



Minutes of the meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** held on
Monday 10 July 2023 at 7.00pm
Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield

PRESENT:

Cllr. S. Mayhew (Chair)
Cllr. K. Bedwell
Cllr. V. Frost
Cllr. D. Ward

Cllr. A. Smith (Vice-Chair)
Cllr. D. French
Cllr. M. McClafferty

IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Chris Macve
Councillor Peter Selby

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

Standing orders did not need to be suspended to enable Councillor Chris Macve to announce his support of the lighting of the Beacon for D-Day 80th Anniversary in relation to item 8.1 and that this council should definitely be involved with.

3.0. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received in advance of the meeting from Councillor Reed and also Councillor Bennett due to work commitments.

4.0. MINUTES

4.1. Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 5 June 2023

EL.11.07.23 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 5 June 2023 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2. Action list

Members noted this and approved actions still pending. Members were informed that the upgrade to the existing Diamond Jubilee sign at Victoria Pleasure Park was underway.

In relation to the open space grass cutting schedule and future support towards 'no mow May', the Chairman announced that two members had volunteered to assist with this already and that this matter would be left until there was an outcome.

- 4.3. Project Monitoring List – for information only
Members noted the report – no actions removed.

5.0. FINANCE

- 5.1. To note bills paid
Members noted the report.

6.0. ADMINISTRATION

- 6.1 To request items for Strengthening Local Relations meeting on 14 August 2023
A pledge had already been submitted to lobby county council over potholes problem on Wealden roads, although members were still keen to request an update on whether further repairs had been scheduled, in relation to an area outside George Moss, a patch on the opposite side of Elizabeth Gardens and an area along Grange Road (as there were still bollards all around here and members asked for this to be raised sooner than later).

Members were disappointed that East Sussex Highways had announced via social media that Lewes Road was closing during the daytime between 17 July to 4 August for traffic calming improvements, for the build out and signage. This would impact the Ridgewood Post Office and cause huge inconvenience to local residents.

Members agreed this should be carried out overnight prior to the carriageway resurfacing, which was scheduled during the night between 7 to 14 August, and that this did not require a full road closure. Also, members were previously informed that this road would not be closed again.

A request was also made to find out if the road signs within town could be cleaned up at some stage.

EL.12.07.23 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to raise any further items other than those mentioned above for the next Strengthening Local Relations meeting by 31 July 2023.

- 6.2 To review Seasonal pitch hire terms and conditions 2023-24
Members agreed to a request for the season to start at the beginning of August, instead of mid August, but also made a suggestion with regard to any future request for longer term hire for football. In order to monitor and keep the pitches from being overused, clubs would be asked to contact Uckfield Town Council if they wished to use a pitch for extra games or training outside of the booking season.

Members agreed that should the times of hire be exceeded, the Council reserved the right to levy a surcharge for the additional period of use, as this was something that would involve further pitch maintenance and would also need to be monitored.

The Head Groundsman had already mentioned that the grass needed time to grow back during August, so we would need to be open minded if this became an issue and to make football clubs aware that the grass was likely to show signs of erosion.

By agreeing to these terms, we would also be covering ourselves if the pitches were damaged.

Another councillor asked how football training sessions were monitored, if clubs were to use the pitches outside of the terms. One member suggested that the Groundstaff could keep an eye on any of the pitches being used and if they had not contacted the town council about this.

Regarding litter, one member asked to add a section within the agreement at point eleven, to ensure that it was the hirers responsibility to pick up any litter after any use.

Another member wanted to clarify which team were playing on the previous Sunday, to contact them and tell them that their teams' language needed to be addressed as there was swearing and there were children in the vicinity so this was not acceptable. They would be contacted about this and asked to speak to their players.

EL.13.07.23 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to:

- (i) a request by AFC Football Club for the football season to start at the beginning of August (instead of mid-August) with a view to monitoring this within the next two years if this should become an issue with grass erosion, and that;
- (ii) should the times of hire be exceeded, the Council reserved the right to levy a surcharge for the additional period of use, and;
- (iii) to arrange a working group meeting soon and raise this item on the agenda.

7.0 ENVIRONMENT

7.1 To note the current position of the Town Council's Estates

Members noted the report and commented regarding the recent upset caused by vandalism to town council facilities, once again. There were damages made to equipment in the Civic Centre and to our play areas and even though this was clearly unacceptable, the point being that we all had to pay for those damages in our taxes.

This would be highlighted in next months' edition of The Uckfield Voice to ask everyone to be vigilant and to report this kind of behaviour to the police.

7.2 To note an update on the East Sussex Highways Contract

Members noted the report and although the new contractors sounded promising, that we should keep monitoring and reporting back to them with any reoccurring problems.

Members were also informed that the new contractors had an outsourced contact centre to assist with periods of increase in demand during bad weather.

8.0 LEISURE

8.1 To consider lighting of the Beacon for D-Day 80th Anniversary on 6 June 2024

The information for this event would need to be submitted by no later than 30th May 2024.

EL.14.07.23 Members agreed for a working group to be set up with Councillor Bedwell helping to coordinate any local events, with the assistance of Councillor Ward.

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
Members noted the report – with thanks to Councillor Macve.
- 10.6 Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.7 Uckfield Youth Club Board
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.8 Wealden Bus Alliance/Weald Link
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.9 Uckfield and District Twinning Association (AGM and events only)
Nothing to report at this time.

11.0 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman raised an item regarding a surplus mower that needed to be sold and replaced with appropriate machinery.

EL.15.07.23 Members agreed to the sale of the mower and emphasised that this would need to be advertised as ‘sold as seen’ as well as for officers to decide on the re-purchase of any other equipment, as required.

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

EL.16.07.23 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 19.47pm.