



UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

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Town Clerk – Holly Goring

Meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** to be held on
Monday 4 March 2024 at 7.00pm
in the Council Chamber, 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 22 January 2024
- 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 December 2023

6.0. ADMINISTRATION

- 6.1 To note the draft minutes from the Strengthening Local Relations (SLR) meeting held on 12 February 2024

7.0. ENVIRONMENT

- 7.1. To note the current position of the Town Council's Estates
- 7.2 To note an update for future options for rural grass cutting

8.0. LEISURE

- 8.1 To consider the We Grow Initiative – a Sussex based gardening co-operative
- 8.2 To consider initial quotations received for play area improvements

9.0. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

- 9.1 To note an update from the Allotment Working Group and with proposed amendments to the Allotment Rules and Regulations

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
- 12.2 To receive the results of survey works at Snatts Road Cemetery



Town Clerk

27 February 2024



Minutes of the meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** held on
Monday 22nd January 2024 at 7.00pm
Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield

PRESENT:

Cllr. S. Mayhew
Cllr. K. Bedwell
Cllr. D. French
Cllr. M. McClafferty
Cllr. D. Ward

Cllr. A. Smith
Cllr. D. Bennett
Cllr. V. Frost
Cllr. B. Reed

IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Peter Selby
Councillor Chris Macve
Councillor Ben Cox

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

Standing orders did not need to be suspended to enable Councillor Chris Macve and Councillor Ben Cox to speak for two minutes apart, although neither were members of this committee.

Councillor Macve identified a slight typographical error in the second paragraph of item 10.2 which was noted.

In relation to agenda item 7.5, Councillor Ben Cox pointed out that there had been a lot of antisocial behaviour and vandalism in and around the Community Fridge recently and that discussions were ongoing at local meetings held with Sussex Police. It was also noted that the police wanted to get across that Facebook was not the correct platform for local residents to raise any problems or reporting incidents.

Those discussions had also led to a recommendation to restrict the use of alcohol to within the area of Luxford Field, and this was something that could be imposed by a Public Space Protection Order.

3.0. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All present.

4.0. MINUTES

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

EL.38.01.24 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 13 November 2023 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2. Action list

Members discussed items on the action list.

It was agreed to remove the action on:

16.09.22 – To consider street lighting repairs.

All the street lamps on the list were raised for repair or replacement lamps.

4.3. Project Monitoring List – for information only

Members noted the report and ongoing actions.

It was agreed to remove items:

FC86.01.23 – Victoria Rainwater Tank Clean and Service.

FC86.01.23 – Wildflower areas.

5.0. FINANCE

5.1. To note bills paid

Members noted the report.

5.2. To note the Income & Expenditure report ending 30 November 2023

Members noted the report.

In relation to ash dieback, one member asked if the Forestry Commission had been approached to see if they would be able to subsidise this. The Town Clerk explained that members had previously set aside money for this as part of our woodland management plan, and that we were already working with the Forestry Commission who were helping us with any applications for High Tier Grant funding from Defra, although just to note this funding was minimal. There may be other grants available over the next year or so.

A question was raised in relation to cemetery land and whether we needed to accelerate our plans to increase capacity. With higher plot sales than interments booked more recently, members were informed that we had started to look into the process of consecration for a section of cemetery land already within the north west side of Snatts Road Cemetery. One member asked to take into account that ancient woodlands such as Paygate Wood (northern part of the cemetery) would need to have a buffer zone for the purpose of conservation.

6.0. ADMINISTRATION

6.1. To request any items for the next Strengthening Local Relations in February (date to be confirmed)

One member helpfully provided further information in relation to a water leak at Regency Close and Manor House Court.

Items raised included sinking in New Road, the gulleys outside Hartfields, dislodging of curb stones and paving slabs, parking issues and any matters arising from the last meeting.

The next meeting was provisionally booked to be held on 12th February 2024, pending confirmation by attendees.

EL.39.01.24 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to raise any further items other than those mentioned above for the next Strengthening Local Relations meeting by 31st January 2024

7.0 ENVIRONMENT

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

Members noted that they had received a quotation for the replacement of the zip line with a viper swing. The quote provided showed that this equipment, to supply and install with surfacing, would cost around £18k. The Town Clerk explained that the zip line had either been vandalised, causing a lot of maintainance or had large sections of the mechanisms stolen, so this piece of equipment was not really condusive to staying there long term. Although slightly more expensive, it would be more cost effective in the long term as it was a more solid mechanism.

Councillor McClafferty, asked if a cost could be obtained for the replacement of the zip line as well.

The committee were grateful to the Grounds team since it was clear from the report that they were really proactive and reacted quickly to any issues that arose.

Replacement nets:

Although we did not have funds set aside specifically for this project, the Town Clerk advised that since the setting of the budget for 2024/25 she could review earmarked reserves and current expenditure to see whether funds were available. It desperately needed doing.

It was a real shame to keep seeing vandalism in the town. It would be good to ask those doing this to stop or clean the graffiti off themselves, rather than our Groundstaff who keep having to do this. This was also raised in the 'Soap Box' edition of 'The Voice' at the end of last year.

EL.40.01.24 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to a proposal to get a quotation for a like for like replacement of the zip wire to compare costs and consider which option would be better.

7.2 To provide an update on Grant Funding from Wealden Community Spaces Programme

Members noted the report.

7.3 To consider potential funding announced for Wealden orchards

Three areas were initially considered for potential funding should this opportunity arise, to include an area between Ridgewood MUGA and the allotments, behind the basketball court at Victoria and with a contribution towards an orchard already planned at West Park.

The area next to Ridgewood MUGA would show the allotment holders that we were trying to help them with the noise concerns.

The boundary of Luxford Field was also mentioned, although this area was considered unsafe for someone who maybe unsteady on their feet as the tree roots could lift the adjacent footpaths.

It was not thought that Hempstead Meadows, being a flood area would be suitable for fruit trees, planting native black poplar trees would be better, although the bottom area of Hempstead Playing Field was a possibility.

There was some concern raised that fruit trees would not be considered suitable for children with particular allergies, although one member was allergic to fruit and bees

but agreed with any proposal to plant fruit trees, as this was not a good enough reason.

EL.41.01.24 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to this funding opportunity, should it arise and to the four areas suggested; next to Ridgewood MUGA and Victoria basketball court, an orchard already planned at West Park and maybe the bottom of Hempstead Field.

7.4 To receive an update on street lighting repairs

Members noted the report. There was a six-month backlog although all the street lights within the report had been authorised for repairs or replacement lamps.

7.5 To consider proposals to improve safety at the lower end of Luxford Field

One member advised that at the latest Wealden District Association of Local Councils (WDALC) meeting last week, members had been informed that local meetings with the police were going to end, and that members wanted them to be reinstated.

For clarity, The Town Clerk pointed out that the six-monthly Focus Groups were going to continue which were arranged by the Police & Crime Commissioner's office. It was just the local Community Safety Action Group meetings that had come to an end with the Wealden Neighbourhood Policing Team. Those meetings had included local council representatives and the Chamber of Commerce, although they were often about more localised issues in surrounding areas, including issues with play area equipment and speeding on roads, despite the intention of the meetings being strategic and thematic.

The focus group meetings with Sussex Police had specific questions for all the police and crime commissioners there, to find out about current views on policing in Sussex and this was a platform where we could talk more widely about any more pressing issues with anti-social behaviour and problems with our assets in the town. Also, the Town Clerk made it clear that all issues in the surrounding areas would still be tackled, this was just going to be looked at differently.

Members raised their concerns with this change in engagement.

With the same reoccurring issues, a member was keen for the council to set up a town based working group to look at a strategy with the new police coming through, with an aim for local businesses and the Chamber of Commerce. This could include compiling a four-year plan together, that was multifaceted with other groups to focus on how to tackle anti-social behaviour.

Wildlife camera operations

Members asked to see if the police could offer to lend us a wildlife camera, temporarily. We could fund this ourselves otherwise, as they were not too expensive. This could be used in different areas too, as and when needed.

Metal Youth Shelter

Members were also keen to remove the metal youth shelter, as this did not look appealing nor serve the purpose intended. It might have been better to manage the location than to get rid of it, with improved lighting and camera coverage, although moving the bollard to another location would only mean going to a less visible corner.

This was an ongoing issue with anti-social behaviour and even though the town council often say how important it was to report anything to the police, this did not always happen.

Councillor Cox re-iterated that the police wanted to have a more strategic team put together, to work with us.

Councillor Ward requested for more information when those meetings were taking place, although respected some of the conversations would be confidential.

With regard to the security lighting on the Community Fridge, one member asked for bat friendly lighting.

EL.42.01.24 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to:

- (i) the lone or purchase of a wildlife camera;
- (ii) to remove the metal youth shelter, and;
- (iii) employ the electrician to explore costs for pillar lighting at the bottom of Luxford Field.

- 7.6 To consider future options for Rural Grass Cutting – Wild Life Corridors (ESCC)
Members approved option two being more environmentally friendly but asked not to do this during 'No Mow May'.

Also, to ask for them to be mindful of entrances into town, to cut around the planters and not to leave grass behind either, as this could cause clogging of the gulleys and drainage issues.

Being against woodland with a bramble type habitat there would be dormice located here, so one member also asked for this to be made aware of.

EL.43.01.24 Members **RESOLVED** to accept option 2 for the reduced rural service with the added comments from councillors about the 'No Mow May' and dormouse locations highlighted.

8.0 LEISURE

- 8.1 To note a further update on the Our Parks Initiative in 2024
Members noted the report.

- 8.2 To note an update from Urban Tennis Foundation
Members noted the report.

9.0 REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

- 9.1 To note an update from the Allotment Working Group
Members noted the report. One member pointed out that developers were being pushed for more allotment space which would have to be managed by the local council as a statutory duty.

The next joint allotment group meeting would be held on 26th February 2024 with the Allotment Association.

- 9.2 To note an update from the Sports Fees & Charges Working Group
Members noted the verbal update.

The Town Clerk announced that the last meeting was productive. The group set the scene, with quite a bit of work to do prior to the follow-up meeting.

The group looked at how the fees and charges were set up for pitch hire in other local towns, sometimes seasonal, match fixtures or by team. Research was also needed to provide a breakdown of our current income, as well as our expenditure on the weekly maintenance of our pitches.

An open survey of the clubs was also proposed in order to see what the clubs' needs were now and in the future.

As Grasshoppers leased the West Park pavilion on a five-year basis, this would be explored further to accommodate them and to focus on separate costs for the pitches.

The group would continue to work on those items. The next meeting was due to be held on 1 February 2024.

[20:14 Councillor Bennett had made a declaration of interest at this point as he was a committee member of one of the local football clubs]

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

Members noted the report.

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 Railway Line Parishes Committee

Members noted the report.

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 wished everyone a happy new year and members were asked to consider an item provided by the Town Clerk:

In the act of fairness, with regard to nominations for Assets of Community Value within the Town, members at Full Council in December had suggested the Rugby Club be included in the next list of applications. It was therefore questioned whether the Uckfield AFC site (The Oaks) should be nominated as well.

EL.44.01.24 Members **RESOLVED** to request for the Town Clerk to make a nomination to Wealden District Council for the AFC Uckfield Town Football Club site (The Oaks) as an Asset of Community Value.

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

EL.45.01.24 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.
- 12.2 To provide an update on survey works at Snatts Road Cemetery
Members noted the report.
- 12.3 To consider a proposal by the Uckfield Grasshoppers Junior Football Club
Members noted the proposal, but did not wish to proceed at this time.

The meeting finished at 20:43pm.

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> | <u>To consider revised byelaws for the Town Council's 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>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. |
| <u>EL28.10.23</u> | <u>7.3 To consider the installation of a gate to restrict access to the Grounds work area next to Victoria Pavillion</u> (i) install a gate on the main drive (with a pedestrian gate and closer) estimated at £300 to £400, and; (ii) defer the decision to bring the path around the edge of the fencing up to the car park to the next E&L Committee in November 2023, after seeking further details on accessibility and funding options. | 09.10.23 | HG/JH | Members agreed at the E&L meeting on 13 th November 2023 to bring the path around the edge of the fencing up to the car park and for this work to be carried out in-house. The gate has been installed at Victoria with relevant signage. The path will be looked at when we have staff capacity. |

| Resolution No. | Details | Date Raised | Action By | Date Complete |
|--------------------------|--|-------------|-----------|---|
| <u>EL40.01.24</u> | <u>To note the current position of the Town Council's Estates</u> Members RESOLVED to agree to a proposal to get a quotation for a like for like replacement of the zip wire to compare costs and which option would be better. | 22.01.24 | JH | As in the report at the last E&L meeting, it had been recommended to replace the zip line with vipor swing as it's cheaper to purchase, maintain and they see less H&S implications/maintenance costs. The first quote received for supplying and installing a vipor swing was around £18k with new surface included. This was the ballpark quote for Hempstead Play Area. A more detailed report is available at agenda item 4.2. |
| <u>EL41.01.24</u> | <u>To consider potential funding announced for Wealden orchards</u> Members RESOLVED to agree to this funding opportunity, should it arise and to the four areas suggested; next to Ridgewood MUGA and Victoria basketball court, an orchard already planned at West Park and maybe the bottom of Hempstead Field. | 22.01.24 | RN | This will be actioned when the funding round opens. |
| <u>EL42.01.24</u> | <u>To consider proposals to improve safety at the lower end of Luxford Field</u> Members RESOLVED to agree to: (i) the lone or purchase of a wildlife camera, and; (ii) remove the metal youth shelter, and; (iii) the electrician to explore costs for pillar lighting at the bottom of Luxford Field. | 22.01.24 | HG/JH | The youth shelter is on the list to be removed. A quote for the pillar lighting is being sought although has come out very costly. Officers are exploring grant funding applications as an option. A new flood light has been installed on the front of the Community Fridge, which has improved matters, and the fence works have been completed. In progress. |

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 | Tree for a tree planting programme | | Project Number | 74 |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|----------|---|----|
| <u>FC.86.01.23</u> | £2,000 | 23.01.24 | Planting is due to take place in March 2024, this year. The Ranger has devised a management plan for this and is under control. | |

| Project Name | New gazebo and trestle table for events | | Project Number | 75 |
|---------------------------|---|----------|--|----|
| <u>FC.86.01.23</u> | £300 | 23.01.24 | Recommend that Events Working Group identify suitable items to purchase before financial year end. | |

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

| 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. Waiting on final costings. | | |
| | - | 16.01.24 | Looking into options. Plan to make lease arrangement in 2024/25, so funds will need to be carried forward. We are currently looking at updated costings and proposals. | | |

£21,916.87 of this expenditure is due to be covered by Ash Dieback earmarked reserves.

| Boxes highlighted are to be funded or part funded by earmarked reserves/new initiative spending | £22,910.87 of this expenditure is due to be covered by Ash Dieback earmarked reserves. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---------|-------|---------|--------|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| Purchases | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Protective - Outdoor staff | 80 | 92 | 92 | 237 | 0 | 278 | 81 | 45 | 50 | 955 | 488 | 54 | 54 | 54 | 1,118 | 650 |
| Street lights, supply & maintenance | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11,508 | 0 | 11,508 | 11,000 |
| Street light repairs | 5,031 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5,031 | 5,000 | 0 | 0 | 12,500 | 17,531 | 17,500 |
| Bus shelters | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 391 | 0 | 391 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Allotments | 22 | (1,642) | 15 | 156 | 1,111 | 475 | 193 | 807 | 629 | 1,766 | 3,000 | 0 | 0 | 500 | 2,266 | 3,500 |
| Playing fields and pitches | 276 | 1,086 | 769 | 1,303 | 816 | 521 | 1,185 | 435 | 353 | 6,745 | 17,835 | 1,982 | 1,982 | 1,982 | 12,690 | 23,780 |
| Playing fields electricity | 33 | 1,029 | 69 | 69 | 82 | 435 | 466 | 34 | 57 | 2,274 | 220 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2,274 | 220 |
| Play Areas | 0 | 0 | 80 | 686 | 1,497 | 30 | 750 | 0 | 0 | 3,043 | 3,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3,043 | 3,000 |
| Cemetery, grave digging | 320 | 640 | 1,346 | 320 | 640 | 0 | 0 | 640 | 320 | 4,226 | 3,750 | 333 | 333 | 333 | 5,226 | 5,000 |
| Cemetery, rates & water | 1,116 | 115 | 115 | (1,695) | 115 | 115 | 149 | 115 | 115 | 259 | 1,650 | 183 | 183 | 183 | 809 | 2,200 |
| Cemetery, litter | 234 | 293 | 249 | 220 | 249 | 249 | 358 | 205 | 234 | 2,291 | 2,250 | 250 | 250 | 250 | 3,041 | 3,000 |
| Cemetery, maintenance | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 402 | 402 | 200 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 402 | 200 |
| General equipment repairs | 708 | 136 | 1,211 | 1,561 | 2,271 | 0 | 257 | 102 | 527 | 6,773 | 2,500 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6,773 | 2,500 |
| New Equipment | 0 | 0 | 747 | 0 | 327 | 2,230 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3,303 | 3,500 | 0 | 0 | 1,500 | 4,803 | 5,000 |
| Ground Maintenance General | 2,341 | 715 | 627 | 803 | 710 | 120 | 46 | 549 | 133 | 6,043 | 2,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6,043 | 2,000 |
| Hire of equipment | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| LNRS & Sites of Interest (Ranger) | 2,377 | 2,189 | 2,177 | 0 | 0 | 1,028 | 2,349 | 2,799 | 2,532 | 15,451 | 23,303 | 2,589 | 2,589 | 3,614 | 24,244 | 31,071 |
| LNRS & Sites of Interest (Working budget) | 176 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 31 | 0 | 215 | 2,250 | 250 | 250 | 250 | 965 | 3,000 |
| Transit | 97 | 163 | 94 | 413 | 119 | 0 | 0 | 101 | 98 | 1,086 | 1,500 | 222 | 222 | 222 | 1,752 | 2,000 |
| Ford Ranger | 546 | 60 | 260 | 69 | 652 | 82 | 75 | 216 | 77 | 2,038 | 1,500 | 167 | 167 | 167 | 2,538 | 2,000 |
| Tractor maintenance & running costs | 202 | 2,242 | 2,982 | 48 | 164 | 131 | 355 | 0 | 26 | 6,150 | 1,500 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6,150 | 1,500 |
| Movana Vehicle | 536 | 94 | 109 | 214 | 129 | 607 | 134 | 964 | 97 | 2,883 | 1,500 | 167 | 167 | 167 | 3,383 | 2,000 |
| Grass cutting mower | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 760 | 760 | 750 | 0 | 0 | 750 | 1,510 | 1,500 |
| Fencing | 45 | 193 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 248 | 750 | 83 | 83 | 83 | 498 | 1,000 |
| Trees | 120 | 650 | 0 | 167 | 3,002 | 750 | 1,290 | 21,037 | 1,975 | 28,991 | 9,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 3,000 | 33,991 | 12,000 |
| Litter bins | 0 | 0 | 0 | 786 | 140 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 926 | 800 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 926 | 800 |
| Litter collection, open spaces | 948 | 980 | 1,135 | 1,295 | 1,006 | 1,109 | 1,112 | 980 | 799 | 9,364 | 6,825 | 758 | 758 | 758 | 11,639 | 9,100 |
| Horticulture | 37 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 37 | 225 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 112 | 300 |
| Roundabout expenditure | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Weald Hall Events | 0 | 1,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2,280 | 6,413 | 1,037 | 4,575 | 15,305 | 14,000 | 0 | 0 | 1,000 | 16,305 | 15,000 |
| Corp dev- signage outside areas | 0 | 0 | 537 | 0 | 196 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 733 | 500 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 733 | 500 |
| Groundsmen - salaries | 6,339 | 7,274 | 9,382 | 9,894 | 10,306 | 10,026 | 9,849 | 14,716 | 10,410 | 88,195 | 90,286 | 10,032 | 10,032 | 10,032 | 118,291 | 120,382 |
| Groundsmen - National insurance | 561 | 587 | 772 | 842 | 899 | 861 | 836 | 1,508 | 914 | 7,779 | 7,347 | 816 | 816 | 816 | 10,228 | 9,796 |
| Groundsmen - Pension | 1,505 | 1,676 | 2,056 | 1,453 | 2,072 | 2,015 | 2,413 | 3,453 | 2,558 | 19,201 | 16,612 | 1,846 | 1,846 | 1,846 | 24,738 | 22,150 |
| Town Security/CCTV | 1,482 | 55 | 976 | 60 | 55 | 58 | 58 | 1,346 | 57 | 4,146 | 2,200 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4,146 | 2,200 |
| Floral displays | 0 | 1,343 | 507 | 507 | 657 | 507 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3,520 | 3,500 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3,520 | 3,500 |
| Repair and replace street furniture | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 750 | 0 | 0 | 750 | 750 | 1,500 |
| Cleaning materials | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 50 | 50 | 50 |

Environment Leisure Committee as at 31 December 2023

| | Apr 23 Actuals £ | May 23 Actuals £ | Jun 23 Actuals £ | Jul 23 Actuals £ | Aug 23 Actuals £ | Sep 23 Actuals £ | Oct 23 Actuals £ | Nov 23 Actuals £ | Dec 23 Actuals £ | Actuals at 31 Dec 23 | Budget at 31 Dec 23 | Jan 24 Budget £ | Feb 24 Budget £ | Mar 24 Budget £ | Total 2023/24 | Budget 2023/24 |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Performing rights | 157 | 671 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 475 | 478 | 0 | 0 | 1,781 | 400 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,781 | 400 |
| Event Advertising Marketing | 190 | 80 | 130 | 80 | 668 | 280 | 80 | 80 | 100 | 1,688 | 2,625 | 292 | 292 | 767 | 3,038 | 3,500 |
| Weald on the Field | 550 | 138 | 0 | 1,533 | 6,411 | 984 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9,617 | 4,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9,617 | 4,000 |
| Climate Change Working Group activities | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| Twinning Hospitality | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| HMLNR & WPLNR | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 324 | 324 | 350 | 0 | 0 | 150 | 474 | 500 |
| Total Purchases | 26,026 | 21,868 | 26,435 | 21,031 | 34,293 | 25,647 | 28,928 | 51,590 | 28,120 | 263,938 | 237,867 | 21,050 | 32,558 | 42,950 | 360,104 | 330,499 |

New initiatives 2023/24

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|--------------|----------|----------|---------------|------------|----------|----------|----------|---------------|---------------|
| ESCC Grass Verge cutting | 4,442 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4,442 | N/A | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4,442 | 4,442 |
| Tree for a tree planting programme | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | N/A | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2,000 |
| New gazebo and trestle tables for events | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | N/A | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 300 |
| King's Coronation | 1,879 | 90 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,969 | N/A | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,969 | 2,000 |
| Victoria Rain Water Tank clean and service | 4,290 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,031 | 0 | 0 | 5,321 | N/A | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5,321 | 7,000 |
| Wildflower areas | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | N/A | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 250 |
| Vehicle replacement | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | N/A | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7,500 |
| Total New Initiatives 2022/23 | 10,611 | 90 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,031 | 0 | 0 | 11,732 | N/A | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11,732 | 23,492 |

Earmarked reserves expenditure covering above expenditure (in progress)

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|-------|-------|-----|--------|---|--------|-----|--|--|--|--|--|
| Cycle to Work scheme | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,631 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,631 | N/A | | | | | |
| Ash dieback | | | | | 1,270 | 90 | 250 | 20,307 | 0 | 21,917 | N/A | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--|--|--|--|--|
| Income for Cycle to Work Scheme | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 116 | 116 | 116 | 347 | N/A | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--|--|--|--|--|

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the Strengthening Local Relationships (SLR) Liaison Meeting
Green Room, Civic Centre on Monday 12 February 2024 at 1.00pm

PRESENT: Cllr. Chris Dowling East Sussex County Council
Cllr. Claire Dowling East Sussex County Council
Rebecca Iona Contact Centre Mgr (ES Highways)
Ian Johnson Traffic & Safety Mgr (ESCC)
Steph Quinnell Community Steward (ES Highways)
Liam Riley Stakeholder Assurance Lead

IN ATTENDANCE:

Cllr. Peter Selby
Holly Goring – Town Clerk
Rachel Newton – Senior Administrative Officer, Uckfield Town Council
Minutes taken by Rachel Newton

1.0 APOLOGIES

None.

2.0 APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last SLR meeting held on the 14 August 2023 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record.

3.0. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING

a) Potholes

Patching works were scheduled to be carried out on the High Street and London Road and were expected to take place during March and April, date to be confirmed.

b) Update on grass crete outside Uckfield College in Downsview Crescent and Southview Drive

Some grass crete that had risen in Downsview Crescent and marked as a potential trip hazard had been passed to the ES Highways team to keep an eye on.

c) Lashbrooks Road

Pavement defect works were completed and surrounding areas were being monitored for potential issues.

d) Severe surface run off – Baker Street

This was an ongoing concern in relation to severe run off, due to heavy rainfalls on numerous occasions, which had led to the flooding of a garage owned by one of the local residents along this side road.

Further to an initial assessment in September, a proposal to raise the berm could cause an issue for vehicles accessing the road, so it was not an easy option. The Contact Centre Manager would look into this further.

4.0. ONGOING FLOODING PROBLEM AT JUNCTION TO SNATTS ROAD

The gully at this junction was always prone to overflowing due to the way the road was built, although it was draining better since the gulleys had been cleaned. The drainage team would provide a more cyclical clean by jetting the area to prevent a build-up of silt.

5.0 NEW ROAD SURFACE EROSION AND SINKING

Concerns were raised regarding the state of the surface of New Road, with one area in particular which seemed to show evidence of subsidence. Patch repairs had been scheduled which would involve structural repairs, to plain out or excavate the affected area and level off.

The Town Clerk also raised an issue with the surface water run-off affecting Ridgewood Recreation Ground and in particular Ridgewood Village Hall car park which was then causing water ingress into the village hall basement during heavy rain showers. In previous years, this had ruined the groundwork underneath the play area adjacent to the hall, which had cost a lot to rectify. This whole car park area needed resurfacing, including introducing various concrete channels and aco drains, but concerns had been raised about going ahead with those works if there was still water coming off New Road.

There was no proper definition between the highway surface of New Road and the grass verges adjacent to the recreation ground, all the way from the pedestrian gate down towards the small footway to the west of the Ridgewood Village Hall car park. The Town Clerk knew of berms and build ups that had been introduced elsewhere in the town to reduce surface water run off, and wondered if this could be investigated on New Road.

ES Highways officers thought it would be useful to arrange a visit onsite, and to see if the Drainage team could also be present, alongside the Highway Steward.

6.0 NEW ROAD JUNCTION

A local resident had submitted a traffic query in relation to the junction where New Road, Ridgewood joined the Lewes Road. This was an ongoing problem with speeding and poor visibility for drivers exiting the junction, especially turning right up towards the town centre.

Looking north from New Road at this junction, there were often parked cars on the eastern side Lewes Road by the Post Office. Local residents recalled there being a mirror opposite the junction some years ago and wondered if this could be replaced.

This matter was raised for the attention of members of this partnership meeting, to see what could be done to improve visibility. Something would need to change due to the anticipated population increase with up to five developments and a new bus route having access points in the vicinity of this junction.

The Traffic and Safety Manager confirmed that it was not county policy to allow a mirror to be installed opposite a highway junction, even if this was on private land, as the liability would rest with whoever put it up. This would only be placed up due to an extremely poor crash record.

In relation to parking, having double yellow lines along this road was not considered to be a practical option, especially for local residents and those using the Ridgewood Post Office. Parking was also a natural road calming measure, so this would only change the problem.

Other options included a one-way system or adding signage, possibly to a 'No Through Road'.

7.0 REGENCY CLOSE – GULLEY BLOCKED AFTER WATER LEAK

After approximately two years of reporting this problem to South East Water, the water leak was now dealt with. In the meantime, East Sussex Highways team had been asked if they could clear and monitor the gulleys to assist with water drainage, at the junction of Regency Close and Manor House Court. This was scheduled to be carried out within six months or less.

8.0 KERB STONES DISLODGED AND BREAKING UP, SOUTHERN CORNER OF LIBRARY WAY

The utility companies had a six-month grace period to make good, although they often did not have the same stone to hand initially and might have used tarmac as a temporary replacement. The Contact Centre Manager did re-iterate to the street works team to replace like for like with the original 'york' stone. If there were specific areas of concern in the future, it would be helpful to ascertain the exact locations and the Permit Inspector could attend the site, if necessary.

9.0 PAVEMENT PARKING ISSUES

a. Parking on grass verges

A couple of local residents had raised issues with vehicles parking on grass verges and pavements in various parts of town, including The Drive, Lealands Drive. Also, Cambridge Way, although this area was difficult as there were only so many parking spaces on this road and residents tended to park on the verges to ensure the refuse lorry and other large vehicles still had access.

In some parts, the refuse vehicles and other large vehicles could not turn around and were going up on the grass verges to allow them to get around some corners, so it was not just local residents.

Sussex Police had been approached a while ago, although they would only act if this was causing an offence or issue to the public highway.

The enquiry was to ask if a lay-by could be considered, although it was fully understood that this was not just a local problem and that costs would be a major issue for this sort of request.

The County Council had a policy that stated that lay-bys would not be provided in urban areas at the expense of the Highway Authority. They could only consider installing lay-bys under a community match initiative, which would require substantial funding from the parish/town council and local area.

The reality with these situations too was that removing one problem could also cause another one and this was not just a local issue. People would still park on the verges anyway even in places that had a layby, and a layby could restrict access to existing properties.

b. Parking and commercial bins

A local resident had asked to resolve an issue with commercial bins and pallets being left outside on the pavement, outside a shop at the top of the High Street near the Church Street traffic lights. It was considered to be very narrow to pass along the pathway with these bins and vehicles parking up on the roadside.

However, this had been passed to the enforcement team and although it was not appealing, it was not against the law and there was no obstruction to pedestrians.

This resident had been informed that we were still being advised to use the Sussex Police's Operation Crackdown to report vehicles parked on the pavements.

10.0 APPROACH TO FRAMFIELD TRAFFIC LIGHTS

This was an ongoing query raised by a resident in Blackboys in relation the parking bays outside the shops at the approach to the traffic lights, leading to Framfield Road. These parking bays were mainly used by residents and local businesses, and even though there was a parking restriction sign, this was not being enforced.

The resident had asked if those parking spaces could be removed and thought this would not be an expensive exercise, but would enable a better flow of traffic at the junction.

The Town Clerk did feel these bays obstructed the traffic flow and the last parking bay was a bit too high and counter-productive to the junction.

However, East Sussex Highways confirmed that there were no parking restrictions under any review or being promoted at this time.

This matter was raised by the Town Council in a report that had been submitted in relation to the access corridors into town some years ago, that was meant to feed into phase four of Uckfield highway improvements.

11.0 TREE PITS – HIGH STREET

The gulleys around the tree pits along the High Street had been raised for clearing previously at the Highway Project Board. The flooding was not only due to the tree pits, but the water running down to the bottom of the High Street.

Several of the gulley assets were raised for more regular clearing and to be monitored by the Community Steward.

12.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Upcoming works:

Resurfacing works along London Road between 4th and 29th March, possibly reduced to start on 11th March. Details could be found on the East Sussex Highways website.

The works in Southview Drive were due to start today for the next couple of weeks.

The Uckfield bus station consultation was due to commence shortly, and the works were hoped to be undertaken early summer.

Other items raised:

School Hill, Maresfield was mentioned. Although out of this area, this was a busy road and also needed to be resurfaced. The Contact Centre Manager would let us know when this likely to be on the works program.

An ongoing situation in Red Clover Road and another on behalf of a local resident about potholes in Keld Avenue. These were being looked at.

The Town Council had written to the landowner adjacent to a wall, on Church Street, which was starting to bow. Although it was not an ES Highways matter at this stage, they wished to make them aware.

Councillor Selby mentioned potholes in Mill Lane and recognised that although this was a private road, this was a busy carriageway used by pedestrians accessing the town from Alexander Road. Clarification was sought on to what extent the East

Sussex Rights of Way had responsibility for contributing to these works. The Town Clerk explained that she had been in communication with property owners and ES Rights of Way on a few occasions in the past few years. The condition of the road was often in a poorer state nearer the entrance which was located to a business, and questioned whether the businesses in the road contributed to the repairs.

The Stakeholder Assurance Lead confirmed that if this was considered as a carriageway with highway rights, then Highways would normally carry out those repairs, but they would need to establish if this was just a 'Rights of Way' referral instead.

There had been some recent positive comments emerging in relation to the Balfour Beatty contractors and our thanks were given.

13.0 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Date of next meeting: Monday 15th July 2024 at 2pm

The meeting ended at 14.19pm

DRAFT

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 4 March 2024

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. Some funds were made available in 2023/24, funds are waiting in earmarked reserves and the remaining funds have been set aside within the budget for 2024/25. We therefore intend to upgrade the play area in the next financial year.

Grounds team are investigating drainage issues as a starting point.

One of the new bins has been vandalised. The Grounds team are looking into possibility of moving this bin further away from the skate park.

A quote was obtained for the replacement of the nets on the practice cricket area - £1,975 plus VAT. This work has yet to be carried out, but will need to do so before the start of the next cricket season in 2024.

Hempstead Lane Play Area and Hempstead Meadows LNR

As outlined in agenda item 8.2, quotations are being sought for equipment to replace the zip-line.

Rocks Park Play Area

Nothing to report.

Snatts Road Cemetery

A report was presented to Full Council on 11 December 2023, regarding the Lime Tree. Contact is being made with the deed holders of in graves near to where works need to take place.

A survey has been undertaken of the land in the old cemetery. A report has been provided in agenda item 12.2.

West Park Recreation ground and West Park LNR

Nothing to report.

Ridgewood Recreation Ground

Nothing to report.

Elizabeth Gardens

Nothing new to report

Hughes Way play area

Nothing to report.

Luxford field and play area

Nothing to report.

Woodlands

Tree planting will commence in March 2024.

Equipment & Vehicles

Exploration into the lease of a replacement for one of the Ground vehicles has commenced. Further details will be presented to members once we have the information available.

Following a thorough review of quotations for the part exchange of the Town Council's tractor, and adoption of the budget for 2024-25, an order has been placed for the purchase of a new tractor, through a payment plan over a term of 24 months.

Street Furniture & Lighting

We are now in receipt of weekly updates from ES Highways in relation to outstanding jobs.

Other

Nothing to report.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officers: James Hollingdale

Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Monday 4 March 2024

Agenda Item 7.2

TO NOTE AN UPDATE FOR FUTURE OPTIONS FOR RURAL GRASS CUTTING

1.0 Background

- 1.1 This report provides an update from East Sussex County Council regarding the Environment & Leisure Committee's decision at their meeting on 22 January 2024, to opt in to reduce the cutting of rural verges or change the schedule in line with wild plant cycles. This is part of their Environmental Enhancement Service.
- 1.2 There are very few verges that fall under the criteria of rural grass verges within the boundary of Uckfield Town. The few we do have tend to be located in New Road, Snatts Road and Eastbourne Road.
- 1.3 Members also asked to raise some additional comments in relation to the 'No Mow May' and dormouse locations, being against woodland with bramble type habitat.
- 1.4 East Sussex County Council recorded our choice of options.
- 1.5 In regards to 'No Mow May' they flagged this but have stated that unfortunately, due to the nature of the programming and the first rural cuts starting on the 6 May, they are unable to state when Uckfield's first rural visibility cut will be carried out. However, as we have opted for option two, these will only be visibility cuts for safety at junctions and on the inside of bends where sight lines between road users may be obscured by vegetation.
- 1.6 They have previously asked us to note, in both options, that safety remains a priority and that any visibility or safety issues can be reported to the Stakeholder Liaison Officer at ES Highways to investigate and rectify as necessary.
- 1.7 If the Town Council wishes to change this option in the future, the Town Council would need to contact the Contracts Management Group.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Monday 4 March 2024

Agenda Item 8.1

TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM WE GROW CIC – SUSSEX BASED GARDENING CO-OPERATIVE

1.0 Co-operative Gardening in Uckfield

- 1.1 We have been approached by We Grow CIC, who are looking for support for a new co-operative gardening initiative in Uckfield. This was also raised at an Uckfield Green Partnership meeting last week and at the Allotment Working Group meeting on 26th February 2024. A proposal was then made to raise this motion with members of the Environment and Leisure Committee to discuss if this was a joint project we could consider.
- 1.2 We Grow CIC is launching a new scheme to establish food co-ops in Uckfield: bringing groups of local people together to grow their own food.
- 1.3 We Grow is a Sussex-based initiative, established during the Pandemic. It is made up of a small team of people and is rooted in grassroots community ethics. The project began in Forest Row. So far, the team have helped 22 food co-ops to get together and get growing – most of the groups are made up of 3 members or families growing together, and a few are larger groups of between 10 and 20 families or members. Groups happen in back gardens, allotments, or larger pieces of land.
- 1.4 The beauty of a food co-op is that unlike an allotment all jobs are shared, so if members of the group want to go away or just take a break, they cover for each other. The plot is still tended and food is still produced. Watering can be done on a rota so it doesn't need to be done every day. Whatever is needed for the plot is bought together making it cheaper, and some things can be shared between a few local co-ops.
- 1.5 Working 2-3 hours per week as a group together plus each taking a turn on a weekly watering rota, produces enough for each member or family to take home a veg box each week, all year round.
- 1.6 There are two ways that the Town Council could consider supporting this initiative:
 1. Identifying whether there may be sites that are owned by the Town Council, which could be utilised by a gardening co-operative;
 2. Identifying whether this is an initiative we want to promote with allotment holders. There may be that a site holder who is struggling to maintain their plot who might want to work on it cooperatively with other local residents.

2.0 Suitable area

- 2.1 One proposed area that might be suitable for a community allotment is using a piece of scrubland on the left-hand side, top of Hospital Approach, which members have spoken about already. This is an area that might be difficult for individual people to look after because it is on a slope. However, it would be better suited if the land were more level access and easily accessible. Officers and Grounds staff would be asked to consider suitable areas.

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 Members are asked to:

- I. Request officers to investigate whether there are sites owned by the Town Council which could be utilised as community gardens;
- II. Investigate whether a co-operative gardening approach would be feasible within our allotment rules and regulations;
- III. To bring these findings to a future meeting for further consideration by members.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Monday 4 March 2024

Agenda Item 9.1

TO NOTE AN UPDATE FROM THE ALLOTMENT WORKING GROUP AND TO REVIEW PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE ALLOTMENT RULES AND REGULATIONS

1.0 Updates

- 1.1 The Allotment Working Group met on Monday 26th February 2024 at the Civic Centre. This meeting provided some previous updates to committee members and latest items raised for discussion, including those from tenants and site reps.
- 1.2 There are currently forty-three people on the allotment waiting list (there were fifty-seven in January) so the waiting list is reducing, even though there are people joining, especially in Springtime! These figures are normally compared each June, but this was just to highlight the current trends, which are improving.
- 1.3 Tenants were contacted in early February to see if anyone was intending to give up their plot before the growing season. Some tenants decided they no longer wished to continue with their allotment and a couple of the larger plots were reduced in size creating two additional plots on the Framfield East and Bird in Eye sites.

2.0 Allotment checks

- 2.1 The next allotment checks will be carried out at the end of April/May time, which will be held jointly between a council official, local councillor and a member of the Allotment Association present on each site. This will be to ensure that the allotment plots are being used and to meet any tenants on site if they had any issues to raise.
- 2.2 There are some minor tweaks to the wording in the Allotment Rules and Regulations 2023, at items 2.4 and 2.6, which refers to the prevention of weeds and provides information on the ban of slug pellets, moving towards being 'greener'. Members are being asked to approve those changes at this meeting (see Appendix A) and a copy will be included with the annual invoices going out in April, along with a covering letter to highlight any changes being made.

3.0 Allotment Competition – automatic entry

- 3.1 This year's Allotment Competition is yet to be announced! This is just for some fun value and to celebrate our fantastic allotment community. Tenants were asked to share any of their ideas before choosing categories this year.

Some tenants were keen to promote wildlife elements and to be a bit 'greener', which we have taken on board. Also, having nectar rich flowers and plants that are bee and pollinator friendly, providing a pond or water for birds and amphibians, not using pesticides and providing some sheltered habitat such as a very small log pile or bug hotel. The idea of re-use, reduce, repurpose and recycle was also ever popular.

Some ideas for fun included best bird scarer (other than scarecrow) and funniest vegetable!

We also received some feedback to say no need for a competition at all as it would be a waste of council's time.

Although we could not include them all, it would be important to choose any categories that were achievable by all our tenants, as this year the competition will resort back to being an automatic entry for everyone. A couple of our tenants felt that the present system did not always reflect some of the best plots around and some tenants may have an amazing plot which meets a particular criteria or category, but not even realise.

If any tenant does not wish to be involved in the competition however, they can simply let us know or opt out.

4.0 Next meeting

- 4.1 The next joint working group meeting will be held on Monday 25 March 2024 between the councillors on the working group, members of the Allotment Association and allotment reps, coming together to discuss anything raised by the allotment tenants too.

If anyone wishes to raise any items sooner, please get in touch with either Rachel at the Council offices or via your allotment site rep, those details can be found on the noticeboards.

5.0 Recommendation

- 5.1 Members are asked to note the report and accept the minor amendments to the Allotment Rules and Regulations, aforementioned at item 2.2.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Uckfield Town Council Allotment Rules



APRIL 2023 (Updated)

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1 Assignment / Sub-letting

- 1.1 Priority will be given to parishioners of Uckfield and will be dependent on the numbers on the waiting list at the time.
- 1.2 The tenancy of an allotment is personal to the tenant named in the agreement.
- 1.3 The tenant may not underlet, assign, sublet or part with possession or control of all or any part of their allotment without written consent from the council. (Agreement c)
- 1.4 Within the first three months the tenant is within a probationary period if the tenant chooses to return the allotment to the council during this period the tenant will have rental returned minus a £10.00 administration fee. If the tenant undertakes no significant work (no less than 40% cultivation) to a plot within the first three months of receiving the plot then the tenancy will be terminated and the plot returned to council for re-letting.
- 1.5 New tenants will be required to submit a deposit of such amount as the Council decides which will be refunded at the time of cessation of the allotment tenancy (provided the plot is left in a satisfactory and rentable condition).
That for the 2023/24 season this deposit shall be £52.00.

2 Cultivation and weed control

- 2.1 The cultivated area is defined as the area that is cultivated for vegetable or fruit crop or flower production. Cultivation requires the tenant to regularly dig or mulch, or prune and weed 75% of the plot. Compost bins, glass houses, water butts, poly-tunnels and fruit cages are also included within the cultivated area, as are ornamental flower crops. Areas of lawn or meadow are not included within the cultivated area. (Agreement a)
- 2.2 Allotments must be kept clean and maintained in a good state of cultivation (minimum 75% in cultivation) and fertility throughout the year. An area that is annually cleared of weeds yet remains un-cropped or un-planted during any one year will be considered as non-cultivated. The whole plot, including any uncultivated/leisure areas, must be kept tidy, safe and free from flowering weeds. (Agreement a)
- 2.3 Allotments that have areas that are unsuitable for production - such as heavily shaded areas, excessively sloping land or impoverished or polluted soils - may be allowed extended lawn and wildflower conservation areas. Extended grass areas must be agreed in writing with a council officer.
- 2.4 It is the tenant's responsibility to keep the plot free of weeds that cause a nuisance to adjoining tenants. [Nuisance weeds must be controlled or suppressed, otherwise this will lead to termination of the tenancy.](#) Where on inspection or as the result of complaints, a plot with weeds is identified the tenant will be sent a weed notice letter, [a](#) - A further inspection will be carried out up to 8 weeks after the notice period has expired, and if there are no improvements in cultivation a notice of termination will be sent. (Agreement a)
- 2.5 Carpet and black plastic must not be used for weed control on allotments.
- 2.6 Use of Pesticides, herbicides, vermicides and fertilisers:
Where these are used, manufacturer's instructions must be followed at all times. Particular care should be taken to avoid drift or spillage on paths and neighbouring plots. Tenants should generally only use weedkillers over winter or in the spring, and not in the vicinity of crops.

Glyphosate must not be used as this is known to be a particular environmentally damaging weedkiller.

[Slug pellets: There was a ban of metaldehyde announced by Defra in September 2020, which is found in slug pellets. Garlic \(garlic wash recipe\) is the cheapest, easiest and most effective way to deter slugs.](#)

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3 Trees and invasive plants

- 3.1 All trees, bushes and hedging over the absolute height of 2.5 metres (or 8 feet) in height are in breach of allotment rules and will lead to a notice and possible termination.
- 3.2 Tenants must not, without consent of a Council officer, cut or prune trees outside of their own allotment or plant any trees which will exceed an absolute height of 2.5 metres (or 8 feet) and/or allow self-seeded trees to grow on their allotment, including any that are growing through perimeter fencing. (Agreement d)
- 3.3 Fruit trees are permitted but will normally be included within the 25% of non-cultivated area. Where fruit trees are planted outside of the 25% non-cultivated leisure area, the soil beneath fruit trees must be planted with productive crops or other plants in accordance with cultivation rules.
- 3.4 Tenants who have fruit trees that have grown above 2.5 metres will be served a notice instructing them to prune trees to an acceptable height. Where trees are not pruned back to an acceptable height then the council reserves the right to prune back trees and charge the cost to the tenant.
- 3.5 All fruit trees must be selected so as to avoid breaching the height rule, with trees being selected to grow to around 2 metres but no higher than the absolute height of 2.5 metres. Trees should be grown on dwarfing or semi dwarfing rootstocks and pruned so as not to exceed 2.5 metres in height.
- 3.6 The council reserves the right to enter any plot, with or without the consent of the tenant, to remove oversized trees and plants over 2.5 metres (or 8 feet) in height as well as cut down excessive and seeding weed growth or overgrown grass. If the removed vegetation has been planted by the tenant then removal costs will be charged to the tenant. Failure to pay for removal costs will result in tenancy termination.
- 3.7 Invasive plants such as Bamboo, all types of willow and fast growing conifers (including Christmas trees) are not permitted. If the invasive plants are not removed by the tenant then the tenancy will be terminated and plants removed at cost to the tenant.

4 Hedges and ponds

- 4.1 Tenants are responsible for maintaining any hedge on or abutting their plot. They should be kept to a height of around 2 metres with an absolute maximum height of 2.5 metres (8 feet). Hedge sides shall be trimmed at least once per year so as not to obstruct pedestrian or vehicular access. (Agreement e)
- 4.2 Where hedges abut a perimeter boundary, road or vehicular haulage way, the council is responsible for maintaining the outside and top.
- 4.3 Hedges should not be cut back during the bird nesting season, which runs from 1st March - 1st September.
- 4.4 No fast-growing conifers or invasive screening plants such as bamboo or willow may be planted as hedging on allotment land.
- 4.5 The maximum surface area for a pond is 1.5 square metres and will be no deeper than 50cm deep. The pond area will be included as part of the non-cultivated area.
- 4.6 Ponds must be temporary and should not be constructed out of concrete or any other hard landscape material. All ponds should be sited at least 2 metres distance from any haulage way or path. Tenants are advised to provide secure fencing.
- 4.7 The use of sunken baths as ponds or for water storage is not permitted on safety grounds. Baths being brought onto the allotment space by an existing tenant will be seen as unwanted waste and will result in a tenant being put on notice. Historical baths brought on site before the 2011 rule review that are both functional and above ground will be exempt.

5 Plot use and storage

- 5.1 Tenants must use their allotment and any structures on it for their own personal use and

must not carry out any business or sell produce from it (unless sold for the benefit of charity or the allotment association of that site.) Tenants may not use their allotment as a place of residence and/or sleep overnight.

- 5.2 The allotment is rented to the tenant for the purpose of cultivation of herb, flower, fruit and vegetable crops.
- 5.3 Only materials for use on the plot may be stored there, such as beanpoles, cloches, pots and netting for seasonal use.
- 5.4 Construction materials, paving and timber for infrastructure work must be used within 12 months.
- 5.5 Quantities in excess of the above will be regarded as unacceptable and the tenant ordered to remove them. Failure to do so will result in the materials being removed by the council, the tenant charged with the cost and notice of termination given.

6 Water, Bonfires & Other Restrictions

- 6.1 Sprinklers are prohibited. Hose pipes may be used to water directly if hand held or to fill water butts, provided this does not prevent other tenants having access to water supplies.
- 6.2 Mains water will be available from 1st March to 31st October. Water supply is subject to season restrictions and hosepipe bans.
- 6.3 Any form of unattended mains connected irrigation - be it open hose food irrigation or seep hose irrigation - is forbidden and will lead to notice of termination.
- 6.4 All stand pipes and water butts beneath standpipes will be considered as a common resource to be shared with surrounding tenants. Any tenant who uses excessive quantities of water, or who is seen to consistently monopolise the water supply to the detriment of fellow tenants, will be put on notice. Where possible, tenants are encouraged to collect rainwater for use on their allotments.
- 6.5 Bonfires are permitted for the burning of un-treated or un-painted woody waste only. The burning of any other materials – such as plastics, tyres, carpet, MDF, laminated wood - is strictly prohibited and will lead to immediate termination and referral for prosecution.
- 6.6 All open fires between 1st April and 1st November must be contained within an incinerator barrel, however small contained fires will be permitted for barbequing.
- 6.7 Smoke from a bonfire, which could be a nuisance to neighbours by interfering with the use and enjoyment of their garden or property, or could affect the comfort or quality of life of the public, could result in action under the Environment Protection Act of 1990. Tenants who light a fire within 50ft (15.24m) of the centre of a highway may be guilty of an offence under the Highways Act 1980.
- 6.8 Fires must be attended at all times until all material has burnt and the fire extinguished. Fires must be kept to a manageable size to ensure safe burning and a minimum of smoke production. Any fire managed in an unsafe manner or producing excessive smoke will result in an instant notice and may lead to tenancy termination.
- 6.9 All potentially toxic materials should be removed from the allotment site and disposed of in the relevant civic amenity site. Failure to remove said materials will lead to termination and recovery of removal costs.
- 6.10 The council reserves the right to prohibit bonfires on a specific plot and/or group of plots.
- 6.11 Tenants may not remove any mineral, sand, gravel, earth or clay from the allotment gardens without the written permission from the council. (Agreement d)

7 Waste materials and pollutants

- 7.1 Waste regulations apply to materials brought on site by existing tenants. It is the responsibility of the new tenant to instruct the council to take away waste left on site within the first month of taking a plot. The new tenant may also gather photographic evidence of any potential polluting materials on site when they take on the plot.

- 7.2 Waste from external sources, including green waste, may not be deposited on the allotment or any other part of the site. Abuse will result in immediate tenancy termination and prosecution.
- 7.3 The bringing on site and use of polluting materials such as tyres, asbestos, glass and carpet shall be treated as illegal disposal of waste and will result in immediate notification and referral for prosecution.
- 7.4 The bringing on site and use of rubble and hardcore for paths and other forms of construction is prohibited. The bringing on site of tyres, plastic or metal materials such as shelving, angle iron or bath tubs - as well as other timber and plastic materials not relating to crop production is prohibited. Bringing such materials on site will result in a notice and possible termination.
- 7.5 The creation of concrete pad footings for sheds or green houses, or concrete pads for paving, or any solid brick and cement structures is prohibited. Narrow concrete and brick footings will be allowed for a glass house.
- 7.6 The use of glass bottles for any form of construction or raised bed is forbidden and will result in a notice and possible termination.
- 7.7 All non-diseased vegetative matter shall be composted and used on the tenant's allotment. Diseased plants and perennial weeds can be burned in an incinerator.
- 7.8 The council reserves the right to clear overgrown plots that are currently tenanted and are causing a nuisance. The tenant will be charged the full cost on each occasion that this occurs.
- 7.9 In the event that a tenant is put on notice for excessive materials such as timber, metal, carpet or tyres being left on plot, and if the tenant does not clear such materials, then the council reserves the right to clear such materials and reclaim costs from the tenant.
- 7.10 If tenants witness someone illegally fly tipping rubbish onto allotment land they should contact Wealden District Council Streetscene at street.scene@wealden.gov.uk or 01323 443322.

8 Structures and fences

- 8.1 Sheds and sided structures shall be included within the 25% area allowed for non-cultivation. Poly tunnels, glasshouses and fruit cages will be included within the cultivated area.
- 8.2 Any structure on the allotment must be temporary and maintained in safe order with an appropriate external appearance and condition. If the council is not satisfied with the state of the structure the tenant must either repair it to the council's satisfaction or remove the structure within one month of instruction to do so. If the structure is not removed, the council may remove it and charge the tenant the full cost of removal and disposal. (Agreement e) (Agreement f)
- 8.3 Tenants may put up one shed and no more than two greenhouses (including poly-tunnels) on their plot. Glasshouses and poly-tunnels should cover no more than 20% of the allotment. Permission from the site representative or council officer is required for poly tunnels, with tunnel size and layout agreed. No tunnel or glasshouse should exceed 2.13 metres in height.
- 8.4 Where a tenant is given a plot with a structure then the tenant should take photographs of structures to disprove liability if structures are seen to be unsafe.
- 8.5 Any structures erected on the allotment shall not be made from hazardous materials (e.g. asbestos) and the colour shall be in keeping with the natural environment.
- 8.6 The maximum size of a shed is 3 metres long x 2 metres wide x 2.13m high, (9 feet x 6 feet x 7 feet).
- 8.7 N.B. West Park allotments maximum size of shed is 6' x 4' provided guttering and water butts are installed.
- 8.8 All structures must be adequately secured to the ground to prevent uplift with sheds and

glass houses requiring a footing on slabs bedded on sand.

- 8.9 All structures must be kept within the boundary of the allotment and must not be constructed over underground utilities (e.g. water supply pipes). All structures must be removed before the end of the expiration of the tenancy.
- 8.10 Solid fences adjacent to neighbours' plots should not exceed 1 metre in height and wire and trellis fences should not exceed 1.5 metres in height. (Agreement e)
- 8.11 It is an offence to attach or hang any materials to any council fencing.

9 Paths & haulage ways

- 9.1 Paths within allotments must be kept free from flowering weeds and long overgrown grass that exceeds 15cm (over 6 inches high). (Agreement b)
- 9.2 A single main path no wider than 75cm, as well as narrow internal paths (being spurs from the main path and being no wider than 50cm) will also be included within the cultivated area. Wider paths will be allowed on steeply sloping plots where raised beds require wider access.
- 9.3 Paths that exceed the dimensions stated above shall be included within the non-cultivated area.
- 9.4 Shared paths between two allotments must be maintained, and kept cut and clipped up to the nearest half width by each adjoining tenant; paths must be kept clear of obstructions at all times.
- 9.5 All paths should be wide enough for easy pedestrian access to neighbouring tenants' plots.
- 9.6 Where car parking or vehicle access is permitted on an allotment site, the tenant must ensure that all haulage ways have free access for other users.
- 9.7 Haulage ways must not be obstructed - or parked on - by vehicles. Haulage ways may be parked upon for loading and unloading only. Vehicles which frequently and persistently block haulage ways may be barred from allotment sites.(Agreement b)

10 Dogs, livestock and Bees

- 10.1 Dogs must not be brought onto allotments or any part of the site unless they are kept on a short lead or otherwise restrained at all times. Tenants who fail to keep dogs on leads will receive a notice.
- 10.2 Tenants with persistently barking dogs or dogs that harass allotment tenants will be put on notice and shall have dogs barred from allotment sites.
- 10.3 The burial of any pets or animals on any allotment land is strictly forbidden and will result in termination.
- 10.4 No animals or livestock may be kept overnight on allotment land, except hens with permission sought and agreed.
- 10.5 Any tenant that wishes to keep hens on their allotment must advise the Town Council in writing and complete an Undertaking (see Appendix 1) which requires the following:-
- that the hens will be kept in accordance with the RSPCA Guidelines
 - defines the minimum number of two hens (no cockerels allowed) and maximum number of hens not exceeding coop capacity
 - and confirms that all eggs from these hens are for personal consumption
- 10.6 The keeping of bees is not allowed on any allotment land. The Uckfield Allotment Bee Club are based along Framfield Road and currently look after five bee hives. Please contact the Town Council if you are interested and require any further information.

11 Rent

- 11.1 The tenant must pay the invoiced rent within 40 days of the due date and may, if

qualified, claim any special discounts the council offers only at the time of invoicing.

- 11.2 The rent year runs from the 1st April to 31st March each year. A tenant may voluntarily relinquish their allotment at any time, or have their tenancy terminated for breach of the tenancy agreement before year end but no rebate will be payable unless the plot is surrendered within the initial 3-month probationary period.
- 11.3 New tenants will be responsible for recording initial plot condition by taking photographs of the plot at the time of accepting tenancy.
- 11.4 All tenants over the age of 60 will be eligible for a concessionary 20% discount on submission of documented proof of date of birth. Concessionary evidence must be provided prior to 1st April in order to receive concession for the following year.
- 11.5 The departing tenant shall remove any items or derelict structures from their plot before the end of the tenancy. Inspections will be carried out on final hand over with a bill given if necessary. The council will dispose of any such material not removed by the tenant. The full cost of disposal shall be charged to the outgoing tenant.
- 11.6 Rent may be increased at any time provided the council takes reasonable steps to give at least six months' notice by way of signs on notice boards and gates, or by newsletters etc. Failure to give notice to any individual tenant will not invalidate the tenants rent increase.
- 11.7 An administration fee will be charged per annum to the amount of £15 per plot. This is subject to any slight increase on an annual basis.

12 Observance of Rules

- 12.1 Tenants must observe and comply with current rules, regulations and policies, and those which the council may make at any time in the future (e.g. statutory law changes, local restrictions - such as bonfire restrictions).
- 12.2 Rules will be posted online on the council website www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk, and may be displayed either on notice boards, gates and/or sent with rent invoices/new tenancy agreements/newsletters. Failure to observe rules will lead to tenants being put on notice and possible tenancy termination. In certain extreme instances a breach of site rules can lead to immediate termination of tenancy.
- 12.3 Tenants must comply with any reasonable or legitimate directions given by an authorised officer in relation to an allotment or site.
- 12.4 Tenants shall, as regards to the allotment plot, observe and perform all conditions and covenants contained in the lease (if any) under the council hold the land.
- 12.5 Any Member or Officer of the Council shall be entitled at any time to enter and inspect the allotment plot.

13 Site safety, security and duty of care

- 13.1 Tenants must not discriminate against, harass, bully or victimise any other person/s on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, social origin, language, religion, political or other opinion, belief, gender, marital status, age, sexual orientation, sexuality, medical condition, disability, or disadvantaged by any condition which cannot be shown to be justified.
- 13.2 No tenant must cause another tenant harassment, alarm or distress. Any use of violence or threats of violence or damage to another's property will be grounds for immediate termination of tenancy and possible prosecution. (Agreement b)
- 13.3 The allotments and site or any structures thereon may not be used for any illegal, immoral or anti-social purpose. Tenants found to have committed an illegal or immoral act will be subject to immediate tenancy termination.
- 13.4 In the case of two tenants having an unresolved dispute and no one party can be proven as being in breach of any site rules then the council reserves the right to end the tenancy of both parties. The council reserves the right to consult with the site representative and

the Uckfield Allotment Society regarding any such disputes.

- 13.5 Tenants have a duty of care to everyone, including visitors, trespassers and themselves.
- 13.6 Any structure or any other item considered hazardous should be removed after instruction from a council officer. Failure to do so will see the council remove the structure or item with costs charged to the tenant and may result in termination.
- 13.7 Storage of fuels and hazardous materials is prohibited only chemicals necessary for gardening purposes can be stored. All chemicals must be locked away and out of reach of children. Manufacturer's instructions regarding safety, storage, mixing, disposal and use must be followed at all times. The Council recommends the use of organic alternatives wherever possible. Usage of fuels and hazardous materials should be undertaken with caution. If hazardous materials such as asbestos are found on your allotment then please inform your site representative or a council officer. (Agreement i, in part)
- 13.8 Particular care should be taken when using strimmers, rotavators and other mechanical/powerful equipment both in relation to the user and any third-party person. Appropriate personal protective equipment should be worn at all times.
- 13.9 Unsafe working practices may result in plot termination and the tenant shall be liable for any damage or injury caused by unsafe working practices.
- 13.10 Tenants may not bring, use or allow the use of barbed or razor wire on the allotment. (Agreement L)
- 13.11 The council is not liable for loss by accident, fire, theft or damage of any structures, tools, plants or contents on allotment. Tenants are advised not to store any items of value on the allotment, and to insure and mark any items kept at the allotment. Tenants should report incidents of theft and vandalism to their site representative and the police.

14 Unauthorised persons

- 14.1 Only the tenant, or a person authorised or accompanied by the tenant is allowed on the site.
- 14.2 The authorised officer or other authorised persons may order any unauthorised person on the site in breach of these rules to leave immediately.
- 14.3 The tenant is responsible for the behaviour of children and adults visiting the allotment. In an instance where a visitor breaches site rules then the tenant will be held equally responsible.
- 14.4 Allotments are not suitable for large private gatherings of 12 people or more. The playing of amplified music is forbidden.

15 Vehicles, tents and caravans

- 15.1 Motor vehicles may not be parked overnight or deposited on the allotment so as to cause a blockage except in the car parking areas provided, other than for short-term loading/unloading. Obstruction of paths and drives is not permitted.
- 15.2 Caravans and live-in vehicles are not permitted on any allotment land.
- 15.3 Overnight erection of tents, yurts and other temporary structures, as well as overnight camping, are not allowed on allotment land.

16 Plot numbering, plot splitting and notices

- 16.1 Tenants must mark the allotment number on the outside of a shed or greenhouse, or on a post, and keep it clean and legible to be visible from the haulage way or main access path.
- 16.2 Where plots do not have numbers clearly on display the council reserves the right to paint numbers on sheds, water butts or fencing. Plots without suitable numbering are in breach of tenancy and can be put on notice by a council officer or authorised person.

- 16.3 Council or Allotment Society information may be displayed on notice boards where provided. No other notices or advertisements are allowed on the site except with written consent of the authorised officer.
- 16.4 Allotment plots may be reconfigured or divided at the discretion of the town council.

17 Change of address and notices

- 17.1 Tenants must immediately inform the council, in writing, of changes of address or status.
- 17.2 If a tenant moves to an address outside of the boundary of the Uckfield Town Council, they would need to relinquish their allotment, although this could be reviewed with the possibility of termination being an option.
- 17.3 Notices to be served by the council on the tenant may be:
- a) Sent to the tenant's address in the Tenancy Agreement (or as notified to the council under these rules) by email, post, registered letter, recorded delivery or hand delivered; or
 - b) Served on the tenant personally; or
 - c) Placed on the plot.
- 17.4 Notices served under paragraph 17.3 will be treated as properly served even if not received
- 17.5 Written information for the council should be sent to: Uckfield Town Council, Civic Centre, Uckfield or by email: rachel@uckfieldtc.gov.uk

18 Site reps

Who can help with your allotment? Who to contact and how we can help if you have any issues with your allotment?

Your site representative is an allotment tenant who volunteers as a communication link between tenants, the local council and Allotment Association. They can ensure that a helpful, fair and consistent service is maintained on all sites across the local allotment community. They can also pass on information to the council and help with things like security, water supply, showing vacant plots, signing up new tenants to the waiting list, giving advice, support and encouragement to tenants if requested and monitoring the need for repairs and rubbish collections.

Details of site reps can be found on allotment noticeboards. If you need any further information, please contact: rachel@uckfieldtc.gov.uk

19 Allotment Association

Most allotment sites have an association run by volunteer tenants. The Allotment Association hold meetings every few months to discuss any issues and are hoping to encourage new members to join.

Please email the Secretary of the Allotment Association, David Newbery at newsletteruckfield@gmail.com for more details.

20 Application

- 20.1 These rules are made pursuant to Allotment Acts 1908 to 1950 and apply to all rented allotments.

21 Terms and interpretation

In these rules the words used are to have the following meaning:

- 21.1 Allotment: A plot of land that is let by the council for the cultivation of herb, flower, fruit and vegetable crops.
- 21.2 The Council: Uckfield Town Council.

- 21.3 Tenant: A person who holds an agreement for the tenancy of an allotment.
- 21.4 Site: Any area of allotments that are grouped together at one location
- 21.5 Rent: The annual rent payable for the tenancy of an allotment.
- 21.6 Review notice: Any notice of reviewed rental charges.
- 21.7 Site representative: An allotment tenant who works as a middle person between the council and the tenants and helps oversee the allotment.
- 21.8 Tenancy agreement: A legally binding written document which records the terms and conditions of letting, of a particular allotment(s), to an individual tenant or group.
- 21.9 Haulage way: A common route within the site for vehicular and pedestrian access to allotments.
- 21.10 Headland: The area of land between an allotment plot and any haulage way or perimeter fence.
- 21.11 Authorised officer: A member of staff of Uckfield Town Council.
- 21.12 Other authorised person: The tenant or invited guest.
- 21.13 Cultivation: Keeping the plot in good productive order by: the maintenance and improvement of soil; the control and prevention of flowering weeds, ornamental plants, and herb, flower, fruit and vegetable crops.
- 21.14 Paths: Dividing paths between allotments.
- 21.15 The non-cultivated leisure area: Small area (no larger than 25% of plot) of grass, patio or built structures, for pastimes, eating and/or relaxing.

22 The Council's responsibilities

- 22.1 Administration
 - d) Keeping waiting lists, letting plots, rent collection, terminations and enforcement of rules.
- 22.2 Repairs and Maintenance
 - e) Repairs to site perimeter fences, gates and water infrastructure; maintenance of haulage ways; vacant plot management; hedges and tree management.
- 22.3 Rubbish clearance
 - f) To remove rubbish which has been fly-tipped.
- 22.4 Liability
 - g) The council is not liable for loss by accident, fire, theft or damage of any structures, tools, plants or contents on allotment.

23 The complaints procedure

- 23.1 The council aims to provide a high quality of allotment service. If, however, you are unhappy with the service, in the first instance telephone or write to the Council. If you are dissatisfied with the response then follow the procedure below.
- 23.2 The council's corporate complaints procedure is available from the Council Office.

24 Tenancy termination

The council may terminate allotment tenancies in any of the following ways:

- 24.1 By giving 12 months written notice to quit expiring at any time between 29 September to 6 April inclusive.
- 24.2 At any time after three calendar months written notice by the council that the allotment is required for a purpose other than agriculture to which it has been appropriated under any

statutory provisions, or for building, mining or any other industrial purpose, or for roads or sewers necessary in connection with any of these purposes. Where possible, the Council will consult tenants and arrange relocation and appropriate compensation.

24.3 By giving one month's written notice to quit if:

- a) The rent is in arrears for 40 days or more (whether formally demanded or not); or
- b) The tenant is in breach of any of these rules or of their tenancy agreement; or
- c) Automatically on the death of the named tenant, (normally there would be no objection, in the first case, to a family member taking on the tenancy). (Agreement m)
- d) If the tenant becomes bankrupt or compounds with creditors
- e) 22.4 The tenancy may also be terminated by the council or the tenant by twelve months previous notice in writing expiring on or before 6th day of April or on or after 29th September in any year. (Allotment Act 1922. Section 1(1) (e).

25 **GDPR – using your personal information and data protection**

Changes to the current Data Protection legislation came into effect from May 2018, as a result of the 2016 EU Directive (GDPR).

Tenants must be over 18yrs to apply (data protection).

Using your personal information

Personal information which you supply to us may be used in a number of ways:

- To provide you with an Allotment and manage your tenancy; retaining your personal data supplied on both paper and electronic records.
- For statistical analysis.
- For fraud prevention.
- For audit and debt collection.

We will not disclose any information to any company or organisation outside Uckfield Town Council except to help prevent fraud, or if required to do so by law.

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 04 March 2024

Agenda Item 10.2

ALL WEATHER PITCH OPERATION GROUP

1.0 Summary report

- 1.1 Councillor Selby and I attended the meeting held at the Uckfield Leisure centre on 26th February 2024.

The report from Freedom Leisure on the 3G pitch continues to be very positive and all slots are fully booked with one exception between 5-6pm on a Monday evening, which is very good for the use of the facility and income.

The bookings for the out of football season are up and there has been extensive interest in booking the 24/25 season. Following discussions on the level of usage, confirmation was made that this was within the design life of the mat which was based on an average of eighty hours per week over ten years and that a combined Rugby/Football maintenance report was due in May to report on its current condition.

There was no further information on the replacement of the rubber crumb. The Football Association (F.A.) are still conducting tests and trials.

The application to the F.A. for grant assistance in providing the storage container is in the process of being submitted but could also include replacement of the pitch machinery, as only one application can be considered annually.

The sinking fund for pitch replacement is still as the previous meeting but the next instalment of funds is due shortly. The fund is still on target for pitch replacement in approximately two years, but is dependent of the maintenance report.

If there is a shortfall, it was confirmed that the college budget would be able to make a loan to enable the continuation of the much-used facility.

The Uckfield Rugby club are still progressing with their long-term plans to provide more family accessible facilities on the pitch.

There was lengthy discussion of the detail of the original Design and Access Statement (D&A), when the planning application was made regarding the number and frequency of playing matches. When these occur, there is an increased level of noise and disturbance to the adjacent properties. These matches are generally held on a Saturday and Sunday when householders are at home.

The wording of the D&A Statement was very vague, so it was agreed to keep a watching brief and record of the disturbance.

The next meeting will be held on 10th June 2024.

Councillor C. Macve

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 4 March 2024

Agenda Item 10.3

REPORT OF OUTSIDE BODIES: CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST

1.0 Summary Report

Ashdown Forest Management Plan - this has been drafted, although not finalised. It is awaiting feedback from Surrey Wildlife Trust as a consultant. The report has not been approved by Natural England yet either. It will be shared with parishes as soon as possible.

St Johns Car Park – a contractor has been appointed to improve the car park. Works will be carried out at a time when the car park is not used as heavily. Potholes at the car park entrance are also due to be repaired, but Natural England have to give permission for tarmac to be used, because the car park is in an SSSI. Funds have been set aside for the work and it will be undertaken as soon as possible.

Staffing and recruitment

Representatives were informed that:

- A new Administration Manager had been recruited three months ago, Zoe Nichols, who has a legal background
- A new CEO had been recruited, Mark Pearson, who would start work at the end of January. He has a conservation background with experience with Surrey Wildlife Trust and Sussex Wildlife Trust
- A new Deer Ranger, who would manage the deer management programme, was in the final stages of being recruited.
- A new member of the Livestock Team would be recruited and hopefully start work by April.

With these appointments the Ashdown Forest is now fully staffed.

Paid Parking Scheme.

The group was briefed that the scheme had been considered a success by Ashdown Forest. A full year of operations had been analysed and a report prepared for the Finance Committee. Following their review, a report would be shared on the website. The scheme was launched with a projection of annual revenues of £200,000. This had been met. However, it was important to note that a large part of these revenues would need to be used to fill the annual operating deficit, which was the primary objective of the scheme. The remaining balance would allow modest levels of increased expenditure on a range of priorities. It would be important to recognise, however, that the funds would not allow all car parks to be immediately improved. Car park maintenance was undertaken based on annual assessments of need and availability of funds.

Displacement parking did occur but was less than was anticipated. There had been some vandalism of signage, but the arrest of a perpetrator sent a clear signal that criminal damage to Ashdown Forest signs would have consequences.

It was agreed that communicating the idea that parking payments supported the Forest directly might have a positive effect on how people saw the parking payments. Parish representatives agreed to help with this.

Landscape Recovery.

The group was briefed on the failure to win a DEFRA development grant for the Landscape Recovery project under Round 2 of the scheme. He noted that the problem had been due to the evaluation of the proposed activities on contributions to government's net zero target. With the support of the new CEO there was every intention of Ashdown Forest to lead another bid for the coming Round 3 of the scheme.

Planning application of concern

The representative for Ashurst Wood noted the planned development of 50 dwelling units on the A22 in Ashurst Wood close to ancient woodland.

A discussion ensued around the 400m zone, the 7.5km zone and the implications of developments in these zones for Ashdown Forest. It was noted that Ashdown Forest was a formal consultee on planning applications in the former zone but not the latter but was always interested in and concerned about proposed developments in the vicinity of the Forest.

Councillor Angie Smith

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 Members are asked to note the report.