



Minutes of the meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** held on  
Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 7.00pm  
Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield

**PRESENT:**

Cllr. Angie Smith (Chair)  
Cllr. Duncan Bennett  
Cllr. Chris Macve

Cllr. Karen Bedwell  
Cllr. Donna French  
Cllr. Spike Mayhew

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Councillor Peter Selby

Rachel Newton – Senior Administrative Officer  
Minutes taken by Rachel Newton

**1.0. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

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

None.

**3.0. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Two formal apologies were received in advance of the meeting from Cllr B. Reed and Cllr D. French, both owing to personal reasons.

**4.0. MINUTES**

4.1. Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 25 November 2024

**EL.34.01.25** It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 25 November 2025 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4.2. Action list

Members noted the report and asked for the following item to remain on the action list (discussed further at item 7.2):

EL.55.04.24 – To consider actions to reduce litter in the vicinity of new food outlets and retail businesses.

4.3. Project Monitoring List – for information only

Members noted the report – no further updates.

**5.0. FINANCE**

5.1. To note bills paid

It was disconcerting to see that the recent acts of vandalism to the pillar lighting in Luxford Field had resulted in a huge financial cost to the Town Council and that if this

continued, it may be worth looking at more suitable lighting for this location in the future, with some sort of protection and vandal proof.

Members suggested maybe looking into column lights instead of pillar lighting, which would be a more solid construction and more robust, or quick break away lighting with a protection guard, which were smaller and less easy to damage.

It may also be worth going back to the original company to ask if we had received any advice on the current model purchased and to request any kind of member deal that could be offered in this regard.

5.2 To note the Income & Expenditure report up to 30 November 2024

The Cemetery income for interments and memorials (budgeted at 30 November 2024), was slightly higher than those figures displayed in the initial report that was circulated.

Members subsequently noted the report.

**6.0. ADMINISTRATION**

6.1 To revisit the Cemetery working group and review options available for cemetery provision

Members asked for this invitation to be extended to all Councillors, so that this opportunity did not fall under the auspices of just those members who were on the Environment and Leisure Committee.

Once a working group was set up, it would be useful to take part in a site visit to the cemetery primarily to gather a sense of the works being carried out on a day to day basis by the Grounds staff, and to see how the service could be improved and to establish if any new facilities could be introduced.

Councillors had also been keen to investigate what else cemeteries in Kent and Sussex offered, so this could be explored.

The cemetery was a facility for the local community and it was important that the grounds were well maintained and available at a reasonable price whilst space was available. For this reason, staff had been obtaining quotes for contracted support to attend the cemetery on a fortnightly basis, to provide more attention to detail with grass cutting and maintenance works.

**EL.35.01.25** Members **RESOLVED** to agree to revisit the Cemetery working group, and to ask all Councillors (not just on this committee), to compare costs and facilities in comparison with other local service providers, and to share ideas for future cemetery provision.

6.2 To note a future provision of training resources in relation to matters raised with East Sussex Highways

At the recent Strengthening Local Relations meeting, staff from East Sussex Highways had been asked for some training resources to help local Councillors understand how and where to report any maintenance or road safety issues, and to re-look at their code of conduct.

Local residents sometimes reported potholes or snagging issues to local Councillors, if they were struggling to do this online, which was then raised with East Sussex County Councillors for their assistance, although these issues could often be reported direct through the East Sussex Highways website.

It was also recognised that local Councillors would benefit from being able to view some training resources in regards of where to report maintenance enquiries, road safety issues and to understand the local Highways code of conduct.

The Road safety stewards could only fix issues if they were reported in the first instance, and they were only assigned jobs on the rota, and they were facing some abuse from disgruntled members of the public. Members agreed that greater awareness was needed, although it was understood if a job was not completed or finished properly, that some people would feel upset. Regardless, any abuse towards staff just doing their job was unacceptable.

## **7.0 ENVIRONMENT**

7.1 To receive an update from Wealden District Council's Climate Change Green Paper  
Members noted the report and were happy for the working group to formulate a response on behalf of the Town Council as they had responded to the original survey.

7.2 To review the Town Council's Litter Policy – Policy No. 78  
In respect of a recent request by a local resident for a litter bin in Keld Close, members voted equally for and against this, so the Chair was summoned to cast the deciding vote. This decision was not taken lightly however, as members understood the need to increase the number of litter bins around the town, especially where new developments were being built.

There was a dog fouling sign in Keld Close, and this request did not meet the relevant criteria, although the litter bin scoring system would need to be reviewed again soon, to stay in line with the overall need to provide more litter bins in the town.

Members were aware of the upcoming incentive to find out ways to reduce our waste collection costs at the same time, and money was available in the revenue budget for litter bins.

The vast majority of litter bins had been removed by Wealden District Council in the past, possibly due to waste collection costs at the time, so all those costs needed to be compared during the upcoming review.

It was argued that some people did pick up their litter and take it home if a bin was not available, although the counter argument was that this did not always happen in certain areas, especially with dog walkers.

A local transport plan could be factored in as well which provided the most popular walking routes.

Members also asked for further action to reduce litter in the vicinity of new food outlets and retail businesses, so this was kept on the action list.

Although this no longer appeared to be a problem leading into town, there were still issues with litter gathering at the edge of the Highlands pub and just outside the Co-op. Members wished to offer their gratitude to all the staff who had been keeping this particular area spotless by clearing any rubbish being dumped outside their business premises, and putting it in their bin provided outside. Councillors asked if they could continue to keep an eye on any surrounding areas as well, which would be really helpful.

### **EL.36.01.25 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to:**

- (i) approve the amendments (in red) to the Town Council's Litter policy no. 78, including costs, and;
- (ii) reject the request by a local resident for a litter bin in Keld Close under the current scoring system. Also, to inform the resident that evidence was being gathered to install more litter bins around the town. With three votes in favour (Councillor S. Mayhew, Councillor K. Bedwell and Councillor D. Bennett), and three votes against

(Councillor A. Smith, Councillor D. French and Councillor C. Macve), the deciding vote was made by the committee Chair.

7.3 To note the current position with the Town Council's Estates

The fencing had been removed at Elizabeth Gardens which looked much better. Councillor S. Mayhew made a request for an update on the barrier at Hempstead play area, as this was potentially unsafe. This was logged on the Grounds sheet for urgent attention and would be chased up.

Councillor D. French mentioned that at a meeting last week, at Wealden District Council, she was informed by Councillor Kelvin Williams that there might be some funding available for the West Park play area, although this was not confirmed yet.

**8.0 LEISURE**

8.1 To consider the commemoration of the VE Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

**EL.37.01.25** Members **RESOLVED** to agree to take part in the commemoration and celebration of the VE Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025, and felt that this was only fair to open this up to all Councillors, for everybody to get the opportunity to take part in these working groups.

It had not been intermated, but the decision to have beacon lighting would need to be decided by the working group.

8.2 To establish a working group to organise a showcase event to promote the various Community groups and activities in Uckfield

This was a lovely suggestion and it was felt that this should be opened up to other Councillors and perhaps other stakeholders in turn, who may wish to lead this event, as long as this was kept locally and for Uckfield.

The working group could also work with Wealden Volunteering and support them with this idea, so that they could run this and perhaps we assist them that way around.

It was a good idea, but it might also be worth thinking about including this idea as part of the Weald on the Field event, as this might be the ideal place for everyone to be at, where we know there would be a large footfall. This would need to be considered in terms of space and voluntary groups that wanted to participate, and if people wanted to watch the acts and listen to music, and want to approach these groups at the same time. This could be in the Weald Hall as well as Luxford Field.

This could be a self-promotional idea, where we could assist with this but our input would need to focus on facilitating their needs.

With the VE Day celebration and Weald on the Field event already scheduled, it may be good to organise this for later in the year or springtime next year.

**EL.38.01.25** Members **RESOLVED** to agree to:

- (i) ask other Councillors if they wished to assist with this showcase event to promote the various Community groups and activities in Uckfield, and;
- (ii) ask Wealden Volunteering and support them with this idea raised, so that they could run this event themselves, and to offer to facilitate use of the Weald Hall and Luxford Field.

**9.0 REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS**

None.

**10.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

- 10.1 All Weather Pitch Operational Group  
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.2 Conservators of Ashdown Forest  
Members noted the report and thanked Councillor A. Smith and Councillor B. Reed.
- 10.3 Local Nature Reserve Supporters Group  
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.4 Luxford Centre Management Committee  
Members noted the supplementary report provided and thanked Councillor C. Macve.
- 10.5 Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee  
Members noted the report with thanks again to Councillor C. Macve.
- 10.6 Uckfield Youth Club Board  
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.7 Wealden Bus Alliance/Weald Link  
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.8 Wealden Food Partnership Advisory Group  
Nothing to report at this time.

#### **11.0 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair wished to promote the Green Shoots Fashion Show and had sought the support of Councillor K. Bedwell so this could raise funding for Family2Family charity.

Councillor D. French would also do a pinned post on the News and Events news pages.

#### **12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

**EL.39.01.25** It was **RESOLVED** that pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it was advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

- 12.1 To consider a report on the Marketing programme  
The Marketing and Community Engagement Officer had been meaning to provide updated figures for the various events that took place in December, but the timescales for preparing the report were tight, to meet the agenda despatch deadline. Event reports for November and December would therefore feature in the next committee report.

The meeting finished at 20:21pm.