



# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

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

**Town Clerk – Holly Goring**

## **YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO A MEETING OF UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL**

**on**

**Monday 13 January 2025 at 7.00pm  
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 MAYOR'S DISCRETION**

#### **3.0. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL AND WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

#### **4.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

#### **5.0 MINUTES**

5.1 To **RESOLVE** that the minutes of the meeting of Full Council on 2 December 2024 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

5.2 Action list – For information only

5.3 Forward plan

#### **6.0 COMMITTEE MINUTES**

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

(a) Plans Committees – 6 January 2025

(b) Environment and Leisure Committee – no meeting held

(c) General Purposes Committee – 16 December 2024

#### **7.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES (none received)**

- 8.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS** (none received)
- 9.0 TO RATIFY DOCUMENTATION FROM STANDING COMMITTEES:**  
General Purposes Committee  
(i) Risk Management Policy (No. 29)
- 10.0 TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WEALDEN PARISH REMUNERATION PANEL ON TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES FOR 2025/26**
- 11.0 TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE AND APPROVE THE CONSOLIDATION OF EARMARKED RESERVES**
- 12.0 TO CONSIDER PROPOSED DRAFT SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS FOR WEALDEN CITIZENS ADVICE AND WEALDEN VOLUNTEERING**
- 13.0 TO REVIEW THE RESULTS OF THE RESIDENTS' SURVEY 2024**
- 14.0 TO ADOPT THE CONTENT OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-30 PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF THE DOCUMENT**
- 15.0 TO ADOPT THE TOWN COUNCIL'S ANNUAL PLAN 2025/26**
- 16.0 TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE AND FORMALLY SET THE ANNUAL BUDGET (PRECEPT) FOR 2025/26**
- 17.0 TO ADOPT THE ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR 2025-30**
- 18.0 QUARTERLY PROGRESS UPDATE ON UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL'S ANNUAL PRIORITIES FOR 2024/25 (Q3)**
- 19.0 TO CONSIDER THE BEST METHOD FOR RESPONDING TO THE FOLLOWING CONSULTATIONS:**  
(i) Strengthening the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities in England (deadline 12 February 2025)  
(ii) Draft Transport Strategy Consultation (deadline 7 March 2025)
- 20.0 TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS**
- 21.0 SIGNING OF GRAVE CERTIFICATES AND TO NOTE TRANSFERS OF DEEDS OF GRANT**
- 22.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED**
- 23.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- 24.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**



Town Clerk  
7 January 2025

# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of **UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL** held  
on Monday 2 December 2024 at 7.00 pm  
in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield

**PRESENT:** Cllr. K. Bedwell (Town Mayor)      Cllr. S. Mayhew (Deputy Mayor)  
Cllr. B. Cox      Cllr. M. McClafferty  
Cllr. D. French      Cllr. P. Selby  
Cllr. J. Love      Cllr. A. Smith  
Cllr. C. Macve      Cllr. P. Ullmann  
Cllr. D. Manvell

## **IN ATTENDANCE:**

County Councillors Claire and Chris Dowling  
Two members of the public  
Sarah D'Alessio      Assistant Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer  
Holly Goring      Town Clerk  
Minutes taken by Holly Goring

## **1.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members and officers were reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on the agenda. They were advised that notice should be given at this part of the meeting of any intended declaration and that the nature of the interest should then be declared later at the commencement of the item or when the interest became apparent.

The Town Clerk provided blanket dispensation for members to talk on the general principles of the business planning documents. If a particular matter did become detailed, members could then declare their interest.

Councillor A. Smith declared her personal interest in agenda item 13.0 relating to the service level agreement for Wealden Citizens Advice as she was the Town Council representative.

Councillor P. Selby also declared a personal interest in agenda item 13.0 relating to the service level agreement for Wealden Volunteering as he was the Town Council representative.

The Town Clerk explained that they could speak on agenda item 13.0, to assist with information, as this report was only to gauge views at this stage.

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

There were no statements from members of the public.

### **3.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL AND WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**FC.69.12.24** It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to enable updates to be provided by County and District Council representatives.

Councillor Chris Dowling referred to a number of ongoing matters in New Town and Ridgewood that he had been supporting residents with. This included potholes, streetlighting, and highway safety in Ridgewood (New Road).

Councillor Claire Dowling advised that she had been liaising with East Sussex Highways in relation to the works due to be undertaken to the footways in Lashbrooks Road.

Good news had been received regarding Fireflies Nursery, who would now be moving to a new venue following the closure of Holy Cross Primary School.

The ES Highways contractor (Balfour Beatty) had developed a member portal which had proved extremely useful in advising members of the progress on matters reported within their ward area. Over the last month in Uckfield North, they had had 11 potholes and 34 streetlights repaired, and 37 drains cleaned.

Councillor Dowling reminded members that there was an SLR meeting arranged for January, so not to wait for that for any urgent matters.

Councillor Macve wished to congratulate ES Highways on the reconfiguration of the traffic lights at the Church Street junction. This had made quite a difference. He asked if it could be further extended so that there was a longer entrance into the town. It currently only allowed about two additional cars through.

Councillor French referred to the layby in Church Street. The gulley adjacent to the layby was saw water sitting at the grid level of the gulley, so questioned if there was a blockage.

Councillor Manvell sought clarity on the ES Highway member portal, which sounded really useful. Councillor Dowling clarified that it recorded the reactive repair work being undertaken, not scheduled works. The Town Clerk advised that progress still needed to be made on the request to install a pedestrian crossing on London Road near North Row.

Councillor French asked if there was any further news on the Holy Cross site. No further information had been received as yet.

Councillor Macve asked if numbers could be added in the new bus station/bus shelters for local taxi companies.

In providing Wealden District updates, Councillor B. Cox advised that both he and Councillor Manvell had joined the Wealden Alliance at Wealden District Council.

Councillor French had raised the upcoming closure of the day service unit at Uckfield Hospital, to Wealden District Council and the relevant Portfolio Holder.

Councillor Manvell added that he was now Portfolio Holder for Housing and Benefits at Wealden District Council.

**FC.70.12.24** Members **RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

#### **4.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from Councillors D. Bennett, V. Frost, B. Reed, and D. Ward due to sickness and personal commitments.

#### **5.0 MINUTES**

5.1 To resolve that the minutes of the meeting of Full Council on 21 October 2024 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

**FC.71.12.24** Members **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of Full Council on 21 October 2024 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

#### **5.2 Action List**

Members agreed to remove the following actions and noted the report:

FC.93.01.24 – Lloyds Bank Group correspondence

FC.65.10.24 – Residents' Survey

#### **6.0 COMMITTEE MINUTES**

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

(a) Plans Committee of the 28 October and 18 November 2024

**FC.72.12.24** It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Plans Committee of the 28 October and 18 November 2024.

(b) Environment & Leisure Committee of the 25 November 2024

**FC.73.12.24** It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Environment & Leisure Committee of the 25 November 2024.

(c) General Purposes Committee of the 4 November 2024

**FC.74.12.24** It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the General Purposes Committee of the 4 November 2024.

**7.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**  
(None received).

**8.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM FULL COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS**  
(None received).

**9.0 TO RATIFY DOCUMENTATION CONSIDERED BY STANDING COMMITTEES:**  
**General Purposes Committee**

(i) Member Audit Policy – Policy No. 63

**FC.75.12.24** It was **RESOLVED** to ratify the decision of General Purposes Committee on 4 November 2024 and adopt the Town Council's updated Member Audit Policy.

#### **10.0 TO CONSIDER A MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR CHRIS MACVE**

Councillor C. Macve had put forward a motion to request that Uckfield Town Council hosted an event to assist with advertising the variety of clubs, societies, groups, and facilities available within the town. He thought that the Civic Centre could host a showcase event.

Councillors Macve and Selby offered to host the event, with the intention that those attending would organise themselves for their displays and information.

The Town Mayor, Councillor Bedwell wondered if it could be linked to the Annual Town meeting, but Councillor Macve felt a weekend would be more suitable.

**FC.76.12.24** It was **RESOLVED** to support Councillor Macve's motion, and for the matter to be referred to the Environment & Leisure Committee, to establish a working group for the organisation of the event:

*"I have been thinking for a while about proposing a motion for UTC to consider providing an event to promote and advertise all the clubs, societies, groups and facilities that are available within our town. The idea being to improve the social, inclusivity and community life for our residents and the local environment. I understand that there have been a number of observations and comments recently from residents from some areas of the new developments regarding a feeling of exclusion from the town of Uckfield. I expect that this also applies to newer residents who have moved into the existing established areas and this will only grow as all the new plans come forward and the town boundaries expand. If the Town Council sponsored a showcase event in the Civic Centre where all of the clubs and societies could promote themselves it would show "newcomers" what a huge variety of facilities the town has to offer. It would also be an opportunity for those clubs to encourage new members to join them as I know many of them need to bolster their numbers"*

#### **11.0 TO REVIEW A SNAPSHOT OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S BUDGET AND BALANCE SHEET POSITION FOR Q2 OF 2024/25**

The Assistant Town Clerk & RFO referred to the profit and loss account, and explained that some invoices were still to be issued, such as those for sports hire. Luxfords restaurant and the Civic Centre events income was projected to increase in Q3 due to a large variety of functions and events during that period. Members subsequently noted the report.

#### **12.0 TO CONSIDER THE INITIAL FINDINGS OF THE RESIDENTS' SURVEY**

The Town Clerk explained that the deadline for responses to the Town Council's residents' survey had finished that day. For that reason, the Town Clerk presented some of the very early highlights from the online survey for members' information. At that point, a total of 138 responses had been received.

The Town Clerk therefore suggested that as analysis of the full survey was likely to take place nearer Christmas due to current workload in overseeing festive events, covering staff sickness, and working closely on the working draft budget papers, it would be prudent to extend the survey deadline, to see if they could reach 200 responses.

Members supported the idea, and offered help to promote the survey at Late Night Shopping, with flyers being collected by Councillors later that week who would be manning various stations on the night - on the ramp, with a reindeer and on the stage!

Members felt the Town Council should also undertake more consultations, and polls to drill down further on responses from the survey, and engage with the community on specific issues, moving forward.

**FC.77.12.24** Members noted the work undertaken to date, and **RESOLVED** to support the extension of the deadline for responses to the Residents' Survey 2024, and

assist with its promotion in the lead up to Christmas.

### **13.0 TO CONSIDER THE SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS FOR:**

#### **(i) Wealden Citizens Advice**

#### **(ii) Wealden Volunteering**

Members had previously received a presentation from Wealden Volunteering at the end of October, which had included a useful update on their services, their plans for expansion, and their request for an increase in funding from £8,000 to £9,000.

Members received a presentation from Wealden Citizens Advice (WCA) prior to the Full Council meeting, which had also been very useful with updates on matters handled by the Citizens Advice team, and financial support they had given to local residents. They were also requesting an increase in funding; requesting a sum of £28,000, in comparison to the current £19,000 attached to the service level agreement.

#### Wealden Citizens Advice

The Town Council representative for WCA, Councillor A. Smith, advised that they were supporting the most vulnerable of the town's residents, and she also understood the immense pressure on their services. They were supporting residents with the fundamentals of life i.e. their income. She was also aware that they were dealing with one of the highest levels of disabled clients of the Citizens Advice Bureaus in the country. The cost of living and cost of running that business would have increased exponentially, so it was important to protect the wellbeing of the town's most vulnerable residents through this service.

A further four Councillors supported the provision of an increase in principle, despite noting that available funding within the Town Council's budget was limited. Members noted the hundreds of thousands of debt relief their service had found for residents in need in the district, and felt the service provided an incredible return on those organisations awarding grant funding.

Members questioned whether they could utilise some of the general power of competence grant funding, to support an increase.

#### Wealden Volunteering

The Town Mayor discussed her 'People to People' project with Wealden Volunteering and the Uckfield Chamber of Commerce.

Members felt the contents of the service level agreement needed to be strengthened further, in terms of reporting and updates on the services they delivered to residents and businesses.

The Town Clerk suggested that both service level agreements should only be renewed for 12 months to provide more flexibility for all parties moving forward. Members subsequently noted the report.

### **14.0 TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT CONTENT FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-30**

The draft objectives for the Strategic Plan had been updated to remove projects that had been completed, and ensure alignment with current priorities and deliverables for 2025 onwards.

One member felt that more emphasis needed to be incorporated on the need for more sports facilities, lobbying for the increase of parking facilities, and a desire to reconnect the railway line to the Tunbridge Wells line.

Members discussed the format of the draft plan, and questioned whether the objectives included within the draft plan were achievable for the Town Council. At present, there was a mix of aspirations and tangible objectives. A number of those listed were not in the power or control of the Town Council, but were important for the town. In referring to the latter, the Town Council played the role of lobbying, and pushing for change.

The Town Clerk suggested changing the formatting of the document, in its publication, and separating out the deliverables for the Town Council and community aspirations under each theme. Aspirations were considered just as important to include, to show to developers, and partner agencies. It was questioned whether they should be phrased as aspirations, but the Town Mayor on reading out the definition, that the plan can set out the two parts of our intentions, what we can achieve ourselves, but the second part should express the needs of the town over the long term.

Members supported this suggestion and requested that the Town Clerk re-prioritise and set out the contents. It was also noted that the Strategic Plan should align with the Uckfield Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **15.0 TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN FOR 2025/26**

Members reviewed the draft annual plan and were asked, similar to the Strategic Plan, if they could provide any further feedback to the Town Clerk over the Christmas break.

Under the community section, it was suggested that the floral displays be included. It was also suggested that more reference be made to the service level agreements under the community grant funding action. Members subsequently noted the draft Annual Plan for 2025/26.

#### **16.0 TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT ANNUAL BUDGET FOR 2025/26**

The Assistant Town Clerk & RFO presented the draft working budget papers. This was the very first draft, and therefore very much work in progress. She explained the first covering sheet which listed the proposed income and expenditure for each committee with the total gross income and expenditure, then the net figure with the income removed. This provided the required precept which was then divided by the council tax base to calculate the average council tax figure for each household per annum (council tax band D).

The first draft was based on early indications for service delivery, contract costs, utility charges, proposed staffing changes and increases as a result of NI threshold changes, and estimated NJC salary increases in 2025.

The Town Clerk explained that unfortunately the developments of Ridgewood Farm and Mallards Drive (Harlands Park) would not accrue any community infrastructure levy, as these outline applications were approved pre-CIL. This was very disappointing for such major developments and meant that zero



developer contributions would be coming from these developments. In fact the only additions to Town Council facilities was the creation of a footpath on adjacent Town Council land, for both Harlands and Victoria. Officers were still awaiting the council tax base figure from Wealden District Council, by which the precept would be divided to calculate the amount per average household (council tax band D) per annum.

Members reviewed two options and understood that where previously very minimal increases had been put in place during and after the pandemic, the Town Council was now playing catch up and trying to deliver services and large scale projects with limited resource. The last two to three years had also seen more use of reserves to deliver key projects. Substantial works were required to the Town Council's built assets and this could see a fair proportion of the earmarked reserves being spent. Yet, more attention was required on the Town Council's estates (grounds) to improve current grounds maintenance, play and sport facilities, to better understand and preserve our nature reserves and woodlands, particularly those adjacent to developments. Costs had also increased across the board with external contractors.

Some members also questioned if this budget was too conservative, and wondered if further contingency should be factored into the budget, in line with the recommendation of the Internal Auditor.

Members were understandably concerned about proposing a large increase, but also recognised the risks involved if the Town Council didn't set a realistic budget for 2025/26 to get service levels and the condition of our assets back to existing levels, ensure we remained compliant, reduce the pressure on existing staff, and establish and prepare itself for future growth in the town. The current position was not sustainable.

Members subsequently noted the report, and welcomed further discussions on the revised versions as the figures were reviewed, at both Finance Sub-Committee and General Purposes Committee.

**17.0 TO CONSIDER THE DRAFT ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR 2025-30**

Members were in general, content with the document. They sought clarity on a current land dispute, to which the Town Clerk was awaiting an update from the solicitors, and a more detailed breakdown was requested for the lease/rental income on the Town Council's asset portfolio. Members subsequently noted the draft.

**18.0 TO CONSIDER A RESPONSE TO THE UK GOVT CONSULTATION ON REMOTE ATTENDANCE AND PROXY VOTING AT MEETINGS**

The Town Mayor, Councillor Bedwell, suggested that Town Councillors should respond to the survey individually, as views were likely to vary, and would increase the responses provided. The Town Clerk would circulate the weblink for members to complete.

**19.0 TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS**

Members noted the report.

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

Two deed of grants had been received:

Victoria Nanina Skinner

Mrs Vanessa Fox

**FC.78.12.24** It was **RESOLVED** for three councillors to sign the above deeds of grant.

**21.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED**

None received.

**22.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Town Clerk advised that the Uckfield Food Bank were incredibly grateful for the support from Uckfield Town Council on their collection campaign that weekend, in Tesco.

**23.0 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair, Councillor Bedwell reminded members of the importance of the Full Council meeting on Monday 13 January 2025, where the final drafts of the business planning documents for the Town Council would be considered for adoption. There would be two Finance Sub Committee meetings and a General Purposes Committee meeting between this meeting and the Full Council in January. All members were welcome to attend these meetings, and ask questions of the officers in that period.

The meeting closed at 8.46pm.

**ACTION LIST – FOR INFORMATION ONLY  
FULL COUNCIL**

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<p><b><u>FC.105.02.17</u></b></p> <p><b><u>FC.95.01.20</u></b></p>	<p><u>14.0 To sign and seal the byelaws for Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve and West Park Local Nature Reserve</u> Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to sign and seal the byelaws for Hempstead Meadows and West Park Local Nature Reserves.</p> <p><u>18.0 To sign and seal the Town Council's byelaws for Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve and West Park Local Nature Reserve</u> Members RESOLVED to: (i) authorise the affixing of the common seal to the byelaws for both Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve and West Park Local Nature Reserve and signing by two named councilors, and; (ii) authorise the Town Clerk for Uckfield Town Council to carry out the necessary procedures and apply to the Secretary of State for confirmation.</p>	<p>20.02.17</p> <p>20.01.20</p>	<p>HG</p>	<p>In progress.</p>
<p><b><u>FC115.04.19</u></b></p>	<p><u>9.0 To consider a motion submitted by Councillor Donna French</u> It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to support the motion put forward, and; “reinvestigate the possibility of part funding a traffic warden; entering into a discussion with Hailsham, Crowborough and Polegate, with a view to joint funding a shared traffic warden, employed via Sussex Police.”</p>	<p>08.04.19</p>	<p>HG</p>	<p>It was proposed that this matter be brought back to Full Council on 2 December 2024, so members could fully understand the views of individual councillors. This has been delayed until the New Year, due to large agendas based on the Council's business planning.</p>
<p><b><u>FC.30.09.20</u></b></p>	<p><u>12.0 To review a report by Councillor A. Smith on the need for affordable homes in Uckfield</u> After a detailed discussion, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to request that the Town Clerk write to the Housing Minister Rt Hon Robert Jenrick with a copy of this report and advise Wealden DC's planning department of these discussions along with neighbouring parish councils.</p>	<p>14.09.20</p>	<p>HG</p>	<p>The report would be updated utilising the latest market analysis, affordability and housing market information. It would be presented back to UTC before being sent to MHCLG, and to the Deputy PM.</p>

<b><u>Resolution No.</u></b>	<b><u>Details</u></b>	<b><u>Date Raised</u></b>	<b><u>Action By</u></b>	<b><u>Date Complete</u></b>
<b><u>FC.55.10.21</u></b>	Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the motion “ <i>Uckfield Town Council supports the increase in the provision of Changing Place Toilets across the country, and will approach East Sussex County Council to understand if they:</i> (i) <i>have submitted an expression of interest to central government to draw down funding to the county of East Sussex, and:</i> (ii) <i>if ESCC have expressed an interest, that Uckfield Town Council lobby for such facilities to be introduced in Uckfield.</i> ”	25.10.21	HG	Officers will prepare necessary financial information to understand what’s involved in creating a Changing Place Toilet. Members were asked to consider suitable locations.
<b><u>FC.63.10.23</u></b>	<u>13.0 To receive a response from East Sussex County Council to a previous motion submitted requesting the installation of a pedestrian crossing</u> Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to accept the proposed amendment to Councillor Bennett’s original motion and set out to: “maintain this as the ideal site and the path that students were taking to reach school, in order to emphasise the views of the young people. Uckfield Town Council would be very happy to explore the option of community match funding and fund a feasibility study, as the Town Council felt it was important to concentrate on this area, and not further north of the town. It was also suggested that any data or feedback from the feasibility study and associated speed surveys, should reflected in any future updates to the Sustrans report.”	30.10.23	HG	In progress.
<b><u>FC.76.12.23</u></b>	<u>11.0 To consider a motion from Councillor D. French</u> After some discussion, members <b>RESOLVED</b> to put forward nominations for the Uckfield Rugby Club, the Family Hub (as Childrens Centres were at risk of closure) and the Highlands Inn (as the last remaining pub in the south of Uckfield and their support to community lunches) as Assets of Community Value.	11.12.23	HG	In progress.
<b><u>FC.105.02.24</u></b>	<u>14.0 To consider the issues being experienced with parking at Victoria Pleasure Ground</u> Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to give permission for officers to proceed with the above three proposals for monitoring vehicles parking at Victoria Pleasure Ground, and to also replace signage which emphasised the purpose of the car parking area.	26.02.24	HG	In progress.

<b><u>Resolution No.</u></b>	<b><u>Details</u></b>	<b><u>Date Raised</u></b>	<b><u>Action By</u></b>	<b><u>Date Complete</u></b>
<b><u>FC.115.04.24</u></b>	<u>10.0 To consider current issues with pavement parking and proposals for undertaking a campaign</u> With unanimous support, members <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve for the Town Clerk and Marketing & Community Engagement Officer to proceed with a communications campaign around poor parking behaviour.	08.04.24	HG/ WH	In progress.
<b><u>FC21.05.24</u></b>	<u>24.0 To consider a motion from Councillor B. Reed</u> Members voted to support the motion put forward by Councillor B. Reed and <b>RESOLVE</b> for Uckfield Town Council to sign up to the 'Weald to Waves' initiative and pledge to mapping key environmental assets in the Uckfield area – such as mapping the location of local nature reserves, local wildlife sites, local geological sites and woodland areas.	20.05.24	HG	In progress.
<b><u>FC.29.06.24</u></b>	<u>12.0 – To consider a request to review the opening times of the toilet(s) at Victoria Pleasure Ground</u> With six votes in favour, and three members against the proposal (including Cllr Selby), members <b>RESOLVED</b> to address this matter through the Town Council's budget setting process which would begin September 2024, to ensure the correct service provision was in place.	26.06.24	SD/HG /JH	Unable to be considered at this time.
<b><u>FC.44.09.24</u></b>	<u>11. To consider a motion from Councillor Bernadette Reed</u> With seven votes in favour, two votes against and two members abstaining from voting, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> for the Town Clerk to nominate Luxford Field Car Park as an Asset of Community Value.	09.09.24	HG	To be progressed.
<b><u>FC.49.09.24</u></b>	<u>15.0 To consider the relocation of the substation in Shepherds Way</u> Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to request that a meeting be arranged onsite with UKPN, to understand what difficulties they were experiencing with the current location and what would be involved with any movement.	09.09.24	Grnds/ TC	We await an update from UKPN on their updated proposals.

<u>Resolution No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Date Raised</u>	<u>Action By</u>	<u>Date Complete</u>
<b><u>FC.50.09.24</u></b>	<p><u>16.0 To consider setting up a working group to establish a Heritage Plaque Project</u></p> <p>Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to select Option B, and prepare a localised scheme for Uckfield, with the following members appointed to join a member-led working group (Councillors D. Bennett, D. French, J. Love and B. Reed).</p>	09.09.24	WH	In progress.
<b><u>FC.63.10.24</u></b>	<p><u>15.0 To consider a motion from Councillor D. French</u></p> <p>Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the purchase and installation of a central locked box housing a public access trauma kit on the exterior of the Civic Centre, with plans to look wider in the town, in due course. Research should be undertaken to source funding or partnership working to deliver this project in association with local emergency services as well as the Freemasons, Rotary Club and Uckfield Lions.</p>	21.10.24	HG	To be progressed in the New Year.
<b><u>FC.64.10.24</u></b>	<p><u>16.0 To consider further expansion of a motion from Councillor B. Reed</u></p> <p>(i) approve the broadening of the Town Council representative role for the Conservators of Ashdown Forest to also include the Weald to Waves initiative, and (Councillor D. French and Councillor B. Reed);</p> <p>(ii) approve for Councillor Reed to utilise that role to liaise with the relevant agencies involved in the Weald to Waves initiative, and understand what the partner role entails in terms of resource and if a financial contribution is required. Councillor Reed was asked to bring back a report with this information.</p>	21.10.24	BR	In progress

## FULL COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN – 2025

STANDING ITEMS FOR FULL COUNCIL AGENDA	REPORT LEAD
Any written reports from District or County Councillors	District/County Councillors
Minutes from the last meeting	Town Clerk
Action List	Town Clerk
Forward Plan	Town Clerk
Reports from outside bodies	Councillor representatives for NPlan and Gatwick
Reports from working groups	Councillor reps
Signing and sealing of lease agreements	Town Clerk/E&F Mgr
Check for any review of service level agreements	Town Clerk
Check for any urgent consultation panel decisions	Town Clerk
Mayor and Deputy Mayor engagements	Administrative Officer
Cemetery deeds of grant (any prepared are usually left in the box for Full Council)	Senior Administrative Officer

## FULL COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN – 2025

DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	REPORT/OFFICER
April 2025	Ratification of GP Committee policy and strategy reviews such as the Annual Investment Strategy	Town Clerk/ Asst Town Clerk
	Standing Orders and Direct Debit payments	Asst Town Clerk
	Snapshot of Budget and Balance Sheet position at end of March 2025	Asst Town Cler
	End of Year Progress Update on 2024/25 Annual Priorities	Town Clerk
	Discussion on the Town Council's viewpoint on parking issues in Uckfield	Town Clerk
	Execution (signing and sealing) lease agreements if not already completed	Town Clerk
	To consider costs of establishing a Changing Places toilet	Town Clerk
CONFIDENTIAL		
DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	REPORT OFFICER
May 2025	Election of Mayor	Town Clerk
	Election of Deputy Mayor	
	Any co-options – youth or elected member	
	Review terms of reference of committees	
	Appointments to standing committees and sub-committees	
	Appointments to Outside bodies	
	Appointments to Full Council working groups	
	Annual review of Standing Orders/Scheme of Delegation/Terms of Reference	
	Annual review of Financial regulations	
	Annual review of Code of Conduct policy	
	Schedule of monthly member audits	
	Review of Fixed Asset Register	
	Calendar of meetings for 2025-26	
	Membership of bodies and annual fees	
CONFIDENTIAL		



## FULL COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN – 2025

DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	REPORT OFFICER
June 2025	Internal Audit Report for 2024-25 (for the year ending 31 March 2025)	Asst Town Clerk
	Annual Governance Statement – Section 1 of AGAR	Asst Town Clerk
	Sections 2 & 3 of AGAR and draft financial statements	Town Clerk/ Asst Town Clerk
	Standing Orders and Direct Debit payments	Asst Town Clerk
	Snapshot of Budget and Balance Sheet position at end of June 2025 (Q1)	Asst Town Clerk
	Q1 Progress Update for 2025/26 Annual Priorities	Town Clerk
CONFIDENTIAL		
DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	REPORT OFFICER
September 2025	Q1 Progress Update for 2025/26 Annual Priorities	Town Clerk
CONFIDENTIAL		

## FULL COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN – 2025

DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	REPORT OFFICER
<b>October 2025</b>	To note the report of the External Auditor	Town Clerk
	Q2 Progress Update for 2025/26 Annual Priorities	Asst Town Clerk
	Snapshot of Budget and Balance Sheet position at end of September 2025 (Q2)	Town Clerk
	Six monthly review of Fixed Asset Register	Town Clerk
	To review the documentation for the Town Council's Buildings Insurance Renewal	Town Clerk/E&F Mgr
	Calendar of meetings for 2026	Town Clerk
	Initial review of Service Level Agreements	Town Clerk/Asst TC
CONFIDENTIAL		

DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	REPORT OFFICER
<b>December 2025</b>	To consider draft content of Strategic Plan 2026-2031	Town Clerk
	To consider draft content of the Annual Plan 2026/27	Town Clerk
	To consider draft content of the Annual Budget 2026/27	Asst Town Clerk
	To consider draft content of the Asset Management Plan 2026-31	Town Clerk
	To review the documentation for the Town Council's Buildings Insurance Renewal	Town Clerk/E&F Mgr
	Calendar of meetings for 2026	Town Clerk
CONFIDENTIAL		

# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



## RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

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

16	27.11.23	Annual review by General Purposes Committee
17	11.12.23	Ratification and adoption by Full Council
18	16.12.24	Annual review by General Purposes Committee
19	13.01.25	Ratification by Full Council

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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

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

This policy will be reviewed annually by the General Purposes Committee.

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

- Insurances
- Working with others
- Self-managed risk

Insurances			
Risk Identification			
<u>Insurance Cover</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Review Date</u>
Protection of physical assets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Buildings, and contents (where applicable)</li><li>• Business interruption</li><li>• Stock</li><li>• Computer Equipment</li><li>• UTC Building CCTV (on premise)</li><li>• Town Centre CCTV</li><li>• Terrorism</li><li>• Some specified Grounds equipment</li></ul>	Company: Commercial Combined QBE Ins (Europe) Ltd Policy No:  Period of cover: 19 October 2024 - 18 October 2025  Y126862QBE0123A Optional Marsh Commercial Claims Assist  Combined Engineering (British Engineering Services Contract No. EIP000843  Flood Excess Insurance (Signal Box) Policy Excess Ltd (Policy No. FE261314  Flood Excess (Bridge Cottage) Policy Excess Ltd	.	August to October 2025  Arrangement reviewed annually by the Town Clerk/Estates & Facilities Manager

	(Policy No. FE261311  Cyber Cover ESN0040117213	The Internal Auditor recommended that Cyber risk be incorporated into this policy and a quote be obtained for insurance cover for this risk. Cyber cover was incorporated in the insurance cover for 2024-25.	
Public Liability Insurance including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employers Liability</li> <li>• Libel and Slander</li> <li>• Motor Vehicles</li> <li>• Fidelity Guarantee</li> <li>• Personal Accident</li> <li>• Legal Expenses</li> <li>• Money</li> <li>• Civic Regalia</li> <li>• Litter Bins</li> <li>• Bus Shelters</li> <li>• Tennis courts to include Victoria</li> <li>• Large Grounds Equipment</li> <li>• Town Centre CCTV</li> </ul>	Company:  Zurich Municipal  Policy No: YLL-272007-6913  Period of cover 20 June 2024- 19 June 2025  Part of three year agreement to 2027.	Public Liability £15M  Products Liability £10M  Employers Liability £10M  Hirers Liability £2M  Libel and Slander £250,000  Fidelity Guarantee £2M  Personal accident cover £500k any one person, or £2M any one incident.  Motor vehicles Comprehensive cover	Reviewed annually by Assistant Town Clerk.

## Internal controls

Up to date register of assets		<p>Full review of Fixed Asset Register in progress.</p> <p>Tree survey records are now being uploaded to software purchased called OTISS (which sits alongside Pear (the Town Council's mapping system). Plan to add all street furniture and assets in due course.</p>	<p>Ongoing. Reviewed at Full Council in December and January each year as part of annual review of Asset Management Plan.</p>
Regular maintenance arrangements for physical assets.		<p>Budgets in place, maintained by staff and outside contractors in line with annual building maintenance programme.</p>	<p>Ongoing and Building Maintenance Programme reviewed annually as part of budget setting process.</p>
Annual review of risk and adequacy of cover			<p>Annual review – to assess contract and action plan.</p>
Ensuring robustness in insurance provider	<p>Full market review of insurance cover undertaken by brokers in 2024.</p>		<p>Tender for brokers to be undertaken in 2025.</p>

Ensuring we comply with new requirements set out in the EU General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)	A Town Council may appoint an independent Data Protection Officer although this is not compulsory.	GDPR-Info were re-appointed DPO for Uckfield Town Council in May 2019. There is currently no external contractor undertaking this role.  GDPR-Info visited premises on 28 June 2018 and carried out full one day information audit.	Review to be undertaken in 2025/26.
Ensuring we have adequate network security and firewalls in place	Audit undertaken of current practices, with action plan of areas to focus attention  Uckfield Town Council Civic Centre Wi-Fi. A feature was added to the public Wi-Fi, which each client has to accept prior to joining the Wi-Fi, giving protection for Uckfield Town Council from misuse.  Uckfield Town Council has installed a tailor-made Network fire wall with	Redway Networks       Redway Networks	Wi-Fi was upgraded in August 2023, which saw an upgrade of the infrastructure within the Civic Centre and Victoria Pavilion.  Further works were undertaken to security in 2022.



	VPN capabilities to further strengthen network security and only allow traffic that is pre-authorised.		
<b>Internal audit assurance</b>			
<p>Internal auditor testing includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Review of internal controls in place and their documentation.</li> <li>✓ Review of management arrangements regarding insurance cover.</li> <li>✓ Testing of specific internal controls and report findings to the General Purposes Committee.</li> </ul>			

**Working with others****Risk Identification**

	<u>Details</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Review Date</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Security of vulnerable buildings, amenities or equipment</li></ul>	Civic Centre, The Hub, West Park and Victoria Pavilions and the garage store alarmed and maintained by outside contractors.	Security Alarms - Kaisu Period of cover: March 2024 – March 2025	All security alarm companies to be accredited to the Security Systems and Alarms Inspection Board(SSAIB) and or the National Security Inspectorate (NSI). The intruder alarm system was inspected in September 2024.
	Civic Centre, The Hub, West Park and Victoria pavilions and Foresters Hall maintained by outside contractors.	Fire Alarms – Sovereign  All expire March 2025. New contractor in place for April 2025.	Full annual fire risk assessments were undertaken by Pyrotech in December 2024.
		Redway Networks/Focus telephones/	Telephone system was moved from analogue to digital on 16 Jan 2023.
		Brighton CCTV	Victoria Pavilion now connected to enhance CCTV provision.  Annual inspection of the cameras and repairs undertaken –

	<u>Details</u>	<u>Comments</u>	December 2024, which resulted in the upgrade of three cameras across the two sites <u>Review Date</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of services being carried out by others</li> </ul>	Town Centre CCTV	<p>Town Centre CCTV system upgraded 2024. Six cameras. in partnership with Sussex Police.</p> <p>Joint Data Controller with Sussex Police. ISA signed Nov 2024.</p> <p>New maintenance SLA in place for Town CCTV with ChromaVision from April 2024 for 3yrs. Gold Service.</p>	Full review undertaken 2023 and 2024.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Banking arrangements, including borrowing</li> </ul>	Civic Centre	Civic Centre own CCTV system – Brighton CCTV	
	Banking arrangements reviewed every two years by Finance Sub-committee.	Annual review undertaken of the Town Council's borrowing and investments by Finance Sub-Committee, and subsequently reported to GP	Next review between Jan and March 2025.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional services (architects, project managers etc.)</li> </ul>	<p>Credit card/Worldpay transactions</p> <p>To use specialist when required.</p>	<p>Committee.</p> <p>Changed provider from Worldpay to UTP (Barclaycard) in August 2024.</p>	<p>Review to be undertaken as and when required on a project by project basis and in line with procurement regulations.</p>
<b>Internal controls by Internal Auditor</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standing Orders</li> <li>Annual review of contracts</li> <li>Clear statements of management responsibility for each service.</li> <li>Adoption and adherence to codes of practice</li> <li>Arrangements to detect and deter fraud and/or corruption</li> <li>Regular bank reconciliation, independently reviewed.</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>		
<b>Internal audit assurance</b>			
<p>Internal Auditor testing includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Review of internal controls in place and their documentation.</li> <li>✓ Review of management arrangements regarding insurance cover.</li> <li>✓ Testing of specific internal controls and report findings to the General Purposes Committee.</li> </ul>			

**Self-managed risk**

- Regular scrutiny of financial records and proper arrangement for the approval of expenditure;
- Strengthened monthly member audit procedures, and incorporation of all bank reconciliations, with quarterly sign off by members.
- Regular budget monitoring statements;
- Minutes properly numbered and paginated with a master copy for safe keeping
- Regular returns to HM Revenue and Customs; contracts of employment for all staff, systems of updating records for any changes in relevant legislation
- Regular returns of VAT, relevant officer training and VAT review booked in for early March 2025
- Procedures for dealing with and monitoring grants made;
- Procedure in place for recording and monitoring Members' interests and gift and hospitality received;
- Adoption of codes of conduct for Members and employees;
- Developing systems of performance measurement;
- Documented procedures to deal with enquiries from the public;
- Documented procedure to deal with responses to consultation requests;
- Dual member authorisation of BACs payments entered by Assistant Town Clerk for supplier payments commenced February 2021 (members have access to authorisation only and will not be able to enter funds nor issue payments);
- Recognition of changes for new paying-in procedures as a result of the Town Council's bank closing in Uckfield. The paying-in and withdrawal of funds is now processed through the Post Office;
- Revised procedures for Luxfords Restaurant opening and close down, and review of movement and security with holding of cash;
- Two members of staff cashing up from restaurant each day, and investigation to commence on Internal Auditor's recommendation on cash collections;

**Internal audit assurance**

- ✓ Review of internal controls in place and their documentation
- ✓ Review of minutes to ensure legal powers in place recorded and correctly applied
- ✓ Testing of income and expenditure from minutes to cashbook, from bank statements to cashbook, from, minutes to statements etc. including petty cash transactions
- ✓ Review and testing of arrangements to prevent and detect fraud and corruption
- ✓ Testing of disclosures
- ✓ Testing of specific internal controls and report findings to the General Purposes Committee
- ✓ Publication of information in line with Local Government Transparency Code on Town Council website;
- ✓ Town Council's financial requirements met on website;
- ✓ Annual precept resulted from an adequate budgetary process;
- ✓ Salaries and allowances paid in accordance with council approvals and PAYE and NI requirements;
- ✓ Asset and investment requirements complete and accurate;
- ✓ Periodic and year end bank reconciliations properly carried out;

## **Meeting of the Full Council**

**Monday 13 January 2025**

### **Agenda Item 10.0**

#### **TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WEALDEN PARISH REMUNERATION PANEL ON TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES FOR 2025/26**

##### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 This report sets out the recommendations from the Parish Remuneration Panel for Wealden District. As Members will be aware the Panel make recommendations on allowances for Wealden District Council and all of the Town and Parish councils in the Wealden District. All councils are required to take their recommendations into account when setting their allowances. The Panel was established by Wealden District Council under Regulation 27 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, for the Town and Parish Councils in its area.

##### **2.0 Recommendations for 2025/26 allowances**

- 2.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel met on 12 November 2024. Their final report is attached for members' consideration in appendix A. A copy of the report is also displayed in the Town Council's noticeboard at the Civic Centre, as required. A copy of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 is available in the office should members wish to read the legislation.
- 2.2 The recommended increase for Level (3) Councils in 2024/25 was a 3.0% increase on that recommended for 2024/25 and equates to the following allowance per annum before tax:
- **Basic Allowance £1,537** (members currently receiving £1,415.61)
  - **Chairman's allowance £2,122** (Chair/Mayor currently receiving £1,954.73)
- 2.3 Please note that in previous years, members had resolved to freeze allowances, and then have made gradual increases rather than the recommended sums, since 2021.

##### **3.0 Travelling and Subsistence Allowances**

- 3.1 Under Regulation 26, Town and Parish Councils may pay travelling and subsistence allowances undertaken or incurred in connection with the performance of any duty within one of more of the categories set out in that regulation. These payments and categories are set out in the Parish Remuneration Panel report in paragraphs 15-18 and it was agreed to fix the travelling allowances in line with HM Revenue & Customs 'Approved Mileage Allowance payment' rates.

##### **4.0 Initial response from Town Clerk's correspondence**

- 4.1 Due to the need for the Town Council to adopt its budget at Full Council on 13 January, the Town Clerk was keen to understand the majority view of Councillors prior to the meeting, so the Assistant Town Clerk & RFO could look at the calculations in advance.

#### 4.2 Members were asked the following by email on 11 December 2024:

A decision will be taken at Full Council on Monday 13 January on member allowances for Uckfield Town Council, but as this will be the same night that we have to adopt our annual budget for 2025/26, having a steer beforehand on the views of members will be incredibly helpful for preparing the budget papers.

The proposal of the Independent Remuneration Panel from their meeting on 12 November recommended that Basic and Chair allowances should increase by 3.0%, to an annual sum of £1,537 (basic allowance) and £2,122 (Chair's allowance).

Don't forget the percentage increase recommended by the panel will be from their recommended starting position in 2024/25 of £1,492 (basic allowance) and £2,060 (Chair's allowance). We don't currently align with the previous panel's recommendations.

Uckfield Town Council froze member allowances in both 2021/22 and 2022/23. Members resolved to increase the annual basic allowance by 5% to £1,348.20 (Basic Allowance) and to £1,861.65 (Chair Allowance) for 2023/24. And for 2024/25 you agreed a further 5% increase to £1,415.61 (basic allowance) and £1,954.73 (Chair allowance). PLEASE ALSO NOTE ONLY 10 OF THE 15 TOWN COUNCILLORS, CURRENTLY RECEIVE MEMBER ALLOWANCES.

**ACTION:** There are therefore four potential options which I would like you to consider **by Monday 23 December**. Could you please respond with your current preference:

OPTION	DESCRIPTION	BASIC ALLOWANCE	CHAIR ALLOWANCE
A	Freeze member allowances at the current rate	£1,415.61	£1,954.73
B	Increase the current rate of allowances by a further <b>5%</b> ( <i>to move us closer to the Panel's suggested figure</i> )	£1,486.39	£2,052.46
C	Increase the current rate of allowances by a further <b>3%</b> ( <i>so we stay behind the recommended figures, but align with the Panel's proposed percentage increase</i> )	£1,458.08	£2,013.37
D	Increase member allowances to the current figure recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel	£1,537.00 ( <b>8.6%</b> )	£2,122.00 ( <b>8.6%</b> )

#### 4.3 Fourteen responses were received out of 15 Town Councillors. The responses received were as follows:

Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
2 in favour	4 in favour	6 in favour	2 in favour

#### 5.0 Recommendation

5.1. Members are asked to consider the attached report of the Independent Remuneration Panel, and instruct the Clerk accordingly.

# Report of the Wealden Parish Independent Remuneration Panel on Town and Parish Councillor Allowances for 2025/26

## Introduction

1. This is the 24th Annual Report of the Parish Independent Allowances and Remuneration Panel to make recommendations regarding the amount of payments that may be made to Councillors. The Panel is established by Wealden District Council under Regulation 27 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, for the Town and Parish Councils in its area (full list of Town and Parish Councils to which the report applies is attached at Appendix A).

## Summary

2. The Panel recommends:

- a) That allowances should be paid in accordance with three bands, Levels 1 to 3 as defined in Appendix A;
- b) That there be an increase in allowances in line with that recommended for District Councillors, with Basic and Chairman's Allowances rounded to the nearest pound. These allowances for 2025/26 to be as set out below.

<b>2025/26</b>	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>
<i>Basic Allowance</i>	£194	£482	£1,537
<i>Chairman's Allowance</i>	£336	£756	£2,122

- c) That the policy to fix Travelling Allowances in line with HM Revenue & Customs 'Approved Mileage Allowance Payment' (AMAP) rates be re-affirmed;
- d) Subsistence Allowance to be the same as those indicated for District Councillors. These allowances for 2025/26 are set out in the table below.

Breakfast	£8.00	When away from home on approved Council business before 8 a.m.
Lunch	£11.00	When away from home on approved Council business between 12 noon and 2 p.m.
Evening Meal	£20.00	When away from home on approved Council business after 7 p.m.
Overnight absence	£98.30	When outside London
London and specified Conferences	£110	

All claims must be accompanied by a valid receipt and payment is subject to Councillors signing to say they have actually and necessarily incurred the amount being claimed.

- e) That the recommendations set out above are all proposed for implementation at the commencement of the financial year 2025/26. However, Town and Parish Councils can choose the extent to which they wish to implement these allowances; and
- f) The Panel notes with regret that it is still not possible under the current legislation to recommend a Carers' Allowance for Parish/ Town Councillors, but would wish for all Parish and Town Councils to consider adopting a basic



allowance to enable Parish/Town Councillors to use this to cover care costs where need be to attend meetings.

### **Membership of Panel and Meetings**

3. The Panel consists of three members – Mr Edward Stone (Chairman), Mr Stephen Hallam and Mr Clive Mills.
4. The Panel met in person on 12 November 2024.

### **Panel Remit**

5. The Panel produces a report in relation to the members of the town and parish councils for which the Wealden District Council is the responsible authority and in respect of which it is established, making recommendations, in accordance with the provisions of regulation 29 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, as to:
  - a) the amount of parish basic allowance payable to members of such town and parish councils;
  - b) the amount of travelling and subsistence allowance payable to members of such town and parish councils;
  - c) whether parish basic allowance should be payable only to the Mayor or Chairman of any such town and parish council or to all of its members;
  - d) whether, if parish basic allowance should be payable to both the Mayor or Chairman and the other members of any such town and parish council, the allowance payable to the Mayor or Chairman should be set at a level higher than that payable to the other members, and, if so, the higher amount so payable; and
  - e) the responsibilities or duties in respect of which members should receive parish travelling and subsistence allowance.

### **Parish Basic and Chairman's Allowances**

6. As in previous years, the Panel has examined available data in order to assist in determination of a recommendation on parish/town council basic allowance and whether it should be payable to both the Mayor or Chairman and the other elected members of a town or parish council.
7. The Panel has considered last year's report to Town and Parish Councils recommending allowances for 2024/25.
8. The Clerk to the Panel had invited all Town and Parish Councillors, via the clerks, to provide any comments on the allowance scheme. Four responses had been received and welcomed.
9. The Panel emphasised that it is keen to see all Parish and Town Councils adopt a scheme of some sort, even if it is normal practice not to claim. This is to ensure that no potential candidate should be put off standing due to the costs of working as a local councillor, and to ensure that Parish and Town Councillors could choose to claim an allowance should they need to do so.
10. Following discussion, the Panel **recommends** that the increase in allowances is in line with that recommended for Wealden District Councillors at 3%, rounded to the nearest pound (£).
11. Regulation 29(2) requires that recommendations be expressed not only in cash terms but also as a percentage of the amount recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel as the Basic Allowance for Wealden District Councillors. The Panel is recommending that the allowance is increased for District Councillors to £5193 per annum for the financial year 2025/26. Based on that figure, the percentages have been incorporated into the attached Appendix A.

### Chairman's Allowance

12. As indicated in previous reports, individual Town and Parish Councils are free to decide whether an allowance should be payable only to the Mayor or Chairman and/or to all of its members. The Chairman's Allowance, as recommended by this report, is intended to be paid as a substitute for the Basic Allowance rather than in addition to it, but this is at the discretion of each Town and Parish Council.
13. Town and Parish Councils are reminded that the Chairman's Allowance (again detailed in the attached Appendix A) is an allowance personal to the Parish/Town Councillor elected Mayor or Chairman. It is entirely separate to the allowance under the Local Government Act 1972, Sections 15(5) and 35(5), which is payable as the Parish/Town Council thinks fit to reasonably meet the expenses of the office of Mayor or Chairman.
14. The Panel **recommends** an increase to all Chairman's Allowances of 3%, on the same basis as increases to Parish/Town Council Basic Allowances, as detailed in Appendix A attached.

### Travelling Allowance

15. The Panel wanted to clarify that under Regulation 26, Town and Parish Councils may pay travelling and subsistence allowances, including an allowance in respect of travel by bicycle or by any other non-motorised form of transport, undertaken or incurred in connection with the performance of any duty within one or more of the categories set out in that Regulation. This also includes provision for encouraging car sharing.
16. Councillors can receive up to a tax-free approved amount when using their own vehicles in carrying out their duties. These payments are known as Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAP), and as from 6 April 2011 the following rules apply:
  - Car or Van – 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles and 25p per mile thereafter;
  - Motor Cycle – 24p per mile (all miles);
  - Cycle – 20p per mile (all miles); and
  - A 5 pence per mile per passenger supplement for up to four passengers.
  - Public transport subject to the Council's approval.

### Subsistence Allowance

17. The Panel **recommends** that the current level of subsistence rates to be the same as those indicated for District Councillors. These allowances for 2025/26 are set out in the table below:

Breakfast	£8.00	When away from home on approved Council business before 8 a.m.
Lunch	£11.00	When away from home on approved Council business between 12 noon and 2 p.m.
Evening Meal	£20.00	When away from home on approved Council business after 7 p.m.
Overnight absence	£98.30	When outside London
London and specified Conferences	£110	

18. It was confirmed that payment should still be subject to Parish/ Town Councillors certifying that they had actually and necessarily incurred the amount being claimed. The Panel commented that subsistence allowance was a 'top up' on the amount it would cost a councillor to eat at home.

### **Co-opted Members**

19. As set out above, under the relevant legislation co-opted members of Town and Parish Councils are not eligible to be paid Parish/Town Council Basic Allowances nor Chairman's Allowances, but may claim Travelling and Subsistence Allowances. It is not in the Panel's remit to make any recommendations that this change.
20. Co-opted Members can claim a Co-optees' Allowance as provided for in their own Parish or Town Council's Allowance scheme.

### **Communication of Allowances**

21. On receipt of this Report, Town and Parish Councils must advertise receipt of the report in line with Regulation 30 (2003 Regulations).
22. In setting the levels of allowances, Town and Parish Councils must show they have regard to the IRP's recommendations, but it is entirely up to each Town and Parish Council what scheme of allowances is adopted. The Panel has expressed its preference that an allowance scheme is adopted by all Councils, even if not claimed by individual Councillors. When adopting a scheme, Parish and Town Councils must under the Regulations publish its scheme by public notice.

**Edward Stone**  
**Chairman**

**Dated: 12 November 2024**

	<b>LEVEL1</b>	<b>LEVEL2</b>	<b>LEVEL3</b>	
<b>Basic Allowance</b>	£194	£482	£1,537	
<b>Chairman's Allowance</b>	£ 336	£756	£ 2,122	
<b>PARISH</b>	<b>No. of Cllrs</b>	<b>Maximum Basic Allowance</b>	<b>Maximum Chairman's Allowance</b>	<b>% of Recommended District Basic Allowance</b>
<b><u>Level 1</u></b>				
<b>Alciston</b>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>
<b>Little Horsted</b>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>
<b>Selmeston</b>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>
<b>Cuckmere Valley</b>	7	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Berwick</b>	7	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Wartling</b>	7	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Long Man</b>	7	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Hooe</b>	7	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Arlington</b>	7	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Laughton</b>	7	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Isfield</b>	7	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Chiddingly</b>	9	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Hellingly</b>	15	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Hadlow Down</b>	7	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Fletching</b>	9	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Warbleton</b>	11	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Frant</b>	11	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Alfriston</b>	7	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>East Hoathly/Halland</b>	9	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Chalvington/Ripe</b>	7	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Horam</b>	11	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>East Dean/Friston</b>	9	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Framfield</b>	11	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Hartfield</b>	13	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Ninfield</b>	9	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Danehill</b>	9	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Buxted</b>	15	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Withyham</b>	13	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Herstmonceux</b>	11	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Mayfield/ Five Ashes</b>	15	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Maresfield</b>	14	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Rotherfield</b>	13	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Westham</b>	13	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Pevensay</b>	13	£194	£482	3.74%
<b>Wadhurst</b>	15	£194	£482	3.74%

<b><u>Level 2</u></b>				
<b>Forest Row</b>	15	£482	£756	9.28%
<b>Willingdon/Jevington</b>	19	£482	£756	9.28%
<b>Polegate</b>	15	£482	£756	9.28%
<b>Heathfield/Waldron</b>	21	£482	£756	9.28%
<b><u>Level 3</u></b>				
<b>Hailsham</b>	24	£1,537	£2,122	29.60%
<b>Uckfield</b>	15	£1,537	£2,122	29.60%
<b>Crowborough</b>	16	£1,537	£2,122	29.60%

New description of earmarked reserves:	Which previous ER lines did this include:	Year end total	Carry forwards agreed at GP Committee May 2024 from 2023/24	Amount to add from Jan 24 Full Council ER reallocations and budget adoption Jan 2024	Expenditure /income during financial yr	Current total as of 24.12.24	New description consolidated total	Notes
		As at 31 Mar 2024						
Ash Dieback	Ash dieback	9,223.71	0.00	25,000.00	-8,882.53	25,341.18	<b>25,341.18</b>	Ash dieback works still required in 2025, as a H&S priority
Branding and communications	Upgrading noticeboards - 3210	2,908.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,908.00	<b>2,908.00</b>	£2k is already allocated of these funds for the CC front sign
Building Maintenance	Building Maintenance Fund - 3201	231,053.00	0.00	81,605.00	-90,905.94	221,752.06	<b>227,752.06</b>	Of this amount, £13k is still allocated towards Signal Box, £24,577.50 towards Ridgewood car park, £59,373 for fire door installation in Feb/Mar 25, and £10k office reconfig. Which leaves...£120,891.56 remaining
	Improve internal decoration of Vpavilion	5,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00		
	Foresters New Front doors -	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00		
Building Reconfiguration and Renovation	West Park Pavilion scheme - 3227	45,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	45,000.00	<b>50,221.53</b>	Signal Box and Osborn Hall are a priority moving forward.
	Signal Box refurbishment - 3192	5,221.53	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,221.53		
Car Park improvements	Resurface Osborn Hall Car Park - 3221	3,658.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,658.00	<b>31,543.00</b>	Works to Ridgewood Car Park could be approx. £100-150k due to drainage requirements so further funds will need to be found.
	Ridgewood Car Park - 3172	27,885.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	27,885.00		
Civic Centre	Weald Hall Floor - 3177	60,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	60,500.00	<b>65,936.38</b>	The majority of this funding has been allocated for flooring - new Weald Hall floor, new carpets in the building, and security upgrade/redecoration.
	Weald Hall Replacement backdrops -	1,740.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,740.50		
	Civic Centre lift upgrade	8,151.99	0.00	5,000.00	-13,151.99	0.00		
	Air con units for Civic Centre	1,695.88	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,695.88		
	Ventilation for CT reconfiguration	0.00	0.00	15,000.00	-15,000.00	0.00		
	Security upgrade for Civic Centre	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.00	2,000.00		
Climate Change Initiatives	Climate Change Initiatives	5,700.00	0.00	0.00	-5,700.00	0.00	<b>22,552.67</b>	Further projects will be identified for 2025/26, to look at buildings and climate change initiatives.
	Green Projects	1,734.29	0.00	0.00	-900.00	834.29		
	Tree planting	718.38	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	1,718.38		
	Climate Change Carbon Emission projects	20,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	20,000.00		
Community Infrastructure Levy	Community Infrastructure Levy - 3222	38,744.15	0.00	0.00	11,542.55	50,286.70	<b>50,286.70</b>	<b>This income needs to be used for infrastructure projects and can be utilised for sports grounds, streetlighting and alike.</b>
Community Initiatives	Dementia Training - 3215	697.17	0.00	0.00	0.00	697.17	<b>830.50</b>	<b>This small amount could be utilised for the VE Day event??</b>
	Weald on the Field - 3219	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
	General Power of Competence -	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
	Gazebos and tables for events	0.00	300.00	0.00	-300.00	0.00		
	262 Saturday Bus Service	3.08	1,800.00	0.00	-1,803.08	0.00		
	Twinning Hospitality - 3230	133.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	133.33		
Conservation and wildlife monitoring	Boothland Wood - 3165	500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	500.00	<b>1,815.00</b>	This is an important project and can be used to upgrade interpretation boards early 2025, at entrance to these places.
	HMLNR (&WPLNR donation) - 3121	1,165.00	150.00	0.00	0.00	1,315.00		
Elections	Elections - 3169	21,358.87	0.00	1,500.00	0.00	22,858.87	<b>22,858.87</b>	Must be kept to cover four yearly and ad hoc by-election costs.
Future land purchases/expansion	Future land expansion (Snatts & HMLNR)	2,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,000.00	<b>2,000.00</b>	Useful for professional fees for any river walk exploration.
Grounds machinery and equipment	New Ride on Mulcher and Tractor	0.00	0.00	20,250.00	-20,250.00	0.00	<b>16,951.22</b>	These purchases are already in hand, or on order, so funds will be utilised shortly.
	Hedgecutters	0.00	0.00	2,000.00	-1,048.78	951.22		
	DR Hand Mower	0.00	0.00	3,500.00	0.00	3,500.00		
	Izeke mower	0.00	0.00	12,500.00	0.00	12,500.00		
Grounds vehicles	Vehicle replacement - 3141	20,000.00	7,500.00	0.00	0.00	27,500.00	<b>27,500.00</b>	Grounds vehicles on order, and for next order late 2025
Luxfords Restaurant	Coffee machines in luxfords bar	31.05	0.00	0.00	-31.05	0.00	<b>0.00</b>	No funds currently set aside due to expenditure in 2024.
	Luxfords New Dishwasher	500.00	0.00	500.00	-1,000.00	0.00		
Office administration, IT and training	Data Protection - 3228	1,625.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,625.00	<b>2,349.00</b>	Useful for any IT upgrades or ad hoc specialist support.
	Upgrade of IT systems - 3142	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
	Civic Centre booking system -	3,191.50	0.00	0.00	-3,191.50	0.00		
	Training - 3143	724.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	724.00		
Old Timbers Lane Maintenance	Old Timbers Lane Maintenance - 3111	16,750.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	16,750.00	<b>16,750.00</b>	Has to be set aside for this purpose only.
Open spaces and street furniture	Fencing - 3199	126.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	126.00	<b>5,287.68</b>	Street furniture and fencing has declined in our open spaces, so important to have funds available to undertake repairs.
	Litter Bins Policy - 3178	3,208.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,208.00		
	Street furniture repair/replace - 3193	436.32	0.00	0.00	0.00	436.32		
	East Sussex CC Verge cutting cont	9.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.00		
	Covid memorial bench -	300.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	300.00		
	Wildflowers and horticulture	0.00	150.00	0.00	-141.64	8.36		
	Donation for street furniture - 3122	1,200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,200.00		
Play Area Upgrades	Play Area Enhancements - 3185	11,525.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11,525.00	<b>81,525.00</b>	Use for Victoria Play Area upgrade with the S106 agreement funds in 2025.
	Upgrading Vic Pleasure Grnd Facilities -	50,000.00	0.00	20,000.00	0.00	70,000.00		
Professional expertise	Professional fees - 3131	1,507.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,507.00	<b>1,507.00</b>	Useful to have to hand for specialist expertise.
Public Conveniences	Public Conveniences - 3176	30,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	30,000.00	<b>30,000.00</b>	Has to be allocated to Public Convenience project.
S106 agreements and deeds of easements	Section 106 agreements - 3135	17,909.37	0.00	0.00	0.00	17,909.37	<b>17,909.37</b>	Use for Victoria Play Area upgrade.
	Ridgewood Watercourse maintenance	5,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00	<b>5,000.00</b>	Has to be allocated to watercourse (Eastb Rd development)
Snatts Road Cemetery and Cemetery Wall	Geophysical survey of Cemetery	-155.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-155.00	<b>8,145.00</b>	To be used for general improvements in the Cemetery or to wall.
	Cemetery enhancement - 3173	8,300.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8,300.00		
	Playing fields & pitches - 3229	258.00	8,000.00	0.00	0.00	8,258.00		

**AGENDA ITEM 11.0 -  
CONSOLIDATION OF  
EARMARKED  
RESERVES**

Sports pitch and recreational improvements	Ridgewood Rec Ground levelling - 3189	2,493.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,493.00	14,357.17	These funds could cover the cost of the football and cricket improvements planned in 2025 as well as CIL funding.
	Skate park peripheral area - 3117	2,542.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,542.00		
	Pitch Improvements Works	0.00	0.00	5,000.00	-4,530.29	469.17		
	Seat, signage for tennis courts - 3207	595.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	595.00		
Streetlighting	Streetlight timers - 3174	1,856.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,856.00	23,302.26	Important that we utilise these funds for streetlighting repairs first, before utilising CIL funding, as CIL can be used for a wider range of infrastructure improvements.
	Streetlight replacement SOX lanterns - 3224	10,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10,500.00		
	Streetlighting repairs	30,647.00	0.00	0.00	-19,700.74	10,946.26		
Tree works	Tree works - 3118	4,701.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,701.00	4,701.00	To be used for general tree works that might be more costly.
Community safety initiatives	CCTV Replacement Programme - 3136	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,199.64	Previously allocated for speed reduction device. But could be used for general community safety initiatives if members agreed.
	Speed reduction - 3220	5,199.64	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,199.64		
Town Centre Regeneration Masterplanning	Consultants Town Centre - 3159	75,300.00	0.00	-25,000.00	0.00	50,300.00	101,500.00	As a bare minimum we must ensure £50k remains allocated for the Joint Committee Master Plan Work, by the Uckfield Joint Regeneration Committee with ESCC and WDC.
	Joint Committee Master Plan Work - 3202	50,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	50,000.00		
	White Rails Improvements - 3125	1,200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,200.00		
TOTAL		854,270.76	18,900.00	167,855.00	-174,994.99	866,030.23	866,030.23	

## **Meeting of Full Council**

**Monday 13 January 2025**

### **Agenda Item 12.0**

#### **TO INITIALLY CONSIDER THE SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS FOR:**

- (i) WEALDEN CITIZENS ADVICE, AND;**
- (ii) WEALDEN VOLUNTEERING**

#### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The service level agreements the Town Council had in place with Wealden Citizens Advice and Wealden Volunteering were due for renewal, as the current agreements were due to end in March 2025.
- 1.2 Members have had an opportunity to discuss the agreements at General Purposes Committee on 4 November 2024, Full Council on 2 December 2024, as well as through budget setting discussions at Finance Sub-Committee on 16 December 2024 and 7 January 2025.
- 1.3 A presentation was given by the Manager of Wealden Volunteering to members, on 25 September 2024. This was a useful presentation, and highlighted the following points:  
*Wealden Volunteering changed their name back in March. They had had a good year, and seen increased interest from others. Having a central location in the district was particularly helpful, and they now had 90 members (they had 34 in 2020). Over 30 new members had joined since the change in branding and wider catchment in March.*

*The majority of their income was from membership and fundraising activities. They were doing more around fundraising to boost grant funding income. The Manager was the only paid member of staff. They were fortunate to have a low rent for their location, but with rates and utilities increasing, like all premises it will place further pressure on their running costs as well as rumours that substantial repairs are due to be undertaken to the block of properties, which they will need to contribute to. At present the annual subscription is £40 per year for charities.*

*They now had an SLA with Heathfield & Waldron PC, and the Manager was based in their parish office one day a week to provide support to Heathfield residents. They were looking at other SLAs in Wealden with the potential to set up a pop-up in Crowborough and link up with Wealden DC.*

*Members discussed a few things with the Manager:*

- the current annual evaluation of the Town Council's community grant programme. The Manager had particular issues in obtaining correspondence and engagement from a handful of organisations this year, so the task which should take no longer than a month, took nearly three months to complete. It was suggested the Town Council send out a grant agreement with the award of the grants;*
- the Town Mayor's proposed project for the year, 'People for People', to bring businesses in to support volunteer groups through their intention to provide social value;*
- it was recommended that the NHS could be a potential funder for the organisation, as social prescribers sought to build people's mental health. The Manager confirmed that they had a number of social prescribers that referred people to them. Suggestions*



were also given to keep up to date with Charity Excellence, and the Contracts Register at ESCC;

- the work they could support the Town Council with, around community cohesion. The example was given around new housing developments such as Ridgewood Place who felt out of touch from what's happening in the town, and more isolated;
- the value of the Chamber of Commerce meetings and how the People for People project could be built with their support;
- Wealden Volunteering's request for slightly more funding from £8k to £9k.

- 1.4 A presentation was given by the CEO of Wealden Citizens Advice on 2 December 2024. This was a useful presentation, and highlighted the following points:
- reference was made to the bi-annual report presented to General Purposes Committee on 16 December 2024;
  - in the region of 3,000 clients had been supported across the district; with around 18,000 issues handled. In Uckfield alone, they had supported 265 residents in the first six months of the financial year;
  - this resulted in significant financial outcomes for the residents, with substantial income, reimbursements, debts written off, and repayments rescheduled;
  - in addition to money advice, they also supported residents with benefits and tax credit enquiries and applications, charitable support, referrals to the Food Bank, and the provision of grants eligible for Household support funding to support them when moving into new accommodation or new properties which did not have white goods, or carpets, or beds for example;
  - debt management was by far the biggest issues affecting residents, and personal independence payment issues;
  - despite the affluent nature of the district, there were pockets of deprivation and isolation;
  - they were currently located within Uckfield Library, and the location was working well next to the High Street and Luxfords car park. They had requested new signage at the front of the library to better signpost their services, and they were currently reviewing usage of the upstairs rooms;
  - their rent was due to increase by £5k in 2025, and for that reason along with increasing costs of running the service, they requested an increase in the funding attached to the service level agreement with Uckfield Town Council, to £28,000. At present, the Town Council were providing £19,000 per annum.
  - they ran a successful recruitment drive for volunteers in the last quarter of 2024;
  - they also worked on key campaigns and schemes such as Digital Exclusion, Cost of Living Fund support with Wealden District Council, and supporting residents with issues experienced with management companies;

## **2.0 Discussions to date**

- 2.1 Full Council discussed the following on 2 December 2024:

### **13.0 TO CONSIDER THE SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS FOR:**

#### **(i) Wealden Citizens Advice**

#### **(ii) Wealden Volunteering**

Members had previously received a presentation from Wealden Volunteering at the end of October, which had included a useful update on their services, their plans for expansion, and their request for an increase in funding from £8,000 to £9,000.

Members received a presentation from Wealden Citizens Advice (WCA) prior to the Full Council meeting, which had also been very useful with updates on matters handled by the Citizens Advice team, and financial support they had given to local residents. They were also requesting an increase in funding; requesting a sum of £28,000, in comparison to the current £19,000 attached to the service level agreement.

#### Wealden Citizens Advice

The Town Council representative for WCA, Councillor A. Smith, advised that they were supporting the most vulnerable of the town's residents, and she also understood the immense pressure on their services. They were supporting residents with the fundamentals of life i.e. their income. She was also aware that they were dealing with one of the highest levels of disabled clients of the Citizens Advice Bureaus in the country. The cost of living and cost of running that business would have increased exponentially, so it was important to protect the wellbeing of the town's most vulnerable residents through this service.

A further four Councillors supported the provision of an increase in principle, despite noting that available funding within the Town Council's budget was limited. Members noted the hundreds of thousands of debt relief their service had found for residents in need in the district, and felt the service provided an incredible return on those organisations awarding grant funding.

Members questioned whether they could utilise some of the general power of competence grant funding, to support an increase.

#### Wealden Volunteering

The Town Mayor discussed her 'People to People' project with Wealden Volunteering and the Uckfield Chamber of Commerce.

Members felt the contents of the service level agreement needed to be strengthened further, in terms of reporting and updates on the services they delivered to residents and businesses.

The Town Clerk suggested that both service level agreements should only be renewed for 12 months to provide more flexibility for all parties moving forward. Members subsequently noted the report.

2.2 At the meeting of Finance Sub-Committee on 7 January 2025, members recommended the following to Full Council, as part of the budget conversations:

- Service Level Agreements – after discussion it was recommended to renew these agreements for 12 months, to maintain Wealden Volunteering at £8k, and for Wealden Citizens Advice to receive £23k. It was recommended that the main Community Grant funding allocation (General Power of Competence) be set at £23,000;

### **3.0 Recommendations:**

3.1 Members are asked to:

- (i) agree to the grant funding allocations recommended by Finance Sub-Committee at their meeting on 7 January 2025 and award, Wealden Volunteering a sum of £8,000 for 2025/26, and Wealden Citizens Advice a sum of £23,000 in 2025/26;
- (ii) renew the service level agreements for a term of 12 months to give all parties the ability to review their position in the autumn of 2025 before renewing further, and;
- (iii) provide the Clerk with initial feedback on the contents of the draft service level agreements, and nominate two Town Councillors to sign the agreements once finalised.

Contact Officer: Holly Goring

Appendices: Appendix A: Draft SLA for Wealden Citizen's Advice

Appendix B: Draft SLA for Wealden Volunteering



## **SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT**

### **Uckfield Town Council and Wealden Citizens Advice, Uckfield Branch**

#### **Period of agreement**

This is a 12-month agreement that will start on 1 April 2025 and finish on 31 March 2026, with an opportunity to then review the agreement moving forward.

#### **Aim**

The aim of Wealden Citizens Advice is to provide free impartial advice to people for the problems they face and to improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives. The service is independent of other agencies and all information is handled confidentially. The service values diversity and promotes equality; challenging discrimination wherever seen. The service is available to everyone, with a particular focus in this service level agreement for the provision of support to residents in Uckfield and the surrounding villages.

#### **Key performance indicators**

##### **Opening hours**

A service is offered face to face or over the phone.

At present the first point of contact is via their freephone number Monday to Friday 9am until 3.00pm. The customer will then be contacted to arrange an appointment.

Advice and support can be provided either face to face or by telephone, but face to face appointments are reserved for high priority cases or need across the three offices.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Face to face</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
Monday	9.30 to 3	9.30 to 3
Tuesday	9.30 to 3	9.30 to 3
Wednesday	9.30 to 3	9.30 to 3
Thursday	9.30 to 3	9.30 to 3
Friday	-	9.30 to 3

Uckfield Town Council will be informed if there are any proposed changes in opening times necessitated by a reduction of available funds.

## **Reporting**

A bi-annual written report will be provided to Uckfield Town Council on the key performance indicators and the following information:

- (i) Total number of clients (and specifically residents) helped by advisers by the Uckfield branch;
- (ii) Number of issues dealt with by the advisers in the Uckfield branch;
- (iii) Breakdown of the top five types of issues dealt with by the advisers in the Uckfield branch and Wealden District (%);
- (iv) The amount of money obtained for clients as a result of successful grant and benefit applications;
- (v) Details of any social policy campaigns in which the Uckfield branch have participated;
- (vi) Number of social policy evidence forms submitted by volunteers at the Uckfield branch to the Wealden Research and Campaign task force
- (vii) Details of any projects or new services available for residents in Uckfield and the surrounding villages;
- (viii) Breakdown of team available in terms of numbers of advisers, staff and trustees;

## **Information sharing**

In addition to a bi-annual report from the Wealden Citizens Advice, a representative of Uckfield Town Council will be appointed at the Annual Statutory meeting of Uckfield Town Council to attend WCA board meetings and provide updates to General Purposes Committee as a representative of this outside body.

It is also recommended that once a year, a representative of Wealden Citizens Advice attends a meeting of Uckfield Town Council to give a verbal report and answer any questions from members with regard to the service level agreement and service provision.

## ***Financial contributions***

The provider (Wealden Citizens Advice) will receive a sum of £23,000 in 2025/26 in line with this agreement.

Payment will be made in two instalments of £11,500. The first instalment will be issued in May of each year, and the second instalment issued in October.

Signed

Full Name

On behalf of the Uckfield Town Council

Date

Signed

Full Name

On behalf of the Wealden Citizens Advice

Date



## **SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT BETWEEN UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL AND WEALDEN VOLUNTEERING**

### **GENERAL**

This is a non-legally binding agreement between Uckfield Town Council and Wealden Volunteering.

It must be understood by both parties that failure to provide the services detailed below could jeopardise the likelihood of renewal of the service level agreement.

The agreement shall run for a 12-month period between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026.

The Town Council shall look favourable on a renewal if the terms of the agreement are met satisfactorily. However, the Town Council cannot commit to a renewal as it is accepted that renewal of the agreement is a decision for the elected Members and Members will change over the course of time. The Town Council, may, however, introduce a policy that supports the partnership in general terms.

### **Service Level Agreement requirements**

#### **Council Grants**

Wealden Volunteering will:

- Undertake an annual monitoring exercise with ALL grant awardees that were successful of being in receipt of grant funding through Uckfield Town Council's annual community grants programme. This exercise will provide an opportunity to evaluate their use of the community grant funding and ensure that the grant money given to community and voluntary organisations has been well accounted for. A written report will be provided to the Town Council at the end of each financial year;
- Provide services to the community of Uckfield to match individuals and groups with volunteering opportunities, to provide hearing aid maintenance services, and general support with IT or administrative tasks such as photocopying and laminating, and assistance with digital access;
- Work with the Uckfield Chamber of Commerce and Town Mayor to deliver the 'People to People' campaign and increase engagement between businesses and the voluntary sector;

Uckfield Town Council will:

- Require that all organisations receiving grants make a commitment to co-operate with the Wealden Volunteering during their annual monitoring exercise and support their work;

## **Reporting**

A bi-annual written report will be provided to Uckfield Town Council on the key performance indicators and the following information:

- (i) Total number of clients (and specifically residents) helped by Wealden Volunteering in Uckfield;
- (ii) Number of successful volunteer matches;
- (iii) Detail of any projects or new services available for residents in Uckfield and the surrounding villages;
- (iv) Breakdown of team available in terms of numbers of advisers, staff and trustees;

## **Information sharing**

In addition to a bi-annual report, a representative of Uckfield Town Council will be appointed at the Annual Statutory meeting of Uckfield Town Council to attend WV board meetings and provide updates to General Purposes Committee as a representative of this outside body.

It is also recommended that once a year, a representative of Wealden Volunteering attends a meeting of Uckfield Town Council to give a verbal report and answer any questions from members with regard to the service level agreement and service provision.

## **Financial contribution**

Uckfield Town Council will provide a sum of £8,000 for the period 2025/26, in line with this agreement.

Payment will be made in quarterly instalments (June 2025, September 2025, December 2025, and March 2026).

## **Authorisation**

Signed

Full Name

On behalf of Uckfield Town Council

Date

Signed

Full Name

On behalf of Wealden Volunteering

Date

# **Agenda item 13.0**

## **Residents' Survey 2024**

### **highlights**





# Methodology

- ❑ Members were keen to understand the views of local residents, and find out their thoughts on their local area, local decision-making, local service provision and priorities for the town both now and in the future;
- ❑ An online survey was designed on Google forms for ease and at no cost;
- ❑ Survey consisted of 29 questions – mix of open and closed to assist with capturing key results and data, useful for analysis whilst also enabling residents to elaborate on their responses, for us to fully understand;
- ❑ The survey was promoted via the Uckfield Matters magazine (delivered to every household), social media pages, and via flyers and posters in the Civic Centre;
- ❑ Although an online survey, it was advised on the website and flyers that hard copies were available at the Civic Centre;

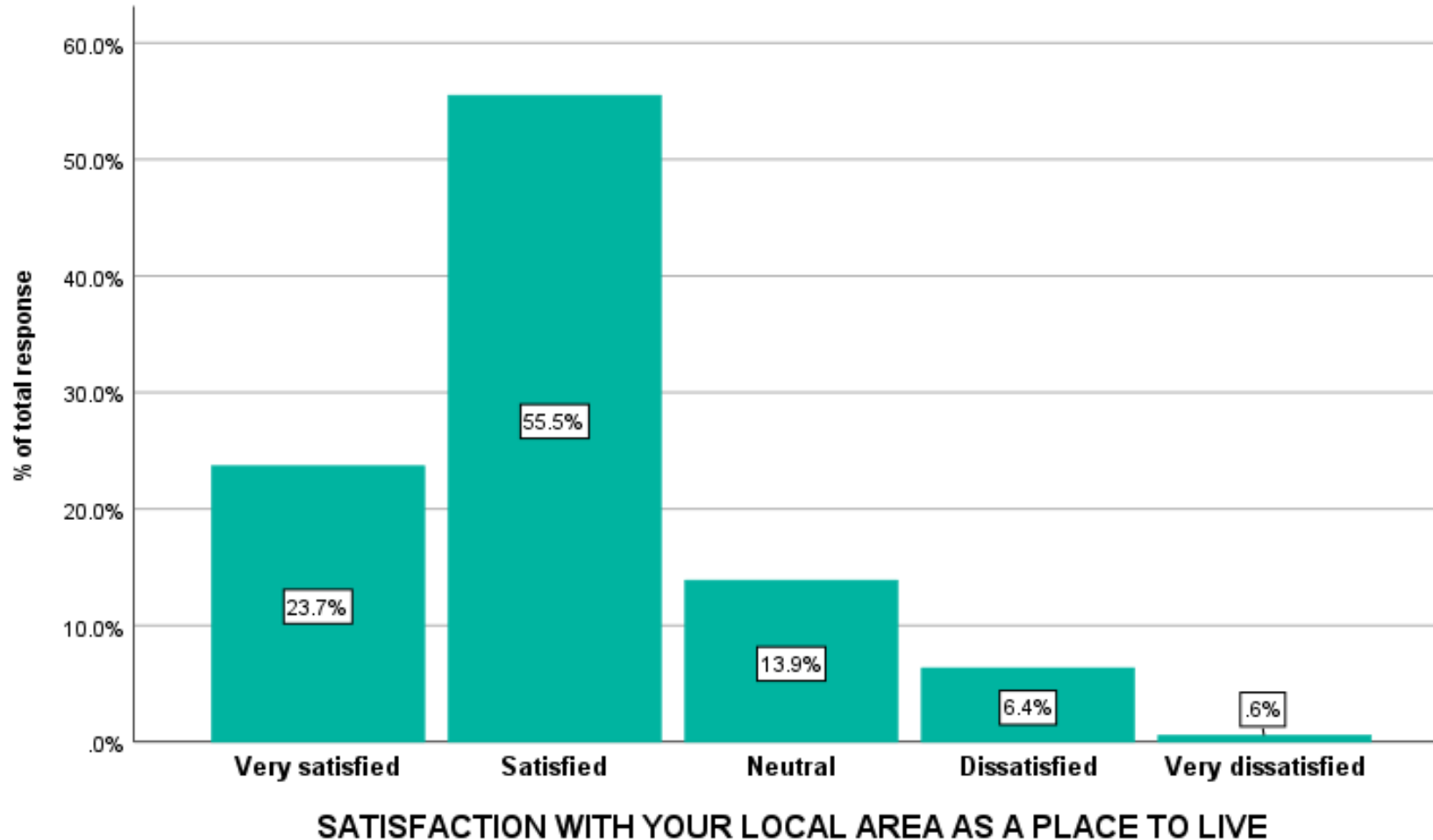


# Analysis

- ❑ A total of 173 responses were received online. This compares with the 138 received by the initial deadline of 2 December. We were hoping to reach 200 so in light of pressures on staffing during December, we extended the deadline to capture a greater number of responses;
- ❑ With 6,456 households recorded for the parish in the 2021 census, this is a 2.7% response rate;
- ❑ We are also aware that as the survey was online it picked up a handful of respondents who lived just outside of town;
- ❑ For those questions where there were multiple responses, and more detailed data comparisons were required, the data was exported via excel to IBM SPSS Statistics to ensure the data captured was analysed accurately;

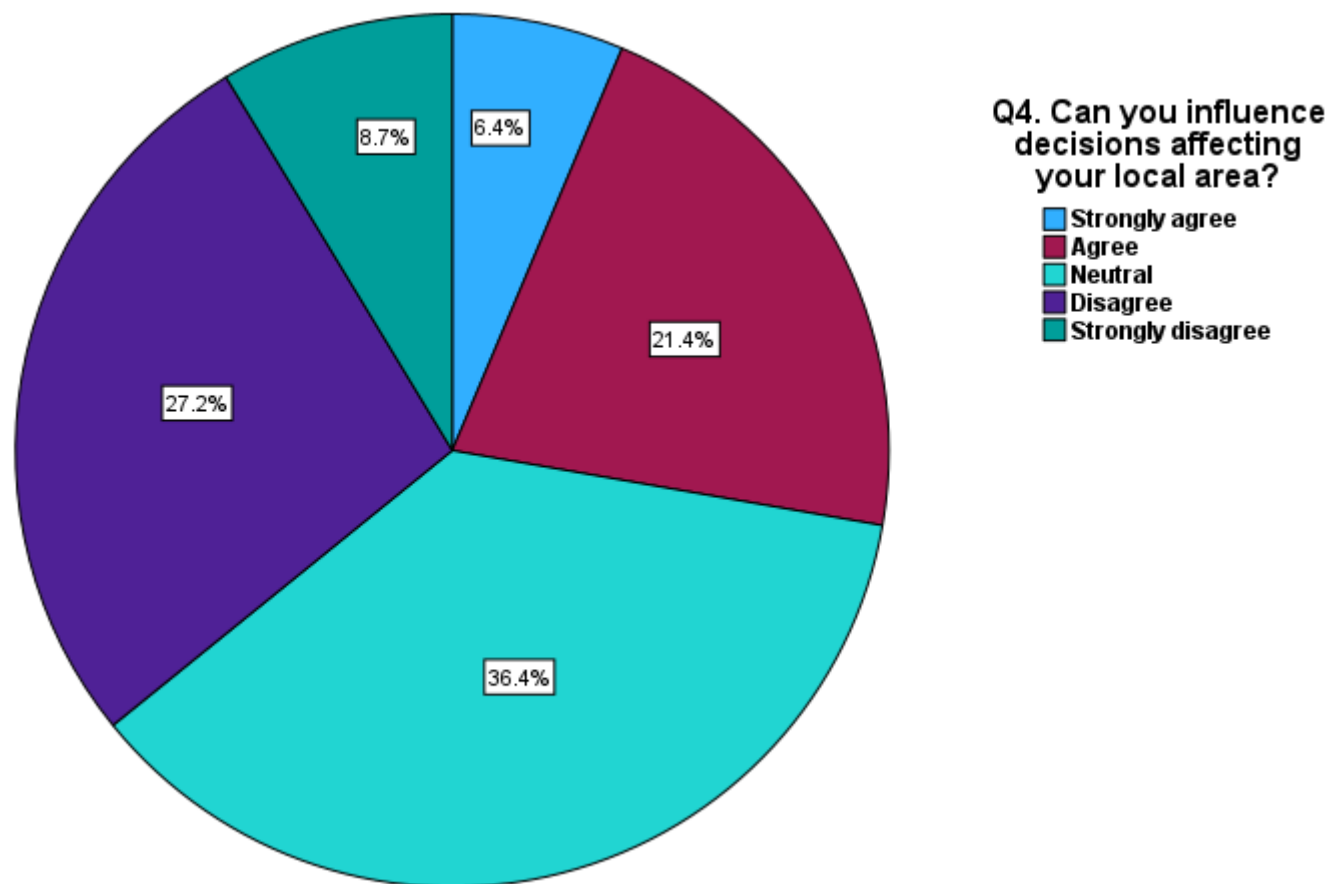
# Satisfaction with their local area as a place to live

79.2% of respondents were satisfied with their local area, compared with 7% who were dissatisfied.



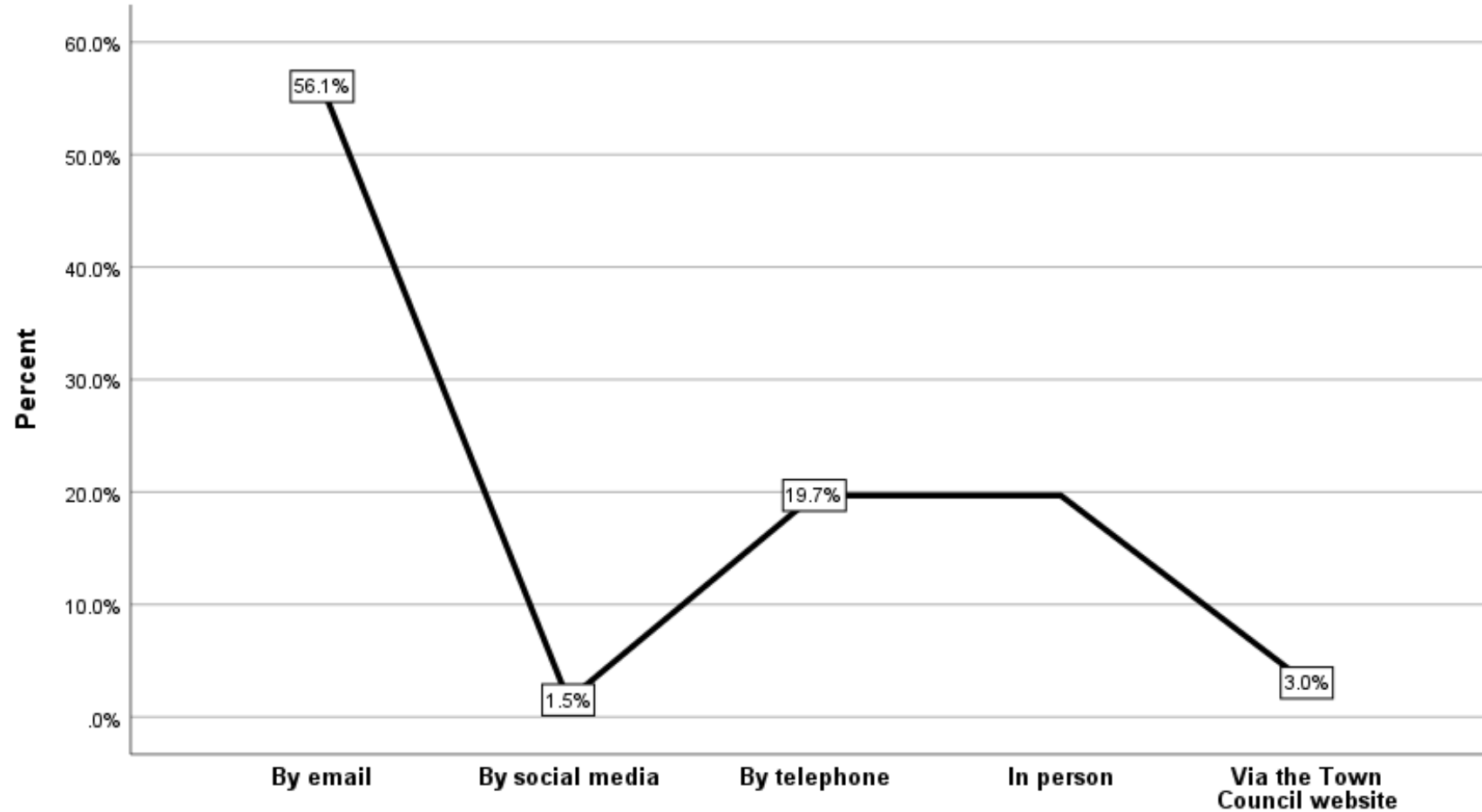
# Influencing local decision-making

27.8% of respondents agreed that they could influence local decision-making, compared with 35.9% who disagreed, and just over a third of respondents (36.4%) who neither agreed or disagreed.



# Making contact with the Town Council

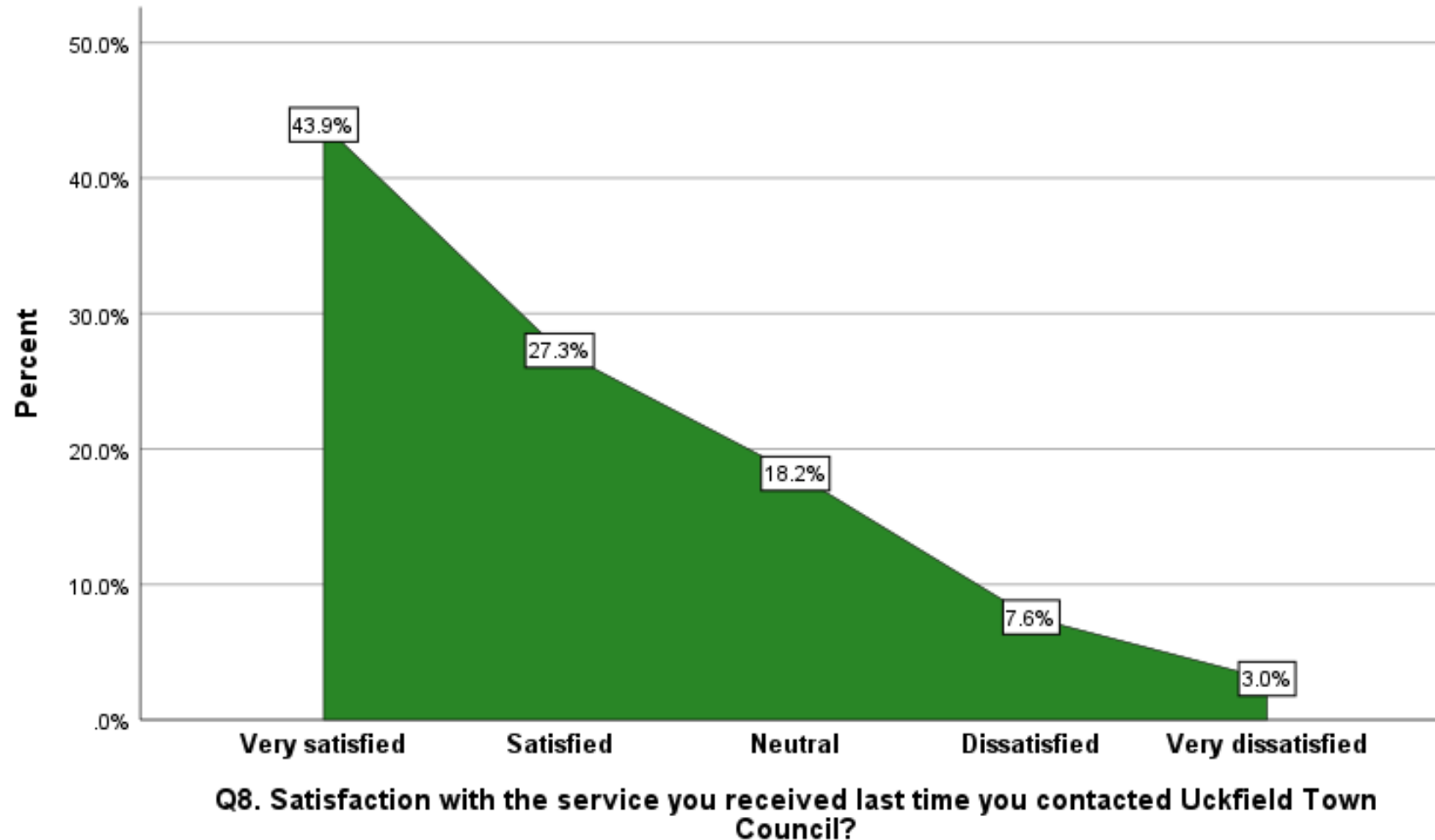
Of the 66 respondents who made contact with the Town Council in the past 12 months, just over half contacted the Council by email.



Q7. Of those who contacted the Council, what method of communication did they use

# Making contact with the Town Council

Of the 66 respondents who made contact with the Town Council in the past 12 months, nearly three quarters were satisfied with the service they received (71.2%).



# Importance of work programmes for Town Council buildings

Work programme	Important	Not important	Neutral
Improvements to plumbing/heating	50.8%	13.9%	35.3%
Installation of renewable technologies	65.9%	9.8%	24.3%
Renting space at market value to increase income streams	65.4%	5.8%	28.9%
Providing space for community use	91.3%	-	8.7%
Installing modern technologies in Town Council buildings	78.7%	5.2%	16.2%
Improve internal decoration	46.8%	6.9%	46.2%
Invest in external fabric of building	61.9%	6.9%	31.2%
Resurface car parks adjacent to Town Council buildings	53.7%	8.1%	38.2%

- 1). Providing space for community use**
- 2). Installing modern technologies**
- 3). Installation of renewable technologies**
- 4). Renting space at market value to increase income streams**
- 5). Invest in external fabric of building**

# Importance of Grounds work programmes

Work programme	Important	Not important	Neutral
Maintenance and care of Snatts Road Cemetery	47.4%	14.4%	38.2%
Management of Town Council owned woodlands and handling of diseased trees	85.0%	2.9%	12.1%
Wildlife monitoring	67.0%	12.2%	20.8%
Maintenance and improvements to sports pitches	72.8%	6.4%	20.8%
Mowing open spaces and Town Council land	82.0%	4.6%	13.3%
Hedgecutting and general upkeep	87.3%	2.3%	10.4%
Creating wildflower areas and planting	75.7%	6.3%	17.9%
Providing and emptying/disposing of litter bins on Town Council land	96.5%	-	3.5%
Upgrading and routinely inspecting play areas	83.8%	4.0%	12.1%
Identifying space to increase cemetery provision	43.9%	13.9%	42.2%
Identifying space to increase allotment provision	50.8%	9.8%	39.3%
Planting trees or community orchards	72.6%	8.1%	19.1%

# **Importance of work programmes in Grounds services**

- 1). Providing and emptying/disposing of litter bins on Town Council land**
- 2). Hedgecutting and general upkeep**
- 3). Management of Town Council owned woodlands and handling of diseased trees**
- 4). Upgrading and routinely inspecting play areas**
- 5). Mowing open spaces and Town Council land**



# Importance of community activities

Work programme	Important	Not important	Neutral
Civic Centre Events Programme	57.8%	9.8%	32.4%
Organising outdoor community events such as Weald on the Field	79.8%	5.2%	15.0%
Provision and maintenance of Town Centre CCTV	89.0%	3.4%	7.5%
Floral displays in the High Street	77.5%	3.5%	19.1%
Christmas lights in the Town Centre	87.9%	4.1%	8.1%
Funding community grants to community groups	82.1%	4.6%	13.3%
Providing community toilets in the Civic Centre and Victoria Ground	90.7%	2.9%	6.4%
Introducing a heritage plaque scheme for notable people or buildings	26.4%	24.9%	46.8%
Delivering projects to increase the town's tourism offer	50.9%	16.2%	32.9%
Lobbying for more banking presence or a banking hub	77.5%	5.8%	16.8%
Working with key partner agencies to address food poverty	72.3%	11.5%	16.2%

- 1). **Providing community toilets**
- 2). **Provision and maintenance of Town Centre CCTV**
- 3). **Christmas lights in the Town Centre**
- 4). **Funding community grants to community groups**
- 5). **Organising outdoor community events such as Weald on the Field**

## **Meeting of the Full Council**

**Monday 13 January 2025**

### **Agenda Item No. 14.0**

#### **TO FORMALLY ADOPT THE CONTENT OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-30 PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF THE DOCUMENT**

##### **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 We are proposing to revamp the layout and presentation of the Strategic Plan for 2025-30. At the meeting of Full Council on 2 December 2024, members felt that the strategy should be separated in terms of tangible objectives that the Town Council could deliver and longer term community aspirations that the Town Council could lobby for, and show to key stakeholders such as developers, partner agencies or businesses in the local area.
- 1.2 For that reason, and before adopting the Strategic Plan in its final format and presentation, we wished to clarify with members that the separation of the objectives from the longer term aspirations was correct.
- 1.3 The content set out in appendix A, intends to present this in a clear format for members to consider.

##### **2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the content of the Strategic Plan's objectives for delivery, and community aspirations for the period 2025-30.

Contact Officer: Holly Goring

## Our Strategic Priorities – Conservation

<b>East Sussex County Council Corporate Priorities:</b>	<b>Making best use of resources now and for the future Driving Sustainable Economic Growth</b>
<b>Wealden District Council's Corporate Priorities:</b>	<b>Climate Change and our Environment:</b> Protecting our environment and leading the district towards carbon neutrality.
<b>Uckfield Town Council's Strategic Priority:</b>	<b>Environment and health</b>
<b>By 2030, the Town Council will have:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintained a good standard of grounds maintenance within the town to ensure Uckfield remains an attractive place to live;</li> <li>• Maintained good quality floral displays within the town centre, to ensure Uckfield town centre remains an attractive place to live, work and visit;</li> <li>• Purchased suitable machinery and equipment to improve arrangements for managing the cutting of the Town Council's open spaces in-house;</li> <li>• Improved the facilities and surfacing at the Town Council's play areas with plans to upgrade at least two play areas (Victoria Pleasure Ground and West Park);</li> <li>• Undertaken two-yearly full football pitch renovations for the Town Council's football pitches;</li> <li>• Delivered short term plans to improve the Town Council's sport pitches, and identified medium and long term plan, with potential funding (cricket and football);</li> <li>• Explored and agreed a plan to deliver improvements to the Town's skate park;</li> <li>• Designated areas of Town Council land, for the growth of wild flowers;</li> <li>• Introduced a number of initiatives to increase the use of our open spaces, and encourage greater physical activity (distance markers, fun games and activities which encourage movement);</li> <li>• Continued working with Sussex Local Nature Partnership as part of their Green Spaces Project to understand the ecological benefits of green spaces as well as the social and health/wellbeing benefits, in order to develop a longer term vision and set of objectives for these sites – particular focus will have been given to Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve and Snatts Road Cemetery;</li> <li>• Commissioned ecological appraisals and specific/specialised wildlife surveys to fully understand the species within our woodlands and nature reserves;</li> <li>• Adopted an action plan for delivery against our carbon audit, in order to reduce our carbon emissions, and ensured a periodic review of the audit is undertaken;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduced changes and new initiatives in line with the Town Council's Climate Change Policy and action plan to reduce the Town Council's carbon emissions through reviews of our contracts, buildings, energy sources and management of nature and waste disposal;</li> <li>• Hosted events such as the Eco EXPO to better inform residents of the various alternative technologies and services available to do their bit to tackle climate change;</li> <li>• Installed further solar panels on the roof of the Civic Centre in line with the Town Council's Climate Change Action Plan;</li> <li>• Recorded and mapped the findings of frequent tree surveying programmes to ensure safety from ash dieback, and other diseases.</li> <li>• Continued to deliver important tree planting schemes so that for every tree that has been removed, another tree has been planted. We will have also identified suitable sites where additional trees can be planted on Town Council land to restock from felling or coppicing, or to create new community orchards;</li> <li>• Liased with landowners adjacent to the River Uck to investigate the purchase of land from the end of the footpath in Knights Meadow to Hempstead Lane by the mill, rugby field and Buxted Park and create the first section of a River Walk;</li> <li>• Led by example, to deliver a project with Brighter Uckfield and Uckfield Chamber of Commerce to encourage Uckfield's businesses and organisations to reduce their use of single-use plastic and undertake a review around recycling and re-use;</li> <li>• Continued to provide burial authority services with responsibility for the maintenance of the Cemetery at Snatts Road and Holy Cross churchyard;</li> <li>• Consecrated a new area of land within Snatts Road Cemetery, and explored the expansion or creation of new cemetery provision;</li> <li>• Continued to work with East Sussex County Council to gradually review street lighting and replace with new columns and LED lighting where necessary;</li> </ul>
<b>Lobbied for progress towards the town's community aspirations:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Worked with our partner agencies to increase opportunities for residents of all ages to take part in activities which improve their health and wellbeing;</i></li> <li>• <i>Worked with our partner agencies to have plans for or deliver the creation of further sport facilities;</i></li> <li>• <i>Consecrated a new area of land within Snatts Road Cemetery, and explored the expansion or creation of new cemetery provision;</i></li> <li>• <i>Identified space for new allotment plots to meet demand from growth in population;</i></li> </ul>

<b>East Sussex County Council Corporate Priorities:</b>	<b>Driving sustainable economic growth</b>
<b>Wealden District Council's Corporate Priorities:</b>	<b>Local Economy:</b> A growing economy which enables people to live well
<b>Uckfield Town Council's Strategic Priority:</b>	<b>Design and Development</b>
<b>By 2030, the Town Council will have:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worked closely with the planning authority, Wealden District Council, to understand the latest legislative updates and guidance;</li> <li>• Fed into Wealden District Council's Local Plan development process; responding to consultations and raising issues relating to Uckfield;</li> <li>• Supported the development of a Neighbourhood Plan and finalised the plan for adoption and utilised alongside the Wealden Local Plan by developers;</li> <li>• As a member of Uckfield Town Centre Regeneration Committee, we will have worked with our partners (<i>Wealden District Council and East Sussex County Council</i>) to explore options for regeneration within the centre of the town, and possibility of expanding the retail and business offer;</li> <li>• Worked with Wealden District Council to ensure the Town Council is fully engaged in other regulatory matters such as licensing;</li> <li>• Developed an annual process by which the Town Council reviews its assets and strategic asset management plan, which considers each of the Town Council's buildings to improve the efficiency and use of these properties;</li> <li>• Delivered an annual programme of maintenance and decoration to all of the Town Council's built assets through schemes of major and minor works;</li> <li>• Reviewed the condition of car parks adjacent to Town Council owned buildings and agreed a programme of repairs or resurfacing, with a particular focus given to drainage and repair at Hempstead Recreation Ground, Ridgewood Village Hall car parks and the staff Civic Centre parking area;</li> </ul>
<b>Lobbied for progress towards the town's community aspirations:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Promoted the need for affordable and key-worker housing within Uckfield, to support those in housing need and first time buyers;</i></li> <li>• <i>Considered the infrastructure requirements for the town in terms of sport, leisure, recreation and community facilities through engagement with key stakeholders, local residents and businesses including future demand on Town Council services such as allotment and cemetery provision;</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Held developers to account to ensure the conditions of planning permissions are met, and adjacent boundaries and wildlife are sensitively looked after;</i></li> <li>• <i>Worked with the Chamber of Commerce to engage with High Street landlords (commercial and residential) to promote and secure improvements to street frontages;</i></li> <li>• <i>Protected the green space between Uckfield town and surrounding villages;</i></li> <li>• <i>Worked towards the 30 by 30“ United Nations target to designate 30 percent of land and ocean areas as protected areas by 2030 to aid nature recovery.</i></li> </ul>
--	--

<b>East Sussex County Council Corporate Priorities:</b>	<b>Driving sustainable economic growth</b>
<b>Wealden District Council’s Corporate Priorities:</b>	<b>Climate Change and our Environment:</b> Protecting our environment and leading the district towards carbon neutrality.
<b>Uckfield Town Council’s Strategic Priority:</b>	<b>Transport and Access</b>
<b>By 2030, the Town Council will have:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduced speed reduction initiatives including community speedwatch and behaviour change campaigns, and explored the introduction of installing permanent speed indicator devices;</li> <li>• Created up to date street maps of the town, which highlight our open spaces and footways including the alleyways and twittens;</li> <li>• Continued to work with East Sussex County Council to gradually review street lighting and replace older lights with new columns and LED lighting where necessary;</li> <li>• Worked with Uckfield Chamber of Commerce and local businesses to review festive lighting for the town centre in preparation for Christmas 2025 and beyond;</li> </ul>
<b>Lobbied for progress towards the town’s community aspirations:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Worked with partner agencies to identify and implement solutions for introducing parking controls within the town centre;</i></li> <li>• <i>Worked with partner agencies to increase parking capacity within the town to meet existing demand and future growth;</i></li> <li>• <i>Remain engaged in discussions to actively promote the electrification of the railway line, and the potential reopening of a line between Uckfield to Lewes railway line providing a direct route into Brighton;</i></li> </ul>

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Remain engaged in discussions to actively promote the reinstatement of a link between Uckfield/Lewes/Brighton and Tunbridge Wells railway lines;</i></li> <li>• <i>Worked with partner agencies and landowners to explore the possibility of improving footway links between Ridgewood Farm, the SANGs and the nature reserves, and explored the possibility of creating a riverside walk;</i></li> <li>• <i>Identified potential areas within the town which required improvements to pedestrian safety and worked with the relevant agencies to lobby for enhancements; including investigating the possibility of repairing the footpaths on Manor Park to remove the risk of trips and falls;</i></li> <li>• <i>Lobbied for improved bus services which support the community, enabling residents on the periphery of town to access the High Street and business park, and for residents in local villages to access Uckfield as their key service centre;</i></li> <li>• <i>Worked with our partner agencies to identify highway issues within the access corridors into the town centre and utilised S106 developer contributions or Community Infrastructure Levy to improve the infrastructure and address matters relating to traffic congestion, traffic calming and road safety;</i></li> <li>• <i>Worked with the relevant partner agencies to address the danger of speeding vehicles and the possibility of extending the 20mph town centre speed limit;</i></li> </ul> |
|--|--|

## Our Strategic Priorities – Community

<b>East Sussex County Council Corporate Priorities:</b>	<b>Driving sustainable economic growth Making best use of resources now and for the future</b>
<b>Wealden District Council's Corporate Priorities:</b>	<b>Community Resilience and Wellbeing:</b> Building strong, mutually supporting communities which are actively engaged in their own future.
<b>Uckfield Town Council's Strategic Priority:</b>	<b>Infrastructure and recreation</b>
<b>By 2030, the Town Council will have:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supported local community and voluntary organisations and sought to assist them with their positive work within the town;</li> <li>• Worked alongside the local business community and community groups to deliver a free public event within the town – Weald on the Field;</li> <li>• Assist and support the organisation of the annual Remembrance Parade and Services;</li> <li>• Established a list of special and important dates or individuals within the town's history and commemorated these on heritage plaques;</li> <li>• Investigated the viability of providing additional public convenience facilities within the town centre and seeking to obtain a changing spaces facility through applications for associated grant funding;</li> <li>• Explored the creation of an outside performance space on Town Council-owned land, for use by the town as part of the annual events calendar;</li> <li>• Supported the partnership work and continuation of the Uckfield Youth Club</li> </ul>
<b>Lobbied for progress towards the town's community aspirations:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Supported the town with the promotion of its tourism offer, through liaison with Uckfield Heritage and Wealden District Council's Economic Development team;</i></li> <li>• <i>Continued to maintain, improve and protect all of our natural areas to accommodate the demands of future growth of the town;</i></li> <li>• <i>Worked with partner agencies, to identify future options for providing more community space within the town to meet the needs of local community groups and organisations;</i></li> <li>• <i>Worked with partner agencies to understand more about our disadvantaged communities and explored ways to engage with these households;</i></li> <li>• <i>Lobbied for a banking presence, and supported the creation of a banking hub, to provide a face to face facility for local residents.</i></li> </ul>



<b>East Sussex County Council Corporate Priorities:</b>	<b>Making best use of resources now and for the future</b>
<b>Wealden District Council's Corporate Priorities:</b>	<b>Community Resilience and Wellbeing:</b> Building strong, mutually supporting communities which are actively engaged in their own future.
<b>Uckfield Town Council's Strategic Priority:</b>	<b>Infrastructure and recreation (Civic Centre and Community facilities)</b>
<b>By 2030, the Town Council will have:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Made improvements to the decoration and flooring within the main corridors and meeting rooms;</li> <li>• Undertaken improvements to the venue's performance facilities (sound, lighting and staging);</li> <li>• Replaced the tables and table racks within the Civic Centre to ensure easier manoeuvrability for room set-ups;</li> <li>• Updated room facilities in line with the latest technologies, providing the facilities to enable hybrid meetings to be hosted within the Weald Hall and Council Chamber;</li> <li>• Introduced temporary air conditioning units within the Civic Centre building for the summer months;</li> <li>• Developed and implemented a communications and marketing plan for the Civic Centre, in addition to an annual calendar of events;</li> <li>• Introduced a number of initiatives and increased takeaway options for customers in Luxfords Restaurant;</li> <li>• Built a good online and social media presence for both the Civic Centre and Luxfords Restaurant;</li> </ul>

## Our Strategic Priorities – Continuous improvement

<b>East Sussex County Council Corporate Priorities:</b>	<b>Making best use of resources now and for the future</b>
<b>Wealden District Council's Corporate Priorities:</b>	<b>Community Resilience and Wellbeing:</b> Building strong, mutually supporting communities which are actively engaged in their own future.
<b>Uckfield Town Council's Strategic Priority:</b>	<b>Internal process and procedures</b>
<b>By 2030, the Town Council will have:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved communication with residents, businesses and visitors to the town through enhancements to the Town Council website and social media accounts;</li> <li>• Improved the condition and display of existing noticeboards, and undertaken a review of their location to ensure they are clear and visible;</li> <li>• Installed new parish and community noticeboards for residents living in new developments and areas of the town;</li> <li>• Improved accessibility to committee meetings by installing an additional hearing loop in the Council Chamber;</li> <li>• Increased promotion of the town's key facilities;</li> <li>• Encouraged applications from local traders and organisations in the Town Council's procurement procedures for contractual work within the town;</li> <li>• Undertaken a thorough review of our key policies in particular personnel and GDPR based policies to ensure they remain up to date with the latest guidance and best practice;</li> <li>• Reduced our use of paper within the Town Council office, by reviewing our working practices and procedures with regard to file retention, purchase orders and invoicing and record management;</li> <li>• Further reviewed our financial processes, and streamlined in line with Internal Auditor guidance</li> <li>• Placed more focus on searching and applying for suitable grant funding to fund key projects for the benefit of local residents;</li> <li>• Set up Councillor surgeries to enable residents to have more frequent face to face contact with their elected members;</li> <li>• Engaged with residents in a variety of means to understand their requirements and desires for the town, to better inform our annual business planning, neighbourhood planning and infrastructure planning.</li> </ul>



# Uckfield Town Council's Annual Priorities 2025/26

## CONSERVATION

### ROBUST APPROACH TO ARBORICULTURE

We will address the remainder of ash dieback, and continue to record and map the results of our rolling tree surveying programme to ensure the safety of the public. We will re-plant trees and restock areas of our woodlands, alongside new community orchards where trees have been removed and disease has had an impact.

### PROTECTING OUR NATURAL HABITATS

We will commission ecological appraisals and wildlife monitoring of our ancient woodlands and local nature reserves, and seek to separate areas from the public to preserve the flora and fauna and protect key species.

### EDUCATION AND CONSIDERATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE

We will host an Eco EXPO to promote alternative technologies to local residents, and continue to consider alternatives in our purchases and management of Town Council land, with a continued focus on conservation and tree planting.

### UPGRADING OUR ASSETS

We will seek professional expertise to explore and deliver options for key buildings in the Town Council's portfolio – Osborn Hall/Signal Box. We will continue to improve the condition, safety and decoration of buildings we manage day to day – Civic Centre, Foresters Hall and Victoria Pavilion.

### UPGRADING OUR SPORTS PITCHES

We will arrange for and fund:

- the replacement of the artificial cricket wicket;
- full pitch renovations of our football pitches between May and July;
- the installation of maneuverable goal posts for the football pitches at New Barn and Harlands;
- welfare facilities at Harlands Recreation Ground.

In addition we will also apply for grant funding to undertake more substantial improvements to the grounds and facilities, and explore options for a future upgrade of the Skate Park.

## COMMUNITY

### COMMUNITY GRANTS

We will award up to £23,000 of community grant funding to local groups and charitable organisations for the period 2025/26, alongside the provision of £23,000 to Wealden Citizen's Advice and £8,000 to Wealden Volunteering through service level agreements.

### UPGRADING PLAY AREA FACILITIES

We will see delivery of the upgrade to Victoria Play Area, and make mid-term upgrades to equipment at Hempstead Recreation Ground. Funding will also be put aside for future improvements to West Park play area.

### PUBLIC REALM

Work with the Uckfield Chamber of Commerce and local businesses to review the contract for festive lighting for the town centre, in preparation for Christmas 2025, and work with local contractors to provide a beautiful floral display in our town centre.

### PUBLIC EVENTS AND ANNIVERSARIES IN THE TOWN

We will organise and deliver the annual day festival Weald on the Field, a beacon lighting ceremony to mark the VE Day and support the organisation of the Remembrance Parade and Services.

## CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE

We will utilise the assistance of professional expertise to project manage major projects and assist with the review of specialist policies and procedures.

### FORWARD PLANNING

We will work with local partner agencies, residents and local businesses to understand the infrastructure requirements for Uckfield, in regards to sport, leisure, recreation and community facilities. We will also consider the future impact on the Town Council's provision of allotment and cemetery space, from growth in the town, and make preparations. This information will also be utilised to inform the finalisation of an Uckfield Neighbourhood Plan.

## **Meeting of the Full Council**

**Monday 13 January 2025**

### **Agenda Item 16.0**

#### **TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE AND FORMALLY SET THE ANNUAL BUDGET (PRECEPT) FOR 2025/26**

##### **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 This report sets out the recommendations of the Finance Sub-Committee from their recent meeting on 7 January 2025 whereby they considered and put forward recommendations for the budget for 2025/26.

##### **2.0 Recommendations of Finance Sub-Committee**

##### **4.0 DETAILED REVIEW OF DRAFT BUDGET PAPERS FOR 2025/26 AND PROPOSED CONSOLIDATION OF EARMARKED RESERVES**

Members were provided with a further revised draft of the working budget papers for 2025/26, which did not rely on the use of reserves, for members to discuss and consider in comparison with the version circulated with the agenda papers, which saw reliance of £45-50k on reserves.

The Assistant Town Clerk & RFO explained the detailed changes in the draft version of the budget circulated and published with the agenda for this committee meeting, and then the revised version providing other options for consideration which had been circulated to members that day.

Members reviewed the differences between the options presented, and then went line by line through the income and expenditure for 2025/26 by committee area. During this detailed exercise, members highlighted the following points:

- Contingency - the importance of having funds set aside for contingency, as recommended by the Internal Auditor;
- Income streams for room hire – with improvements to the Town Council buildings and reconfiguration of some areas, it was suggested that a campaign be run to market our room hire, and promote the facilities available;
- Festive lights – confirming the proposed income and expenditure figures to ensure it was right for the coming year taking into account potential contract costs, and additional works required by East Sussex Highways. The Town Clerk explained the difficulty with prior loss of overheads due to property ownership changes and street lighting column issues. This was an opportunity to listen to local residents and increase the lighting display for 2025;

- Member allowances – an initial members' poll was split. At present, the figure in both versions of the draft working budget papers were based on 10 Councillors claiming allowances at a 5% increase. A decision would be taken at Full Council on 13 Jan 2025;
- Service Level Agreements – after discussion it was recommended to renew these agreements for 12 months, to maintain Wealden Volunteering at £8k, and for Wealden Citizens Advice to receive £23k. It was recommended that the main Community Grant funding allocation (General Power of Competence) be set at £23,000;
- WPA – it was questioned whether staff were fully utilising the scheme. The Assistant Town Clerk explained that the majority of staff were. Others were being signposted when necessary and it was confirmed that a review meeting with all staff was currently being arranged;
- Mayoral chain – the detachable centrepiece required some restoration, and the main mayoral chain needed capacity to add the next Mayor;
- Insurance reinstatement valuations of built asset portfolio – the Town Clerk explained the need to ensure the values were current in the event of any damages. It was recommended to keep this in the budget and to be renewed every 2/3 years;
- Play Areas – the Town Clerk explained that due to vandalism and age/deterioration, a number of the play areas required attention. The cost of replacement parts had also increased, so further funding had been allocated within revenue and for saving in reserves, to have funding in place to renew and repair the play equipment when necessary to meet the needs of families. The councillors agreed;
- Waste collection – the Town Clerk explained that a review would be taking place of the Town Council's commercial waste contract to ensure that costs were kept to a minimum. At present, it was costing in the region of £12k per annum just for the collection of the waste emptied from the Town Council's 76 bins on Town Council land. It was suggested that communications be issued to ensure residents were made aware of the costs and be asked to take their rubbish home where they could;
- Events programme – work was underway to plan for further marketing and communications on room hire, functions and annual Civic Centre events programme;
- Staffing – members considered and discussed the proposed need for further resource. This would ensure the Town Council met existing need and demand within service provision, compliance and legal requirements. It would improve service standards for the town's residents, assist with the delivery of large projects to improve the condition of the Town Council's assets, alongside preparing for future growth, and possibly the future devolvement of services should the UK Government's White Paper be enacted.



The Town Council had a duty to local residents, staff, contractors and customers/visitors to the town, and at present a great deal was being delivered on the shoulders of staff who were going above and beyond to provide a positive experience for customers and residents. Members understood the pressures on existing staffing levels and difficulties in capacity to deliver, alongside the desire to further increase income streams. It was recommended that officers continue to explore further options for staffing to support the Town Council in its management of the current asset portfolio and potential future growth of the town. Members also supported the Town Council's continued desire to raise a third of the council's income, through its own means, rather than rely solely on the precept (council tax).

**FS.09.01.25**

Bearing in mind the very difficult decision, with requirements to effectively deliver the Town Council's services in 2025 and beyond, members **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council, a proposed annual budget for 2025/26 of £1,986,903 with a precept of £1,321,883 subject to any final alterations or amendments based on updated financial calculations from quotations, contractors or year to date expenditure. Subject to those final calculations, it would result in an increase of £30.30 (15.95%) per annum for the average Council Tax Band D household (approx. £3.03 per month),

**3.0 Recommendations**

- 3.1 Members are asked to consider the above recommendations of the Finance Sub-Committee from their meeting on 7 January 2025, and for the Town Council to adopt the annual budget for 2025/26 of £1,986,904 with a precept of £1,321,884 subject to any final alterations in the meeting. Subject to any final alterations in the meeting, it would result in an increase of £30.30 per annum (*approx. £3.03 per month or £0.69p per week*) for the average Council Tax Band D household.

Contact Officer: Sarah D'Alessio

	Proposed Income	Proposed Expenditure	Proposed Income	Proposed Expenditure
	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26	2025/26
<b>General Purposes</b>				
Revenue	242,180	888,248	281,136	959,857
New Initiatives etc.		123,945		98,750
Earmarked Reserve Projects		10,500		12,500
Sub Totals		<b>1,022,693</b>		<b>1,071,107</b>
<b>Environment and Leisure</b>				
Revenue	115,304	379,496	128,284	483,589
New Initiatives etc.		10,786		81,420
Earmarked Reserve Projects		43,000		56,000
Sub Totals		<b>433,282</b>		<b>621,009</b>
<b>Luxfords Restaurant</b>				
Revenue	230,600	258,957	255,600	294,788
Earmarked Reserve Projects		500		0
New Initiatives		0		0
Sub Totals		<b>259,457</b>		<b>294,788</b>
<b>Gross Income/Expenditure</b>	588,084	1,715,432	665,020	1,986,904
		<b>1,127,348</b>		<b>1,321,884</b>
<b>Net Budget Requirement</b>		1,127,348		1,321,884
<b>Tax Base</b>	5933.4		6000.4	
<b>Band 'D' Council Tax</b>		<b>£190.00</b>		<b>£220.30</b>

FINAL DRAFT OF  
THE 2025/26 ANNUAL  
BUDGET FOR  
ADOPTION

15.95% increase  
£30.30 increase (3.03 per month or  
0.69p per week)

Final Draft  
GP Budget 2025/26 v7 (10.1.25)

Committee	Nominal Code	Cost Centre	2024/2025 Final Budget	*Year to date (Dec 24)	2025/2026 Draft Budget	Notes
GP						
	5609	C/C Wood Pellets	10,000	3,334	10,000	*YTD - 2 pellet deliveries, not yet paid Dec delivery. Should work out approx. 3 per winter.
	5610	C/C Rates	35,500	32,416	37,250	Increased slightly to take account of any increases in 2025.
	5611	C/C Electricity	9,000	8,613	11,000	Increased slightly to take account of the new contract.
	5612	C/C gas	4,500	2,420	4,000	Gas costs steadying out.
	5613	C/C water	2,800	2,304	3,200	Due to see an increase in 2025, reflective of this.
	5617	C/C Refuse collection	1,350	974	1,400	Plan to review waste contract.
	5620	C/C Regular Maintenance Contracts	18,000	10,643	16,000	Costs steadying out as a result of contracts being reviewed.
	5660	C/C Repairs & Renewals	25,000	13,921	25,000	
	5610 - 5676	Civic Centre	106,150		107,850	
	5744	The Source rates	1,000	5,706	3,000	Still awaiting outcome of Valuation Office for demolition of Hub
	5743	The Source	0	2,111	750	*YTD - had unforeseen works since demolition.
	5743 - 5747	The Source	1,000		3,750	
	5760	F/H rates	3,100	2,178	2,700	
	5761	F/H electricity	2,500	1,789	2,600	
	5762	F/H gas	1,200	433	0	No gas supply at Foresters Hall, just awaiting removal of meters.
	5763	F/H water	250	219	325	Anticipating increase in 2025.
	5765	F/H regular maintenance	2,500	1,858	2,500	
	5766	F/H repairs	3,000	4,161	3,000	This should steady out after substantial work undertaken in 2024.
	5760 - 5769	Foresters Hall	12,550		11,125	
	5720	Victoria Pavilion rates	4,500	4,098	4,650	Allowing for slight increase.
	5721	V/P electricity	5,000	4,987	7,000	Use of electricity has increased with usage of the building and charges
	5722	V/P gas	4,000	1,765	3,000	Due to new heating system, gas usage should improve.
	5723	V/P water	1,500	1,303	1,650	Allowing for slight increase
	5725	V/P regular maintenance	3,500	4,357	4,000	Works were undertaken in 2024 to improve internal condition/compliance
	5726	V/P repairs	3,500	1,267	3,000	
	5719 - 5729	Victoria Pavilion	22,000		23,300	
		Ridgewood Village Hall	0		0	
	5711	W/P Pavilion electricity	0	1,048	1,500	
	5713	W/P Pavilion water	0	740	1,000	
	5715	W/P Pavilion regular maintenance	0	783	0	
	5716	W/P Pavilion repairs	0	0	0	
	5709 - 5718	West Park Pavilion	0	0	0	
		Total West Park	0		2,500	
		Income				
	4610	Weald Hall	-35,000	-21,710	-36,000	Changes to regular hirers in 2024 has made predictions difficult for 2025.
	4615	Weald Hall - Commercial	-3,000	-274	-4,000	
	4620	Council Chambers	-10,500	-6,423	-11,000	
	4625	Council Chambers - Commercial	-2,800	-564	-3,000	
	4630	Ashdown Room	-10,200	-7,977	-10,500	
	4635	Ashdown Room - Commercial	-3,800	-940	-4,000	
	4640	Green Room	-14,000	-6,825	-14,500	
	4650	Oakleaf Room	-17,000	-12,217	-17,000	
	4660	Mayors Parlour	-13,500	-6,830	0	Town Clerk moved into MParlour Jan 25, following reconfiguration of offices.



**Final Draft**  
**GP Budget 2025/26 v7 (10.1.25)**

	4670	Equipment hire	-1,400	-2,265	-3,500	
	4671	Martlets Room	-6,500	-3,769	-18,500	Regular hirer of MParlour will now be using the Martlets Room from Jan 25
	4675	Old TC Office (CC Room Rental)	-7,200	-5,400	-7,200	Longer term room rental
		Nightingale Room	0	0	-5,000	
	4673	Community Toilet scheme	-1,130	-915	-1,220	
		Sundry income	0	-90	-250	
	4610 - 4700	* Civic Centre	-126,030		-135,670	
	4690	*Quickborn Suite	-9,000	-6,625	-9,000	
	4796	Hub Site	0		0	
	4797	Hub site (Community Fridge recharge of services)	-300	0	-550	March 2024, recharged for £500 in line with elec charges.
	4798	Source re-charge of services	-2,000	-304	-2,000	Includes elec recharges of Source.
		Source rent	-3,000	-1,456	-3,000	Lease due for renewal March 2026
	4796 - 4798	* The Hub	-5,300		-5,550	
	4760	F/H regular users	-15,000	-9,751	-15,750	Campaign due to start in Jan 25 on building/room hire availability.
	4761	F/H ocassional users	-100	-683	-800	
	4762	F/H commercial	-1,500	-779	-1,575	
	4760 - 4763	* Foresters Hall	-16,600		-18,125	
	4719	V.P Sussex Support Service Rent	-10,500	-7,875	-11,000	Lease in process of being renewed.
	4720	Victoria Pavilion	-250	-371	-1,000	Promotion of ground floor space availability should increase usage.
	4721	V/P repayment of electricity	-2,000	-1,742	-3,600	Reflects increased usage and subsequent recharges.
	4726	Victoria Garages (Cricket)	-200	-100	-350	Review of garage leases due in 2025.
	4723	V/P repayment of gas	-1,600	-51	-250	Reflects new system and reduced usage.
	4720 - 4723	* Victoria Pavilion	-14,550		-16,200	
	4781	* Ridgewood Village Hall	-1,350	0	-2,100	Insurance recharge is much higher in 2025, due to premium split.
	4710	* West Park Pavilion	-6,600	-2,583	-7,200	To be confirmed based on utility discussions.
	4677	* FiT Payments - Civic Centre	-5,000	-3,880	-7,500	
		* RHI Payments - Civic Centre	-11,000	0	-11,000	Have yet to claim for winter 2024/25.
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-23,950</b>		<b>-27,800</b>	
		<b>Planning and Development Services</b>				
		Economic Development				
	5530/5532	Festive Lights				
	5530	Festive Lights	15,000	8,168	16,000	Considered priority by residents. Increase funds available for more across the roads.
	5532	Festive lights electricity	500	0	500	
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15,500</b>		<b>16,500</b>	
		Income				
	4530	* Festive Lights	-2,000	-3,000	-3,000	Seen increase in contribution from Chamber of Commerce.
		<b>CENTRAL SERVICES</b>				
		<b>Corporate and Democratic Core</b>				
		Corporate Management				
		Administration and Hospitality				
	5410	Admin - general	2,500	2,295	2,700	General administrative costs have increased.
	5412	Admin - telephones	5,250	5,608	6,000	Contract costs have increased slightly.
	5413	Admin - photocopier	2,500	2,105	3,000	Contract costs have increased slightly.
	5415	Postage	160	176	200	Postage costs albeit very minimal usage, have increased
	5416	Stationery	1,900	1,313	1,900	OK
	5410- 5417	* Administration	12,310		13,800	
	5435	* Hospitality	100	153	175	
	5455	Health and Safety	3,500	527	2,750	Tend to utilise separate building nominal codes.

**Final Draft**  
**GP Budget 2025/26 v7 (10.1.25)**

	5425	* Recruitment	500	115	750	Need to invest more in recruitment, to attract the right people for the right jobs
	5425	* General	250	0	250	
		Accountant, Audit and Internal Audit Fees	0	0	0	
	5475	* Accountant Fees	5,100	5,150	5,500	
	5495	* External Audit Fees	2,250	2,100	2,200	
	5494	* Internal Audit Fees	2,500	1,313	2,100	In line with 2024 costs.
	5497	Professional Fees	11,000	7,562	11,000	Plus funds allocated in new initiatives.
	5793	Subscriptions	4,600	4,805	5,750	This will include new OTISS software subscriptions for asset mgt.
	5794	Training	6,000	4,950	7,000	Priority to place more focus on training and inductions.
	5430	Office Equipment	11,000	14,886	17,000	This reflects increase in annual IT support, Wi-Fi and security costs plus any new equip
	5460	Insurances	43,500	47,574	49,000	To reflect increased insurance costs
	5577	Newsletter	5,100	3,600	5,100	
	5490	Protective Clothing	300	116	300	
	7903. 2300	Loan Costs	39,800	19,360	38,100	
	5580 - 5590	Bank and Credit Charges	0	0	0	
	5581	Bank charges	960	557	960	
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>136,460</b>		<b>147,935</b>	
		Income				
	4403/4410	* Training/Administration	-400	-302	-400	
	4579 - 4583	* Bank Interest				
	4580	Bank Interest (Business Reserve)	-13,000	-3,981	-6,000	Reflects interest income during 2024.
	4581	Bank Interest - Capital Reserve	0	-12,822	-20,000	
	4583	Interest Misc (Fixed rate bond)	-7,000	-15,056	-14,076	
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-20,400</b>		<b>-40,476</b>	
		Democratic Representation and Management				
	5543	Members Allowances	16,987	10,642	14,864	5% increase x 10 Cllrs
	5544	Members Expenses	110	0	116	5% increase
	5465	Mayors Allowance	1,987	1,576	2,086	5% increase
	5470	Elections	0		0	
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19,084</b>		<b>17,065</b>	
		Income	0			
		<b>Net Expenditure</b>				
		Grants and Partnerships				
	5480	Grants Section 142 - Wealden Citizens Advice SLA	19,000	19,000	23,000	WCA requested £28k. Meeting their request halfway.
	5485	Grants - General Power of Competence	25,000	22,222	23,000	Slight reduction of main community grant pot to assist with increases in SLAs
	5487	Wealden Volunteering SLA	8,000	8,000	8,000	Wealden Volunteering requested £9k.
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52,000</b>		<b>54,000</b>	
		Income	0			
		<b>Net Expenditure</b>				
		Other Buildings and Services to the Public				
	5730-5732	Cemetery Buildings East & West	0	0	0	
	5730	Cemetary Buildings rates	950	775	925	
	5732	Cemetary Buildings repairs/contracts	750	0	750	
		Signal Box, Osborn Hall, Foresters Hall Chapel	0	0	0	
	5735	Signal Box Repairs/contracts	2,500	3,012	2,500	

Final Draft  
GP Budget 2025/26 v7 (10.1.25)

		* Osborn Hall	0		0	
	5750	All buildings cleaning materials	2,500	2,293	2,750	
	5770	* Foresters Hall Chapel	0	0	0	Costs can be incorporated into Foresters Hall expenditure.
	5772-5774	2a Vernon Road	1,000	1,072	1,000	
	5790	Bridge Cottage	0	0	0	
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,700</b>		<b>7,925</b>	
		Income				
	4730	* Cemetery Building East	-5,500	-4,125	-6,000	Opportunity to review rental value when re-letting
	4775-4776	* Signal Box + Insurance recharge	-6,000	0	-3,000	Hope to have plan for re-let late 2025/26 if not before.
		Signal Box, Osborn Hall, Foresters Hall Chapel				
	4780	* Osborn Hall	-1,050	-1,043	-900	Insurance recharge lower in 2025, as premium split is lower.
		* Foresters Hall Chapel	-1,150	-863	-1,150	
	4771	* 2a Vernon Road	-7,800	-5,450	-9,300	
	4783	* Bridge Cottage + Insurance recharge	-2,850	-2,846	-4,965	Reflects insurance recharge with premium split for 2025.
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-24,350</b>		<b>-25,315</b>	
		<b>SALARIES</b>				
	5680 - 5682, 5795	Caretakers/Other Buildings				
	5680	Caretakers - salaries	106,403	76,903	96,758	
	5686	Casual Caretakers	1,500	6,472	10,000	
	5681	Caretakers - National Insurance	6,648	5,240	10,014	
		Caretakers - Pension	21,387	13,236	19,448	
	5540 - 5542	Administration	0		0	
	5540	Office staff - salaries	280,594	196,820	311,468	Includes £18070 towards increasing 2 x part time roles to full time.
	5541	Office staff - National Insurance	30,563	19,959	40,345	Includes £2710 for above
	5542	Office staff - pension	56,400	39,355	62,605	Includes £3632 for above
	5547	WPA NHS Top-Up	2,340	1,399	3,468	Includes £510 for additional staff
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>505,834</b>		<b>554,107</b>	
		<b>Total Revenue Expenditure</b>	<b>890,588</b>		<b>959,857</b>	
		<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-242,180</b>		<b>-281,136</b>	
			<b>648,408</b>		<b>678,721</b>	
		<b>Saving for Long Term Earmarked Projects</b>				
		Elections	1,500		1,500	
		W Hall Floor	0		0	
		Civic Centre communal carpet - 10 year project	500		500	
		5 yearly EICR's for all outlets	2,500		2,500	
		Future reconfiguration or renovations to existing buildings	0		0	
		Civic centre lift upgrade	5,000		2,000	
		Climate change carbon emissions reduction projects e.g. solar panels	0		0	
		Air Con units for Civic Centre in preparation for warmer months	0		0	
		Improve internal decoration of Victoria Pavilion	0		0	
		Insurance Reinstatement Valuation	0		5,000	
		Security upgrade Civic Centre	1,000		1,000	
			<b>10,500</b>		<b>12,500</b>	
		<b>Total New Initiatives 2025/26</b>				

Final Draft  
GP Budget 2025/26 v7 (10.1.25)

		Building Maintenance	93,605		55,000	Detail of which to be agreed. Further fire safety works, 2A Vernon Rd, VPav and CC.
		Upgrade of Mayoral chain	0		750	
		Professional expertise for major projects and policy reviews	0		30,000	
		New parish noticeboards for new developments	0		2,000	
		New tables and table trolleys for Weald Hall, Ashdown Rm and Green Rm	10,000		0	
		Server upgrade and small office computer upgrade	4,500		0	
		Signal Box	10,000		0	Additional funds for Signal Box refurbishment may be required.
		Market Asset Valuation	3,500	5,000	0	
		Contingency	0		11,000	As recommended by Internal Auditor
			121,605		98,750	
			1,022,693		1,071,107	

<u>Total</u>	<u>2024/25</u>		<u>2025/26</u>
Total Revenue Expenditure	890,588		959,857
Total Long Term Earmarked Reserve Projects	10,500		12,500
Total New Initiatives	121,605		98,750
Total Budget Expenditure	1,022,693		1,071,107
Total Income	-242,180		-281,136
Net Expenditure	780,513		789,971

**Final Draft**  
**Environment and Leisure Budget 2025/26 (v7. 10.1.25)**

Committee	Nominal Code	Cost Centre	2024/2025 Final Budget	Year to date (Dec 24)*	2025/2026 Budget	Notes
		<b>CULTURAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, REGULATORY AND PLANNING SERVICES</b>				
		<b>Cultural and Related Services</b>				
		Recreation and Sport - Leisure and Recreation Grounds				
E & L	5120	Playing Fields and Pitches	19,000	8,194	17,500	*YTD - Play Area inspections, line marking machine and ground works still to be undertaken.
E & L	5122	Playing Fields and Pitches - Electricity	2,350	1,004	2,500	
E & L	5176	Play Equipment Repairs/Maintenance	4,000	3,166	8,000	Substantial repairs required to individual pieces of equipment due to vandalism and age.
E & L	5203	Grounds Maintenance - Contract	0	0	0	
E & L	5204	Grounds Maintenance - General	5,000	4,304	7,500	
E & L	5201	General Equipment Repairs and Hire	7,000	3,242	7,000	Need to allow for equipment and machinery to be regularly serviced now its being used more.
E & L	5202	New Equipment	5,000	5,887	6,500	
E & L		Vehicle Running Costs	0	0	0	
E & L	5269	* Transit	2,000	1,640	0	
E & L	5279	* Movano	2,000	2,155	1,500	
E & L	5275	*Tractor	2,000	1,681	2,150	
E & L	5271	Ford Ranger	2,000	1,401	0	This will be replaced by the new Toyota Hilux Ranger vehicle in Spring 2025.
		Vehicle running costs (x3 new vehicles - possible tyres, fuel for Ranger etc)	0	0	2,500	
		Vehicle PCP Arrangements	0	0	7,500	Remaining funds for 2025-26 after use of earmarked reserves allocated for vehicle replacements
	5283	Rainwater Harvester Maintenance	1,200	2,252	2,400	Two tank cleans/services per annum recommended
		Grass Cutting Mower maintenance	1,500	559	1,500	
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>53,050</b>		<b>66,550</b>	
		Income				
E & L	4110	* Sport Income	-16,000	-1,171	-20,000	*YTD - Invoices still to be issued for seasonal hire (Cricket and football clubs).
E & L	4120	* Event Income	-6,500	-6,855	-7,250	
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-22,500</b>		<b>-27,250</b>	
		<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>30,550</b>		<b>39,300</b>	
		<b>Public Open Spaces, Planting and Allotments</b>				
E & L	5100	Allotments	3,500	-376	3,500	*YTD in credit, due to credits received for water bills. Plan to carry out fencing works.
E & L	5231	Hempstead Meadows and West Park LNRs + sites of conservation interest	3,000	2,184	4,000	Increased focus and priority to be given to Boothland Wood and Nature reserves.
E & L	5295	Litter Bins	1,000	0	1,000	
	5296	Litter Collection, Open Spaces	12,000	8,400	11,000	Will be reviewing waste contract for Uckfield TC including Civic Centre and Cemetery.
E&L	5375	Repair & replacement of street furniture	1,500	0	2,500	Further attention to be given to assets in 2025/26.
E & L	5330	Corporate Signage	1,000	217	1,000	Remaining funds to be used towards interpretation boards in Nature Reserves.
E & L	5058	Protective Clothing	1,000	1,285	2,000	
E & L	5280	Fencing	1,000	664	3,000	Outstanding fencing works on Town Council land.
E & L	5299	Horticulture - Bedding	300	258	300	
E & L	5285	Tree Surveying and general works	12,000	11,945	11,000	This covers the cost of the tree surgeon retainer and surveying. Substantial works to be funded from specific new initiative funding and earmarked reserves.
	5033	HMLNR & WPLNR	500	0	500	*YTD - being used towards interpretation boards at woodlands.
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36,800</b>		<b>39,800</b>	
		<b>Income</b>				
E & L	4100	* Allotments	-11,000	-10,624	-12,000	
	4101	*Allotment Deposits	-1,000	-1,406	-2,000	
	4275	* Environment Sundry Income	-200	-87	-200	
E & L	4123	West Park Culvert Maintenance Agreement with WDC	-400	-400	-500	
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-12,600</b>	<b>-12,517</b>	<b>-14,700</b>	
		<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>24,200</b>		<b>25,100</b>	
		Culture and Heritage				
E & L	5394	Twinning Hospitality	0	0	0	Utilise funding from reserves if required.
E & L	5300	Civic Centre Events	15,000	8,649	15,000	
	5301	Performing Rights Society	2,000	569	2,000	
	5302	Event Advertising /Marketing	3,000	2,211	3,000	
	5078	Weald on the Field and Revival	10,000	11,420	11,500	

**Final Draft**  
**Environment and Leisure Budget 2025/26 (v7. 10.1.25)**

		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30,000</b>		<b>31,500</b>	
E & L	4050	Civic Centre Events	-25,000	-8,499	-25,000	*please note that bank reconciliations have not been completed for Nov or Dec with income from Nov/Dec events
	4270	Farmers Market Income (The Source Car Park)	0	-420	-720	
	4387	Weald on the Field	-5,000	-3,405	-5,500	
		Total income			<b>-31,220</b>	
		<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>280</b>	

Committee	Nominal Code		2024/2025 Final Budget	Year to date (Dec 24)*	2025/2026 Budget	
		<b>Planning and Development Services</b>				
		Economic Development				
E & L	5370	Town Security CCTV	2,650	3,662	2,900	*YTD - infrastructure improvements with upgrade. Funding received from Home Office and CoC
E & L	5373	Floral Displays Town Centre Baskets & Troughs	3,600	3,572	3,750	
		Display on Tesco Roundabout	0	0	750	For a further £750 we can add planting and maintenance to Tesco roundabout.
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,250</b>		<b>7,400</b>	
E & L	4350	Income - Roundabout	-864	-864	-864	
E&L	4390	CCTV - Chamber of Commerce (contribution to cost of running 1 x camera)	-450	-1,258	-610	* income in 2024, included grant funding towards infrastructure improvements from Home Office.
		Total	<b>-1314</b>		<b>-1474</b>	
		<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>4,936</b>		<b>5,926</b>	
		<b>Environmental and Regulatory Services</b>				
E & L		Cemetery Services				
	5181	* Grave Digging	5,000	2,880	6,000	*YTD - won't have yet received November/December invoices
	5180	* Rates/Water	1,500	1,098	1,500	
	5182	*Litter	3,000	1,875	3,000	
	5186	* Maintenance	200	186	200	
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9,700</b>		<b>10,700</b>	
		Income				
E & L	4180	* Cemetery - Interments	-36,000	-26,451	-37,000	
	4181	* Cemetery - Memorials	-6,800	-6,225	-10,000	Includes income for memorial benches
	4182	* Cemetery - Sundry Income	-200	0	-200	
	4183	* Cemetery - Maintenance Charge	-4,200	-2,651	-4,400	
		TOTAL	<b>-47,200</b>		<b>-51,600</b>	
		<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>-37,500</b>		<b>-40,900</b>	
		<b>HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SERVICES</b>				
		Highways and Transportation				
		Street Lights - Supply, Maintenance and Repairs				
E & L	5080	* Supply & Maintenance	11,000	0	12,000	Invoice usually received at year end.
E & L	5081	* Repairs	15,000	34,701	15,000	*YTD - backlog from 2023, processed during 2024. Overspend covered by streetlighting earmarked reserves
E & L	5372	Climate Change Working Group Activities	0	0	0	
E & L	5086	Bus Shelters	500	54	1,000	
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26,500</b>		<b>28,000</b>	
		Income				
E & L	4370	* Climate Change Working Group events (e.g. Eco EXPO)	-100	0	-450	Eco EXPO planned for September 2025. Min of £15 per pitch multiplied by 27.
E & L	4295/4240	* Delegated Functions	-1,590	-1,060	-1,590	*slight reduction for Q3 due to closure of bus station during works.
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-1,690</b>		<b>-2,040</b>	
		<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>24,810</b>		<b>25,960</b>	
E & L	5360	Salaries Groundsmen	137,626	100,515	194,922	Includes £51502 for one full time member of staff in estates, and one seasonal member of staff.
	5361	Groundsmen - NI	12,716	9,268	27,935	Includes £6225 for above
	5362	Groundsmen - Pension	33,734	24,696	45,473	Includes £10352 for above
	5230	Salary Ranger	33,120	24,601	31,310	

Final Draft					
Environment and Leisure Budget 2025/26 (v7. 10.1.25)					
		TOTAL	217,196		299,639
		TOTAL REVENUE EXPENDITURE	379,496		483,589
		TOTAL INCOME	-115,304		-128,284
		TOTAL	264,192		355,305

Committee	Nominal Code		2024/2025 Budget	Year to date (*Dec 24)	2025/2026 Budget	
		Long Term Earmarked Reserve Projects				
		Ash Dieback	0	8,883	12,500	
		Tree works	0	0	7,500	
		Conservation and wildlife monitoring	0	0	8,000	Quotes received for wildlife appraisals and dormouse surveying at approx. £6k.
		Play Area Upgrades	0	0	20,000	West Park needs attention and Hempstead Rec. Perhaps use this on top of CIL funding for West Park upgrade
		Vehicle Replacement	0	0	5,000	Deposit for replacement of Flatbed vehicle early 2026 or 2026-27
		Streetlighting repairs	0	9,701	0	
		Upgrade Victoria Pleasure Ground facilities	20,000	0	0	Tender process commencing Jan 2025.
		Pitch improvement works - cricket or football	5,000	4,530	0	
		Hedgecutters - 2 x long reach	2,000	1,049	0	
		DR Mower (hand mower) - use frequently	3,500	0	0	
		Izeke mower (Year 1 of replacement, minus funds in reserves)	12,500	0	3,000	Total cost is £24,000 and purchased March 2025, so funds available.
		Total Long Term Earmarked Projects	43,000		56,000	
		TOTAL				
		New initiatives for 2025/26				
		Artificial Cricket Pitch resurfacing	0	0	7,000	In line with quotation received.
		Football Pitch Maneouvrable posts (New Barn and Harlands)	0	0	10,500	In line with quotation received.
		Full football pitch renovations - May 2025	0	0	29,000	In line with quotation received and works booked.
		Permanent welfare facilities for Harlands Recreation Ground	0	0	12,000	May incur additional costs - drainage/utilites. Anticipate costs of £12k.
		ESCC Grass Verge cutting contribution	5,686	5,686	0	E&L Committee decision not to fund ES Highways for the additional cuts in 2025/26.
		Tree for a tree planting programme	1,000	2,039	0	*YTD - community orchard trees purchased to be funded from Wealden DC funding. Funding already in Eres
		D Day Anniversary activities	2,000	2,352	1,420	Request put forward for VE Day event in 2025. £830 available in earmarked reserves, to reduce £2,250 expenditure to £1420.
		Roofed compound area for Grounds storage	500	0	0	
		Ranger equipment	650	900	0	
		Harlands Pond management plan works	950	0	0	
		New Ride on Mulcher Four Wheel Drive - Year 2	0	3,653	5,500	£5250 Total cost £10.5k. Split over 2yrs. Assists with bracken and bramble control. This would be Year 2.
		New top handled chainsaw	0	0	1,000	
		New tractor (Year 2 of 22 month payment plan)	0	19,798	15,000	To pay year 2 of two year payment plan.
			10,786		81,420	
		TOTAL	2024/25		2025/26	
		Total Revenue Expenditure	379,496		483,589	
		Total Long Term Earmarked Reserve Projects	43,000		56,000	
		Total New Initiatives	10,786		81,420	
		Total Budget Expenditure	433,282		621,009	
		Total Income	-115,304		-128,284	
		Net Expenditure	317,978		492,725	

**Luxfords Final Working Draft Budget Papers (v7. 10.1.25)**

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Nominal Code</b>	<b>Cost Centre</b>	<b>2024-25 Final Budget</b>	<b>Year to date * (Dec 24)</b>	<b>2025-26 Draft Budget</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Luxfords</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>					
	5810	Food Purchases	52,000	44,354	59,500	
	5820/5825	Bar Purchases	11,000	8,029	11,000	
	5840	Consumables	2,000	1,542	2,200	
	5842	Cleaning	1,000	761	1,000	
	5845	Maintenance & Rep	2,000	901	2,000	
	5850	Equipment	1,500	3,268	1,800	YTD - £2266.50 paid for from earmarked and general reserves for replacement commercial oven.
	5855	Equipment Hire	900	1,158	1,200	
	5890	Uniform	150	181	250	
	5980	Credit Card Charges	3,000	759	1,800	
	5861/5864	Utilities	21,000	11,478	22,000	
	5866	Waste Collection	1,800	1,811	2,600	
	5867	Professional Fees	850	1,047	1,200	
	5940/5945	Salaries	161,757	138,310	188,238	Includes 12k for Casual staff and £10401 towards temporary role.
			<b>258,957</b>		<b>294,788</b>	
	<b>Income</b>					
	4810	Rest Food Sales	158,000	117,663	175,000	
	4820	Rest Bar Sales	10,500	5,037	12,500	
	4910	Function Food Sales	35,000	19,297	37,500	
	4920	Function Bar Sales	24,000	15,875	27,500	
	4940	Equipment Hire	1,600	492	1,600	
	4840	Luxfords Hire	1,000	435	1,000	
	4950	Sundry Income	500	0	500	
			<b>230,600</b>		<b>255,600</b>	
			<b>28,357</b>		<b>39,188</b>	





# **UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL**

## **Property Asset Management Plan**

**2025-30**

## Contents

1.0	Purpose of the Asset Management Plan	Page 3
2.0	Function of the Asset Management Plan	Page 3
3.0	The Town Council's Asset Portfolio	Page 4
4.0	Asset Management Strategy 2025-30	Page 6
5.0	Asset Management Strategy Delivery 2025/26	Page 7
6.0	Process for Adoption and Operation	Page 8
Appendix 1 - Consultation and Protocols		Page 9
Appendix 2 – External Influences		Page 10
Appendix 3 - Asset Register		Page 11

## **1.0 Purpose of the Asset Management Plan**

Uckfield Town Council first drafted an Asset Management Plan in 2001 in line with guidance from the Department of the Environment and Transport, and the Regions. It provided details of the operational assets at that time in terms of land and buildings, vehicles and non-operational assets which were leased out to other parties. However, this document did not closely align with the Town Council's strategic documents at that time nor was it referred to on a regular basis.

The Town Council produced a new Asset Management Plan in 2017. The Town Council recognised the important role that property plays in supporting the Town Council to deliver its strategic and annual plans and wants to provide a clear and accessible statement of its intentions for the portfolio both in the immediate year and over the next five years. The Asset Management Plan has been written in accordance with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Public Sector Property Asset Management Guidelines and further reflects good practice as recognised by Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. It provides a clear, approved strategy for the management of the Town Council's property assets.

## **2.0 Function of the Asset Management Plan**

1. To manage the asset portfolio in support of the Town Council's Annual Plan and Strategic Plan;
2. To define the property portfolio, its value, condition and suitability to deliver the Town Council's priorities;
3. To outline the policy for holding, acquiring and disposing of the property assets;
4. To identify opportunities to rationalise, invest or develop the property portfolio to support the Town Council's corporate priorities and the need for financial return;
5. To raise awareness of property as a valuable and workable asset in support of the Town Council's corporate priorities;
6. To manage the asset portfolio to deliver the needs of the Town Council's services;
7. To maximise asset value and asset use through strategic maintenance and operational planning;

The property assets are managed both individually and as an entire portfolio to maximise operational value, income generation and capital value at all times whilst complying with the requirements for commercial sensitivity, economic viability, best value and probity.

The Asset Management Plan (AMP) identifies the anticipated maintenance budget requirement over a five to ten-year period for the building assets. This is used to assist in financial planning and to indicate ongoing costs related to the individual assets to inform strategic decisions on their future.

The AMP is subject to consultation processes which are summarised at Appendix 1.

The management of the property assets is subject to external and internal influences which are summarised at Appendix 2.

The AMP will support the Council in the delivery of its corporate priorities through ensuring that the portfolio is dynamically managed with focus directed towards priority areas, maintenance costs kept to a sustainable level and strategic decisions based on delivering services and optimising financial return.

### 3.0 The Town Council's Asset Portfolio

The Portfolio comprises 66 land and property assets. These assets comprise buildings, land, recreation grounds and playing fields, woodland, cemeteries, allotments, playgrounds and a signal box. In addition, the Town Council holds a number of wayleaves, licences and leases and street furniture.

Asset Type	Number of Assets
Allotment	7
Building	13
Cemetery	2
Land	17
Nature Reserve	3
Path	1
Playground	8
Pond	2
Recreation Ground	7
Woodland	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>

The assets are summarised in the Asset Register at Appendix 3 in accordance with these categories.

A full market valuation of the Town Council's assets was undertaken in 2024 (dated 31 March 2024) (in terms of market valuation). This exercise is typically undertaken every five years and will next be carried out in April 2029. The values given are made for capital accounting purposes in accordance with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Valuation Standards and with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

The basis of the value used for each property depended upon the type of asset held and whether it is used by the Council or held for investment purposes. The uses were categorised into:

Operational (specialised) –purpose built properties used by the Town Council

Operational (non-specialised) – used by Council but with more general use

Non-Operational – usually held for investment purposes

Heritage – historic building held for its cultural, educational and environmental value

Please note that the most recent market valuation continued to classify Bridge Cottage as a heritage asset. This changed in the March 2019 asset valuation, as before that time, it was categorised as a non-operational asset held for investment purposes.

Properties were valued in reference to the following:

- **Cost** – the amount of cash or cash equivalents paid to acquire, construct or renovate the property (for Heritage assets only).
- **Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC)** which is defined by the RICS as:  
*‘the current cost of replacing an asset with its modern equivalent asset less deductions for physical deterioration and all relevant forms of obsolescence and optimisation.’*
- **Fair Value** which is defined by the RICS as:  
*‘the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date’*
- **Market Value** which is defined by the RICS as:  
*“the estimated amount for which an asset or liability should exchange on the valuation date between a willing buyer and a willing seller in an arm’s length transaction after proper marketing and where the parties had each acted knowledgeably, prudently and without compulsion.”*

In March 2014, the asset portfolio was valued at £4,513,250 with an annual rental income of £52,658 (*which includes all income from building rents and other rents and wayleaves at Nov 2018*) and an annual maintenance budget which has recently been in the region of £70-£100k to work through some major works required.

In March 2019, the asset portfolio was valued at £5,823,050 with an annual rental income of £55,271 (*which includes all income from lease/licence agreement rental payments and wayleaves only at December 2019*) and an annual maintenance budget which has recently been in the region of £70-80K per annum.

In March 2024, the asset portfolio was valued at £5,314,050. On average the annual rental income is approximately £42k for lease rental income (with three leases due to be reviewed shortly, and one property vacant) so this is likely to increase further once all premises are occupied and lease agreements up to date. The Town Council sees an average annual income of £100-110k for the hire of facilities at the Civic Centre, and £12-15k at Foresters Hall. The Town Council also receives nominal sums from time to time from wayleave agreements where utility companies require access onto Town Council land. The annual building maintenance budget for 2024-25 was set at £76k, and a further £55k is being proposed for 2025/26, in addition to the use of earmarked reserves for specific identified projects.

2023 and 2024 saw the Town Council undertake more substantial works around compliance. We are currently reviewing the condition of vacant properties or properties soon to be vacant, and seeing where we can increase income from underutilised facilities.

The works and servicing requirement for the buildings have been prioritised to ensure that all legislative compliance needs are met followed by maintaining a ‘fitness for purpose’ to deliver the operational need and to maintain the asset value.

In 2014, a Building Maintenance Programme was commissioned which is now moving into its eleventh year. The plan originally set out a ten-year programme of works needed on the building assets where the Town Council based on a stock condition survey. It was acknowledged that a lot of the works were external, and further substantial works were

required to ensure the buildings were safe, compliant, user friendly and efficient. A new stock condition survey was carried out in 2019, which identified future works to be carried out over the next five years. It is recommended that this be planned for 2025 to review the external structure and maintenance of the buildings. The Town Council has upgraded the plumbing and heating systems in Foresters Hall, Foresters Chapel and Victoria Pavilion during 2024.

The Town Council reviews the building maintenance programme on an annual basis in order to prioritise works in accordance with the condition of all buildings. The Town Council has also recently reviewed works, to see what works can be carried out by local contractors and smaller firms in contrast to larger scale or specialist works.

Up to date insurance rebuild valuations were undertaken of all Town Council buildings in 2019, 2020 and 2023 to inform the Town Council's building insurance policy. It is recommended that a review be undertaken in either 2025 or 2026. As a result, funds have been set aside in the proposed budget for 2025/26.

#### **4.0 Asset Management Strategy 2025-30**

The Asset Management Strategy defines the framework for the property portfolio management over the next three to five years. The Town Council will:

- ☐ Manage the assets to support the objectives of the Strategic Plan;
- ☐ Manage the assets in accordance with relevant legislation;
- ☐ Undertake a review of existing land use;
- ☐ Consider the acquisition and disposal of assets to support the strategic priorities;
- ☐ Undertake a full review of leases, licences and other land interests to ensure that they are up to date and that all occupations are properly regularised;
- ☐ Review statutory compliance of the Town Council's buildings to ensure that proper procedures are in place to comply with Health and Safety requirements;
- ☐ Manage our assets and property portfolio to ensure we reach carbon neutrality;
- ☐ Produce and update a Maintenance Strategy to support the Asset Management Strategy which, when combined will jointly assist in the delivery of the corporate priorities. The maintenance plan will identify the annual actions that will need to be carried out from year to year to achieve the Maintenance Strategy;
- ☐ Identify opportunities to work with partners to support wider public sector real estate strategies.

## **5.0 Asset Management Strategy Delivery 2025-30**

The Asset Management Plan underpins the five-year property asset strategy and also breaks this down into stages to be achieved in each financial year of the Asset Management Plan. Over the next financial year, the Town Council will:

- ☐ Review and confirm the Maintenance Strategy for the next 5 years;
- ☐ Deliver any remaining actions from annual fire risk assessments and five-yearly EICR inspections;
- ☐ Commence the review of the leases, licences and land titles;
- ☐ Deliver initiatives outlined within the Town Council's Strategic and Annual Plans:
  - finalise the upgrading of our facilities to ensure compliance (fire safety and electricity) in the Civic Centre, Foresters Hall, and Victoria Pavilion);
  - refurbish the Signal Box and bring up to standard to be able to re-let;
  - improve the Cemetery Chapels to prepare for re-let;
  - consider the future of Osborn Hall, and explore options for a new community facility
- ☐ Aim to decarbonise our buildings and landholdings, and ensure we use them in an environmentally sustainable way
- ☐ Explore options for creating further recreational facilities;
- ☐ Manage consultants and contractors to deliver the asset management objectives;
- ☐ Report six monthly on the delivery of the asset management plan objectives.

## **6.0 Process for Adoption and Operation**

The Town Clerk will present the Asset Management Plan to the Town Council for approval and adoption.

If approved, the Asset Management Plan will form the strategy under which the property portfolio is managed by the Town Clerk on behalf of the Town Council. The Town Clerk will agree targets for the delivery of the strategy over the forthcoming financial year and will report at the end of the financial year as part of the asset management plan annual review.

## **7.0 Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Consultation and protocols

Appendix 2: External Influences

Appendix 3: Asset Register



## **Appendix 1 - Consultation and Protocols**

The Asset Management Plan will be presented to the Town Council for consideration with a recommendation that it be accepted and formalised into the Final Asset Management Plan subject to any amendments that the Town Council wish to see included into the final document.

The AMP will then be amended to reflect the Town Council's decision and the final document will be published and will confirm the strategy upon which the property assets will be managed for the period of the Asset Management Plan.

The AMP will be presented to the Town Council each year in draft alongside the draft budget and draft priorities to summarise progress over the outgoing financial year and to identify targets for the forthcoming financial year. The Town Council will be invited to review progress and approve the following year's targets.

The Town Clerk will report to the Town Council on the progress of the Asset Management Plan on a six-monthly basis via Full Council and the delivery of the objectives for the specific financial year.

## **Appendix 2 – External Influences**

### **Legislation**

The property portfolio will be managed and maintained in accordance with relevant legislation to ensure compliance with Health and Safety, Landlord and Tenant, Planning and environmental legislation.

### **Best Practice**

In addition, the portfolio will be managed in accordance with best practice following relevant industry guidelines and guidelines and policies from Central Government.

New leases will be let in accordance with RICS best practice; Asset maintenance will follow the RICS best practice on maintenance management as outlined in Strategic Facilities Management Guidance Note.

Where appropriate the Town Council will follow the Government's Transparency Code for recording asset database details.

### **Property Market**

Recommendations for the strategic and operational management and maintenance of the Town Council's property assets will be made having regard to the nature of the property market at the relevant time.

### Appendix 3 - Asset Register

#### Allotment

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS13	Ridgewood Allotments (i)	Allotment land, declared Town Council land 1978. Members agreed in 2009 (FC.082.03.09) during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment that no allotment sites should be offered for housing development.	Allotment	Freehold	0.72ha
OS27	West Park Allotments	Allotment land, transferred from developer in 1987 with restrictive covenants in place. As per FC.082.03.09 above.	Allotment	Freehold	0.36ha
OS30	Bell Lane Allotments	Allotments leased from ESCC in 1995. As per FC.082.03.09 above.	Allotment	Leasehold	0.19ha
OS32	Bird-in-Eye Allotments	Allotment land purchased in 1932 with restrictive covenants. As per FC.082.03.09 above.	Allotment	Freehold	0.85ha
OS39	Framfield Road Allotments (i)	Allotment land purchased in 1932, divided by road to hospital in 1992. As per FC.082.03.09 above.	Allotment	Freehold	0.86ha

OS40	Framfield Road Allotments (ii)	Allotment land purchased in 1932, divided by road to hospital in 1992. As per FC.082.03.09 above.	Allotment	Freehold	0.43ha
OS48	Ridgewood Allotments (ii)	Allotment land, declared Town Council land 1978.	Allotment	Freehold	0.76ha

## Building

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS16	Ridgewood Village Hall	Hall leased on full repairing lease to Ridgewood Village Hall Management Committee. (25 year term from April 2010)	Building	Freehold, leased out	0.21ha
OS24	2A Vernon Road	Flat and garden to the rear of Foresters Hall. Purchased in 1994, rented out.	Building	Freehold, leased out	0.06ha
OS38	Foresters Hall	Community hall and associated land/car park purchased in 1986 and available for hire to community groups and individuals.	Building	Freehold	0.10ha
OS45	Victoria Pavilion	Pavilion building adjacent to Victoria Pleasure Ground. Ground floor of pavilion available for hire by recreation ground users or organisations.  First floor of pavilion leased to Sussex Support Services. (lease agreement in process of renewal)	Building	Freehold, leased out	0.03ha

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS49	West Park Pavilion	<p>Pavilion building adjacent to West Park recreation ground. The building was transferred from the developer in 1987 with restrictive covenants in place. Previously reviewed for redevelopment.</p> <p>The Pavilion has now been leased to a local sports club on a full repairing lease. This commenced May 2023 and will run for five years.</p>	Building	Freehold	0.02ha
OS50	The Source	<p>The Hub was demolished in September 2023, due to concerns regarding health and safety. The building was a post-war prefabricated building and had reached the end of its life.</p> <p>The northern side of building (the Source) was retained and has undergone improvements and seen its own services and intruder and fire alarm systems installed. This will enable the building to be leased until the future of the site is agreed and a new community facility or building is developed for the benefit for the community. The current lease agreement will run for two years from April 2024.</p>	Building	Freehold	0.03ha
OS51	Civic Centre	Building housing Town Council Offices, meeting rooms, function rooms and restaurant. Opened in 1991 by the Mayor.	Building	Freehold	0.12ha
OS55	Bridge Cottage	Historic building purchased from ESCC in 1984. Leased to Uckfield and District Preservation Society (25 year full repairing lease from December 2015).	Building	Freehold, leased out	0.01ha

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS55a	Bridge Cottage - Shop Adjacent	Building adjacent to Bridge Cottage and associated land. Purchased in 2010. Forms part of above lease arrangements with Uckfield and District Preservation Society.	Building	Freehold, leased out	
OS56	Signal Box	Former Signal Box building, purchased from British Railways Board in 1993. The property is currently vacant and requires refurbishment before re-letting in 2025.	Building	Freehold, leased out	
OS57	Osborn Hall	Community hall leased out to Guide Association on a full repairing lease. (20 year term from Jan 2006) Exploring options for future of the hall.	Building	Freehold, leased out	0.02ha
OS63	Large storage unit - Victoria Pleasure Ground	Building used to store grounds equipment and vehicles. Completed in 2012.	Building	Freehold	
OS64	Double garage storage - Victoria Pleasure Ground	Set of double garages. One leased to Anderida Cricket Club and one is leased to Uckfield Performance Ensemble on full repairing leases. The lease agreements are due for renewal.	Building	Freehold, leased out	

### Cemetery

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS34	Snatts Road Cemetery and Chapel	Cemetery (new section) purchased in 1942.	Cemetery	Freehold	1.33ha
OS35	Snatts Road Cemetery and Chapel	<p>Cemetery and Chapel</p> <p>(Consecration of chapel removed by Lord Bishop of Chichester in 1999). One chapel and part of second chapel leased to commercial tenant – due to be reviewed early 2025.). Part of second chapel utilised by Uckfield Town Council.</p>	Cemetery	Freehold	1.19ha

### Land

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS1	Land to the north of Hart Close	Open land adjacent to road, transferred to Town Council by developer. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was considered unsuitable at the time.	Land	Freehold	0.22ha



ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS2	Hempstead Fields	Open land adjacent to recreation ground, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1991. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.	Land	Freehold	1.69ha
OS6	Hunters Way	Open land with footpaths and tree planting, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1973. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was considered unsuitable at the time.	Land	Freehold	0.36ha
OS7	Linnet Green	Open land adjacent to road, acquired by Town Council in 1995. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was considered unsuitable at the time. This land is currently in dispute and Solicitors instructed, as the land was sold at auction on 6 December 2022, despite Uckfield Town Council having documentation to confirm transfer.	Land	Freehold	0.05ha
OS9	Land at Harlands Farm	Open land and woods, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1989. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was considered unsuitable at the time. This land is currently in dispute and Solicitors instructed, as the land was sold at auction on 6 December 2022, despite Uckfield Town Council having documentation to confirm transfer of maintenance to the Town Council by landowner Federated Homes in the mid-19990s.	Land	Freehold	0.30ha

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS10	New Barn Farm	Open land, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1990. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was agreed it was not appropriate at that time.	Land	Freehold	3.24ha
OS11	Oaklea Way	Open land adjacent to road, previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.	Land	Freehold	0.11ha
OS18	Rocks Park Bank	Open land adjacent to road junction. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was considered unsuitable at the time.	Land	Freehold	0.07ha
OS19	Rocks Park Flats	Open land with footpaths and tree planting, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1990. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.	Land	Freehold	0.28ha
OS21	Land at Selby Road (Selby Meadows)	Open land under 10 year licence from December 2020 for community use with New Town Action Group. Also registered as an Asset of Community Value by Uckfield Town Council.	Land	Freehold, licenced out	0.13ha
OS22	Shepherds Gate	Open land, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1995. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was considered unsuitable.	Land	Freehold	0.16ha

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS23	Swallow Court	Open land, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1995. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was considered unsuitable. This land is currently in dispute and Solicitors instructed, as the land was sold at auction on 6 December 2022, despite Uckfield Town Council having documentation to confirm transfer of maintenance to the Town Council by landowner Federated Homes in the mid-1990s.	Land	Freehold	0.03ha
OS31	Bellbrook Open Space	Open land, transferred from developer in 1995 with restrictive covenants. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. Considered unsuitable as currently a de facto Nature Reserve.	Land	Freehold	1.46ha
OS33	Browns Lane Rockery and Path	Open land, transferred from developer in 1991 with restrictive covenants. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was considered unsuitable.	Land	Freehold	0.08ha
OS37	Elizabeth Gardens	Open land with footpath. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was considered unsuitable.	Land	Freehold	0.14ha
OS52	Land and woods at Harlands Farm	Land and woods, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1989, adjacent to Harlands Farm. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.	Land	Freehold	0.03ha

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
TBC	Land on the north side of Brown's Lane (known as the Dene)	Uckfield Town Council completed its purchase of this land on 2 October 2023. Land Registry title received summer 2024. The land is for recreational purpose, only.	Land	Freehold	TBC

#### Nature Reserve

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS20	Hempstead Meadows LNR	Open land established as a nature reserve in 2002. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was agreed that none should be released.	Nature Reserve	Freehold	1.60ha
OS58	HMLNR extension	Open land adjacent to Hempstead Lane Local Nature Reserve, transferred to the Town Council by developer in 2008. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was agreed that none should be released.	Nature Reserve	Freehold	2.42ha
OS29	West Park Local Nature Reserve	Open land, transferred from developer in 1990 with agreement to create local nature reserve. Previously reviewed for redevelopment during a review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It was agreed that none should be released.	Land	Freehold	11.04ha

**Path**

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS62	Land on South side of 32 Keld Drive and North side of 33 Keld Drive	Access path to the Bird-in-Eye allotments	Path		

**Play area**

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS5	Hughes Way	Playground with play equipment, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1998. New play equipment installed in Feb 2018.	Playground	Freehold	0.09ha
OS12	Oakwood Drive	Playground with play equipment, transferred from developer in 1987. Pieces of equipment will be gradually upgraded during 2024 and 2025.	Playground	Freehold	0.09ha
OS15	Ridgewood Play Area	Playground with play equipment, declared Town Council land 1978. New play equipment & MUGA installed in Oct 2016.	Playground	Freehold	0.03ha
OS17	Rocks/West Park Play Area	Playground with play equipment.	Playground	Freehold	0.33ha
OS36	Downland Copse	Playground with basketball court, transferred from developer in 1993.	Playground	Freehold	0.15ha

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS44	Luxford Field Play Area	Playground with play equipment, transferred to Town Council from ESCC in 1983. Play area shape redesigned and full play area upgraded with accessibility in Sept 2020.	Playground	Freehold	0.13ha
OS46	Hempstead Play Area	Playground with play equipment, acquired by Town Council in 1932. New play equipment installed in August 2013.	Playground	Freehold	0.02ha
OS47	Victoria Play Area	Play area, part of Victoria Pleasure Ground, leased from Richard James Streatfield in 1897 for 999 years. New surfacing added in 2017. Due to be upgraded in 2025.	Playground	Leasehold	0.09ha

## Pond

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS53	Harlands Farm Pond	Pond, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1989, adjacent to Harlands Farm.	Pond	Freehold	0.16ha
OS61	Balancing Pond at Harlands	Balancing pond behind pumping station on Mallard Drive, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1989, adjacent to Harlands Farm.	Pond	Freehold	0.21ha

## Recreation Ground

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS3	Hempstead Lane Recreation Ground	Recreation ground, acquired in 1932, with some restrictions.	Recreation Ground	Freehold	0.76ha
OS8	Luxford Field	Open land for recreation open space, public recreation ground or a site of a community building, transferred from ESCC in 1983. Requirements are in place that need to be observed.	Land	Freehold	1.13ha
OS14	Ridgewood Recreation Ground	Open land used as recreation area, declared Town Council land 1978.	Recreation Ground	Freehold	1.94ha
OS25	Victoria Pleasure Ground Tennis Courts	Tennis Court, part of Victoria Pleasure Ground, leased from Richard James Streatfield in 1897 for 999 years.	Recreation Ground	Leasehold	0.12ha
OS26	Victoria Pleasure Ground	Recreation ground, leased from Richard James Streatfield in 1897 for 999 years.	Recreation Ground	Leasehold	3.37ha
OS28	West Park Playing Fields	Recreation ground, transferred from developer in 1987 with restrictive covenants in place.	Recreation Ground	Freehold	2.97ha
OS42	Harlands Farm playing fields	Open recreation ground, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1989, adjacent to Harlands Farm.	Recreation Ground	Freehold	2.07ha

## Woodland

ID	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY	ASSET TYPE	TENURE	SIZE
OS4	Boothland Wood	Woodland transferred to Town Council by developer with restrictive covenants. .	Woodland	Freehold	4.99ha
OS41	Nightingale Wood	Woodland, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1989, adjacent to Harlands Farm.	Woodland	Freehold	2.00ha
OS43	Bridge Farm Road Wood	Woodland, transferred to Town Council by developer in 2002 with restrictive covenants.	Woodland	Freehold	0.66ha
OS54	Harlands Farm woods	Woodland, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1989, adjacent to Harlands Farm.	Woodland	Freehold	0.16ha
OS59	Nightingale Wood (extension)	Woodland, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1989, adjacent to Harlands Farm.	Woodland	Freehold	0.31ha
OS60	Nightingale Wood (extension)	Woodland, transferred to Town Council by developer in 1989, adjacent to Harlands Farm.	Woodland	Freehold	0.46ha



## **Meeting of the Full Council**

**Monday 13 January 2025**

### **Agenda item 18.0**

#### **Q3 PROGRESS UPDATE ON UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL'S ANNUAL PRIORITIES FOR 2024/25**

##### **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 This report provides a review at the end of quarter three on the Town Council's priorities for 2024/25 (end of December 2024).
- 1.2 The priorities identified for delivery in 2024/25 consisted of initiatives which were often additional to the day to day responsibilities of the Town Council, but demonstrated that by working together with colleagues and partner agencies, we can achieve a great deal for the town and its residents.
- 1.3 Organisations often spend time producing plans or lists of priorities, but do not review progress until the end of the year. With this paper, the Town Clerk provides an update to members to explain the progress being made to deliver these priorities.

##### **2.0 Q3 2024/25: Progress Update**





- 2.1 Of the 12 priorities, three priorities are completed, eight priorities have progressed very well, but there's still room for further work to be completed before the end of the financial year. One priority was delivered but the level of service was at amber level due to technical issues.

##### **3.0 Recommendations**

- 3.1 Members are asked to review this progress report, and note the work undertaken to date.




Appendices: Appendix A: Q3 2024/25 Progress Report  
Contact Officer: Holly Goring




##### **Key:**




	= Progress behind schedule		= Some progress has been made
	= On schedule for completion		= Completed

## APPENDIX A: Q3 - 2024/25 Progress Update

Priority	Status	Notes	Lead Committee	Lead Officer
<b>COMMUNITY GRANTS</b> We will award up to £52,000 of community grant funding to local groups and charitable organisations for the period 2024/25 (£25,000 to community groups, and £27,000 through service level agreements)	✓	All payments have been made with first instalments paid in May 2024, and second instalments for the larger grants in October 2024.	General Purposes Committee	Assistant Town Clerk & RFO
<b>UPGRADING PLAY AREA FACILITIES</b> We will undertake a full upgrade of Victoria Play Area, and seek to replace pieces of equipment that have reached end of life in Hempstead Recreation Ground and Oakwood Drive play area.	●	A number of play area companies have been reviewing the site of the Victoria Play Area, and providing initial ideas for designs and indicative costings. The next stage will be to place the contract out on Contracts Finder and obtain quotes/designs via a robust procurement process, whilst we engage with the local primary school and general public.	Environment & Leisure Committee	Estates & Facilities Manager
<b>PUBLIC EVENTS AND ANNIVERSARIES IN THE TOWN</b> We will work alongside the local business community and local community groups to deliver two free public events within the town; D-Day Anniversary Beacon Lighting and Weald on the Field	✓	Both events were completed and a great success through the provision of excellent entertainment, local traders supplying food/refreshments, and of course teamwork from councillors and staff!  The weather was on our side, and the events were delivered in the region of the budget allocated.	Full Council	Town Clerk

Priority	Status	Notes	Lead Committee	Lead Officer
<b>FESTIVE LIGHTS</b> Work with the Chamber of Commerce, and local businesses to review the festive lighting for the town centre, in preparation for Christmas 2024		Despite working with East Sussex Highways and the contractor through the year, we still experienced issues prior to installation and during the festive period, which resulted in complaints on social media. We lost two lamp columns due to road collisions. The overhead at the upper section of the High Street should not have been installed by the contractors, as we were aware of the issues of power supply as a result of property ownership changes, and East Sussex Highways had to be called out after installation to address connections for 3-4 motifs. Although these were then working, the storms over the Christmas period further affected two overheads and two lamp column motifs failed and these were unable to be fixed before switch off on 6 January. This was very disappointing. The Town Council will be re-tendering for the contract for 2025 onwards, and will be consulting residents on what they wish to see in the town. Additional funding has also been incorporated into the budget for 2025/26.	General Purposes Committee	Estates & Facilities Manager
<b>PROTECTING NATURAL HABITATS</b> We will place greater focus on wildlife monitoring in both our ancient woodlands and local nature reserves, and separate areas from the public to preserve the flora and fauna and protect key species		Equipment has been purchased to start undertaking wildlife monitoring in our woodlands and nature reserves.  We are currently exploring opportunities for grant funding with the support of a local agency to support our woodland management.  Siltex has been purchased for Harlands Pond, and a bulb planting day is planned for February.  Quotes have also been obtained and funding set aside in the budget for 2025/26 for wildlife appraisals to be completed and associated monitoring such as dormouse surveys.	Environment & Leisure Committee	Estates & Facilities Manager
<b>WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN</b> We will undertake the third year of works within our Woodland Management Plan, to address ash dieback. We will re-plant trees and restock areas of our woodlands where trees have been removed and disease has had an impact.		These works have been progressing since November. Much of the works are being undertaken this winter by qualified Grounds staff, which should ensure greater care of the surrounding woodland, and access points into the woodlands.  In the meantime, a grant application to Wealden DC was successful for community orchard tree planting, and this has funded the planting of trees.	Environment & Leisure Committee	Estates & Facilities Manager

Priority	Status	Notes	Lead Committee	Lead Officer
<b>GRASS VERGE CUTTING</b> We will continue to contribute to the costs of East Sussex County Council's grass verge cutting contract to retain a good standard of service and ensure visibility is maintained on pavements and highways.		The payment was made to East Sussex County Council for 2024/25 to maintain existing service standards and frequency of cuts to the town's grass verges. <i>(Urban verges used to receive 5-6 cuts per annum but East Sussex County Council can now only afford to fund two. Rural verges receive two cuts per annum).</i>	Environment and Leisure Committee	Town Clerk
<b>CLIMATE CHANGE</b> We will host an educational activity with primary schools, consider alternative fuel supplies in our wider building portfolio, explore additional insulation within our buildings, review the equipment we purchase, use local suppliers, and manage our land for nature with a continued focus on conservation and tree planting.		A new air source heating system has been installed at the rear of Foresters Hall, and an all-electric system for heating/water in Foresters Chapel, in place of gas.  Improvements have been undertaken to lighting to replace with LED whilst undertaking emergency lighting upgrades.  Tree saplings have been planted utilising free saplings from x, and grant funding for community orchards from Wealden District Council.  The Climate Change Steering Group are hosting a Green Fashion Show in February, and have scheduled in further events for 2025.	Environment and Leisure Committee	Town Clerk
<b>IMPROVEMENTS TO TOWN COUNCIL BUILDINGS</b> We will continue to improve the standard of our buildings and ensure efficient use of utilities and the health and safety of our service users, staff and leaseholders. This will include LED lighting and compliance works, and new tables and table racks for the Civic Centre. Works will also commence to		Electrical Installation Condition reports have been completed for all buildings, including the majority of remedial works. Improvements have been undertaken to emergency lighting within the Civic Centre, and improvements to lighting within Foresters Hall, and Victoria Pavilion. Research has been undertaken to identify the right tables for hirers/bookings in the Civic Centre. The Caretaker reconfiguration works are now complete and awaiting Building Control sign off. This has enabled us to provide more security and privacy to Town Council IT, equipment, and the Civic Centre, and Town Centre CCTV systems. It has also created a new meeting space, for hire. A fully upgraded, and new plumbing and heating system has been installed at Vic Pavilion. The air source heating system has been installed at the rear of Foresters Hall, and the gas heaters removed from Foresters Chapel and replaced with electric heaters supplying heat and hot water. Safety has also been improved, with the installation of TMVs to avoid scalding risk.	Full Council	Town Clerk

the Signal Box, to enable this to be returned to use.		<p>A feasibility study has been undertaken for the Signal Box, and will be presented to members in due course.</p> <p>New fire doors will be installed in Foresters Hall, Victoria Pavilion and West Park Pavilion in February and March 2025.</p>		
Priority	Status	Notes	Lead Committee	Lead Officer
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING</b> We will work with local partner agencies, residents and local businesses to understand the infrastructure requirements for Uckfield, in regards to sport, leisure and recreation and community facilities and the future impact on the Town Council's provision of allotment and cemetery space.		A residents' survey was circulated in November/December 2024 which included questions on resident's desires for sport, leisure and recreational facilities in Uckfield, in addition to what they prioritise from Town Council services. This will inform further workshops with members during 2025.	Full Council	Town Clerk
<b>NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN</b> We will support the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to prepare a draft Uckfield Neighbourhood Plan ready for submission to the local Planning authority.		Documentation is being updated to reflect the latest evidence base, and align with the draft Wealden Local Plan, and Town Council's Strategic Plan for 2025-30.	Full Council	Town Clerk
<b>POLICY REVIEW</b> We will be undertaking a full review of the Town Council's policies in respect of personnel (staffing matters), GDPR and respect in the workplace.		A scheme of delegation has been adopted, the pension policy approved by General Purposes Committee and ready for ratification by Full Council. Further reviews are in the process of being undertaken of the Town Council's HR policies.	General Purposes	Assistant Town Clerk/Town Clerk

## **Meeting of the Full Council**

**Monday 13 January 2025**

### **Agenda Item No. 19.0**

#### **TO CONSIDER PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO THE FOLLOWING CONSULTATIONS PRIOR TO THEIR DEADLINE:**

- (i) Strengthening the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities in England (deadline 26 February 2025)
- (ii) Draft Transport Strategy Consultation (deadline 7 March 2025)

#### **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 A number of consultations have been circulated to parish and town councils for consideration. The only difficulty is these were circulated prior to the festive break, and with a full agenda for consideration on 13 January 2025 it doesn't leave sufficient time for members to review the contents at this meeting.

#### **2.0 Strengthening the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities in England**

- 2.1 The UK Government is seeking views on proposals to introduce measures to strengthen the standards and conduct regime for local authorities in England. The proposals being consulted upon include:

- The introduction of a mandatory minimum code of conduct for local authorities in England
- A requirement that all principal authorities convene formal standards committees to make decisions on code of conduct breaches, and publish the outcomes of all formal investigations
- The introduction of the power for all local authorities (including combined authorities) to suspend councillors or mayors found in serious breach of their code of conduct and, as appropriate, interim suspension for the most serious and complex cases that may involve police investigations
- A new category of disqualification for gross misconduct and those subject to a sanction of suspension more than once in a 5-year period
- A role for a national body to deal with appeals

- 2.2 For this consultation, it would be prudent for elected members to respond individually. Please note that all responses to this consultation are anonymous, and no information will be disclosed in any future published response to the consultation, or reporting of the consultation results, that will compromise that anonymity.

- 2.3 Members have until 26 February 2025 to respond online:  
[Strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - Citizen Space](#)

- 2.4 And we can also feed any specific issues back to the Society of Local Council Clerks by 12 February 2025, for their co-ordinated response.

#### **3.0 Draft Transport Strategy Consultation**

- 3.1 Transport for South East have published their draft Transport Strategy for consultation. The strategy outlines their vision for the South East and areas which need urgent action.
- 3.2 A copy of the summary document has been attached in appendix A of this report, and a copy of the survey for organisations has been attached at appendix B. The deadline for responding is 7 March 2025. We would recommend, that Town Councillors where they can, complete the online survey individually via [Transport for the South East Transport Strategy](#) , and for Uckfield Town Council to provide a formal response as an organisation.

#### **4.0 Recommendation**

- 4.1 Members are asked to agree to respond to both surveys individually, and advise how they wish to compile the organisation's response to the Draft Transport Strategy.

Contact Officer: Holly Goring

# Transport Strategy for the South East

Draft Transport Strategy Summary

10 December 2024

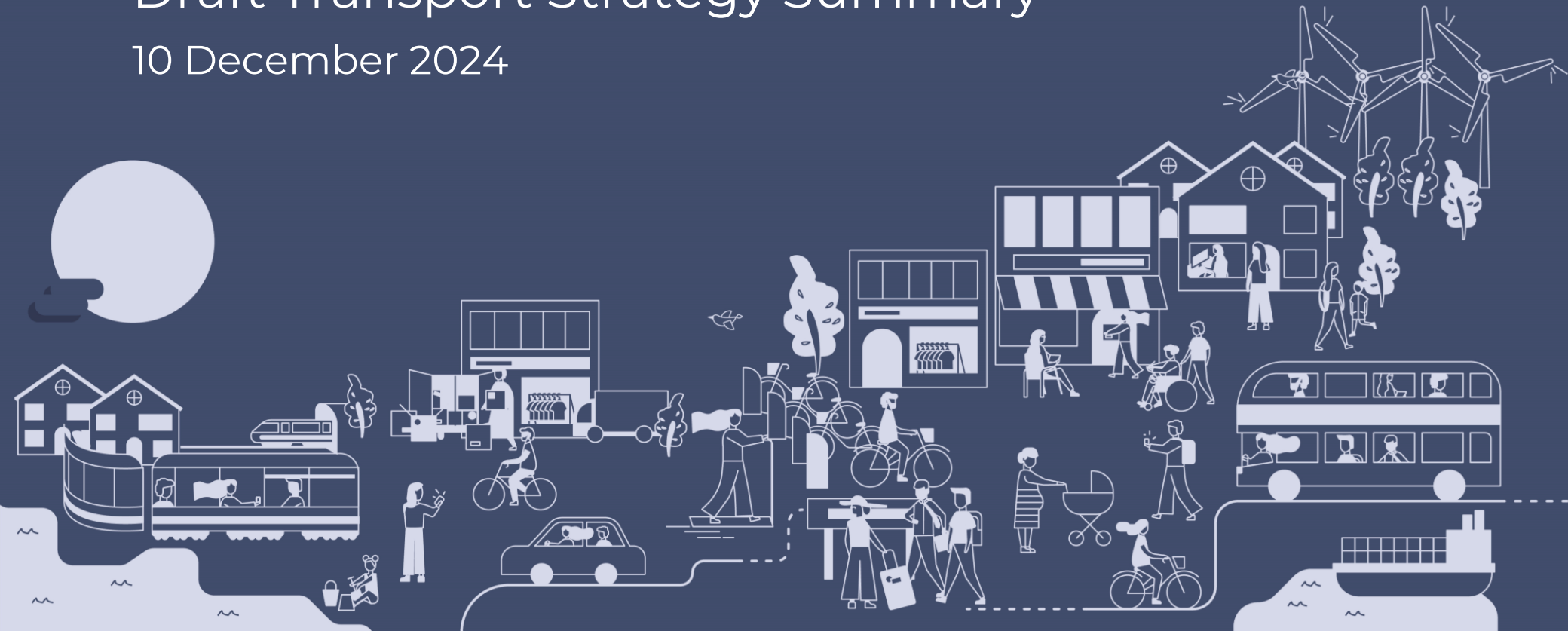






Photo: Emma Varley



# Introduction

**This is the Draft Transport Strategy for South East England**, prepared by Transport for the South East (TfSE), the region's Sub-national Transport Body.

**The South East of England is Britain's gateway to the world.** Its dynamic economy, scenic landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and proximity to London and mainland Europe make it one of the most prosperous and desirable regions for living, working, and visiting in Britain.

**This Strategy outlines a Vision for the South East to be recognised globally for achieving sustainable prosperity and the highest quality of life.** It builds on the previous Strategy that was published in 2020 and is underpinned by over seven years' extensive technical work.

**Its missions-driven approach sets a Route Map for achieving this Vision** through improving strategic connectivity, strengthening resilience, enhancing integration, decarbonising the transport system, and unlocking sustainable growth.

**This Strategy focuses on areas needing urgent action**, where TfSE is uniquely positioned to drive change. Recognising financial constraints, TfSE's approach emphasises practical, achievable solutions, aiming to maximise the impact of available resources.

Developed through **rigorous evidence gathering and stakeholder engagement**, this Strategy presents a framework for action to meet the region's most pressing transport challenges.

In addition to the Strategy, an **Integrated Sustainability Appraisal** has been conducted to assess the Strategy's impact on sustainability objectives, including biodiversity, habitats, carbon, health, access, and equity.

This Draft Strategy will be open **for public consultation** to incorporate feedback and publish a final version in 2025.

# Our Role

**Established in 2017, TfSE's mission is to grow the South East's economy by delivering a safe, sustainable, and integrated transport system.**

TfSE brings together 16 local transport authorities, as well as representatives from district and borough councils, national agencies, and protected landscapes, harnessing a wide range of local and regional expertise.

TfSE and its partners aim to boost productivity and competitiveness, enhance the quality of life for residents, and protect the region's natural and built environment.

**TfSE aspires to transform the quality of door-to-door journeys for residents, businesses, and visitors across the South East.** As a strategic body, TfSE plays a crucial role in adding value by ensuring that funding and strategic decisions about transport in the South East are informed by local knowledge and priorities.

Its comprehensive governance structure – combining political leadership, technical expertise, and stakeholder engagement – ensures that **TfSE is well-placed to deliver for the region.** This structure enables it to speak with one voice on behalf of the region, making a compelling case for investment in the region.

## TfSE members and partners



# Our Region



**7.8m**  
Residents  
(2022)



**3.8m**  
Jobs (2022)



**£230bn**  
GVA per annum



**2** National  
Parks  
**7** National  
Landscapes

## Key to map

1. Reading
2. Wokingham
3. Windsor and Maidenhead
4. Bracknell Forest
5. Southampton
6. Portsmouth

- Key port
- International rail stations
- Key airport



**18%**

UK freight tonnage served  
by South East ports,  
excluding London (2023)

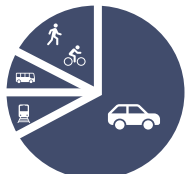
**13m**

Ferry passengers  
(2023)

**18m**

Channel tunnel  
passengers (2023)

## Mode share of trips



**70% Car**  
**21% Foot or cycle**  
**5% Bus or taxi**  
**4% Rail**



**381**  
Rail stations



**327**  
Miles of  
motorway



**40m**

Gatwick Airport  
passengers (2023)

# Case for Action

Since TfSE published its first **Transport Strategy in 2020, the context has evolved significantly**. National and local policy changes, intensified decarbonisation efforts, post-Brexit trade dynamics, and shifts in travel behaviour due to the pandemic all present new challenges.

Additionally, **TfSE's expanded evidence base has provided critical insights into the region's transport needs**, informing this Strategy's updated priorities.

**This research has identified several key challenges** that need to be tackled if the region is to succeed.

## Productivity



**UK productivity has flatlined** – Productivity per hour worked grew just 5% between 2010-20 – half the rate seen in Germany and the USA.

## Decarbonisation



**Transport accounts for 40% of carbon emissions** in the South East (2022) – by far the largest contributor across all industries.

## Housing affordability



The **house price to earnings ratio is over 10:1** in the South East – higher than any other region outside London, and higher than California.

## East-West connectivity



The average speed of passenger rail services on most East-West corridors is under **40mph** – compared to **60mph** on most London corridors.

## International trade



**Trade volumes through Dover are down around 20%** since the UK left the EU, and **Eurostar no longer serves** Ebbsfleet and Ashford.

## Climate resilience



There were more than **4 times** as many delays to rail services in the South due to extreme heat in 2018 than in the 2000s.

## Equitable prosperity



The **Gross Value Added per capita** of less well-connected areas **is less than half** that of well-connected areas and many residents are at risk of **Transport Related Social Exclusion**.

## Congestion



**The M25 carries over 220,000 vehicles a day** – making it the busiest and one of the most congested roads in Europe.

# Vision and Goals

**Our Vision is for the South East to offer the highest quality of life for all and be a global leader in achieving sustainable, net zero carbon growth.**

To achieve this, we will develop a resilient, reliable, and inclusive transport network that enables seamless journeys and empowers residents, businesses, and visitors to make sustainable choices.

We will deliver this Vision by driving strategic investment and forging partnerships that deliver sustainable transport, integrated services, digital connectivity, clean energy, and environmental enhancement.

**Our Vision is supported by three Goals that reflect the three pillars of sustainable development.**

## **Economic Goal**

Improve productivity and attract investment to grow our economy and better compete in the global marketplace.

## **Social Goal**

Improve health, safety, wellbeing, quality of life, and access to opportunities for everyone.

## **Environmental Goal**

Protect and enhance the South East's unique natural and historic environment.

Our Strategy is built on **six Principles** that guide us toward our Vision and Goals. These Principles have been applied across many aspects of this Strategy and help us stay focused on delivering the best possible outcomes for the South East. These Principles are outlined on the following page.

## Vision and Validate

Instead of planning based on current travel trends, this approach envisions a desired future and creates the transport system to achieve it, focusing on long-term sustainability and resilience.



## User Hierarchy

By prioritising pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport over cars, this Principle promotes safer, more sustainable urban environments by designing infrastructure to reflect these priorities.



## Triple Access Planning

This Principle expands accessibility by considering not only physical transport but also digital and social factors, ensuring a more inclusive and connected transport system.



## Movement and Place

Roads and streets are designed not only for efficient transport but also to enhance the surrounding areas, balancing the needs of movement with creating vibrant, liveable spaces.



## Avoid – Shift – Improve

A Strategy to reduce transport carbon emissions by avoiding unnecessary travel, shifting to lower-carbon transport modes, and improving the efficiency of remaining high-carbon modes.



## Environmental Net Gain

New transport developments should leave the environment better off than before by enhancing biodiversity, using sustainable design, and integrating green solutions into infrastructure projects.



# Missions

**TfSE has prioritised five Missions to drive progress toward its Vision.** Each Mission serves as a clear call to action, emphasising tangible outcomes, setting direction, and aligning with national and local priorities.

**The Missions have been carefully chosen to address key areas where the South East risks lagging behind without decisive action,** focusing on issues where TfSE can play a strategic, impactful role.

**Each Mission follows a structured Route Map that clarifies the path forward,** including a Mission Statement, desired Outcomes, and Priorities for the short and longer term.

This approach ensures that **each Mission is robust and adaptable** to different scenarios, enabling TfSE and its partners to respond effectively to emerging needs while driving meaningful progress across the region's most pressing transport challenges.

## The five Missions are:



**Strategic  
Connectivity**



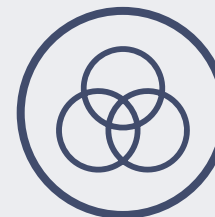
**Resilience**



**Inclusion and  
Integration**



**Decarbonisation**



**Sustainable  
Growth**





We will boost connectivity in the South East by enhancing strategic regional corridors and ensure all communities can access high-quality transport links and key services.

## We will have succeeded when:

- ▶ The connectivity of all the South East's strategic corridors – in terms of journey times and reliability – is comparable to those corridors that serve London.
- ▶ Key towns, cities, and international gateways are as accessible by public transport as they are by car, and rail freight is as competitive as long-distance road freight.



Photo: Network Rail

## Short Term Priorities

We will improve the existing network to better serve passengers and freight by:

- ▶ Enhancing incentives for long-distance public transport through optimised fares, flexible ticketing, and improved amenities.
- ▶ Refining timetables to cater to leisure travel demand and minimising disruption from maintenance schedules.
- ▶ Advancing key connectivity projects to improve regional transport links.
- ▶ Restoring international rail services from Ebbsfleet and Ashford to ease pressure at St Pancras.
- ▶ Expanding rail capacity to support growth at Gatwick and Southampton airports.
- ▶ Safeguarding critical areas and aligning policies to enable long-term transport improvements.

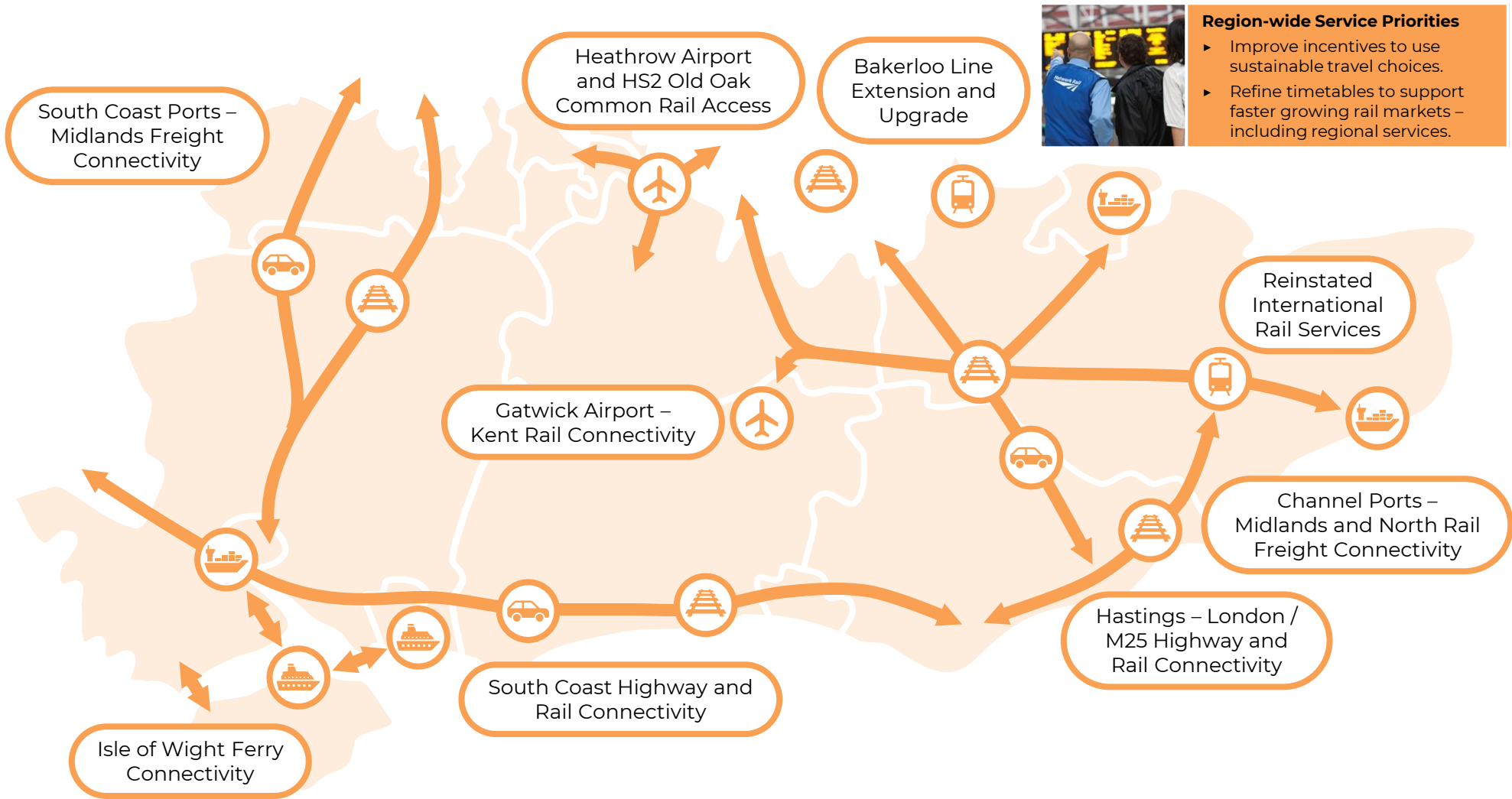
## Long Term Priorities

We will focus on major upgrades and expansions to improve connectivity by:

- ▶ Upgrading the roads and railways serving the Brighton–Southampton coastal corridor to strengthen economic ties between the regions two largest built-up areas.
- ▶ Cutting journey times between London and less well-connected coastal communities.
- ▶ Improving ferry services to islands, including the Isle of Wight.
- ▶ Strengthening freight links from Southampton and the Channel Ports to the Midlands and North.
- ▶ Expanding rail connections to international gateways, including Heathrow and Gatwick.
- ▶ Reviewing the configuration of regional rail services to leverage opportunities at Old Oak Common.



# Key Priorities





We will safeguard the South East's connectivity and enhance the reliability and resilience of our transport systems for future generations.

## **We will have succeeded when:**

- ▶ The transport network delivers comfortable, reliable journeys between key towns, cities, and international gateways.
- ▶ The transport network has the capacity and agility to manage, absorb, and recover from major disruptions quickly, and when the risk of major failures occurring is reduced.

## **Short Term Priorities**

We will strengthen the current network's resilience by:

- ▶ Assessing road disruption impacts and securing sustainable funding for maintenance.
- ▶ Establishing long-term funding pipelines for infrastructure renewals.
- ▶ Strategically planning for future risks to enhance network adaptability.
- ▶ Advocating for consistent funding for maintenance and prevention projects.
- ▶ Coordinating with utility providers to minimise disruption from roadworks.

## **Long Term Priorities**

We will focus on major upgrades and expansions to strengthen resilience by:

- ▶ Tackling rail bottlenecks in areas like Croydon and Woking to boost reliability on key corridors.
- ▶ Creating alternative routes, such as the Uckfield–Lewes line, to maintain connectivity during disruptions.
- ▶ Implementing the Kent Bifurcation Strategy to ease pressure on the Thames crossings and strengthen links between Channel and M25 – including improving Operation Brock and Stack.
- ▶ Resolving highway pinch points to improve flow for all users, including buses, boosting resilience to future risks.



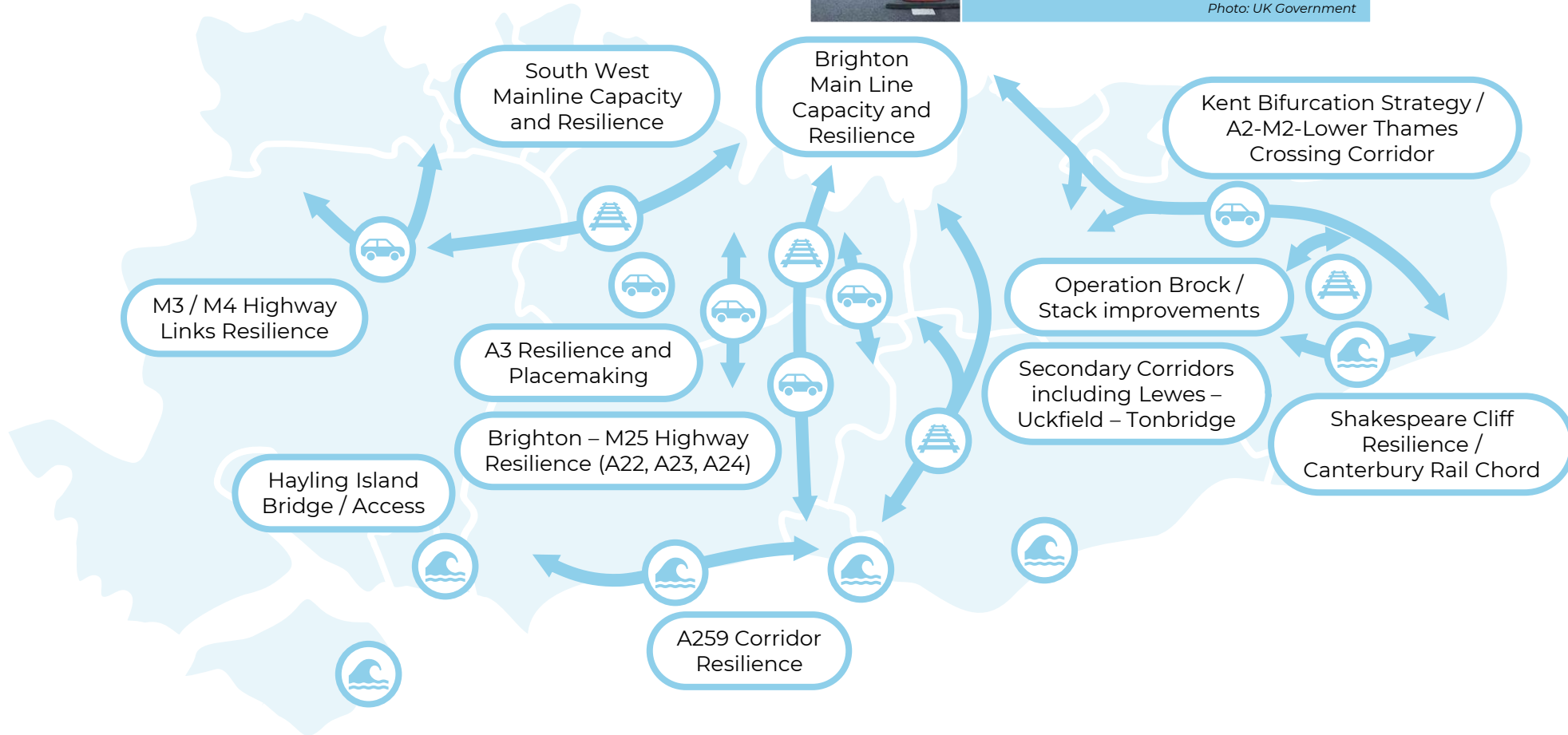
# Resilience Priorities



## Region-wide Maintenance Priorities

- ▶ Reduce the maintenance backlog and improve roadworks management.
- ▶ Secure long-term funding to identify, understand, and address resilience risks.

*Photo: UK Government*



Highway 

Railway 

Coastal erosion/flooding risk 

# Inclusion & Integration Mission



We will create an inclusive, affordable, and integrated transport network across the South East, providing safe and seamless door-to-door connectivity for everyone.

## We will have succeeded when:

- ▶ Everyone can affordably travel where they need to go when they need to go.
- ▶ Customer satisfaction with all aspects of the transport network is high across all sections of society.

## Infrastructure Priorities

We will target infrastructure upgrades by:

- ▶ Designing inclusive infrastructure to improve accessibility for socially excluded groups.
- ▶ Enhancing connectivity in North and East Kent and East Sussex coastal areas to reduce social exclusion.
- ▶ Upgrading interchanges and providing step-free access at transport hubs for seamless connections.

## Service Priorities

We will improve affordability and accessibility by:

- ▶ Offering affordable fares and concessions for vulnerable groups to improve accessibility.
- ▶ Simplifying fares with unified ticketing to lower costs and streamline journeys.
- ▶ Providing socially necessary transport to connect isolated communities with essential services.
- ▶ Implementing Bus Service Improvement Plans and exploring franchising models to better serve communities.
- ▶ Enhancing connectivity to islands and peninsulas, focusing on the Solent and Medway.



# Key Priorities



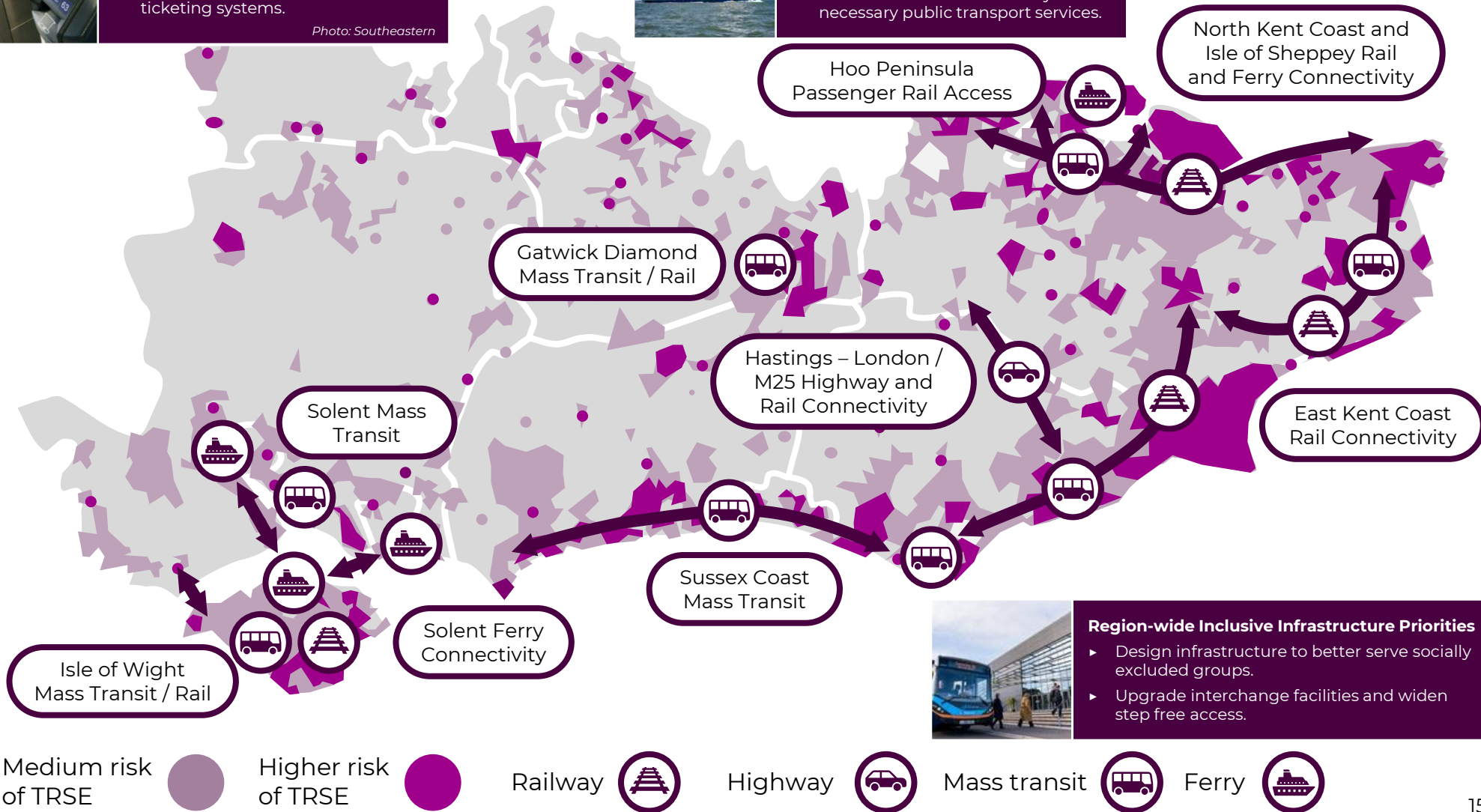
## Region-wide Fares/Ticketing Priorities

- ▶ Offer affordable fares and concessions.
- ▶ Implement integrated fares and ticketing systems.

*Photo: Southeastern*

## Region-wide Service Priorities

- ▶ Deliver BSIPs and leverage new bus service delivery models.
- ▶ Provide and enhance socially necessary public transport services.



## Region-wide Inclusive Infrastructure Priorities

- ▶ Design infrastructure to better serve socially excluded groups.
- ▶ Upgrade interchange facilities and widen step free access.







We will lead the South East to a net zero future by 2050 by accelerating the shift to zero-emission travel, incentivising sustainable travel choices, and embracing new technologies to reduce emissions and combat climate change.

## We will have succeeded when:

- ▶ All surface transport trips made across the South East are net zero emission by 2050 (at the latest).
- ▶ We have not exceeded our carbon budgets for surface transport by 2050.
- ▶ The South East is seen as a world leader in decarbonising transport.

## Short Term Priorities

We will accelerate the transition to low-carbon transport by:

- ▶ Expanding electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure for private and freight vehicles.
- ▶ Increasing the availability of electric and hydrogen vehicles through collaborating with industry.
- ▶ Supporting EV and battery recycling to reduce the environmental impact of EVs.
- ▶ Improving public transport and active travel infrastructure to provide attractive sustainable travel options.
- ▶ Transitioning bus, freight, and ferry fleets to zero-emission vehicles.
- ▶ Promoting integrated land use and transport planning to minimise unnecessary car travel.

## Long Term Priorities

We will solidify the transition to a zero-emission system by:

- ▶ Decarbonising rail through delivering electrification, battery, and alternative fuel trains.
- ▶ Promoting low-carbon infrastructure with sustainable materials and practices.
- ▶ Supporting the government in the development and delivery of any national road user charging proposals, providing a financial incentive for more sustainable choices while reducing congestion.
- ▶ Working with industry to deliver a decarbonised, resilient power networks for rail and electric vehicles.
- ▶ Advancing alternative fuels for aviation and long-haul freight.



Photo: Fastway

# Decarbonisation Priorities



Thames Valley Branch  
Lines Decarbonisation

Newbury – Taunton  
Electrification



## Region-wide Low Emission Vehicles (LEVs) Priorities

- ▶ Roll out charging infrastructure.
- ▶ Increase roll-out of LEVs (cars, buses, and freight vehicles).
- ▶ Support renewal and recycling of LEVs and batteries.



## Region-wide Modal Shift / Demand Management Priorities

- ▶ Improve attractiveness of sustainable travel options.
- ▶ Promote virtual access to reduce travel demand.
- ▶ Support the development of a national road user charging framework.

South Coast – Midlands  
Rail Freight Electrification

North Downs Line  
Decarbonisation

East Sussex Rail  
Decarbonisation

## Region-wide Ferry Decarbonisation

- ▶ Support the transition of ferry operations from fossil fuels to low carbon fuels, including inland waterways.



## Region-wide Power Priorities

- ▶ Ensure the region's power networks are decarbonised and have the capacity and resilience to support the rail network, roll-out of electric vehicles, and development.

*Photo: Mervyn Rands, Creative Commons*



## Region-wide Beyond Transport

- ▶ Support decarbonised energy.
- ▶ Support initiatives to tackle embodied carbon.

*Photo: Rampion Offshore Wind*



Rail decarbonisation interventions are shown in this map – other rail and public transport interventions that promote modal shift are highlighted in Strategic Connectivity and Sustainable Growth missions



We will champion transport interventions that unlock investment opportunities, enable sustainable growth, and create healthy, vibrant, and well-connected communities.

## We will have succeeded when:

- ▶ Population growth and economic development in the South East is underpinned by sustainable transport and infrastructure.
- ▶ The South East has created well-connected communities with easy access to key services and employment opportunities.

## Policy Enablers

We will promote integrated land use and transport planning and enablers by:

- ▶ Concentrating development in areas with strong transport infrastructure.
- ▶ Coordinating housing and transport planning across authorities.
- ▶ Leveraging value capture and other mechanisms to forward-fund transport.
- ▶ Using demand management measures to improve air quality and fund services.
- ▶ Strengthening local planning capacity.

## Transport Intervention Priorities

We will prioritise essential transport projects to support sustainable growth by:

- ▶ Expanding concessionary fare schemes to make sustainable travel affordable.
- ▶ Developing mass transit systems in high-density areas, alongside delivering Bus Service Improvement Plans more widely.
- ▶ Enhancing Sussex Coast and Solent suburban rail services.
- ▶ Delivering Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans and embedding active travel in all new developments.



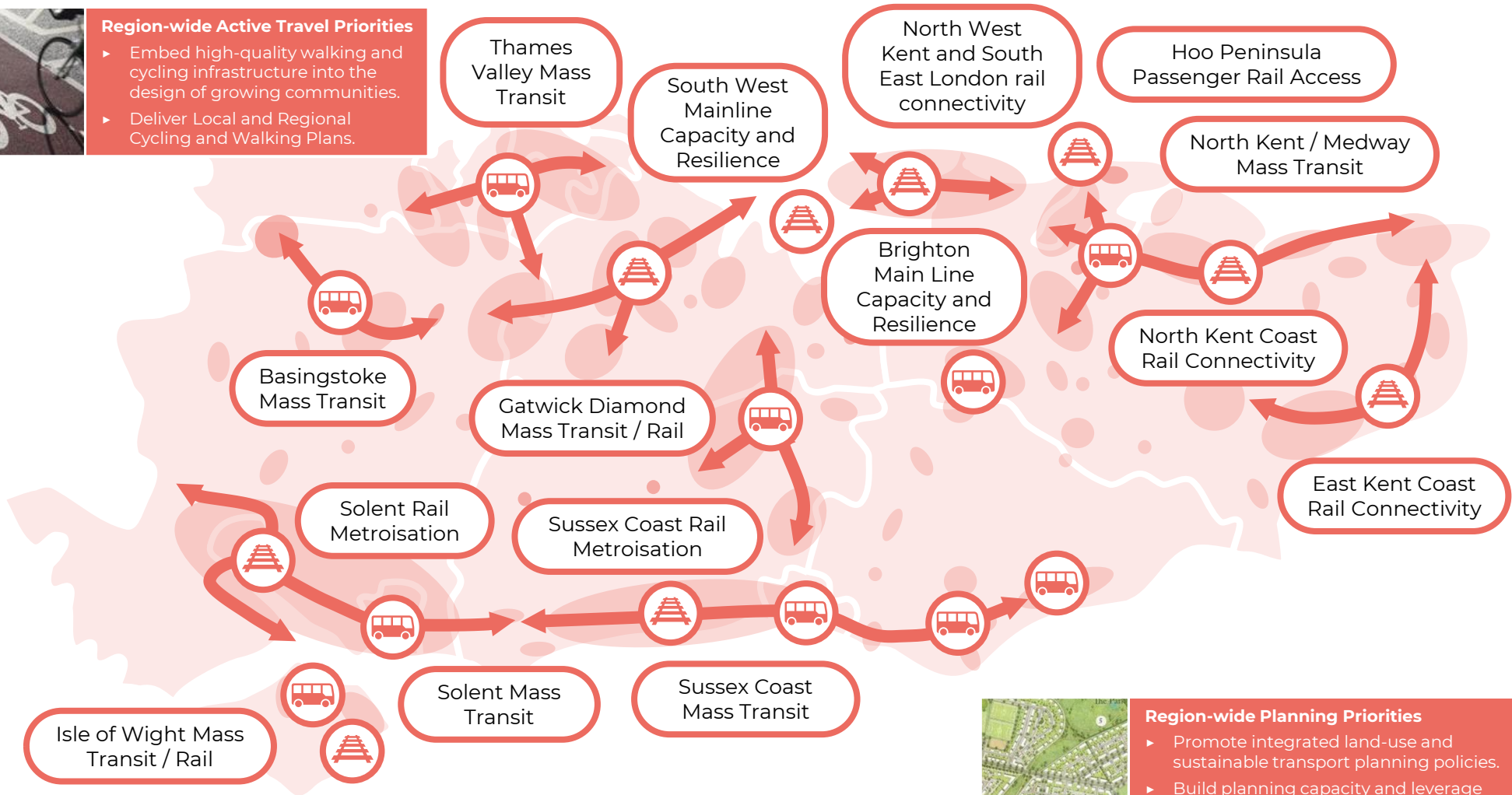


# Key Priorities



## Region-wide Active Travel Priorities

- ▶ Embed high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure into the design of growing communities.
- ▶ Deliver Local and Regional Cycling and Walking Plans.

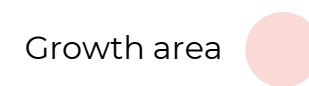
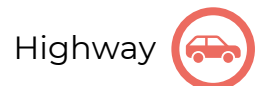


## Region-wide Planning Priorities

- ▶ Promote integrated land-use and sustainable transport planning policies.
- ▶ Build planning capacity and leverage local funding measures.



Photo: South East Faversham



# Delivery

**TfSE is committed to turning its ambitious Vision for the South East into action, building on the foundation provided by its Strategic Investment Plan and Delivery Action Plan.**

TfSE is committed to keeping its Strategy relevant and effective. Following this refreshed Strategy, the Strategic Investment Plan will be updated to align with the new Missions. TfSE also plans to refresh the Transport Strategy every five years, ensuring its approach remains adaptable to evolving challenges and opportunities.

**TfSE recognises the successful delivery of this Strategy relies on collaboration across various stakeholders.** TfSE will therefore drive policy prioritisation, stakeholder engagement, scheme development, and advocacy. Local Transport Authorities will also play a crucial role, especially in delivering highway and public transport projects, while national infrastructure managers (Network Rail and National Highways) will lead major interventions on the railway and strategic road network. Private sector entities, including bus and rail operators, are also essential partners in delivering services and innovations.

**Delivering meaningful change requires overcoming significant challenges,**

including financial constraints, fragmented resources, and increasing demand for public services. TfSE and its partners must embrace innovative solutions such as "beneficiary pays" models, greater devolution, and rail reform to secure sustainable funding. Collaboration across all levels of government, transport operators, and the private sector is essential to achieve TfSE's Vision and Goals.

**TfSE will support its partners with tools such as scheme development funding, an advanced analytical framework, and the Centre of Excellence,** which enhances regional planning capacity and capability. Regular updates to the Delivery Action Plan and the biennial State of the Region Report will ensure its strategies remain adaptable and focused on delivering tangible benefits.

# TfSE's Role


These are the key actions that TfSE and its partners will take to deliver this Strategy.




## Strategic Connectivity



- ▶ Develop business cases for schemes.
- ▶ Implement freight transfer initiatives.
- ▶ Build a coherent infrastructure pipeline for transport and utilities.
- ▶ Collaborate with National Highways and Network Rail / Great British Railways to set road and rail priorities.
- ▶ Secure funding for first / last-mile connections to transport hubs.
- ▶ Improve connectivity to international gateways like ports and airports.



## Resilience




- ▶ Identify TfSE's role in strengthening transport resilience.
- ▶ Build an evidence base on key resilience risks (e.g. extreme weather).
- ▶ Advocate for consistent maintenance funding.
- ▶ Target investments in operational resilience across road and rail networks.
- ▶ Explore nature-based solutions to mitigate risks like flooding.




## Inclusion and Integration



- ▶ Ensure social exclusion impacts are embedded in scheme design.
- ▶ Promote best practices through the Bus Forum and Wider South East Rail Partnership.
- ▶ Expand evidence on interventions addressing social exclusion.
- ▶ Champion integrated ticketing and accessible transport hubs.



## Decarbonisation




- ▶ Embed the Carbon Assessment Playbook in scheme evaluation.
- ▶ Accelerate freight decarbonisation and roll out EV infrastructure.
- ▶ Support the electrification of commercial vehicle fleets.
- ▶ Develop combined transport-energy investment opportunities.
- ▶ Work with Network Rail on rail decarbonisation solutions.



## Sustainable Growth



- ▶ Align housing growth with sustainable transport investment.
- ▶ Expand the 'Healthy Streets' approach across the region.
- ▶ Provide case studies on land-use and transport integration.
- ▶ Identify forward funding opportunities for sustainable growth.



## Delivery and Enablers



- ▶ **Funding:** Develop a "beneficiary-pays" funding playbook.
- ▶ **Advocacy:** Secure increased, consistent funding from government.
- ▶ **Capacity Building:** Strengthen local planning through the Centre of Excellence.

## Next Steps

### **TfSE is committed to keeping its Strategy relevant and effective.**

Following this refreshed Strategy, the Strategic Investment Plan will be updated to align with the new Missions.

TfSE also plans to refresh the Transport Strategy every five years, ensuring its approach remains adaptable to evolving challenges and opportunities.

### **This Draft Strategy is open for public consultation from 10 December 2024 to 7 March 2025.**

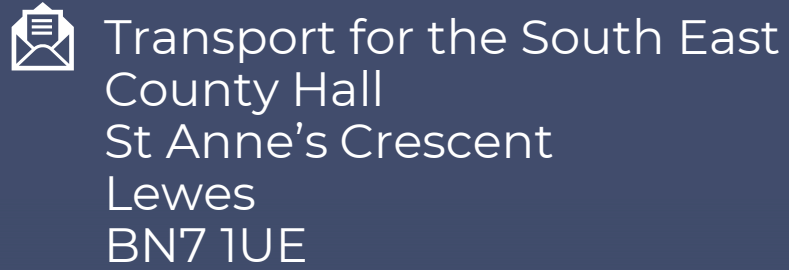
TfSE will incorporate feedback and publish a final version of the Transport Strategy later in 2025.











 [tfse@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:tfse@eastsussex.gov.uk)

 [tfse.org.uk](http://tfse.org.uk)



# Transport for the South East draft Transport Strategy Public Consultation – for Organisations

## Introduction

We are pleased to present the draft Transport Strategy for South East England, prepared by Transport for the South East (TfSE), the region's Sub-national Transport Body.

This strategy outlines a vision for the South East to be recognised globally for achieving sustainable prosperity and the highest quality of life.

You can view the full draft Transport Strategy and a summary document online or by requesting a paper copy. To view these documents online go to [LINK]

### **Please consider these documents before submitting your response.**

In addition to the strategy, an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal has been conducted to assess the strategy's impact on sustainability goals, including biodiversity, health, and access equity. We are also asking for comments on this.

You can view all document online at [LINK]

Feedback received in this consultation will be incorporated as part of the development of the final Transport Strategy which will be published in 2025.

You can complete this survey online at:

<https://tfse.engage-360.co.uk/>

You can also return a paper copy to us at the address below by **7 March 2025**:

Transport for the South East  
County Hall  
St. Anne's Crescent  
Lewes  
BN7 1UE

This survey should take around 20 minutes to complete.

Our privacy notice is provided at the end of this survey so you can see how we use your data.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.



## About your Organisation

**Q What is the name of your organisation?**

**Q What type of organisation do you represent?**

- |                         |                          |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Local authority         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Business                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Charity of third sector | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Transport operator      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| National partner        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Town or Parish Council  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Airport or Port         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**If you answered 'other' above please tell us the type of organisation you represent**

**Q I confirm that I am authorised to respond to this consultation on behalf of my organisation**

Yes ☐

No ☐

**Q What is your name?**

**Q What is your job title?**





**Q Please tell us your email address**

## Challenges

Since TfSE published its first Transport Strategy in 2020, the context has evolved significantly. National and local policy changes, intensified decarbonisation efforts, post Brexit trade dynamics, and shifts in travel behaviour due to the pandemic all present new challenges.

Our research has identified several key challenges that need to be tackled if the region is to succeed.

You can find full details of the challenges our region faces on page 6 of the draft Transport Strategy summary document, and from page 25 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

**Q Do you agree that the challenges we have outlined above are the right ones that the Transport Strategy should be seeking to address?**

- |                           |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Agree                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Neither agree or disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Disagree                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Strongly disagree         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't know                | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Q Do you think there are any other challenges we should consider?**

**Q Are there any other comments you would like to make on the challenges?**

## Vision and Goals

Our vision is to create a region that not only leads the way in sustainable, net zero carbon growth but also offers its residents, businesses, and visitors the highest quality of life.

This vision is supported by three goals, addressing the pillars of sustainable development: fostering a competitive economy, improving social outcomes, and safeguarding the region's natural and historic environment.

Together, these goals ensure that growth in the South East is inclusive, resilient, and sustainable.

You can find full details of our vision and goals on page 7 of the draft Transport Strategy summary document, and page 35 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

### **Q How strongly do you support the visions and goals in the draft Transport Strategy?**

- |                                   |                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly support                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Support                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Neither support or do not support | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Oppose                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Strongly oppose                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't know                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### **Q Do you have any further comments on the vision or the goals?**



## Strategic Connectivity Mission

Connectivity refers to the speed, frequency, and ease by which people and goods move between places. TfSE's focus is on strategic and regional connectivity, as local connectivity is led by our local authority partners.

You can find full details of our strategic connectivity mission on page 10 of the draft Transport Strategy summary document, and page 44 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

### Strategic Connectivity Mission



We will boost connectivity in the South East by enhancing strategic regional corridors and ensure all communities can access high-quality transport links and key services.

#### We will have succeeded when:

- ▶ The connectivity of all the South East's strategic corridors – in terms of journey times and reliability – is comparable to those corridors that serve London.
- ▶ Key towns, cities, and international gateways are as accessible by public transport as they are by car, and rail freight is as competitive as long-distance road freight.

#### Short-Term Priorities

We will improve the existing network to better serve passengers and freight by:

- ▶ Enhancing incentives for long-distance public transport through optimised fares, flexible ticketing, and improved amenities.
- ▶ Refining timetables to cater to leisure travel demand and minimising disruption from maintenance schedules.
- ▶ Advancing key connectivity projects to improve regional transport links.
- ▶ Restoring international rail services from Ebbsfleet and Ashford to ease pressure at St Pancras.
- ▶ Expanding rail capacity to support growth at Gatwick and Southampton airports.
- ▶ Safeguarding critical areas and aligning policies to enable long-term transport improvements.

#### Long-Term Priorities

We will focus on major upgrades and expansions to improve connectivity by:

- ▶ Upgrading the roads and railways serving the Brighton–Southampton coastal corridor to strengthen economic ties between the regions two largest built-up areas..
- ▶ Cutting journey times between London and less well-connected coastal communities.
- ▶ Improving ferry services to islands, including the Isle of Wight.
- ▶ Strengthening freight links from Southampton and the Channel Ports to the Midlands and North.
- ▶ Expanding rail connections to international gateways, including Heathrow and Gatwick.
- ▶ Reviewing the configuration of regional rail services to leverage opportunities at Old Oak Common.



### Q How strongly do you support the strategic connectivity mission in the draft Transport Strategy?

- |                                   |                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly support                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Support                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Neither support or do not support | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Oppose                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Strongly oppose                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't know                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |



**Q How important are the key outcomes of the strategic connectivity mission to your organisation?**

	Very important	Important	Neither important or not important	Not very important	Not important at all	Don't know
Journey time and reliability on strategic corridors is comparable to those serving London	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Key towns, cities and international gateways are as accessible by public transport as they are by car	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rail freight is as competitive as road freight	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q How strongly do you support the priorities which will enable us to improve strategic connectivity?**

*Short-term and long-term priorities are shown at the top of this page.*

Strongly support	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither support or do not support	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oppose	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly oppose	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q Please tell us the one priority from the list at the top of the page you see as most important to achieving this mission?**



## Resilience Mission

The resilience of the South East's transport network is vital to the region's economic, social, and environmental well-being.

You can find full details of our resilience mission on page 12 of the draft Transport Strategy summary document, and page 52 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

### Resilience Mission



We will safeguard the South East's connectivity and enhance the reliability and resilience of our transport systems for future generations.

#### We will have succeeded when:

- ▶ The transport network delivers comfortable, reliable journeys between key towns, cities, and international gateways.
- ▶ The transport network has the capacity and agility to manage, absorb, and recover from major disruptions quickly, and when the risk of major failures occurring is reduced.

#### Short-Term Priorities

We will strengthen the current network's resilience by:

- ▶ Assessing road disruption impacts and securing sustainable funding for maintenance.
- ▶ Establishing long-term funding pipelines for infrastructure renewals.
- ▶ Strategically planning for future risks to enhance network adaptability.
- ▶ Advocating for consistent funding for maintenance and prevention projects.
- ▶ Coordinating with utility providers to minimise disruption from roadworks.

#### Long-Term Priorities

We will focus on major upgrades and expansions to strengthen resilience by:

- ▶ Tackling rail bottlenecks in areas like Croydon and Woking to boost reliability on key corridors.
- ▶ Creating alternative routes, such as the Uckfield-Lewes line, to maintain connectivity during disruptions.
- ▶ Implementing the Kent Bifurcation Strategy to ease pressure on the Thames crossings and strengthen links between Channel and M25 – including improving Operation Brock and Stack.
- ▶ Resolving highway pinch points to improve flow for all users, including buses, boosting resilience to future risks.



### Q How strongly do you support the resilience mission in the draft Transport Strategy?

- |                                   |                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly support                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Support                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Neither support or do not support | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Oppose                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Strongly oppose                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't know                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |



**Q How important are the key outcomes of the resilience mission to your organisation?**

	Very important	Important	Neither important or not important	Not very important	Not important at all	Don't know
The transport network delivers comfortable, reliable journeys between key towns, cities and international gateways	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The transport network has the agility to manage and absorb disruptions quickly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q How strongly do you support the priorities which will enable us to improve resilience?**

*Short-term and long-term priorities are shown at the top of this page.*

Strongly support	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither support or do not support	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oppose	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly oppose	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q Please tell us the one priority from the list at the top of the page you see as most important to achieving this mission?**





## Inclusion and Integration Mission

Creating an inclusive and integrated transport network should be a fundamental part of planning and decision-making. However, TfSE's engagement with socially excluded groups has revealed that many communities across the region still face barriers to access, putting them at risk of exclusion.

You can find full details of our inclusion & integration mission on page 14 of the draft Transport Strategy summary document, and page 60 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

### Inclusion & Integration Mission



We will create an inclusive, affordable, and integrated transport network across the South East, providing safe and seamless door-to-door connectivity for everyone.

#### We will have succeeded when:

- ▶ Everyone can affordably travel where they need to go when they need to go.
- ▶ Customer satisfaction with all aspects of the transport network is high across all sections of society.

#### Infrastructure Priorities

We will target infrastructure upgrades by:

- ▶ Designing inclusive infrastructure to improve accessibility for socially excluded groups.
- ▶ Enhancing connectivity in North and East Kent and East Sussex coastal areas to reduce social exclusion.
- ▶ Upgrading interchanges and providing step-free access at transport hubs for seamless connections.

#### Service Priorities

We will improve affordability and accessibility by:

- ▶ Offering affordable fares and concessions for vulnerable groups to improve accessibility.
- ▶ Simplifying fares with unified ticketing to lower costs and streamline journeys.
- ▶ Providing socially necessary transport to connect isolated communities with essential services.
- ▶ Implementing Bus Service Improvement Plans and exploring franchising models to better serve communities.
- ▶ Enhancing connectivity to islands and peninsulas, focusing on the Solent and Medway.



### Q How strongly do you support the inclusion and integration mission in the draft Transport Strategy?

- |                                   |                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly support                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Support                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Neither support or do not support | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Oppose                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Strongly oppose                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't know                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |



**Q How important are the key outcomes of the inclusion and integration mission to your organisation?**

	Very important	Important	Neither important or not important	Not very important	Not important at all	Don't know
Everyone can affordably travel where they need to go and when	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Customer satisfaction with the transport network is high across all sections of society	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q How strongly do you support the priorities which will enable us to improve inclusion and integration?**

*Infrastructure and service priorities are shown at the top of this page.*

Strongly support	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither support or do not support	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oppose	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly oppose	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q Please tell us the one priority from the list at the top of the page you see as most important to achieving this mission?**





## Decarbonisation Mission

The UK Government, TfSE, and all local authorities in the South East are committed to achieving net zero transport emissions by 2050.

You can find full details of our decarbonisation mission on page 16 of the draft Transport Strategy summary document, and page 68 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

### Decarbonisation Mission



We will lead the South East to a net zero future by 2050 by accelerating the shift to zero-emission travel, incentivising sustainable travel choices, and embracing new technologies to reduce emissions and combat climate change.

#### We will have succeeded when:

- ▶ All surface transport trips made across the South East are net-zero emission by 2050 (at the latest).
- ▶ We have not exceeded our carbon budgets for surface transport by 2050.
- ▶ The South East is seen as a world leader in decarbonising transport.

#### Short-Term Priorities

We will accelerate the transition to low-carbon transport by:

- ▶ Expanding Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure for private and freight vehicles.
- ▶ Increasing the availability of electric and hydrogen vehicles through collaborating with industry.
- ▶ Supporting EV and battery recycling to reduce the environmental impact of EVs.
- ▶ Improving public transport and active travel infrastructure to provide attractive sustainable travel options.
- ▶ Transitioning bus, freight, and ferry fleets to zero-emission vehicles.
- ▶ Promoting integrated land use and transport planning to minimise unnecessary car travel.

#### Long-Term Priorities

We will solidify the transition to a zero-emission system by:

- ▶ Decarbonising rail through delivering electrification, battery, and alternative fuel trains.
- ▶ Promoting low-carbon infrastructure with sustainable materials and practices.
- ▶ Supporting Government in the event they commit to roll out national road user charging, providing a financial incentive for more sustainable choices while reducing congestion.
- ▶ Working with industry to deliver a decarbonised, resilient power networks for rail and electric vehicles.
- ▶ Advancing alternative fuels for aviation and long-haul freight.



### Q How strongly do you support the decarbonisation mission in the draft Transport Strategy?

- |                                   |                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly support                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Support                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Neither support or do not support | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Oppose                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Strongly oppose                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't know                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### Q How important are the key outcomes of the decarbonisation mission to your organisation?



Very  
important

Important

Neither  
important  
or not  
important

Not very  
important

Not  
important  
at all

Don't  
know

All surface transport trips  
are net zero emission by  
2050

☐☐☐☐☐☐

We have not exceeded our  
carbon budgets by 2025  
The South East is seen as a  
world leader in  
decarbonising transport

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

**Q How strongly do you support the priorities which will enable us to improve decarbonisation?**

*Short-term and long-term priorities are shown at the top of this page.*

Strongly support

☐

Support

☐

Neither support or do not support

☐

Oppose

☐

Strongly oppose

☐

Don't know

☐

**Q Please tell us the one priority from the list at the top of the page you see as most important to achieving this**



## Sustainable Growth Mission

The sustainable growth mission aims to deliver prosperity without harming the welfare of future generations. It supports the UK Government's first mission, to "kick start economic growth".

You can find full details of our strategic growth mission on page 18 of the draft Transport Strategy summary document, and page 76 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

### Sustainable Growth Mission



We will champion transport interventions that unlock investment opportunities, enable sustainable growth, and create healthy, vibrant, and well-connected communities.

#### We will have succeeded when:

- ▶ Population growth and economic development in the South East is underpinned by sustainable transport and infrastructure,
- ▶ The South East has created well-connected communities with easy access to key services and employment opportunities.

#### Policy Enablers

We will promote integrated land use and transport planning and enablers by:

- ▶ Concentrating development in areas with strong transport infrastructure.
- ▶ Coordinating housing and transport planning across authorities.
- ▶ Leveraging value capture and other mechanisms to forward-fund transport.
- ▶ Using demand management measures to improve air quality and fund services.
- ▶ Strengthening local planning capacity.

#### Transport Intervention Priorities

We will prioritise essential transport projects to support sustainable growth by:

- ▶ Expanding concessionary schemes to make sustainable travel more affordable.
- ▶ Developing mass transit systems in high-density areas to improve access and reduce congestion.
- ▶ Enhancing Sussex Coast and Solent suburban rail services to compete with road travel.
- ▶ Delivering Local Cycling Walking Improvement Plans and embedding active travel in all new developments..



### Q How strongly do you support the sustainable growth mission in the draft Transport Strategy?

- |                                   |                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly support                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Support                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Neither support or do not support | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Oppose                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Strongly oppose                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't know                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |



**Q How important are the key outcomes of the sustainable growth mission to your organisation?**

	Very important	Important	Neither important or not important	Not very important	Not important at all	Don't know
Population growth and economic development is underpinned by sustainable transport and infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The South East has well connected communities with easy access services and employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q How strongly do you support the priorities which will enable us to improve sustainable growth?**

*Transport Intervention priorities are shown at the top of this page.*

Strongly support	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither support or do not support	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oppose	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly oppose	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q Please tell us the one priority from the list at the top of the page you see as most important to achieving this**

**Q Do you have any further comments on any of the five missions?**



## Global Policy Interventions

You can find full details of our global policy intervention on page 84 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

### **Q How strongly do you agree that the global policy interventions are needed?**

- |                           |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Agree                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Neither agree or disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Disagree                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Strongly disagree         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't know                | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### **Q Are there any other global policy interventions you think should feature in the Transport Strategy?**



## Delivery

The following tables outline the key actions TfSE must take out until 2030 to achieve our missions, and tackle known, cross-cutting delivery challenges.

You can find full details of TfSE's roles as part of our delivery plan from page 91 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

### **Q How strongly do you agree with the actions that TfSE has set in the Delivery Plan?**

- |                           |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Agree                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Neither agree or disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Disagree                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Strongly disagree         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't know                | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### **Q If you disagree or strongly disagree please tell us more about this?**



## Indicators

There are a number of indicators we propose to use to measure the progress of the strategy.

You can view the full table of indicators on page 95 of the full draft Transport Strategy document.

### **Q Are the indicators that we have identified the right ones to measure?**

- |            |                          |
|------------|--------------------------|
| Yes        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### **Q If you have answered 'no' above, please tell us more**

## Integrated Sustainability Appraisal

### **Q To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal represents a through assessment of the draft Transport Strategy?**

- |                           |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Agree                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Neither agree or disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Disagree                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Strongly disagree         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't know                | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### **Q Do you have any specific comments regarding the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal?**



## Overall Views

**Q To what extent do you agree that the draft Transport Strategy sets out an ambitious yet achievable strategy to improve transport across the South East?**

- |                           |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Agree                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Neither agree or disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Disagree                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Strongly disagree         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't know                | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Q Are there any additional comments you would like to make on the draft Transport Strategy?**





## **Privacy Notice – Transport for the South East Transport Strategy Refresh**

### **Overview**

This Privacy Notice covers the responses to the public consultation of our draft Transport Strategy we are delivering as part of our Transport Strategy Refresh.

Transport for the South East and our host authority East Sussex County Council takes data protection seriously. Please be assured that your information will be used appropriately in line with data protection legislation, will be stored securely and will not be processed unless the requirements for fair and lawful processing can be met.

### **What information is being used?**

In order to ensure we accurately reflect the demographic and geographic range of our region, and to keep interested parties updated with this project we will collect the following information:

Personal Data:

Name

Email address

### **How will your information be used?**

Your name and email address will be used so we can monitor and identify duplicate responses, and where agreed so we can contact you at future stages of this project, either to seek your further views or share the outcomes of your involvement as the strategy develops.

All data will be assimilated and pseudonymised for reporting purposes.

We aim to maintain high standards, adopt best practice for our record keeping and regularly check and report on how we are doing. Your information is never sold for direct marketing purposes.

Our staff are trained to handle your information correctly and protect your confidentiality and privacy.

Your information **is not** processed outside of the European Economic Area.

### **What is your legal basis for processing this information?**

Our legal basis for processing your data is consent.

### **How long will your information be kept for?**

Your information will be kept for the duration of this project. You will have the option to remain on our stakeholder database beyond this and if you consent to this we will retain your name and email address until you withdraw consent.

### **How will your information be stored?**

Your information will be stored on our secure systems and accessed only by authorised Transport for the South East officers.

### **Sharing your information**

Your data will be shared with our contracted consultants for analysis purposes.



## **Your rights**

Under data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed why, where and how we use your information
- to ask for access to your information
- to ask for your information to be corrected if it is inaccurate or incomplete
- to ask for your information to be deleted or removed where there is no need for us to continue processing it
- to ask us to restrict the use of your information
- to ask us to copy or transfer your information from one IT system to another in a safe and secure way, without impacting the quality of the information
- to object to how your information is used
- to challenge any decisions made without human intervention (automated decision making)

Please visit [www.eastsussex.gov.uk/your-council/about/keydocuments/foi/data-protection](http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/your-council/about/keydocuments/foi/data-protection) for further details.

## **How to find out more or complain**

Should you have any further queries on the uses of your information, please speak directly to our service: [tfse@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:tfse@eastsussex.gov.uk)

To complain about the use of your information, please contact our Customer Services Team at [www.eastsussex.gov.uk/contactus/complaints](http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/contactus/complaints) or our Data protection Protection Officer at [www.eastsussex.gov.uk/your-council/about/key-documents/foi/data-protection/data-protection-officer](http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/your-council/about/key-documents/foi/data-protection/data-protection-officer).

You can also contact the ICO for further information or to make a complaint:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Phone: 0303 123 1113 (local rate) or 01625 545 745 if you prefer to use a national rate number or you can report a concern on the ICO website at <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>

## **Meeting of the Full Council**

**Monday 13 January 2025**

### **Agenda Item 20.0**

#### **TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS**

##### **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 The report sets out the engagements of the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor between 2 December 2024 and 13 January 2025.
- 1.2 Please note that Councillor K. Bedwell was elected as Mayor and Councillor S. Mayhew elected as Deputy Mayor on 20 May 2024.

#### **TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS**

- 04.12.24 Sussex Mayors Association Luncheon. Seaford Golf Club, Seaford.
- 05.12.24 Meeting with Chamber of Commerce Director and Wealden Volunteering Manager re: People to People Project. Civic Centre, Uckfield.
- 06.12.24 Attended 'Late Night Shopping' event. High Street, Uckfield.
- 07.12.24 Official 'Opening' of Christmas Bazaar. Margaret House, Uckfield.
- 09.12.24 Ribbon Cutting Ceremony. Persimmon Community Art Project. Framfield East Allotments.
- 09.12.24 Cantando Christmas Concert. St Margaret's Church, Buxted.
- 11.12.24 Mayor of Seaford's Christmas Carol Service. St. Leonard's Church, Seaford.
- 13.12.24 Harlands School Winter Wonderland Event. Harlands School, Uckfield.
- 15.12.24 Sussex Association of Bonfire and Carnival Society Carol Service. Holy Cross Church, Uckfield.
- 17.12.24 Attended 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration. Thornbury Care Home, Uckfield.
- 20.12.24 Lighting of Christmas Tree and Choir. Barchester Care Home, Uckfield.
- 22.12.24 Guest at Nine Lessons and Carols. Holy Cross Church, Uckfield.

#### **TO NOTE THE DEPUTY MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS**

- 28.11.24 Attended meeting of League of Friends of Uckfield Community Hospital. Civic Centre, Uckfield.
- 04.12.24 Sussex Mayors Association Luncheon. Seaford Golf Club, Seaford.
- 06.12.24 Attended 'Late Night Shopping' event. High Street, Uckfield.
- 09.12.24 Cantando Christmas Concert. St Margaret's Church, Buxted
- 15.12.24 Sussex Association of Bonfire and Carnival Society Carol Service. Holy Cross Church, Uckfield.

#### **TO NOTE THE TOWN CRIER'S ENGAGEMENTS**

- 06.12.24 Attended to 'open' event and promote the evening's activities
- 14.12.24 Cry to promote Pantomime and Victoria Pavilion Christmas Fair