



UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

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Town Clerk – Holly Goring

Meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** to be held on
Monday 5 June 2023 at 7.00pm
in the Council Chambers, Civic Centre, Uckfield

AGENDA

Under The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, members of the public are able to film or record during a committee meeting.

1.0. 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.

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

3.0. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

4.0. MINUTES

- 4.1. Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on 20 March 2023
- 4.2. Action list – for information only
- 4.3. Project Monitoring List – for information only

5.0. FINANCE

- 5.1. To note bills paid
- 5.2. To note the Income & Expenditure report ending 31 March 2023

6.0. ADMINISTRATION

- 6.1. To appoint members to the Outside Body – Local Nature Reserve Supporters Group
- 6.2. To confirm members for the working groups of Environment & Leisure Committee

7.0. ENVIRONMENT

- 7.1. To note the current position of the Town Council's Estates
- 7.2. To consider a proposal from Fuse Energy
- 7.3. To nominate two members to work with the Estates team, to review the open space grass cutting schedule and future support towards 'no mow May'

8.0. LEISURE

8.1. To note an update on the Allotment Competition

9.0. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

None.

10.0. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

10.1. Active Uckfield

10.2. All Weather Pitch Operational Group

10.3. Conservators of Ashdown Forest

10.4. Local Nature Reserve Supporters Group

10.5. Luxford Centre Management Committee

10.6. Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee

10.7. Uckfield Youth Club Board

10.8. Wealden Bus Alliance/Weald Link

10.9. Uckfield and District Twinning Association (AGM and events only)

11.0. CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

12.0. 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: -

12.1. To consider a report on the Marketing programme



Town Clerk

30 May 2023



Minutes of the meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** held on
Monday 20 March 2023 at 7.00pm
Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield

PRESENT:

Cllr. S. Mayhew (Chair)
Cllr. J. Beesley
Cllr. B. Cox
Cllr. D. French

Cllr. K. Bedwell
Cllr. D. Bennett
Cllr. J. Edwards
Cllr. D. Ward

IN ATTENDANCE:

One member of the public
Councillor Chris Macve

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

1.0. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and officers were reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on the agenda. No declarations of interest were provided at this stage in the meeting.

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

EL.37.03.23 It was **RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders to enable one member of the public to speak followed by a Town Councillor, who was not a member of this committee.

The member of the public wished to speak in relation to item 8.2 in the minutes of the previous Committee meeting held on 13 February 2023:

At the previous Environment and Leisure Committee on 13 February, the resident advised that Councillors had said no to a perfectly polite and understandable request to substitute two small sections of boarding which, when hit by a ball or similar object, reverberated a loud noise which indeed was alien to the MUGA let alone the locality.

Some weeks ago, the resident had also reported to Uckfield Town Council that there was some very unsavoury graffiti on the blank side of the one of the boards, which had now been removed.

Noise generated by use of the MUGA which had been accepted by the person who raised the issue and indeed by those on Ridgewood Recreation Ground, allotments and residents in New Road. However, the resounding crash when these panels were hit was at a different level. The resident had attended the meeting on 13 February and was upset and somewhat shocked by the response of the committee. They and the person in question who raised this matter had been in Ridgewood for

many years (as had many residents and allotment holders) and long before the MUGA and other equipment were put in place. Councillors had not taken the trouble to speak with the person who wrote the letter or listen to the offending noise.

Councillor C. Macve wished to comment on agenda item 6.4 in relation to the renewal of the Allotment Rules and Regulations. He suggested that it would be prudent to include a phrase to state that only residents of Uckfield could apply to acquire an allotment. This matter would be discussed later on in the meeting.

EL.38.03.23 It was **RESOLVED** to reinstate standing orders.

3.0. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology was received in advance of the meeting from Councillor A. Smith who would not be available to attend due to annual leave.

4.0. MINUTES

4.1. Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 13 February 2023

EL.39.03.23 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 13 February 2023 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2. Action list

Members agreed to remove the actions on:

EL.35.10.21 – To review fees and charges for Snatts Road Cemetery for 2022/23

EL.44.11.21 – To review fees and charges for our Sports facilities in 2022/23

EL.32.02.23 – To note the draft minutes from the Strengthening Local Relationships (SLR) meeting held on 17 January 2023

EL.34.02.23 – To consider an invitation to become part of an East Sussex Highways pilot to reduce grass verge cutting on rural verges in Uckfield Town

Members subsequently noted the report.

4.3. Project Monitoring List – for information only

Members noted the report and agreed to remove the following action on:

FC.82.01.22 – Tree for a tree planting programme

5.0. FINANCE

5.1. To note bills paid

Members noted the report.

5.2. To note the provisional Income and Expenditure report ending 31 January 2023

Members noted the report.

5.3. To approve fees and charges for Snatts Road Cemetery in 2023-2024

One member was aware of the input by officers and members and recommended acceptance and approval of a 5% increase due to the rising costs of materials and resource.

EL.40.03.23 Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** to agree to a 5% increase to the fees and charges for Snatts Road Cemetery in 2023-2024.

5.4. To consider and approve fees and charges for the hire of Sports facilities in 2023-24

Cllr Duncan Bennett declared an interest in this item since AFC Uckfield Town Football club were a hirer of facilities at Victoria Pleasure Ground and he was a member of their committee.

The Chair pointed out that the Town Council were always wary when announcing a rise in fees and charges for its services to the public. However, the Town Council had been impacted by the ongoing financial crisis and increase in costs, to equipment repairs, materials, seed, machinery, and resource. It was recommended that an increase be applied of ten percent or more, if need be, due to the increased costs, the recent outlay for reconfiguring pitches at West Park and costs involved to maximise and maintain the use of sports facilities in the town.

Whilst reviewing other fees and charges in recent years, members agreed that due to the history of this and struggles to get to a point where we were working at a better rate, a ten percent increase would mean that we were not continuing to play catch up and leaving this to the next council.

It was also made clear this would still not cover the costs of pitch preparations (line marking, grass cutting, and aeration) nor pitch renovations each year. But, this would contribute towards the provision of these facilities for the benefit of the community.

The Town Clerk sought clarity on whether the 10% would also be applied to the hire of open spaces such as Luxford Field for events. Members agreed that the 10% should be applied across event and sport hire.

EL.41.03.23 Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** to agree to a standard increase of 10% to the fees and charges for the hire of sports pitches and open spaces for sports fixtures, training, and events in 2023-24.

6.0. ADMINISTRATION

6.1 To approve the Cemetery Rules and Regulations for Snatts Road Cemetery

Members reviewed the final draft of the cemetery rules and regulations. The Senior Administrative Officer had undertaken detailed research into comparative local authorities, advice from the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management and the latest legislation and guidance.

The Chair raised the matter of the parish boundary and priority to parishioners, which had been previously referenced by a Town Councillor who was not a member of the standing committee. Local authorities needed to provide a basic level of service to their local residents and the additional charges for individuals from outside of the local area ensured that a local authority still had appropriate capacity to provide the services required by their own residents. For example, a flat fee was chargeable for the purchase of the Exclusive Right of Burial (by a non-parishioner) in conjunction with a resident discount for the interment itself.

For further clarification, the rules would continue to include a reduction for the interment of an individual who had needed to move into care facilities outside of the area within a discretionary period.

EL.42.03.23 Members **RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the renewed Cemetery Rules and Regulations for Snatts Road Cemetery.

6.2 To review the Town Council's Memorial Safety Policy

One member was pleased to note that the new War Grave Commission signs had been installed to the south side of Snatts Road Cemetery to convey the areas where war graves were located. The Town Council also kept a record of the names and grave numbers for anyone who wished to make an enquiry.

EL.43.03.23 Members subsequently **RESOLVED** to agree and accept the updated Memorial Safety Policy.

- 6.3 To approve the Allotment agreement for circulation to all holders for 1 April 2023
Members reviewed the final draft of the allotment agreement which had been reviewed to reflect the changes in the fees and charges from 1 April 2023.

EL.44.03.23 Members noted the suggested amendments and approved the Allotment agreement for circulation to all allotment holders for 1 April 2023.

- 6.4 To approve the Allotment Rules and Regulations for circulation to all holders for 1 April 2023
Councillor D. Bennett declared a personal interest in this agenda item, as an allotment holder.

The Senior Administrative Officer had circulated a copy of the final draft of the rules and regulations for the holding of allotments in Uckfield. This had been thoroughly reviewed to take account of regulations from similar authorities, and external advice and guidance.

One member was curious as to why the limit for having chickens was originally only five, when most people who kept hens would hold them in even numbers. He also raised the idea of omitting the amount of hens allowed altogether, since a standard size coop could be either six, eight or ten so this might prove slightly difficult. This was deemed to be a sensible option, as long as RSPCA guidelines were being followed (hens not exceeding coop capacity) and that tenants were not providing eggs for commercial distribution.

Members discussed giving priority to parishioners of Uckfield, particularly in a time of recent demand, and population growth. Members agreed to add a clause stating that priority would be given to parishioners, subject to the numbers on the waiting list at the time.

Also, in the current rules it stated that allotment tenants would need to relinquish their allotment once they moved out of the area, but this would be changed to be reviewed with the possibility of termination being an option.

EL.45.03.23 Members noted the report and discussions and **RESOLVED** to adopt the renewed and updated Allotment Rules and Regulations, subject to the above changes on keeping hens, and priority to parishioners.

7.0 ENVIRONMENT

- 7.1 To note the current position of the Town Council's Estates
Members noted the report – no comments.

- 7.2 To undertake initial consideration of a land transfer request received for a small parcel of land in Olives Meadow
Members were presented with a written summary of the request which had been received, which the Town Clerk added to. Factors for consideration included future works and access routes which could incur longer term costs due to the flood plain and maintenance of the land. One member also noted that they believed that the land might also include a foul drain that could need replacing underneath the brook.

This route was a right of way, so concerns about the land being blocked off was not something to worry about.

Members felt that at this moment in time, it would not be beneficial for the Town Council to adopt this piece of land and with the timing of the request before the election, such a decision could not be taken. It was suggested that the matter be reviewed at a later date.

8.0 LEISURE

Nothing to report.

9.0 REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

Nothing to report.

10.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

10.1 Active Uckfield

Nothing to report at this time.

10.2 All Weather Pitch Operational Group

Nothing to report at this time.

10.3 Conservators of Ashdown Forest

Nothing to report at this time.

10.4 West Park LNR and Hempstead Meadows LNR – Supporters Group

Nothing to report at this time.

10.5 Luxford Centre Management Committee

Nothing to report at this time.

10.6 Uckfield and District Twinning Association

Nothing to report at this time.

10.7 Uckfield Festival Association

Nothing to report at this time.

10.8 Uckfield Parkrun Board

Nothing to report at this time.

10.9 Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee

Nothing to report at this time.

10.10 Uckfield Youth Club Board

Nothing to report at this time.

10.11 Wealden Bus Alliance/Weald Link

Members noted the report.

11.0 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair thanked everyone on the committee for their support and also wished all those standing at the next election (and not standing) the very best of luck. Cllr. James Edwards advised that he was planning to stand down this year and was thanked for all his support and for his long service and involvement in the work of the committee, over the past few years.

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

EL.46.03.23 It was **RESOLVED** that pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it was advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

12.1 To consider a report on the Marketing programme

Members noted the report.

The meeting finished at 19.51pm.

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

ACTION LIST - FOR INFORMATION ONLY Environment and Leisure Committee

Please note no resolutions can be made from the action list and is for information only.

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<u>EL.28.09.16</u>	To consider revised byelaws for the Town Council's <u>Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)</u> Members reviewed the amendments to the byelaws which still require Natural England and DEFRA's approval. It was RESOLVED to accept the revised byelaws.	05.09.16	HG	The Town Council has sealed and signed the byelaws. A public notice will be published soon to provide the public with an opportunity to view the byelaws, prior to their submission to the Secretary of State.
<u>EL.26.01.19</u>	It was RESOLVED that the Supporter Groups for both reserves be consulted with a view to shorten the byelaws in accordance with DEFRA's comments and report back to the Environment & Leisure committee.	28.01.19		
<u>EL72.05.22</u>	<u>To consider illegal tree works to Town Council trees</u> Members noted the report and RESOLVED to: (i) agree that a strongly worded letter be sent to the resident requesting that they clear up the mess created at their own expense, and; (ii) donate to plants and new trees elsewhere, but if not carried out; (iii) pursue legal action as recommended by Wealden DC.	16.05.22	RN	A response was received from the resident, and solicitors were instructed. No response since 1 September - solicitors have been chased for an update.
<u>EL73.05.22</u>	<u>To consider a number of improvements to direct tourism to Uckfield</u> Members noted the report and RESOLVED to: (i) introduce the following ideas for improvements to direct tourism to Uckfield at the next infrastructure working group meeting: better parking facilities for motorhomes in town and improved signage, and to; (ii) consider if there was anything additional that should be explored to be discussed at that next meeting, and; (iii) for the E&F Manager to explore those initiatives put forward already with the various responsible agencies, including any leverage through ES Highways for proper signage from developers.	16.05.22	RN/ HG	In progress.

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<u>EL08.06.22</u>	<u>To consider proposal for a Queen's Platinum Jubilee Sign at Victoria Pleasure Ground</u> With eight members voting in favour, and one abstaining, members noted the report and RESOLVED to: (i) task the Clerk with obtaining costings for a matching sign on the opposite side of the beacon at Victoria Pleasure Ground to commemorate The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, and; (ii) rejuvenating the current Diamond Jubilee sign, and; (iii) the possibility of having smaller signs attached for other tributes and beacon lighting events.	27.06.22	RN	EL.33.02.23 - Members resolved to get the Diamond Jubilee sign cleaned by a local Blacksmith. This will entail a new sheet cut & vinaled with the UTC logo. This will be carried out shortly and the current shield removed. The idea of adding further shields to commemorate the Queen's Jubilee and the King's Coronation will be explored during 2023/24.
<u>EL.15.09.22</u>	<u>To note temporary bench removal – Hempstead Meadows (anti-social behaviour)</u> Members noted the report and RESOLVED to: (i) reinstate the bench within Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve; (ii) for the Town Council to engage with the local PCSO in relation to any reported incidents of alcohol and drug abuse in this area, and for; (iii) local residents to be asked to report any ongoing concerns of anti-social behaviour to Sussex Police in order for them to monitor and implement any changes on their patrols.	28.09.22	HG	The Town Clerk held conversations with the PCSOs with regard to this area of the nature reserve. They would incorporate this area within their patrols. NFA
<u>EL.16.09.22</u>	<u>7.4 To consider street lighting repairs</u> Members noted the report and RESOLVED to: (i) agree with proposals to carry out repairs on the street lights within the report, and; (ii) for the Town Council to get back in touch with East Sussex Highways to arrange for further details to be presented to Full Council for consideration on street lighting designs.	28.09.22	JH	Confirmation was given to the ES Highways Streetlighting team for works to be carried out. A new East Sussex Highways contractor has been employed. Once settled in, we will review the proposals moving forward to identifying streetlighting upgrades.
<u>EL.35.02.23</u>	<u>8.1 To consider the celebration of King Charles III's Coronation at Victoria Pleasure Ground</u> Members RESOLVED to expand the current events working group membership to also include Councillor A. Smith and Councillor B. Cox.	13.02.23	HG/RN	The events were a huge success. NFA

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE
PROJECT MONITORING FORM 2023-24**

Projects in 2021/22 Budget – New Initiatives

Project Name	Green Projects plus £5,000 in earmarked reserves		Project Number	58
<u>FC.64.01.21</u>	£18,000 minus £1,800 =£16,200	18.01.21	Carbon footprint audit carried out £1,800.	

Projects in 2022/23 Budget – New Initiatives

Project Name	Speed reduction initiative (already have £3,199.64 in earmarked reserves)		Project Number	69
<u>FC.82.01.22</u>	Plus £2,000 placed into budget in 2022/23	17.01.22	Will be utilised when further research has been undertaken into the various roadside initiatives available.	

Projects in 2023/24 Budget – New Initiatives

Project Name	ESCC Grass Verge Cutting Contribution		Project Number	73
<u>FC.86.01.23</u>	£4,442	23.01.23	The invoice was received in April 2023, and has been paid. NFA.	

Project Name	Tree for a tree planting programme		Project Number	74
<u>FC.86.01.23</u>	£2,000	23.01.23	These works usually take place during the winter season.	

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE
PROJECT MONITORING FORM 2023-24**

Project Name	New gazebo and trestle table for events		Project Number	75
<u>FC.86.01.23</u>	£300	23.01.23	Recommend that Events Working Group identify suitable items to purchase.	

Project Name	King's Coronation		Project Number	76
<u>FC.86.01.23</u>	£2,000	23.01.23	£1,969.10 expenditure to organise a celebration event on the day of the coronation, which despite the weather and having to be moved inside was a successful event. NFA.	

Project Name	Victoria Rainwater Tank Clean and Service		Project Number	77
<u>FC.86.01.23</u>	£7,000	23.01.23	A total of £4,289.85 has been spent on undertaking a thorough clean and service of the tank. A follow up visit will take place in the autumn.	

Project Name	Wildflower areas		Project Number	78
<u>FC.86.01.23</u>	£250	23.01.23	To be progressed	

Project Name	Vehicle replacement		Project Number	79
<u>FC.86.01.23</u>	£7,500	23.01.23	These funds will be used towards the cost of leasing a new Grounds vehicle in 2023 onwards.	

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 5 June 2023

Agenda Item 6.1

TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO OUTSIDE BODY – LOCAL NATURE RESERVE SUPPORTERS GROUP

1.0. Outside Bodies

- 1.1. At the Annual Statutory meeting of the Council on 15 May 2023 it was agreed that a representative (and substitute) for the L.N.R. Supporters Group would be appointed at the first meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee.

- 1.2. The Clerk advises for two Council members who express an interest to be appointed representatives for the supporters group who support the ecology of West Park Local Nature Reserves and the Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve, both of which are owned by Uckfield Town Council.

2.0. Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are required to appoint a maximum of two representatives (one and one substitute) to the Local Nature Reserve Supporter Group.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 5 June 2023

Agenda item 6.2

TO CONFIRM MEMBERS FOR THE WORKING GROUPS OF ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE

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.
- 1.3 The working groups which sit under this committee are:
Allotments Working Group;
Fees & Charging Working Group;
Climate Change Steering Group;

2.0 Background to these working groups

- 2.1 The Allotments Working Group reviewed the structure of the Allotment fees and charges in 2021/22 and presented their findings to the Allotment Conference held on 10 November 2022. The committee also reviewed the Allotment Rules and Regulations (last revised 2019) and the renewal of the tenancy contract, which commenced on 1 April 2023. Previous members included: Councillors K. Bedwell, B. Cox and S. Mayhew.
- 2.2 A Sports Facilities Working Group was previously set up in early 2022 to look at the fees and charges for sports facilities in 2023/24, and associated terms and conditions. There had also been items that had arisen out of the working group, not just solely about the fees and charges. Since the covid pandemic, there had been a lot more requests for sports pitches and community space and there could be increasing interest, with future growth and development in the town. This working group broadened its remit in the winter months during the budget setting process to also examine the cemetery fees and charges. Previous members incorporate the above Allotment Working Group members and Councillor A. Smith.
- 2.3 The Climate Emergency Steering Group set out a Climate Change Policy for the Town Council, commissioned a carbon audit for the Town Council's facilities and organised a Climate Change EXPO in April 2022. The Uckfield Green Partnership was formed from this working group but has now become its own entity focusing on town wide initiatives. Previous members included: Councillors K. Bedwell and A. Smith.

3.0 Looking ahead

- 3.1 There is potential for the Allotment Working Group and Fees and Charges Working Group to be combined to focus on these areas prior to and during the budget setting process but there is still quite a bit of work to undertake to strengthen new procedures within this area.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 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) Allotments Working Group and/or combined Fees and Charges Working Group;
 - (ii) Climate Change Steering Group

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 5 June 2023

Agenda Item 7.1

TO NOTE THE CURRENT POSITION WITH THE COUNCIL'S ESTATES

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report sets out the current position with the Council's Estates.

Victoria Pleasure Ground and skatepark

Town Councillors and staff are aware the play area needs upgrading. Money has been set aside in 2023/24. It is therefore hoped that with further funding obtained for 2024/25, and community infrastructure levy/developer contributions, the play area will be able to be upgraded in 2024/25.

A report was received from the Sussex Cricket Foundation and a meeting held with the Grounds Team and Estates & Facilities Manager to talk through the findings. A number of recommendations were offered to improve the current ground conditions, which the Head Groundsman had already started to take on board from the initial visit. Unfortunately due to weather and fixtures being called off, the cricket season had not started well despite our Grounds team undertaking preparations.

A quote has been obtained for the replacement of the nets on the practice cricket area - £1,975 plus VAT. The ground was re-laid and levelled in February 2023 to which the Cricket Club contributed. Due to budget constraints, an application will be made for grant funding to fund the cost of the new nets.

Further investigation is required with the drainage issues near to the skate park.

The defibrillator has been detached from the wall of Victoria Pavilion on two occasions now. Images from the Town Council's CCTV has been passed to Sussex Police for investigation.

Hempstead Lane Play Area and Hempstead Meadows LNR

Nothing new to report.

Rocks Park Play Area

Nothing new to report.

Snatts Road Cemetery

A diseased tree was safely reduced in a wooded area adjacent to the northern section of the cemetery. No damage occurred and the work was carried out safely, to prevent the tree falling in the future.

Town Council staff are aware negative feedback was reported on social media relating to the cemetery. Unfortunately the grass cutting was scheduled in for the week after this post was shared. With the wet weather in recent weeks, staffing shortages and issues with some of the equipment, the team were delayed in reaching the cemetery, but understand this is a sensitive area. Grass cutting has commenced and is a case of playing catch up to address the longer mown grass cuttings and return to site to tidy up. There are also plans to replace the low level fence adjacent to the area designated for scattered ashes next to the cloistered wall in the new cemetery.

West Park Recreation ground and WPLNR

The Grounds staff worked hard to prepare for the Uckfield Grasshoppers Sussex Sixes Tournament which takes place over two weekends in May. The Grounds staff utilised the services of a line marking robot to assist with the marking out of the numerous pitches, which was found to be excellent support with this work. The drone footage shared on social media by the Uckfield Grasshoppers highlighted the excellent preparation undertaken by the grounds staff to prepare for this event.

Ridgewood Recreation Ground

Nothing further to add at present.

Elizabeth Gardens

Nothing new to report.

Luxford field and play area.

Nothing new to report.

Woodlands

The third round of the three-year programme of surveying the tree stock on Town Council owned land has been undertaken. Thankfully, no major concerns were raised, with a handful of trees requiring minor works such as the removal of branches or limbs or ivy. Many of the remaining trees required routine monitoring if evidence was apparent of ash dieback or disease. A handful of trees sitting adjacent to Town Council land were reported to be of concern, so these will be identified and the relevant landowners informed.

Equipment & Vehicles

Unfortunately we have already experienced expenditure with regards to the Grounds equipment. The drive shaft connected to the tractor's engine which runs everything that attaches to the tractor was broken. The repairs and parts cost in the region of £2k. The tractor requires further work to the air conditioning unit and roof, which is also due to cost a further £1.5k to £2k but is necessary to ensure the welfare of staff during the spring and summer months. We also experienced an issue with the gearbox on the new Major Contoura rotary mower which has been addressed under warranty.

We are starting to explore options for the replacement of one of the Ground vehicles through a lease agreement. Further details will be presented to members once we have the information available.

A new strimmer is due to be purchased utilising the new equipment revenue funding made available in this year's budget.

Street Furniture & Lighting

Ongoing repairs are being addressed through a schedule of work managed by East Sussex Highways.

Other

Two members of the Grounds team have undertaken a full day's ROSPA training on play safety and RPII exam to obtain an RPII Certificate of Competence.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officers: James Hollingdale/Holly Goring

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 5 June 2023

Agenda Item 7.2

TO CONSIDER A PROPOSAL FROM FUSE ENERGY

1.0 Overview

- 1.1 This report provides an opportunity to consider a brief submission on behalf of Fuse Energy:
- 1.2 Fuse is a new company building a fully integrated supply of energy. They rent land to develop, build, and operate their sites across their whole lifetimes, and provide electricity directly to customers. This provides cheaper electricity bills to customers near their wind turbines and solar farms, due to the reduced network costs driven by long transmission lines.
- 1.3 Local consumers, businesses and landowners receive a direct supply of energy produced for a significantly below-market price. This means they are able to offer market leading rental figures to landowners and uniquely compelling contract terms.
- 1.4 They are exploring the possibility of building a large solar farm within or just outside of Uckfield, which would be used to supply the local community with cheap electricity, using community ownership.
- 1.5 Equally, they are keen to discuss smaller solar installations that only cover small portions of land, and would provide locals with electricity.
- 1.6 They would be keen to collaborate with the council on this if the council were interested? If the council could help to source available land or had any available land belonging to the council, they would love to hear more. This could be a fantastic opportunity to work together on a project which would greatly help residents and businesses in Uckfield.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider this proposal and advise the Clerk if this is something of interest for the Town Council.

Contact: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 5 June 2023

Agenda Item 8.1

TO NOTE AN UPDATE ON THE ALLOTMENT COMPETITION 2023

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report provides an update on the allotment competition for 2023. The competition categories have been agreed between Uckfield Town Council and the competition sponsors Staverton's Nursery.

2.0 Update on Allotment Competition for 2023

2.1 Staverton's Nursery has sponsored the Allotment Competition for the last three years providing the judges and the winners' garden vouchers. The competition was cancelled in 2021 due to Covid 19.

2.2 Officers have discussed the categories and how the competition could be improved with from Staverton's and it is proposed to move forward with the following proposals.

3.0 Nomination and Entry Forms

3.1 To enter the allotment categories below a nomination for or entry form must be completed and submitted. These are available online and also in paper copy from the Civic Centre.

3.2 For the Adult competition you would be able to nominate yourself or another allotment holder.

3.3 The size of plot would not be a factor in the competition.

4.0 Prizes

4.1 Overview

We will be retaining the ruling that those who have won in one category in the previous two competitions are unable to enter the same category, although they can enter others. This is a similar rule to that used by the RHS at its flower shows and competition.

4.2 The closing date for the allotment competition this year, is Friday 30 June 2023.

4.3 Best Kept Allotment

We are retaining the Best Kept Allotment award for each of the five sites. We have removed the need for a personal statement in order to encourage more entrants. The judges will assess entrants against the criteria.

Five winners receive £25 in garden vouchers

£125

4.4 Overall Winner

The overall winner will be chosen from the five best kept allotment winners and their name will be added to the plaque held at the Civic Centre.

4.5 Ecological Award

This award will allow the judges to focus on the principles of Reuse, Reduce and Recycle and will include looking at:-

- How the plot holder reuses items such as plastic pots;
- The efforts made to conserve water (rainwater harvesting if possible) and reduce the use of water by using mulch or growing varieties requiring less water;
- Encouraging insects and wildlife to the plot. Natural or organic approaches to pest control;
- We have removed the need for an ecological statement in order to encourage more entrants. The judges will assess entrants against the criteria;

One winner receives £25 in garden vouchers **£25**

4.6 Children's award (up to 12 years)

Once again, we intend to allow children to choose what they want to grow. There will be a children's entry form for them to complete available online and in hard copy.

The entry form also allows them to tell us what they like about the allotment and what they have chosen to grow. We will provide flags to entrants to make it easier to identify their entries.

One winner receives £25 in garden vouchers **£25**

4.7 Scarecrow Competition – a bit of fun open to all

For a chance to win a basket of garden goodies we have introduced a Scarecrow Competition. Entrants simply complete the entry form and install a scarecrow on their allotment ready for judging in July. Entries can be as creative as people wish. The judges are really looking forward to seeing what allotment holders come up with.

5.0 **Sponsorship**

5.1 Staverton's Nursery has kindly agreed to sponsor the competition again this year. The total sponsorship will be **£175**.

5.2 The judging will take place in the first week of July – weather dependent – because this is better to judge all the produce being cultivated (even if they are not fully mature).

6.0 **Communication**

6.1 Communicating these changes will be important and will take place via an e-newsletter and notices. Jotform will be used for the online entry forms. The detailed e-newsletter with links to all of the forms were sent out in April 2023, and information also provided in the May edition of Uckfield Matters. A reminder e-newsletter was also sent out in May 2023.

7.0 **Recommendations**

7.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officers: Tracy Atchison, Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 5 June 2023

Agenda Item 10.2

ALL WEATHER PITCH OPERATION GROUP

1.0 Summary report

- 1.1 The April meeting of the group was attended with representation from ESCC, Uckfield College, Freedom Leisure, Uckfield Grasshoppers, Uckfield Rugby Club, a Community representative, Sussex County Football Association and Uckfield Town Council.

The meeting was opened by ESCC making a clear statement that the only item on the agenda was the 3G pitch and there would be no discussion on the leisure centre, as that was the subject of a consultation on its future.

As it was some three years since the last meeting there were several items to bring up to date.

Firstly, it was confirmed that the drainage problem in Spring Meadow appeared to be resolved thanks to ES Highways replacing the surface water drainage.

The college confirmed that, as yet, the installation of the fence anti-rattle clips had not been resolved but that the time switch for the lighting had been replaced.

Freedom Leisure advised that the user agreement and operating conditions appeared to be working satisfactorily now, but that a closer watch was being kept on the adhoc bookings to ensure they complied.

The goal nets had now been replaced.

There followed extensive discussion on the future of the pitch as this was now approaching the end of its design life. The replacement fund, whilst showing a good balance, would be short of the desired amount as a result of rising costs but it was agreed that steps to extend the pitch life were possible.

The Football Association were concerned about the future community use of the pitch, but it was stressed that at this time, there was no intention to exclude outside use and that it would continue to be operated by Freedom Leisure regardless of the outcome of the consultation on the centre itself.

The floodlighting had been converted to LED but needs some adjustment to restrict light pollution to the nearby properties.

The Uckfield Grasshoppers, the largest hirer, now had over four hundred members and confirmed it was an essential facility they could not do without. They were now making bookings on the pitch for 2024.

The Uckfield Rugby club only used the pitch for training purposes, but relied on it for periods of poor weather. The club had plans for large scale redevelopment of the club facilities.

The next meeting would be in September 2023.

Councillor C. Macve

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note the report and provide any comments.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 5 June 2023

Agenda Item 10.5

LUXFORD CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING UPDATE

1.0 Summary report

- 1.1 The AGM for the year to 31 December 2022 was held at the centre on the 13 May 2023 and was well attended by over forty members.

The financial income and expenditure and balance sheets were explained by the Trust Treasurer covering both the House and Executive accounts.

During the year, the centre incurred a deficit of £3,675 partly due to the general increase in the overall operating costs.

Reports from the House and Executive Committee Chairmen focused on the provision of a much-used facility for, not only the club members, but also for many organisations and private individuals within the community.

Thanks were expressed to the retiring Treasurer for her many years of service and a gift presented in recognition of all the sterling work carried out during her term in office.

The members were given updates on the activities of the club and future events. Reports on the past year included projects undertaken to ensure the centre remained well maintained and plans for the improvement of facilities.

Members elected the new Chairmen, Officers and the committee of both the House and Executive Committees.

The date for the AGM for the year ending 31 December 2023 would take place on Saturday 11 May 2024.

Councillor Chris Macve

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Monday 5 June 2023

Agenda Item 10.6

REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES: UCKFIELD RAILWAY LINE PARISHES COMMITTEE

1.0 Summary report

- 1.1 The meeting held on 10 May 2023 discussed at length the future prospects of the line extension into Lewes and its electrification. The programmed timetable for these works which are included in TFSE proposals has shifted from short term i.e. by 2030 to medium term i.e. by 2040. However, on the positive side, they are still included in the proposals.

The reorganisation of GTR means they are now under a Department for Transport Contract. There still appears to be a greater emphasis from the travelling public on leisure use as opposed to commuting.

There is still no response to our representations on the reintroduction of the 22:07 from London Bridge from GTR or from Nus Ghani. We will continue to press for its reinstatement.

It was agreed to write to Wealden District Council, East Sussex County Council, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Lewes Town Council and Kent County Council following the recent elections to ensure the new political framework continues with support for the reinstatement and electrification of the line.

The meeting was sorry to hear of John Coleman, the Crowborough representative's retirement after many years of faithful service.

The next meeting is on 12 July 2023 at 2:30pm.

Councillor C. Macve

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton