre's future.

The County Council intends that the Leisure Centre's dryside facilities will continue to be used by the College, for curriculum use. However, it is considering different options regarding: (a) ongoing community access to the Leisure Centre's dryside facilities; and (b) the future of the Leisure Centre's wetside facilities.

There is an all-weather 3G pitch adjacent to the Leisure Centre, which is used both by the College and by the community. This consultation does not concern the future of the all-weather 3G pitch, which will continue to operate as normal for curriculum and community use.

Respondents are invited to provide their views regarding the future of both wetside and community dryside facilities at the Leisure Centre.

**On 28 February 2023, the East Sussex County Council's Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change approved the public consultation process in respect of the Uckfield Leisure Centre.**

The link to the Lead Member report is listed below.

[Lead Member Report 28 February 2023 <https://democracy.eastsussex.gov.uk/documents/s48364/Uckfield%20LMRCC%20REPORT%20v16%2008.02.2023.pdf>](https://democracy.eastsussex.gov.uk/documents/s48364/Uckfield%20LMRCC%20REPORT%20v16%2008.02.2023.pdf)

## Introduction

What is your name?

Name

What is your email address?

Email

What is your organisation?

Organisation

First part of your primary residence postcode e.g., TN22. Information will be used for mapping interest in leisure facilities in the area



Are you interested in this consultation as a...

*(Required)*

Please select all that apply

- Resident
- Local employee
- Visitor
- Current member or user of leisure centre
- Business owner
- Health professional
- Parent/carer
- Pupil
- Member of Community Group
- Other

If applicable, what is the name of the business, community, organisation, or interested group?

In reference to the DRYSIDE facilities, which of the following apply?  
Please answer on behalf of yourself and any immediate family or household members.

*(Required)*

Please select only one item

- I/we are frequent user(s) of Uckfield Leisure Centre (weekly or more often)
- I/we are regular user(s) of Uckfield Leisure Centre (1-3 times per month)
- I/we are occasional User(s) of Uckfield Leisure Centre (1-3 times per year)
- I/we do not use Uckfield Leisure Centre

In reference to the WETSIDE facilities, which of the following apply?  
Please answer on behalf of yourself and any immediate family or household members.

*(Required)*

Please select only one item

- I/we are frequent user(s) of Uckfield Leisure Centre (weekly or more often)
- I/we are regular user(s) of Uckfield Leisure Centre (1-3 times per month)
- I/we are occasional User(s) of Uckfield Leisure Centre (1-3 times per year)
- I/we do not use Uckfield Leisure Centre

When did you last use the community DRYSIDE facilities within the Uckfield Leisure Centre? Please answer on behalf of yourself and any immediate family or household members.

*(Required)*

Please select only one item

- 2023
- 2021-2022
- 2020 or earlier
- Never

When did you last use the WETSIDE facilities within the Uckfield Leisure Centre? Please answer on behalf of yourself and any immediate family or household members.

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

- 2023
- 2021-2022
- 2020 or earlier
- Never

Within the last 12 months have you used other district, borough council/local authority DRYSIDE facilities within East Sussex County? Please answer on behalf of yourself and any immediate family or household members.

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

- Yes
- No

If 'yes' which one(s)?

Within the last 12 months have you used other district, borough council/local authority WETSIDE facilities within East Sussex County? Please answer on behalf of yourself and any immediate family or household members.

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

- Yes
- No

If 'yes' which one(s)?

Within the last 12 months have you used other non-local authority DRYSIDE facilities instead of or as well as using Uckfield Leisure Centre (e.g., private leisure centres, member of hotel leisure facilities in the area)? Please answer on behalf of yourself and any immediate family or household members.

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

- Yes
- No

If 'yes' which one(s)?

Within the last 12 months have you used other non-local authority WETSIDE facilities instead of or as well as using Uckfield Leisure Centre (e.g., private leisure centres, member of hotel leisure facilities in the area)? Please answer on behalf of yourself and any immediate family or household members.

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

- Yes
- No

If 'yes' which one(s)?

If Uckfield Leisure Centre DRYSIDE community facilities were to close, would you be able to use one of the following alternative Leisure facilities instead (please tick all those that apply)? Please answer on behalf of yourself and any immediate family or household members.

*Please select all that apply*

- Crowborough Leisure Centre
- Hailsham Leisure Centre
- Lewes Leisure Centre
- Other (please specify below)

Other - please specify.

If Uckfield Leisure Centre WETSIDE facilities were to close, would you be able to use one of the following alternative Leisure facilities instead (please tick all those that apply)? Please answer on behalf of yourself and any immediate family or household members.

*Please select all that apply*

- Crowborough Leisure Centre
- Hailsham Leisure Centre
- Lewes Leisure Centre
- Other (please specify below)

Other - please specify.

In light of the information provided above, what is your view about the following options for the future of the Leisure Centre?

*(Required)*

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree or  
disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

(a) keeping all dryside and wetside facilities at the Leisure Centre open, for usage both by the College and the community;

*Please select only one item*






(b) keeping all dryside facilities at the Leisure Centre open for both the community and the College, but ending all wetside use;

*Please select only one item*






(c) ending all dryside community use of the Leisure Centre, but keeping the wetside facilities open for usage by the College and the community;

*Please select only one item*






(d) ending all dryside community use of the Leisure Centre and closing the wetside facilities, so that only the dryside facilities will remain open but used solely by the College;

*Please select only one item*






(e) considering alternative operating models consistent with the existing College use. (Strongly Agree / Agree / Neither Agree or Disagree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree)

*Please select only one item*






You may explain the reasons for your view on these options below  
(maximum 500 words)

Regarding any of the options do you have any ideas or suggestions for an operating model to ensure the future of the Leisure Centre is financially sustainable? (maximum 500 words)

What other community facilities would you like to be available/offered within the Leisure Centre building? Please bear in mind that appropriate steps would be needed to safeguard students from any proposals for shared use by community users during the College day. (maximum 500 words)

Please describe ways in which permanent closure of the DRYSIDE and/or WETSIDE facilities to the community, or the alternative options identified above, would or may particularly affect persons sharing any of the following "protected characteristics": age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. (maximum 500 words)

If your answer to the question above identifies any adverse/negative impact in relation to persons with one or more particular protected characteristics, what steps do you consider could or should be taken to reduce/remove or avoid such impact? (maximum 500 words)

### Equality and Diversity Monitoring

Completing this section is voluntary but doing so will help us better understand the impacts of these proposals.

The County Council wishes to build an understanding of the make-up of respondents to this consultation, in order to improve its understanding of how the options under consideration might impact people who share specific characteristics.

If you complete this section, your answers will only be used for that purpose. Any analysis or reports will be anonymised so that they cannot be traced to particular individuals.

#### What is your sex?

*Please select only one item*

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

If you prefer to define your sex in another way, please write that below

Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

*Please select only one item*

- Yes  
 No  
 Prefer not to say

What is your age?

*Please select only one item*

- 16-24  
 25-29  
 30-34  
 35-39  
 40-44  
 45-49  
 50-54  
 55-59  
 60-64  
 65+  
 Prefer not to say

Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

*Please select only one item*

- Yes  
 No  
 Prefer not to say

What is your sexual orientation?

*Please select only one item*

- Heterosexual  
 Gay/Lesbian  
 Bisexual  
 Prefer not to say

If you prefer to identify your sexual orientation in another way, please write that below:

What is your religion or belief?

*Please select only one item*

- No religion or belief
- Buddhist
- Christian
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- Prefer not to say

If other religion or belief, please write that below:

Are you pregnant or have you had a baby in the last 26 weeks?

*Please select only one item*

- Pregnant
- Had a baby in the last 26 weeks

What is your ethnic group?

Asian or Asian British

*Please select only one item*

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese

Any other Asian background, please write that below:

Black, African, Caribbean or Black British

*Please select only one item*

- African
- Caribbean

Any other Black, African or Caribbean background, please write that below:

### Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups

*Please select only one item*

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian

Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background please write that below:

### White

*Please select only one item*

- English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Roma

Any other White background, please write that below:

### Other ethnic group

*Please select only one item*

- Arab
- Prefer not to say

Any other ethnic group, please write that below:



