



UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

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Town Clerk – Holly Goring

A meeting of the **General Purposes Committee** to be held on
Monday 28 April 2025 at 7.00pm
in the
Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield
AGENDA

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

1.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and officers are reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on this Agenda. Should any Member consider that they require a dispensation in relation to any prejudicial interest that they may have, they are asked to make a written application to the Clerk well in advance of the meeting.

Notice should be given at this part of the meeting of any intended declaration. The nature of the interest should then be declared later at the commencement of the item or when the interest becomes apparent.

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

3.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

4.0 MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on the 17 March 2025

4.2 Action list – for information only

4.3 Project list – for information only

4.4 Forward plan – for information only

5.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS

5.1 To note bills paid

5.2 To consider the income and expenditure reports to the end of February 2025

5.3 To receive and note the Internal Audit Report from March 2025

5.4 To note the End of Year Statement for Community Infrastructure Levy Funding for 2024/25

6.0 BUILDINGS

- 6.1 To note the current position with the Council's buildings

7.0 POLICY

- 7.1 To consider the updated Model Financial Regulations
- 7.2 To consider the updated Standing Orders
- 7.3 To consider the updated Publication Scheme
- 7.4 To consider the updated Equality Policy

8.0 ADMINISTRATION

- 8.1 To receive a report on Health and Safety within the Council
- 8.2 To receive Member audit reports (Feb 2025)

9.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

- 9.1 To consider reports from:-
 - (i) Wealden Citizen's Advice
 - (ii) Wealden Volunteering
 - (iii) Wealden District Association of Local Councils – Mgt Committee
 - (iv) Wealden District Association of Local Councils – Planning Panel

10.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

11.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

To consider whether to **RESOLVE** to exclude the press and public (pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960) during consideration of the following confidential business to be conducted: -

- 12.1 To note bad debts
- 12.2 To consider the lease of the Victoria Storage Garages
- 12.3 To receive an update on the Signal Box
- 12.4 To consider an update from Luxfords Restaurant



Town Clerk
22 April 2025

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the **General Purposes Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield on Monday 17 March 2025 at 7.00pm

PRESENT:

Cllr. D. Ward (Chair)	Cllr. D. Manvell
Cllr. C. Macve (Vice Chair)	Cllr. P. Selby
Cllr. J. Love	Cllr. A. Smith

IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Karen Bedwell
Sarah D'Alessio – Assistant Town Clerk & RFO
Holly Goring – Town Clerk
Minutes taken by Holly Goring

1.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

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.

In relation to agenda item 5.4 - recommendations from Finance Sub-Committee for community grant allocations, there were a few members who had declarations of interest.

Councillor Cox - prejudicial interest in Uckfield Youth Trust;
Councillor Manvell – personal interest in Uckfield Youth Trust;
Councillor Ward - personal interest in St. Peter & St. James Hospice;
Councillor Macve - prejudicial interest in The Luxford Centre;
Councillor Love – prejudicial interest in Uckfield Bonfire & Carnival Society, and a personal interest in Sussex Support Services as an employee;

In those circumstances it wouldn't leave many councillors to vote on the grant allocations, and as a result the Town Clerk further reviewed the detail of each of these interests. Based on the interests being personal for both Councillor Manvell and Councillor Ward, and these councillors having no financial gain, they were given a dispensation to participate and vote on the recommendations set out.

Councillor Love's personal interest in Sussex Support Service required her to leave the room for confidential business agenda item 12.1.

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

No statements were received.

3.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillors V. Frost and P. Ullmann due to personal and work commitments respectively. Councillor B. Cox advised that he

would be arriving late due to running late from a personal commitment but did not make the meeting.

4.0 MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on the 3 February 2025

GP40.03.25 Members **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee on 3 February 2025 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4.2 Action list

Members noted that action GP38.02.25 had been completed and the new accountant notified. Members subsequently noted the report.

4.3 Project list

Members noted the updates within the report.

4.4 Forward plan

Members noted the items detailed within the Forward Plan.

5.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS

5.1 To note bills paid

Members noted the bills paid.

5.2 To note the income and expenditure reports up to 31 January 2025

Members discussed the detail within the reports.

Councillor Manvell, as Chair of Finance Sub-Committee advised that the Sub-Committee had set out to undertake a review of the Town Council's hospitality services this year, in preparation for the 2026/27 budget setting. The Town Clerk advised that the sales figures were on track which represented the hard work of the team, but rising food prices were impacting expenditure alongside salary/NI costs.

Councillor Macve noted the positive set of figures under GP Committee. Members noted the content of both reports.

5.3 To receive the minutes of Finance Sub-Committee on 26 February 2025 and 10 March 2025

Members received the draft minutes of the Finance Sub-Committee held on 26 February and 10 March 2025.

5.4 To consider the recommendations of the Finance Sub-Committee held on 26 February and 10 March 2025

Members were presented with three recommendations which they were required to ratify, to ensure completion:

- (i) ratification of the proposed withdrawal of some funds from the 35 day account;
- (ii) ratification of the proposed allocation of community grant funding for 2025/26;
- (iii) cancellation of the return of the final remaining funds, from a past awardee, that had since disbanded;

GP41.03.25 (i) Members **RESOLVED** to agree to the withdrawal of the required amount (£100k was determined by the RFO) from the 35 day account to ensure adequate funds were available until the first half of the annual precept was received at the end of April 2025.

Councillors Love and Macve left the room for discussions on the Community Grant funding allocations.

Councillor Selby sought clarification on the funds proposed to be allocated to Uckfield College Counselling Service.

Councillor Smith sought clarification on the three organisations that had not been allocated funding. Councillor Manvell advised that the sub-committee prioritised applicants who were utilising the funds towards the provision of their services. They were concerned that the project identified for Selby Meadows couldn't be achieved within the year, and there were potentially more cost effective ways of delivering this project. The Town Council didn't have the funds available to invest the amount requested.

The Chair reiterated how difficult the Finance Sub-Committee meeting had been. 28 applications had been received for 2025/26 requesting £56k, and there were many discussions on how to prioritise the spread of the £22k funding available.

Members also noted that some of the frequent recipients of grant funding would need to be reviewed in more detail for future years – i.e. whether the receipt of grant funding would be better served through the format of a service level agreement.

GP42.03.25 (ii) After much discussion, and clarification, three members voted in favour, and **RESOLVED** to:
 (a) write to all applicants to thank them for their attendance and for their patience, and;
 (b) ratify the proposed allocation of grant funding for 2025/26.

Community Grant Funding under the General Power of Competence		
	Organisation	Allocation
1	Family Support Work	£750
2	Uckfield and Area Community First Responders	£1,000
3	Ashdown Radio Ltd	£500
4	Uckfield Music Club	£500
5	Wealden Works	£1,000
6	Uckfield Food Bank	£750
8	Uckfield Youth Trust	£1,100
9	Uckfield College	£3,000
10	St Wilfrid's Hospice (Eastbourne)	£1,000
11	Imago Community East Sussex Young Carers	£595
12	Care for the Carers	£2,000
13	Uckfield Camera Club	£500
14	Uckfield Proms on the Pitch	£500
15	Uckfield Community Orchestra	£320
16	Friars Gate Archers	£250
17	St Peter & St James Hospice	£1,000

20	Uckfield Bonfire and Carnival Society CIC	£3,000
21	2530 Uckfield Squadron RAF Cadets	£600
22	Sussex Support Service	£750
23	Royal British Legion Uckfield	£200
24	Uckfield Phab Club	£793
25	Uckfield Theatre Guild	£583
26	Bluebell Railway Preservation Society	£250
27	PDA Sense	£559
28	Ridgewood Village Hall	£500
	TOTAL	£22,000

Councillors Love and Macve were invited back into the meeting.

Councillor Smith left the room for consideration of the final recommendation from the Finance Sub-Committee relating to the Uckfield Green Partnership.

The Town Clerk explained the situation and monies that had been returned by the now disbanded organisation, but that a small amount was outstanding, which would have left individuals personally liable.

GP43.03.25 (iii) Members **RESOLVED** to write off the final figure and to strengthen the annual review of grant allocation spend, starting with the following actions:

- (a) The Town Council should strengthen its review of grants spent. A letter should be sent to all successful applicants within the first 6 months to check in on how the funding was being utilised.
- (b) Once the annual review report by Wealden Volunteering was received, any outstanding amounts would be reviewed again.

Councillor Smith returned to the meeting.

6.0 BUILDINGS

6.1 To note the current position with the Council's buildings

Members sought clarification on the Signal Box, and 2A Vernon Road.

Councillor Selby enquired about the placement of a bench on the entrance to Mallard Drive, and correspondence he had received from a local resident. The Town Clerk was in the process of handling the enquiry.

Members noted the report.

7.0 POLICY

7.1 To consider the Annual Leave Policy (No. 81)

Members reviewed the draft policy.

GP44.03.25 Members **RESOLVED** to ratify the recommendation of the Personnel Sub-Committee to approve the Annual Leave Policy (No. 81).

7.2 To consider the revised "Management of Sickness Absence Policy" (No. 14)

GP45.03.25 Members **RESOLVED** to ratify the recommendation of the Personnel Sub-Committee to approve the revised Sickness Absence Policy (No. 14).

7.3 To consider the Annual Investment Strategy (No. 45)

Members noted that the reference made to the UK Central Government department was still not relevant to today's current structure, albeit the reference made related to when the guidance notes were adopted and updated. It was therefore suggested that a more general reference be given to UK Government guidance.

GP46.03.25 Subject to this change, members **RESOLVED** to ratify the recommendation of the Finance Sub-Committee, for the adoption of the Annual Investment Strategy (No. 45).

8.0 ADMINISTRATION

8.1 To receive a report on Health and Safety within the Council

Members noted the update.

8.2 To receive Members' audit reports (none)

9.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

9.1 To consider reports from: -

(i) Wealden Citizen's Advice
Nothing to report.

(ii) Wealden Volunteering
Councillor Selby, the Town Council representative, advised that the organisation had renewed their lease for the property on the High Street for a further five years. The lease agreement had a three-year break clause, so provided some flexibility. Members thanked Cllr Selby for the update.

(iii) Wealden District Association of Local Councils – Mgt Committee
Nothing to report.

(iv) Wealden District Association of Local Councils – Planning Panel
Nothing to report.

10.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair, Councillor Ward, reminded everyone that it was the Annual Town meeting that Wednesday. The meeting would be taking place in the Council Chamber and start promptly at 7.00pm.

11.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Clerk advised members that they had been approached by landowners LCP, regarding the open space south of Fuller & Scotts Funeral Director, and behind the flats from the High Street. The initial intention of the landowner was to provide a commercial car park. When asking the landowners for their ballpark figure for the site, they quoted £140k.

Members requested that the Clerk obtain more information through a land registry search, of:

- the exact size of site;
- any covenants or restrictions;
- any wayleaves;

The landowner would also need to make a formal offer to the Town Council, and set out the above.

GP47.03.25 Members **RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders and extend the meeting by 15 minutes to allow time for the items still needing to be addressed under confidential business.

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

GP48.03.25 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 the terms of the lease agreement for the first floor of Victoria Pavilion
GP49.03.25 Members **RESOLVED** to task the Town Clerk with liaising with the leaseholder, to update them on the valuation range for the premise. Members agreed to a 10-year term for the premise, but agreed that legal advice would be required on whether to do one rent review period at five years, or a staircase approach.

12.2 To consider the terms of the lease agreement for the Cemetery Chapel
GP50.03.25 Members **RESOLVED** to task the Town Clerk with liaising with the leaseholder, to update them on the valuation for the premise. Members agreed to a 5-year term for the premise, with three year break clause, which would be beneficial for both parties based on this being a new lease.

12.3 To note bad debts
Members discussed and noted the bad debts listed.

12.4 To receive the minutes from Personnel Sub-Committee on 11 March 2025
Members received the draft minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee held on 11 March 2025.

12.5 To consider the recommendations from the Personnel Sub-Committee on 11 March 2025
The policies had already been considered above. Following that, the Town Clerk presented an update on progress made towards the staffing proposals set out within the budget for 2025/26.

GP51.03.25 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to give authorisation for the members of Personnel Sub-Committee (*which aligned with the Urgent Consultation Panel group*), to sign off the consultation paper on the forthcoming staffing proposals before circulating to affected staff.

12.6 To consider an update on Luxfords Restaurant
Members noted the contents of the report.

The meeting closed at 21.07pm.

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

ACTION LIST – FOR INFORMATION ONLY

General Purposes Committee

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Completed
<u>GP36.02.24</u>	6.2 To consider a progress update on Ridgewood Village Hall Car Park Members RESOLVED to: (iii) ask the Estates & Facilities Manager to proceed with investigating works involved in Stage 1 (<i>subject to the modifications discussed which would include changing the aco drain for a concrete channel at the entrance to the car park</i>) with quotations to be sought from three contractors for the exact same specification.	05.02.24	JH	In progress.
<u>GP25.11.24</u>	6.2 To initially consider the feasibility report for the Signal Box Members RESOLVED to request that other interested parties be engaged to see the level of interest in the property in its current state or refurbished.	04.11.24	JH	In progress.
<u>GP41.03.25</u>	<u>To consider the recommendations of the Finance Sub-Committee held on 26 February and 10 March 2025</u> Members RESOLVED to agree to the withdrawal of the required amount (£100k was determined by the RFO) from the 35 day account to ensure adequate funds were available until the first half of the annual precept was received at the end of April 2025.	17.03.25	SD	NFA. Completed.

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
PROJECT MONITORING
GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Outstanding/ongoing initiatives from 2022/23

Project name		Building Maintenance Fund (Year 8 – 2022/23)		Project Number		68	
Resolution No.	Funds	Date	Commentary				
<u>FC82.01.22</u>	Proposed expenditure on Building Maintenance Fund 2022/23						
	Year 8		Estimate	Proposed		Expenditure to date...	
	Ridgewood car park drainage		30000	Quotations for Stage 1 of the works have been received, and consideration of the quotations is in progress.		£5,422.50	

Project name		Civic Centre Signage		Project Number	71
Resolution No.	Funds	Date	Commentary		
<u>FC82.01.22</u>	£2,000.00	17.01.22	This funding will be used towards the replacement of the main Civic Centre sign at the front of the Civic Centre and will require the feedback and engagement of Town Councillors. Still to be progressed.		

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
PROJECT MONITORING
GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

Projects for 2024/25

Project Name		Building Maintenance Fund		Project Number	80
Resolution No.	Funds	Date	Commentary		
<u>FC.91.01.24</u>	£93,605	15.01.24	Projects agreed for 2024/25:		
			LED lighting – Civic (£4,943) - Victoria (£19,289) Works to replace and update lighting, and in particular emergency lighting has commenced, with substantial works being carried out in the Civic Centre.		
			Fire door upgrades – Foresters (£13,902) - Victoria (£22,495) - West Park (£22,976) Works were completed in February and March 2025. Contractors currently working on snagging and making good. NFA.		
			Office reconfiguration – (£10,000)		

Project Name		New tables and trolleys for Civic Centre Ground floor rooms		Project Number	81
Resolution No.	Funds	Date	Commentary		
<u>FC.91.01.24</u>	£10,000	15.01.24	This will be in actioned in due course.		

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
PROJECT MONITORING
GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

Project Name		WPA NHS Top-Up		Project Number	83
Resolution No.	Funds	Date	Commentary		
<u>FC.91.01.24</u>	£2,340	15.01.24	This has been processed through the year and is reconciled monthly following payroll. All completed and year end reconciliation being completed. NFA.		

Project Name		Additional funds for Signal Box		Project Number	84
Resolution No.	Funds	Date	Commentary		
<u>FC.91.01.24</u>	£10,000 (plus additional funds from Building Maintenance Programme funding for 2023/24 (£8,000), and 2022/23 (£5,000).	15.01.24	Work is currently in progress, with a commercial enterprise looking to renovate and take on the building. Members will be updated in due course.		

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
PROJECT MONITORING
GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

Projects for 2025/26

Project Name		Building Maintenance Programme 2025/26		Project Number	86
Resolution No.	Funds	Date	Commentary		
<u>FC.90.01.25</u>	£55,000	13.01.25	Identified work will be presented to GP Committee in June 2025.		

Project Name		Update of Mayoral Chain		Project Number	87
Resolution No.	Funds	Date	Commentary		
<u>FC.90.01.25</u>	£750	13.01.25	To be progressed following Annual Statutory Meeting.		

Project Name		Professional expertise for major projects and policy reviews		Project Number	88
Resolution No.	Funds	Date	Commentary		
<u>FC.90.01.25</u>	£30,000	13.01.25			

Project Name		New parish noticeboards for new developments		Project Number	89
Resolution No.	Funds	Date	Commentary		
<u>FC.90.01.25</u>	£2,000	13.01.25	To be progressed shortly.		

GENERAL PURPOSES FORWARD PLAN – 2025

STANDING ITEMS FOR GENERAL PURPOSES AGENDA	REPORT LEAD
Minutes from the last meeting	Town Clerk
Action list	Mgt Team
Project list	Mgt Team
Bills paid	Town Clerk
Bad Debts	Asst TC
Income and expenditure reports	TClerk / Asst TC
Buildings Update	E&F Manager
Health & Safety Update	Asst TC / E&F Mgr
Member Audit reports	TClerk / Asst TC
Reports from outside bodies	Councillor representatives
Draft lease agreements for consideration under confidential business	TClerk / E&F Mgr
Luxfords report	Hospitality Manager

GENERAL PURPOSES FORWARD PLAN – 2025

DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	REPORT OFFICER
28 April 2025	Internal Audit Report from interim visit – Feb 2025	Asst TC
	Review of Model Financial Regulations	Asst TC
	Review of Equality & Diversity Policy	Town Clerk
	Review of Publication scheme	Town Clerk
	End of Year Statement – Community Infrastructure Levy Annual Monitoring Report	Town Clerk
	CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS	
	To review lease agreements for the Storage garages	Town Clerk
	Update on Signal Box	E&F Manager
DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	REPORT OFFICER
9 June 2025	To write off small under and over payments	Asst TC
	Consider carry forward of unspent revenue budget	Asst TC
	Review of Social media policy	M&CE Officer
	Review of Media and Communications policy	M&CE Officer
	To consider the insurance contract for public liability, employer liability and vehicle insurances	Asst TC
	Feedback from VAT review	Asst TC/Town Clerk
	Review of Training and development policy	Town Clerk
	Review of Serving alcohol policy	Town Clerk
	CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS	
	To consider draft of lease agreement for Cemetery Chapel	Town Clerk
	To consider final draft of lease agreement for Victoria Pavilion	Town Clerk

GP Committee at 28 February 2025

	Apr 24 Actuals £	May 24 Actuals £	Jun 24 Actuals £	Jul 24 Actuals £	Aug 24 Actuals £	Sept 24 Actuals £	Oct 24 Actuals £	Nov 24 Actuals £	Dec 24 Actuals £	Jan 25 Actuals £	Feb 25 Actuals £	Actuals at 28 Feb 25	Budget at 28 Feb 25	Mar 25 Budget £	Total £	2024/25 Budgets
Sales																
Training and Administration	177	150	0	0	0	0	125	0	0	0	0	452	300	100	552	400
Festive Light Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,000	0	0	0	3,000	2,000	0	3,000	2,000
Bank Interest - Business Reserve	259	753	575	555	329	207	732	570	472	354	189	4,996	11,917	1,083	6,079	13,000
Bank Interest - Capital Reserve	1,802	1,699	1,540	1,735	1,500	1,554	1,549	1,444	1,597	1,536	1,093	17,048	0	0	17,048	0
Interest Misc. (Fixed Rate Bond)	0	0	0	15,056	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15,056	7,000	0	15,056	7,000
Interest Misc.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	0	13	0	0	13	0
Civic Centre	14,774	11,699	10,619	5,924	6,609	4,343	14,671	5,388	7,723	11,625	7,876	101,251	109,642	14,258	115,509	124,900
Feed-in Tariff Payments	46	0	1,746	0	0	2,088	0	0	1,082	0	0	4,962	3,000	2,000	6,962	5,000
Quickborn Suite rent	708	708	708	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	8,125	8,250	750	8,875	9,000
West Park Pavilion	0	0	1,000	339	0	0	2,446	0	0	1,349	0	5,134	4,500	1,448	6,581	6,600
Victoria Pavilion	901	871	1,029	926	875	958	2,628	875	875	2,426	939	13,303	12,325	2,025	15,328	14,350
RHI - C.Centre Boiler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7,149	0	4,247	0	11,396	11,000	0	11,396	11,000
RHI - FHall Boiler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,028	0	0	0	1,028	0	0	1,028	0
Victoria Storage Garages	50	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	0	100	200	0	100	200
Cemetery Chapel workshop	0	1,375	0	0	1,375	0	0	1,375	0	0	458	4,583	5,500	0	4,583	5,500
Foresters Hall	1,594	1,880	1,271	1,099	383	337	2,242	2,250	1,384	856	2,217	15,515	15,125	1,475	16,990	16,600
Foresters Chapel	288	0	0	288	0	0	288	0	0	288	0	1,150	1,150	0	1,150	1,150
2a Vernon Road, rent	650	650	650	650	650	650	0	1,550	775	775	775	7,775	7,150	650	8,425	7,800
Signal Box	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,000	6,000	6,000
Osborn Hall	0	0	0	943	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	1,043	1,050	0	1,043	1,050
Ridgewood Village Hall	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,111	2,111	1,350	0	2,111	1,350
Bridge Cottage	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,845	0	1	0	0	2,846	2,849	0	2,846	2,850
The Source & Com Fridge	0	0	739	241	0	0	779	0	0	1,067	0	2,826	3,750	1,893	4,719	5,300
Town Crier	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Toilet Scheme	0	305	0	0	305	0	0	305	0	0	305	1,220	1,130	0	1,220	1,130
Wealden Lottery grant funding	10	13	10	10	13	10	17	14	14	17	10	136	0	0	136	0
Total Sales	21,258	20,103	19,888	28,515	12,789	10,948	29,071	25,798	14,674	25,301	16,723	225,068	209,187	31,682	256,750	242,180
£4,006 of this is a new initiative and consists of phase 2 of the computer upgrade																
Purchases																
Administration	1,802	1,216	1,866	1,694	901	1,407	2,006	1,813	992	1,503	1,242	16,441	11,401	909	17,350	12,310
General Advertising	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	125	125	125	250
Recruitment Advertising	0	115	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	115	375	125	240	500
Office Equipment/Computers	1,351	5,092	3,127	1,499	1,086	1,473	1,168	511	814	814	1,047	17,981	11,000	0	17,981	11,000
Hospitality	17	0	27	0	0	78	14	18	5	20	10	187	100	0	187	100
Health & Safety	0	0	274	175	20	47	0	74	11	23	2,138	2,762	3,667	333	3,095	3,500
Insurances	0	124	7,110	0	0	0	40,341	0	0	0	489	48,063	43,500	0	48,063	43,500
Public Works Loan Costs	0	0	0	19,566	0	0	0	0	0	19,360	0	38,926	39,800	0	38,926	39,800
Mayor's Allowance	0	0	497	0	0	583	0	0	497	0	0	1,576	1,490	497	2,073	1,987
Grants Section142	0	9,500	0	0	0	0	0	9,500	0	0	0	19,000	19,000	0	19,000	19,000
Grants - Power of Competence	0	15,784	0	0	0	0	0	6,995	(557)	0	0	22,222	25,000	0	22,222	25,000
Volunteer Bureau SLA	0	0	8,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8,000	8,000	0	8,000	8,000
Clothing - Corp & Prot - Indoor staff	0	0	8	0	35	0	0	0	78	0	7	128	225	75	203	300
Internal Audit Fees	0	0	623	0	0	0	0	690	0	0	0	1,313	1,600	900	2,213	2,500
(External) Audit Fees	0	0	0	0	0	2,100	0	0	0	0	0	2,100	2,250	0	2,100	2,250
Accountant fees	0	0	5,150	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,150	5,100	0	5,150	5,100
Professional Fees	220	0	1,200	0	0	1,330	3,973	839	(940)	650	238	7,510	8,250	2,750	10,260	11,000
Festive Lights	5,444	0	0	0	0	0	2,724	0	0	2,572	0	10,740	15,000	0	10,740	15,000
Festive Light Electricity	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	500	0	0	500
Office Staff - Salaries	21,153	21,015	21,158	20,999	21,192	21,193	21,307	26,742	22,061	22,328	22,426	241,573	257,211	23,383	264,956	280,594
Office Staff - National Insurance	2,119	2,098	2,119	2,096	2,124	2,123	2,138	2,897	2,244	2,281	2,294	24,534	28,016	2,547	27,081	30,563
Office Staff - Pensions	4,229	4,199	4,230	4,196	4,236	4,236	4,256	5,363	4,411	4,465	4,484	48,304	51,700	4,700	53,004	56,400
Members Allowances/Expenses (TBC)	0	0	3,539	0	0	3,552	0	0	3,552	0	0	10,642	12,740	4,357	14,999	17,097
Newsletter	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	810	4,810	4,675	425	5,235	5,100
Bank Charges	67	59	74	64	162	66	65	50	73	62	75	817	880	80	897	960
Civic Centre Running Costs	12,889	11,081	5,757	8,229	5,449	8,447	10,383	6,189	12,468	8,263	6,083	95,238	101,329	4,821	100,059	106,150
Caretakers - Salaries	8,311	10,441	7,610	7,311	9,086	7,094	7,135	12,139	7,777	9,065	7,181	93,149	97,536	8,867	102,016	106,403
Caretakers - National Insurance	464	712	468	455	677	443	450	1,045	526	666	442	6,348	6,094	554	6,902	6,648
Caretakers - Pension	1,398	1,756	1,255	1,260	1,596	1,242	1,252	2,105	1,372	1,580	1,249	16,065	19,605	1,782	17,847	21,387
Casual caretakers	97	219	950	660	1,155	1,093	733	1,054	512	510	168	7,151	1,375	0	7,151	1,500
West Park	190	1,084	100	292	310	98	126	336	137	133	677	3,482	0	0	3,482	0
Victoria Pavilion	2,980	1,375	1,061	1,632	600	2,116	5,111	883	3,371	3,953	(713)	22,366	18,958	3,200	25,566	22,000
Cemetery Buildings	87	86	86	86	86	86	86	86	86	86	81	941	1,700	0	941	1,700
Signal Box	366	296	350	296	305	685	297	300	296	300	228	3,717	2,500	0	3,717	2,500
The Hub	296	1,774	0	1,502	(225)	1,313	329	532	2,569	185	187	8,462	1,000	0	8,462	1,000
Foresters Hall	1,349	601	590	848	2,818	750	1,174	1,797	1,149	1,353	64	12,492	11,992	558	13,051	12,550
2a Vernon Road	0	324	0	0	105	115	190	339	0	74	135	1,282	1,000	0	1,282	1,000

GP Committee at 28 February 2025

	Apr 24 Actuals £	May 24 Actuals £	Jun 24 Actuals £	Jul 24 Actuals £	Aug 24 Actuals £	Sept 24 Actuals £	Oct 24 Actuals £	Nov 24 Actuals £	Dec 24 Actuals £	Jan 25 Actuals £	Feb 25 Actuals £	Actuals at 28 Feb 25	Budget at 28 Feb 25	Mar 25 Budget £	Total £	2024/25 Budgets
Subscriptions	3,262	0	473	651	0	0	77	0	479	0	0	4,942	4,600	0	4,942	4,600
Training	3,511	65	0	125	400	270	40	575	0	310	0	5,296	5,500	500	5,796	6,000
Bank Interest	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(215)	(215)	0	0	(215)	0
All Building Cleaning Materials	325	170	142	903	77	173	169	213	128	171	133	2,603	2,292	208	2,812	2,500
Total Purchases	72,324	89,584	78,243	74,937	52,595	62,512	105,943	83,482	64,510	81,126	50,958	816,215	827,086	61,696	877,911	888,249

New initiatives 2024/25

Building Maintenance Fund	0	0	0	13,651	6,388	20,463	625	4,363	30,587	0	0	76,077	0	0	N/A	93,605
New tables and trolleys for Civic Centre Grnd Flr	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	509	0	0	0	509	0	10,000	N/A	10,000
Computer upgrade phase 2	0	4,006	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,006	4,500	0	N/A	4,500
WPA NHS Top Up	710	103	(280)	742	(280)	750	282	327	758	227	227	3,568	1,170	195	N/A	2,340
Signal Box	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	10,000
Asset Market Valuation Report	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,000	0	0	0	0	5,000	3,500	0	N/A	3,500

Earmarked reserves

[illegible]

Luxfords at 28 February 2025

	Apr 24 Actuals £	May 24 Actuals £	Jun 24 Actuals £	Jul 24 Actuals £	Aug 24 Actuals £	Sept 24 Actuals £	Oct 24 Actuals £	Nov 24 Actuals £	Dec 24 Actuals £	Jan 25 Actuals £	Feb 25 Actuals £	Actuals at 28 Feb 25	Budget at 28 Feb 25	Mar 25 Budget £	Total 2024/25	2024/25 Budgets
Sales																
Restaurant Food Sales	13,506	13,056	12,513	12,764	12,565	12,967	19,545	16,265	13,180	14,551	13,656	154,568	144,500	13,500	168,068	158,000
Restaurant Bar Sales	684	527	634	603	631	466	629	416	870	444	870	6,774	9,625	875	7,649	10,500
Function Food Sales	2,994	1,449	3,528	2,106	768	1,511	3,504	2,491	4,100	3,107	4,462	30,021	31,150	3,850	33,871	35,000
Function Bar Sales	1,312	2,192	4,334	1,333	24	1,000	254	3,506	2,783	587	184	17,510	22,000	2,000	19,510	24,000
Hire of Urn	164	33	24	96	13	28	84	26	73	38	79	659	1,467	133	792	1,600
Hire of Luxfords Restaurant	0	0	13	101	0	121	200	0	200	0	0	635	917	83	718	1,000
Sundry Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	458	42	42	500
Total Sales	18,660	17,258	21,047	17,002	14,002	16,094	24,216	22,706	21,205	18,727	19,250	210,167	210,117	20,483	230,650	230,600
Purchases																
Food Purchases	5,201	4,273	4,821	4,379	3,707	4,805	6,648	5,790	5,821	5,643	4,976	56,064	47,750	4,250	60,314	52,000
Bar Purchases - non-alcoholic	599	735	132	173	225	347	278	77	336	5	336	3,241	2,500	400	3,641	2,900
Bar purchases - alcoholic	943	1,239	93	512	143	160	198	1,376	357	37	158	5,216	7,000	1,100	6,316	8,100
Consumables	165	234	181	125	68	165	265	257	104	71	367	2,002	1,500	500	2,502	2,000
Cleaning	18	0	0	59	643	0	24	17	0	41	48	850	750	250	1,100	1,000
Maintenance & Repairs	7	0	0	119	0	0	0	0	883	126	90	1,224	1,500	500	1,724	2,000
Equipment - New/Replacements	30	149	6	353	110	354	2,267	0	0	0	0	3,268	1,125	375	3,643	1,500
Equipment Hire	0	535	299	87	0	237	0	0	0	0	0	1,158	900	0	1,158	900
Rates	712	712	712	712	712	712	712	712	712	712	0	7,117	7,200	0	7,117	7,200
Electricity	1,386	974	819	766	0	800	863	1,128	1,096	1,156	1,437	10,425	8,250	750	11,175	9,000
Gas	514	139	125	(121)	247	125	126	142	127	140	128	1,692	2,933	267	1,959	3,200
Water	0	0	0	562	0	0	428	0	0	280	0	1,269	1,600	0	1,269	1,600
Refuse Collection	253	211	188	224	198	188	352	198	217	225	220	2,473	1,650	150	2,623	1,800
Stocktaking	205	0	0	205	0	0	637	0	0	0	230	1,277	850	0	1,277	850
Uniforms/Protective clothing	0	181	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	48	230	150	150	380	150
Salaries	9,520	11,323	10,345	10,663	11,961	10,591	10,978	16,446	11,287	12,341	9,876	125,332	111,755	10,160	135,491	121,915
National Insurance	556	783	567	550	744	625	681	1,356	710	880	594	8,045	7,546	686	8,731	8,232
Pension	1,717	2,056	1,882	1,911	2,103	1,824	2,016	3,027	2,056	2,317	1,863	22,774	20,726	1,884	24,658	22,610
Casual wages	1,750	2,265	644	1,137	586	789	960	1,413	1,132	1,233	1,429	13,340	8,250	750	14,090	9,000
Credit charges	293	303	371	174	40	20	187	166	140	0	107	1,800	2,750	250	2,050	3,000
Total Purchases	23,871	26,113	21,185	22,588	21,486	21,743	27,617	32,104	24,977	25,206	21,907	268,797	236,686	22,421	291,218	258,957

*£2,266.50 was spent on a new commercial microwave and installation with member approval (£1k reallocation of earmarked reserves, and £1k from general reserves).

Holly Goring
Uckfield Town Council

26 March 2025

Dear Holly

Uckfield Town Council

Second Interim Internal Audit 24-25

Following the second interim audit completed on 26 March, I attach my updated report for consideration by the Council. This was the second of three audits I intend to carry out to support my opinion on the 24-25 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). I covered the following at this visit:

- Follow up previous recommendations
- Review of accounting and VAT processes
- Testing of expenditure months 9-12
- Risk management and insurance
- Budget setting
- Income - whole financial year
- Transparency Code reporting

I am pleased to report that the Council has successfully maintained a robust system of financial control, and I have identified no matters to date that would result in a negative opinion on the year- end internal audit report. At Appendix A I list updated recommendations arising from the 24-25 audit.

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require smaller authorities, each financial year, to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control and prepare an annual governance statement in accordance with proper practices in relation to accounts. The internal audit reports should therefore be made available to all members to support and inform them when they are considering the Authority's approval of the annual governance statement. I am required by Section 4 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to review controls in place at the Council against predefined control assertions. These control assertions are set out below, together with the results of testing carried out at the interim audit.

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Company Registration Number 14174016
6 Uplands Road. Farnham GU9 8BP

A - Appropriate books of account have been kept properly throughout the year

First Interim Audit

The Council maintains financial records on the Sage Accounting system. My testing confirmed that income and expenditure is balanced to the cashbook and reconciled to bank statements on a regular basis. In the course of my testing I confirmed there is a clear audit trail from the accounts to supporting documentation such as invoices.

I was not able to complete my testing of the brought forward balance on the Sage accounting system, as a number of year end journals from 23-24 have been posted into the current year. The RFO is looking into how to correct these journals, I will then retest the opening balance at my next audit.

The Council has a system of member audits. These are carried out each month, and a member is tasked with reviewing the following:

- Supplier invoices
- Sales ledger transactions
- Staff timesheets
- Bank and petty cash reconciliations

I checked that the member audit process has been operating in 24-25. The last member audit covered August 24, and this was actioned in October. Whilst I would like this check to be completed a little more promptly, I am satisfied that the member audit system is operating as expected.

The Council is registered for VAT, and submits VAT returns to HMRC on a quarterly basis. I reviewed the VAT return for quarter 2. The return was completed on 7 November 2024 and VAT of £23,715 was reclaimed from HMRC. I checked the VAT return and test checked that entries in the return could be agreed to VAT reports extracted from the Sage system.

At my 23-24 audit, I reported that the Council has not had a VAT review for some time and that knowledge of some VAT processes could be strengthened (eg the partial exemption calculation). The RFO confirmed that the Council has contacted a VAT expert to commission a VAT review, it is hoped that this will be completed before year end. This is important as the Council must understand partial exemption and option to tax arrangements in place at UTC.

Second Interim audit

The RFO confirmed that the Council has commissioned a light touch VAT review by the Parkinson Partnership. A visit has been made by the VAT expert and the report is due imminently.

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B - The Council's financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved, and VAT was appropriately accounted for

First Interim Audit

Financial Regulations are based on NALC templates. The Council has adopted new financial regulations, based on the template published by NALC in May of this year. These were approved at the Full Council meeting in May 24, with a further amendment approved at the September 24 meeting. Standing Orders are also up to date, these were reviewed at the September 2024 Full Council meeting.

The Council has a clear process for making payment to suppliers,. Invoices are sent into the office, these are then reviewed against orders and coded and signed off for processing by the Town Clerk. The invoice is passed to the RFO, who inputs the invoice into Sage. Every 2 weeks a BACS run report is run from Sage. The RFO rechecks invoices against this report and the payment is entered by the RFO on to the Council bank account. Payments and payment run information is then presented to Councillors, who physically sign bank payment reports, and approve payments at bank. I reviewed the new financial regulations, this process is properly set out.

I carried out a sample test of non-pay expenditure transactions selected from the cashbook for the first 8 months of the financial year. Transactions were selected from the Day Books: Paid Invoices Report. I was able to confirm the following for all transactions:

- Payment agreed to invoice
- Invoice passed for payment by Town Clerk, evidenced on the face of the invoice
- Invoice signed off by 2 councillors on face of invoice
- VAT accounting correct
- Expenditure appropriate for this Council

There is a clear audit trail from Sage to source documentation to demonstrate compliance with Council financial regulations in the processing of payments to suppliers.

One project was reviewed as part of this testing – refurbishment of heating at Victoria Pavilion. The value of this project is £50,334. It is my opinion that this contract should have been advertised on the Contracts Finder website, this is set out in financial regulations:

- 6.7 **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation (*requiring councils to use the Contracts Finder website and to publicise the award of contracts over £30,000 including VAT, regardless of whether they are advertised*), regarding the advertising of contract opportunities and the publication of notices about the award of contracts.**

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Second Interim audit

A further sample of 5 expenditure transactions were selected from months 9-12 from the accounting system. For all transactions tested I was able to confirm that:

- Payment agreed to invoice
- Invoice passed for payment by Town Clerk, evidenced on the face of the invoice
- Invoice signed off by 2 councillors on face of invoice
- VAT accounting correct
- Expenditure appropriate for this Council

I have now concluded my testing of expenditure for the year, and I am satisfied that the Council has been following financial regulations in the way that expenditure and payments are approved.

C - The Council assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.

First Interim Audit

The Council is insured with Marsh Insurance. The policy was in date at time of audit, with an expiry date of 18 October 2025.

The following assets are insured:

Address	Postcode	Buildings	Buildings	Machinery plant and all other contents	Machinery plant and all other contents
		Declared Value £	Sum Insured £	Declared Value £	Sum Insured £
Uckfield Civic Centre	TN22 1AE	£6,549,750	£7,532,213	£50,259	£57,798
Cemetery Chapels, Uckfield	TN22 2AL	£346,450	£398,418	£5,330	£6,130
The Museum, Bridge Cottage	TN22 1AZ	£2,121,750	£2,440,013	£0	£0
The Foresters Hall & 2a Vernon Road	TN22 5DT	£1,326,350	£1,525,303	£2,600	£2,990
Foresters Chapel	TN22 5DT	£233,778	£268,845	£0	£0
The Pavilion, West Park	TN22 5DU	£725,700	£834,555	£728	£837
Uckfield Signal Box	TN22 1PU	£291,100	£334,765	£0	£0
(Main) Victoria Pavilion, Uckfield	TN22 5DJ	£2,039,750	£2,345,713	£63,960	£73,554
(Green Shed) Victoria Pavilion	TN22 5DJ	£325,950	£374,843	£79,428	£91,342
(Storage units) Victoria Pavilion	TN22 5DJ	£26,137	£30,058	£0	£0
The Village Clock, Uckfield, East Sussex	TN22 1AN	£3,530	£4,060	£0	£0
Osborn Hall, Hempstead Road	TN22 1DZ	£472,525	£543,404	£0	£0
Snatts Road Cemetery Wall	TN22 2AL	£59,757	£68,721	£0	£0
The Source, Civic Approach	TN22 1AL	£272,650	£313,548	£0	£0
Ridgewood Village Hall, New Road	TN22 5TG	£1,219,750	£1,402,713	£0	£0
Machinery, Plant and all other contents floating over Uckfield Civic Centre & The Hub, Civic Approach	TN22 1AE, TN22 1AL	£0	£0	£269,698	£269,698
Totals		£16,014,927	£18,417,166	£472,003	£502,349

Cyber insurance has also been purchased, following recommendations raised at my last audit.

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Second Interim Audit

The Council has completed the review of the Risk Management Policy for 24-25 – Full Council January 2025, minute 84.1.25, following detailed review by the General Purposes Committee. The Risk Management Policy is published on the Council website. It is comprehensive and there is evidence of review in year.

I reviewed the members audit file, and found that checks were up to date. The January review had been completed, and the February review is due once month end reconciliations have been finalised. I confirmed that the quarterly review of the bank reconciliation has been completed, this was actioned as part of the December review by members.

I note that the Council budget for 25-26 is close to £2 million. In order to meet external audit requirements, it is recommended that the process for confirming the appointment of internal audit is strengthened. The Council should minute:

- That it has considered the independence of the internal auditor
- That it has considered the internal audit work programme
- That it has satisfied itself as to the competence of the internal auditor
- That it has agreed a letter of engagement

All information required to assist the Council in this process is set out in my annual engagement letter.

D - The annual precept requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate

First Interim Audit

The precept and budget setting process for the 25-26 financial year is under way. I will review further at my next visit.

I confirmed regular budget monitoring reports, as required by financial regulations, continue to be produced for Council meetings, by reviewing minutes. I sample checked the following

- Environment and Leisure – position at end of August delivered to the October committee meeting
- Quarter 1 position for whole Council was reported at the October Council meeting. This is a little in arrears, ideally budget monitoring reports should be delivered to members within 1 month of the end of each quarter.

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I discussed the Council's earmarked reserve balances with the Clerk and the RFO. The Council has too many earmarked reserves, and should look to consolidate these into a smaller number of more meaningful reserve balances, covering the following:

- Reserves to support fixed assets repair and replacement
- Contingencies
- Projects
- Balances that must be earmarked (eg CIL / grants received and capital receipts)

Second Interim Audit

The budget and precept for 25-26 were approved at the Full Council meeting on 13 January 2025. An annual budget of £1.986m was set, alongside a precept of £1,321,884. The budget was set following review by Council sub committees, and final detailed review of the overall council budget by the Finance sub-committee. Precepting authority deadlines were met.

I will review reserves at my year end audit, the RFO has confirmed that reserves have been reviewed and rationalised in 24-25.

E - Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for for

Second Interim Audit

I tested a sample of income transactions selected from the bank receipts report extracted from Sage for the whole of the financial year.

For Luxfords and functions income I completed the following tests:

- Income per sage agreed back to z reading on till
- I checked cash figure on till report to physical cash count signed off by supervisor and RFO
- Cash banking agreed to paying in slip and to bank statement
- Credit card banking per till report agreed to bank statement

I have two recommendations.

- The Council does not currently have a process for dealing with imbalances identified when the till is cashed up each day. All imbalances should be reported to the RFO as soon as they are identified, and examined as part of the banking process.

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- The till used for food and bar sales is a number of years old, and a time consuming manual process has to be followed to enter sales data on to the accounting system. There are a number of electronic point of sales (EPOS) systems available in the market that can be integrated with the Sage accounting system. The Council may wish to explore options available.

I checked recommendations raised at last audit relating to Luxfords have been implemented by the Council

Other income was also tested:

- Ticket sales through eventbrite agreed to report from ticket agency and to bank statement
- CIL income agreed to remittance advice note from the district council
- Room Hire – a sample of room hire credits were tested from the ledger back to invoices. I then recalculated invoices and checked these had been raised in line with approved fees and charges.
- Rental Income – agreed to shorthold tenancy
- I note that the Council lets a room to a small business. I note that this has rent has not been reviewed since 2022. I therefore recommend that this rent is reviewed in the next 6 months.

I checked the sales ledger at 27.3.25. Debts outstanding at this time were £30,139, of which £5,810 was more than 90 days old. I discussed all older debts more than £500 with the RFO and Town Clerk, and I am satisfied that arrangements are in place to pursue these debts. The Council may wish to move debtors with a history of late payment on to payment in advance if they wish to continue using Council facilities.

F - Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts; all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for

Year-end test

G- Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with council approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.

First Interim Audit

The RFO logged into the HMRC account on 12 November. This showed that the Council is up to date with HMRC submissions and no payments are outstanding.

Payroll is processed monthly, in good time for monthly payments to staff. Timesheets are sent into the office, these are inspected and signed off by the Town Clerk. The RFO sets up the monthly payroll on the Sage payroll system, and checks outputs prior to further processing. Payroll is set up on Natwest Bankline. The Bankline report is signed by the RFO, and checked and signed by the Town Clerk. Authorisation for payment is provided by a councillor, evidenced by signature on the Sage Payroll Summary page

I checked the August 2024 payroll. The cashbook payment was agreed to the payroll summary and the to the bankline report. I confirmed the bankline report had been reviewed and signed off by the RFO / Town Clerk and a councillor. Payments to HMRC and the pension provider were agreed back to payroll reports.

I selected 4 members of staff from the bankline report. For all staff selected I was able to agree pay to payslip. I tested gross pay for each officer, and confirmed that this could be agreed to a pay award letter. Correct scale point was applied, as set out in payscales published by NALC and all scale points were checked to staff pay award letters.

I am satisfied that the Council has a robust payroll system, is up to date with HMRC submissions and payments, and that staff tested are being paid in line with approved rates of pay .

H - Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.

Year end audit

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I – Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.

First Interim Audit

I reviewed the bank reconciliation file. There is clear evidence that bank reconciliations are being completed on a regular basis, the member audit file provided confirmation that these bank reconciliations are being reviewed by members. Bank accounts held by the Council are set out below:

Account	Sage Balance	Note on reconciliation
1210 – clerks account	0	Reconciled 1.10.24 by RFO
1200 – General Account	200,008 – End Aug	Reconciled to end of august, September reconciliation being prepared for member audit
1221 – Fixed Rate Bond	Once a year statement	Reconciled annually when bank sends statement
1224 – Lloyds Bank	Account being be prepared for closure.	Reconciled annually when bank sends statement
1225 – 35 Day account	101,837 – End Sept	Reconciled 1.10.24 by RFO
1226 – 95 Day account	409,189– End Sept	Reconciled 1.10.24 by RFO
1227 – Business Reserve	629,596– End Sept	Reconciled 1.10.24 by RFO

I reperformed the September bank reconciliations for accounts highlighted in yellow, and August for the general account, highlighted in blue. No reconciliation has been prepared in 24-25 for the fixed rate and Lloyds accounts, the bank only issues statements annually. The September bank reconciliations are due to be checked as part of the next member audit, but had not been signed off as correct at the time of my interim audit. I confirmed that these checks had been completed by a councillor for August 24.

J - Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.

Year end test

K: If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 23-24 , it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt.

Not applicable

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L: The Authority publishes information on a free to access website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with any relevant transparency code requirements

Second Interim Audit

The Council meets the requirements of the 2015 Transparency Code by publishing information on the “Transparency on Spend” tab on the website. I checked data at my second interim audit in March and sample checked the following:

- Expenditure data – transactions over £250 published to the end of January 2025
- Grants awarded – published showing awards made in January 2025
- Land - asset register and property management plan published.

Data was up to date and Transparency Code requirements are being met.

M - Arrangements for Inspection of Accounts

Inspection periods for 23-24 accounts were set as follows

Inspection - Key date	23-24 Actual
Accounts approved at Full Council	26 June
Announcement	27 June
Inspection period begins	28 June
Inspection period ends	8 August
Correct length	Yes

The Council met the requirements of this control objective.

N: Publication requirements 23-24 AGAR

The Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and the external audit certificate for 23-24 are published in document archive section of the Council website. The external audit certificate was qualified – External audit comments are set out below:

The AGAR was not accurately completed before submission for review. Please ensure that amendments are corrected in the prior year comparatives when completing next year's AGAR. The smaller authority has confirmed that payments to purchase fixed assets have been excluded from Section 2, Box 6. Please note that the Practitioners' Guide requires that Box 6 includes the costs of purchasing fixed assets. The figures in Boxes 6 and 7 should read £826,974 and £1,249,896 respectively.

I have discussed this matter further with the RFO, the amendment relates to accounting for payments for fixed assets. UTC incorrectly excluded £20K of fixed asset expenditure from expenditure figures in the 23-24 accounts. The Council must:

- Amend the opening balances on the accounting system to reflect the adjustments recommended by external audit
- Ensure that the amended 23-24 figures are included in next year's AGAR

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- Check that no similar issue arises as part of 24-25 closedown.

The Conclusion of Audit certificate was published on 27 September, after the date of the audit certificate (26 September), and before the regulatory deadline of 30 September . The external audit certificate was reported to the meeting of Full Council on 21 October (agenda item 10.0).

The Council is required by regulations to publish AGAR documentation for the previous 5 years. I have checked the Council website, and I was able to view AGAR documentation going back to the 2017-18 financial year.

O - Trust funds (including charitable) The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.

Satisfactory –The Council has confirmed to me that the Council is not sole trustee of a charity.

I would like to thank you for your assistance with the audit. I look forward to meeting you for the year end audit. I attach my invoice for your consideration

Yours sincerely



Mike Platten CPFA

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APPENDIX A

MATTERS ARISING 24-25 AUDIT

FIRST INTERIM AUDIT

Matter Arising	Recommendation	Council Response
I was not able to complete my testing of the brought forward balance on the Sage accounting system, as a number of year end journals form 23-24 have been posted into the current year.	The RFO is looking into how to correct these journals, I will then retest the opening balance at my next audit.	
At my 23-24 audit, I reported that the Council has not had a VAT review for some time and that knowledge of some VAT processes could be strengthened (eg the partial exemption calculation).	The RFO confirmed that the Council has contacted a VAT expert to commission a VAT review, it is hoped that this will be completed before year end. This is important as the Council must understand partial exemption and option to tax arrangements in place at UTC.	
One project was reviewed as part of this testing – refurbishment of heating at Victoria Pavilion. The value of this project is £50,334.	It is my opinion that this contract should have been advertised on the Contracts Finder website	
The Council has too many earmarked reserves,	<p>UTC should look to consolidate these into a smaller number of more meaningful reserve balances, covering the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reserves to support fixed assets repair and replacement - Contingencies - Projects - Balances that must be earmarked (eg CIL / grants received and capital receipts). 	

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SECOND INTERIM AUDIT

Matter Arising	Recommendation	Council Response
In order to meet external audit requirements, it is recommended that the process for confirming the appointment of internal audit is strengthened.	<p>The Council should minute:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - That it has considered the independence of the internal auditor - That it has considered the internal audit work programme - That it has satisfied itself as to the competence of the internal auditor - That it has agreed a letter of engagement 	
<p><u>Bar and Food Sales</u></p> <p>The Council does not currently have a process for dealing with imbalances identified when the till is cashed up each day.</p>	All imbalances should be reported to the RFO as soon as they are identified, and examined as part of the banking process.	
<p><u>Bar and Food Sales</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The till is used for food and bar sales is a number of years old, and a time consuming manual process has to be followed to enter sales data on to the accounting system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are a number of electronic point of sales (EPOS) systems available in the market that can be integrated with the Sage accounting system. The Council may wish to explore options available. 	
I note that the Council lets a room to a small business. I note that this has rent has not been reviewed since 2022.	I therefore recommend that this rent is reviewed in the next 6 months.	

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Meeting of the General Purposes Committee

Monday 28 April 2025

Agenda Item 6.1

TO NOTE THE CURRENT POSITION WITH THE COUNCIL'S BUILDINGS

1.0 Summary

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

2.0 The Buildings

2.1 The Civic Centre

- Works have been undertaken to address issues with the hot water supply to the bar area. Quotes are still being sought for a longer-term solution as well as options to improve the heating in Luxfords Restaurant, along with heating for this area;
- Works are booked to repair a small leak in the front entrance area roof, this has been delayed due to the contractor having a backlog of works;
- The Caretakers Station has been signed off East Sussex Buildings Control with no further actions required;
- The Fire Folder has been updated for 2025 including red bags for the Fire brigade;
- The annual Legionella Risk Assessment and Fire Risk Assessment has been carried out and remedial works have been priced for actioning;
- Spill kits have been installed in Civic, Foresters Hall and Victoria;
- A new food waste bin has been ordered to meet current changes to waste disposal regulations;
- To aid with good manual handling moving large numbers of chairs, a new chair trolley has been purchased;
- The Biomass boiler has had its 6 monthly service carried out;
- The annual intruder alarm serviced have been completed;
- The flag pole is due to be serviced at the end of April 2025;
- A new defibrillator has been purchased to replace the former;

The Source

- The EICR remedials for the Fridge have now been completed.

The Signal Box

- This building is still being inspected on a weekly basis, as instructed by our insurance provider;
- The annual Air con service has been carried out;
- Work with a potential leaseholder is underway with a view to lease the building out on a long-term lease;

Victoria Pavilion

- The fire doors have now been replaced and will be decorated/labelled in the next few months;
- Works have started to re-decorate the entire ground floor area following the installation of the new boiler system. The old flues have now both been removed and made water tight;
- The EICR remedials for Victoria have now been completed;

- The Defib box has been upgraded in partnership with the Uckfield Lions;

Foresters Hall

- The fire doors have now been replaced and will be decorated/labelled in the next few months;
- Works have been completed to make internal areas good, following the installation of the new hot water boiler systems in Foresters Chapel;
- Works have been completed to make internal areas good in Foresters Hall following the installation of the new air source heat pump.
- The Defib box has been upgraded in partnership with the Uckfield Lions;

Snatts Road, Chapel

- This building is still being inspected on a weekly basis, as instructed by our insurance provider;
- Work with a potential leaseholder is underway with a view to lease the building out on a five year lease;

West Park

- The fire doors have now been replaced and will be decorated/labelled in the next few months;
- The Estates & Facilities Manager is working with the leaseholders in relation to health and safety, compliance and providing support to maintain the updated compliance inspections;

2A Vernon Road

- The current tenant has signed a six-month lease extension;
- A repair to faulty cooker socket has been carried out;

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: James Hollingdale

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Issue No.	Date Agreed	Details of amendments
1	11 October 2005	Reissued in new format
2	27 May 2008	General Purposes Minute No. GP.010.05.08
3	17 August 2009	General Purposes Minute No. GP.017.08.09
4	18 April 2011	General Purposes Minute No. GP.104.04.11 Full review undertaken
5	13 April 2015	GP.70.04.15 Review and Update
6	15 August 2016	Amendment in response to updated model financial regulations
7	5 November 2018	Amendment in line with revised Standing Orders – GP Committee
8	9 March 2020	Proposed amendments in line with changes to NALC's Model Financial Regulations in 2019
9	25 April 2022	GP41.04.22 Approval of amendments presented to GP Committee in line with NALC Model Regulations
10	15 May 2023	Annual review – Annual Statutory meeting of the Council
11	20 May 2024	Annual review – Annual Statutory meeting of the Council FC.18.05.24
12	9 Sept 2024	FC.47.09.24 - Review in line with scheme of delegation
13	28 April 2025	Review by GP Committee – <u>changes to Section 6</u> in line with recent changes to Procurement legislation

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1.0 GENERAL

- 1.1 These Financial Regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council. Financial regulations are one of the council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the council's standing orders and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts. The Council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of financial control which facilitates the effective exercise of its functions, including arrangements for the management of risk and for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption. These Financial Regulations are designed to demonstrate how the Council meets these responsibilities.
- 1.2 The post of Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) is a statutory office under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and shall be appointed by the Council. The RFO, acting under the policy direction of the Council, shall administer the Council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices. The RFO shall determine on behalf of the Council its accounting records and accounting control systems. The RFO shall ensure that the accounting control systems are observed and that the accounting records of the Council are maintained and kept up to date in accordance with proper practices. The RFO shall assist the council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources.
- 1.3 The RFO shall produce financial management information as required by the Council.
- 1.4 In these Financial Regulations:
- 'Accounts and Audit regulations' means the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.
 - 'Approve' refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
 - 'Authorise' refers to a decision by the council, or a committee or an officer, to allow something to happen.
 - 'Proper practices' means those set out in the Practitioners Guide.
 - Practitioners Guide refers to the guide issued by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) and published by NALC in England
 - 'Must' and **bold text** refer to a statutory obligation the council cannot change.
 - 'Shall' refers to a non-statutory instruction by the council to its members and staff;
 - 'Value for money' means the public sector definition of value for money. Value for money is based not only on the minimum purchase price (economy) but also on the maximum efficiency and effectiveness of the purchase (the three 'E's') plus equity. Achieving value for money can be described as using public resources in a way that creates and maximises public value.

- 1.5 Section 150(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 which governed the stewardship of money held by local councils has been repealed. It required that 'every cheque or other order for the payment of money be signed by two members of the Council'. Although this requirement has been repealed it is felt that it still remains good practice and will be retained by the Council, for the relevant method of payment.
- 1.6 Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.7 Members of the council are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.8 The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:
- procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the council are recorded as soon as practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible;
 - procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct lost records;
 - identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions;
 - procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records, and measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.
- 1.9 **The council must not delegate any decision regarding:**
- setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);
 - the outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls;
 - approving accounting statements;
 - approving an annual governance statement;
 - borrowing;
 - writing off bad debts;
 - declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence, and'
 - addressing recommendations in any report from the internal and external auditors, shall be a matter for General Purposes Committee/Full Council accordingly.
- 1.10 In addition, the council shall:
- determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
 - authorise any grant or single commitment in excess of £5,000;
 - in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to the recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant committee in accordance with its terms of reference.

2.0 RISK MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROL

- 2.1 The council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.
- 2.2 The Council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The RFO or appropriate Officer shall prepare, for approval by the Council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the Council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the General Purposes Committee, for ratification by the Council at least annually.
- 2.3 When considering any new activity, the RFO or appropriate Officer shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration by the General Purposes Committee.
- 2.4 At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, and annual accounts, the Council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 2.5 The council's accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:
- ensure that risk is appropriately managed;
 - ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;
 - prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud;
 - allow the reconstitution of any lost records;
 - identifying the duties of officers dealing with transactions and;
 - ensure division of responsibilities..;
 - that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money;

3.0 ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT

- 3.1 All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.2 The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonable accuracy at any time.
Accounting records shall in particular contain:
- entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the council, and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate;
 - a record of assets and liabilities of the council, and;
 - wherever relevant, a record of the council's income and expenditure in relation to the claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.
- 3.3 The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

- 3.4 The RFO shall be responsible for completing and certifying the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the Council contained in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the accounting statements, the RFO shall submit them to and report thereon to the Council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.5 Anti-Fraud and Corruption
- 3.5.1 In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations the separation of duties of Officers dealing with financial transactions shall be carried out wherever practical, thus reducing the risk of fraud or suspicion of fraud.
- 3.5.2 Wherever possible arrangement shall be made to ensure that the same two Officers carry out no more than two of the following:-
- (a) The ordering of works, goods or services.
 - (b) The acknowledgement of their receipt,
 - and
 - (c) The examination and certification of invoices and accounts.
- 3.5.3 Wherever possible, Officers responsible for the examination and checking of records of cash transactions shall not be engaged in any of these transactions.
- 3.6 Audit
- 3.6.1 The RFO shall complete the Annual Accounts of the Council and shall submit the accounts for approval and authorisation by the Council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.6.2 **The council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices.**
- 3.6.3 **Any Officer or Member of the council shall, if the RFO or Internal Auditor requires, make available such documents of the Council which appear to the RFO or Internal Auditor to be necessary for the purpose of the internal audit** and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, Internal Auditor or External Auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary for that purpose.
- 3.6.4 The Internal Auditor shall be appointed by the council and shall carry out the work required by the Council to evaluate the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners Guide.

- 3.6.5 The council shall ensure that the Internal Auditor:
- shall be competent and independent of the operations of the Council,
 - shall report to the General Purposes Committee in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;
 - demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, the Internal Auditor shall be free from any conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships, and;
 - have no involvement in the management or control of the Council.
- 3.6.6 Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
- perform any operational duties;
 - initiate or approve accounting transactions;
 - provide financial, legal, or other advice including in relation to any future transactions'; or
 - direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor
- 3.6.7 For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as described in The Practitioners Guide.
- 3.6.8 The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to accounts including the opportunity for inspection of the accounts, books, and vouchers, and associated documents for the display or publication of any notices and statements of account required by the relevant Acts and Regulations.
- 3.6.9 The RFO shall, as soon as practicable, bring to the attention of all Members any correspondence or report from the Internal or External Auditor, unless the correspondence is of a purely administrative nature.
- 3.7 **Members' Audit**
- On a monthly basis one Member of the Council will carry out an audit in accordance with the Members' Audit Policy No. 63 and will report their findings to the next meeting of the General Purposes Committee. This audit incorporates spot checks of supplier invoices, customer invoices, timesheets, and bank reconciliation and verification to nominal code, as well as the petty cash for both Uckfield Town Council and Luxfords Restaurant.
- 3.8 At least once a quarter and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chairman shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and be noted by General Purposes Committee when they review the member audits. This can form part of the existing member audit procedures.

4.0 BUDGET AND PRECEPT

- 4.1 **Before setting a precept, the council must calculate its council tax requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.**
- 4.2 Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by General Purposes Committee at least annually in the autumn, for the following financial year and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chair of the relevant committee.
- 4.3 Each committee shall formulate and submit draft annual budget proposals to the Council in respect of revenue and capital expenditure for the following financial year, not later than the end of December each year.
- 4.4 Detailed estimates of income and expenditure on revenue services and receipts and payments on capital accounts shall be prepared as part of this, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement in any forecasts.
- 4.5 The draft budget (with committee proposals and forecast), including the recommendations for the use and accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the Finance Sub-Committee for recommendation to the Council.
- 4.6 Having considered the proposed budget and forecast, the Council shall review the estimates not later than the end of January each year and shall determine the council tax requirement by setting a budget. The council shall set a precept for this amount no later than the middle of January.
- 4.7 **Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**
- 4.8 **The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February**, and supply each Member with a copy of the agreed budget.
- 4.9 The annual capital and revenue expenditure shall form the Council's budgets and the basis of financial control (monitoring progress and comparing actual spending and income against what was planned) for the ensuing year.
- 4.10 In considering its annual estimates the Council shall have regard to its current five year Strategic Plan, and Annual Plan.
- 4.11 Any withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council or General Purposes Committee, or Environment & Leisure Committee. Any re-allocation of existing earmarked reserves, must be agreed by the council.

5.0 BUDGETARY CONTROL

- 5.1 Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included in the approved budget, and detailed in the regulations.
- 5.2 No expenditure may be incurred that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that item of expenditure, unless first approved by the General Purposes Committee or the Urgent Consultation Panel. Unspent provisions in the revenue budget shall not be carried forward to a new financial year, unless moved to other budget headings or placed in an earmarked reserve by resolution of the General Purposes Committee.
- 5.3 The RFO shall regularly provide each committee with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose “material” shall be in excess of [15%?] of the budget.
- 5.4 The Estates & Facilities Manager, Assistant Town Clerk & RFO or Town Clerk may authorise expenditure which is necessary to carry out any repair, replacement, Health and Safety or other work, which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for expenditure. This is subject to a limit of £5,000 (exclusive of VAT). If time allows, the Clerk shall report the action or request for funding to the Urgent Consultation Panel. The outcome of the action taken by senior officers or decision taken by Urgent Consultation Panel, should be reported to the relevant committee.
- 5.5 Where expenditure is incurred in accordance with Regulation 3.4 above such sums shall be approved by the General Purposes Committee at the next available meeting.
- 5.6 No expenditure shall be incurred in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure, unless the relevant committee is satisfied that it is contained in the capital programme and that the necessary capital funds are available, or the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained. Such authority is to be evidenced by a minute or by an authorisation slip duly signed by the Clerk and where necessary also by the appropriate Chair.
- 5.7 All capital works relating to contracts shall be administered in accordance with the Council’s Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these regulations/

6.0 PROCUREMENT

- 6.1 **All Members of the Council and Officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** An Officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure as far as reasonable and practicable, that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers.
- 6.2 The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the legal power being used shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised so that the minutes can record the power being used.
- 6.3 Every contract, whether made by the Council or by a committee to which the power of making contracts has been delegated, shall comply with the Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exception from any of the following provisions of these Regulations shall be made other than in an emergency.
- 6.4 For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Public Contracts Regulations Procurement Act 2023 and the Procurement Regulations 2024 ~~15~~ or any superseding legislation ("the legislation") must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.
- 6.5 Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of the items listed below in paragraph 6.12) obtain prices as follows:
- 6.6 For contracts estimated to exceed £60,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the Council, or advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.
- 6.7 **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation** ~~(requiring councils to use the Contracts Finder website and to publicise the award of contracts over £30,000 including VAT, regardless of whether they are advertised), regarding the advertising of contract opportunities and the publication of~~ invitations and notices ~~about the award of contracts.~~
- 6.8 For any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works or specialist services with an estimated value ~~between~~ greater than £10,000 but not exceeding £30,000, the Town Clerk/Assistant Town Clerk & RFO or Estates & Facilities Manager shall invite quotations from at least three appropriate firms from a preferred list of contractors as set out in the Financial Regulations.
- 6.9 Where the value is of £10,000 or less in value, the Town Clerk

or a duly approved Officer shall have authorisation to obtain such goods or services from an appropriate firm, but try and obtain three estimates to evidence online prices or recent prices from regular suppliers

6.10 For smaller purchases, the Clerk shall seek to achieve value for money.

6.11 **Contracts must not be split ~~into smaller lots~~ to avoid compliance with these rules.**

6.12 The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:-

~~(i) For the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services.~~

(ii) For specialist services such as are provided by legal professionals acting in disputes (solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants or other services) identifies to be of a specialist nature by the Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk & RFO or Estates & Facilities Manager;

(iii) For work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;

~~(iiiiv)~~ For work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council;

(iv) for goods or materials ~~proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles that are only available from one supplier~~ and/or are only sold at a fixed prices

6.13 When applications are made to waive this financial regulations ~~relating to contracts~~ to enable ~~tenders a price~~ to be negotiated without competition, the reason shall be ~~embodied set out~~ in a recommendation to the Council or General Purposes Committee. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.

6.14 Neither the Council, nor any committee is bound to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate

6.15 Only the Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk & RFO, Estates & Facilities Manager or Hospitality Manager, may initiate orders which shall be endorsed by a second Officer. No individual member or group of members may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.

6.16 No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council or duly delegated committee acting within its Terms of Reference, except in an emergency or approval granted through the Urgent Consultation Panel.

6.17 In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the Estates & Facilities Manager, Assistant Town Clerk &

RFO or Town Clerk may authorise expenditure on behalf of the council which is necessary to carry out any repair, replacement, Health & Safety or other work, subject to a limit of £5,000 (exclusive of VAT). If time allows, the Clerk shall report the action or request for funding to the Urgent Consultation Panel. The outcome of the action taken by senior officers or decision taken by Urgent Consultation Panel, should be reported to the relevant committee.

- 6.18 No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the council or relevant committee is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.
- 6.19 An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate, e.g. petty cash purchases. Where an order number is given verbally, a written order must be raised. Copies of all orders issued shall be retained.
- 6.20 Goods and services received shall be checked against the relevant copy of the purchase order. Access to the ordering programme shall be controlled by the RFO.
- 6.21 Invitations to tender shall state the period and the general nature of the intended contract and the Town Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. In addition, the invitation shall state that tenders must be addressed to the Town Clerk and the last date by which such tenders should reach the Town Clerk. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specially marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.
- 6.22 All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by either the Town Clerk or Assistant Town Clerk & RFO or Estates & Facilities Manager in the presence of at least two Members of the Council.
- 6.23 The Officer shall record the details of the tender, the names and addresses of each tenderer, the amount or price of the tender, the time and place of opening, and the names and signatures of those present at the opening of the tenders. The above details shall be reported to the Council, or where the tenders have been sought by a committee to that committee.
- 6.24 If fewer than three tenders are received for contracts valued above £560,000 or if all the tenders are identical, the Council may make such arrangements as it thinks fit for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works.
- 6.25 Any invitation to tender issued under this Regulation shall contain a statement of the effect of Standing Orders Nos: 25.1. 25.2 and 25.3.
- 6.26 Should it occur that the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, that the work is not allocated and the council

requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was undertaken.

7.0 BANKING AND PAYMENTS

- 7.1 The Council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the Council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for efficiency. The arrangements shall be reviewed annually for security and efficiency.
- 7.2 The council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error.
- 7.3 All invoices for payment shall be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified and certified by the Officer issuing the order. Before certifying an invoice, the Officer shall be satisfied that the works, goods or services to which the invoice relates have been received, carried out, examined and approved.
- 7.4 Duly certified invoices shall be examined in relation to arithmetical accuracy and authorisation, and shall be coded to the appropriate expenditure head. The RFO or appropriate Officer shall take all possible steps to settle all invoices or statements submitted, and which are in order, within 30 days of their receipt, or earlier, or in such manner, (e.g. standing order, direct debit etc), if such payment results in benefit to the Council, subject to any initial instruction forms or letters being signed by two Members of the Council.
- 7.5 Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be summarised to avoid disclosing personal information.
- 7.6 With the exception of the arrangements set out in Regulation 6.1, all certified invoices and payments shall be paid by BACs, drawn on the Council's accounts and all BACs payments shall be signed by two members of the Council. A schedule of payments, listed by committee heading, and signed by the same two Members of the Council, shall be provided and presented at the next meeting of the committee. A member who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment in question.
- 7.7 Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5, the council, a duly delegated committee or the Clerk or RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.
- 7.8 Apart from petty cash, payments shall be effected by BACs or other order drawn on the Council's bankers.
- 7.9 All duly certified invoices will then be entered on the schedule of payments

made and presented to the next meeting of the appropriate committee in accordance with Regulation 5.3.

- 7.10 All monies received by the Council, including Luxford's takings, shall be banked daily and a full record made on the reverse of the paying-in slip. The paying-in and withdrawal of funds is now processed through the Post Office. The Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk were issued with debit cards for withdrawing funds from the Clerk account, in addition to 'change giving' cards to authorise the withdrawal of monies for petty cash purposes only.
- 7.11 Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have disclosable prejudicial interest or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.
- 7.12 The council will aim to rotate the duties of member in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.

8.0 PAYMENT CARDS

- 8.1 Corporate credit card accounts must be set up to operate within defined limits and be specifically restricted to use by the Town Clerk, RFO and Estates & Facilities Manager. The credit card will be subject to automatic payment by direct debit in full from the main bank account each month. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.

9.0 PETTY CASH

- 9.1 The RFO or other appropriate Officer may authorise petty cash to Officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers, relevant receipts or other supporting documentary evidence for payments made shall be forwarded to the RFO with a claim for reimbursement.
 - (a) The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of no more than £400 across the two tins for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses incurred by the Council.
 - (b) The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of no more than £250 for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses incurred by Luxfords Restaurant.
 - (c) Re-imburement for sums over £50 from any petty cash float shall only be made by cheque.
 - (d) Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked as provided in Regulation 9.
 - (e) Management of petty cash will be in accordance with internal audit procedures.

10.0 ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS

- 10.1 If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items may be made by BACs or CHAPS methods provided that the instructions for each payment are signed, or otherwise evidenced, by two authorised bank signatories, are retained and any payments are reported to the council as made. The approval of the use of BACs or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 10.2 If thought appropriate by the council payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained showing which members approved the payment.
- 10.3 Where a computer requires use of a PIN number or other passwords, for access to the council's records on that computer, a note shall be made of the ~ PIN and passwords, and shall be handed to and retained by the Chair of the Council in a sealed dated envelope. This envelope may not be opened, other than in the presence of two other councillors. After the envelope has been opened, in any circumstances, the PIN/or passwords shall be changed as soon as practicable. The fact that the sealed envelope has been opened, in whatever circumstances, shall be reported to all members immediately and formally to the next available meeting of the council. This will not be required for a member's personal computer used only for remote authorisation of bank payments.
- 10.4 No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the council or duly delegated committee.
- 10.5 Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away from the computer and preferably off site.
- 10.6 The council, and any members using computers for the council's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.
- 10.7 Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as Service Administrator, alongside the Town Clerk. The bank mandate approved by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts. The bank mandate will state clearly the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the use of the Service Administrator alone, or by the Service Administrator with a stated number of approvals. The Service Administrator shall set up all items due for payment online. A list of payments for approval, together with copies of the relevant invoices, shall be presented to two authorised signatories.
- 10.8 In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator, the Clerk shall set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.
- 10.9 Two councillors who are authorised signatories shall check the payment details

against the invoices before approving each payment using the online banking system. Evidence shall then be retained showing which members approved the payment online.

- 10.10 A full list of all the payments made will then be presented to the next relevant standing committee.
- 10.11 Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page, and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved password facilities must not be used on any computer used for council banking work. Breach of this regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.
- 10.12 Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written hard copy notification by the supplier and supported by hard copy authority for change signed by two signatories (Town Clerk/RFO or authorised member signatory). This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.
- 10.13 If thought appropriate by the council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by ~ variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by two members and any payments are reported to the relevant committee. The approval of the use of a variable direct debit shall be renewed by resolution by the relevant committee at least every two years.
- 10.14 If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items (principally salaries) may be made by banker's standing order provided that the instructions are signed, or otherwise evidenced by two members are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 10.15 Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.

11.0 PAYMENT OF SALARIES AND WAGES

- 11.1 **As an employer, the Council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation.** The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salaries shall be as agreed by the Council.
- 11.2 **Councillors allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.**
- 11.3 Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be

made for tax, National Insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions may be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to the next available council meeting, as set out in these regulations above.

- 11.4 No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of General Purposes Committee.
- 11.5 All time sheets where applicable shall be in a form prescribed by the RFO and certified as to their accuracy by the member of staff and countersigned by the appropriate manager.
- 11.6 Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record. This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise), other than:
- (a) by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;
 - (b) by the internal auditor;
 - (c) by the external auditor;
 - (d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.
- 11.7 Appropriate Officers shall notify the RFO as soon as possible of all matters affecting the payment of salaries and wages and in particular:-
- Appointments, resignations, retirements, dismissals, suspensions, secondments and all other staff movements.
 - Absences from duty for sickness or other reasons.
 - Information necessary to maintain records of service for superannuation, income tax and national insurance.
 - Changes in remuneration, allowances or working times.
- 11.8 The RFO and the Town Clerk are authorised to make payments of salaries and wages through 'Bankline' subject to such initial permission being signed by two Members of the Council. The total of such payments in each calendar month shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations, to ensure that only payments due for the period have actually been paid.
- 11.9 In the event of emergencies where no two authorised Officers are available to make such payments, the RFO or Town Clerk shall request two Members of the Council to be present.
- 11.10 The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually for the following

financial year and such review shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chair of the Council or relevant committee. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time. This forms part of the annual budget setting process.

- 11.11 An effective system of personal performance management should be maintained for the senior officers.
- 11.12 Termination payments shall only be authorised by General Purposes Committee and before employing interim staff, General Purposes Committee must consider a full business case.

12.0 LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

- 12.1 All loans and investments shall be negotiated by the RFO in the name of the Council, and shall be for a set period of time in accordance with any appropriate Council Policy. Changes to loans and investments should be reported to the General Purposes Committee at the earliest opportunity.
- 12.2 Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible assets) shall be subject to approval by General Purposes Committee. In each case a report in writing shall be provided, in respect of value for money for the proposed transaction.
- 12.3 The Council's Investment Policy (No. 45) in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, shall be written in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance and shall be reviewed by the council at least annually. Prior to the receipt of the precept instalment every six months, the Finance Sub-committee may if required, provide information to the General Purposes Committee on the possible investment of these funds.
- 12.4 All investments of money under the control of the Council shall be in the name of the Council.
- 12.5 All borrowings shall be affected in the name of the Council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose and subsequent arrangements for the loan shall only be approved by full council. The terms and conditions of borrowings shall be reviewed at least annually.
- 12.6 All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 12.7 Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with these regulations.

13.0 INCOME

- 13.1 The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of, and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 13.2 Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be ultimately responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Council.
- 13.3 Appropriate committees will review their fees and charges annually following a report by the RFO or other appropriate Officer.
- 13.4 All accounts due will be collected in accordance with these Regulations and any sums found to be irrecoverable or any subsequent bad debts shall be reported to the General Purposes Committee:

Overdue accounts and bad debts shall be treated in the following manner:-

- (i) Customers with outstanding accounts at 90 days shall be passed to a registered debt collector following a final seven day warning at the discretion of the RFO or appropriate Officer of the Town Council.
 - (ii) Any bad debts that cannot be recovered shall be referred to the General Purposes Committee for authorisation to be written off or for authorisation to make arrangements to collect the debt in other ways.
- 13.5 All sums received on behalf of the Council shall either be submitted to the RFO for banking or to the appropriate Officer collecting the money as directed by the RFO. In all cases all receipts shall be deposited with the Council's bankers in accordance with Regulation 5.2 or in such manner as subsequently directed by the Council's Internal Auditor.
- 13.6 A reference to the related invoice, or otherwise, indicating the origin of each receipt, shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 13.7 All sums received by BACS will be made available for scrutiny for subsequent audits.
- 13.8 Every transfer of official money from one member of staff to another shall be checked and signed for by the receiving Officer.
- 13.9 The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.
- 13.10 Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the Council, the

RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the General Purposes Committee to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

- 13.11 Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.

14.0 PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS

- 14.1 Where contracts provide for payments by instalments, the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments, which shall be made within the time specified in the contract, by the RFO upon receipt of authorised certificates issued by the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract and a valid claim for payment from the contractor. (Subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).
- 14.2 Any variation to a contract, or addition to, or omission from a contract must be authorised by the Town Clerk to the contractor in writing. The Council or appropriate committee should be informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the contract sum by 5% or more, or likely to exceed the budget available.

15.0 STOCKS, STORES AND EQUIPMENT

- 15.1 The Officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and security of all relevant buildings, furniture, equipment, cash, stocks and stores in that section.
- 15.2 Appropriate Officers shall ensure that all conditions of insurance are complied with in respect of cash, valuables and property.
- 15.3 Delivery notes or invoices must be obtained in respect of all goods received, and goods must be checked as to quantity and quality against the purchase orders at the time delivery is made.
- 15.4 Stocks and stores shall generally be maintained at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 15.5 The RFO or appropriate Officer shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

16.0 ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES

- 16.1 The Town Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the safe custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties owned by the Council.
- 16.2 The Estates & Facilities Manager and RFO shall ensure an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date, with a record of

all properties held by the Council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, (where possible), nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held, in accordance with the current Accounts and Audit Regulations.

- 16.3 The continued existence of tangible assets shown on the register shall be verified at least annually with a safety inspection of assets.
- 16.4 No property shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the Council, together with any other consent required by law. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate where required by law).
- 16.5 No property (interests in land) shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any consents required by law, except where the estimated value of any one item does not exceed £500. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).

17.0 INSURANCE

- 17.1 Following the annual risk assessment (Financial Regulations 16.1 and 16.2), the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers in consultation with the Clerk
- 17.2 The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances affected by the Council and the property and risks covered and annually review the Council's insurance requirements.
- 17.3 The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report to the appropriate committee at the next available meeting.
- 17.4 The appropriate Officer shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations effecting existing insurances.
- 17.5 All appropriate members and employees of the Council shall be included in suitable fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined by the Council or duly delegated committee.

18.0 SECURITY AND MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

- 18.1 Records of a financial nature shall be retained in accordance with a schedule of minimum periods to comply with tax and insurance requirements or other

instructions or advice received from the appropriate authorities. Regardless of the above all records must be retained, as a minimum, until after the completion of each year's external audit.

- 18.2 The Council will comply with the Freedom of Information Act and any other appropriate Council policy or other applicable legislation that may be introduced or amended from time to time.

19.0 REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

- 19.1 It shall be the duty of the General Purposes Committee to review these Financial Regulations from time to time and following any change of Clerk or RFO. The Town Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the General Purposes Committee of any requirement for a consequential amendment to them.
- 19.2 The council, may, by resolution of the council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of the council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all members of the council. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the council to act unlawfully.
- 19.3 The council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations by a duly notified resolution to cope with periods of absence, local government reorganisation, national restrictions or other exceptional circumstances.

Appendix 1 - Tender process

- 1) Any invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases.
- 2) The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post, unless an electronic tendering process has been agreed by the council.
- 3) Where a postal process is used, each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk or Assistant Town Clerk & RFO or Estates & Facilities Manager in the presence of at least two members of council..
- 4) Where an electronic tendering process is used, the council shall use a specific email address that will be monitored to ensure that nobody accesses any tender before the expiry of the deadline for submission.
- 5) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Order [34.5] and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 6) Where the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



STANDING ORDERS

Issue No.	Date Agreed	Details of amendments
1	2 nd May 2006	Reissued in new format
2	25 th March 2008	General Purposes (GP.070.03.08)
3	28 th April 2008	Full Council (FC.096.04.08)
4	6 th July 2009	Full Council (FC.018.07.09)
5	10 th January 2011	Complete reissue of document at Full Council in accordance with revised NALC Model Standing Orders. (FC.049.01.11)
6	16 th May 2011	Annual Statutory Meeting – Review of SO 34.2
7	11 th November 2013	Full Council (FC.55.11.13) Comprehensive amendments following introduction of Localism Act 2011
8	7 th July 2014	Amendments to start times of meetings.
9	20 th April 2015	FC - General review and update
10	4 th July 2016	FC – General review and update
11	22 nd August 2016	FC – Minor amendment to 9.3. Plus amendments to Section 34 (Financial Matters) following update to financial regulations approved by GP Committee on 15 th August 2016.
12	30 th July 2018	Refresh in line with NALC Model Standing Orders (revised 2018)
13	17 January 2022	FC - Full review in line with NALC Model Standing Orders (revised 2020)
14	27 June 2022	FC – review in line with NALC Model Standing Orders (2018) Version 2 (April 2022) – Financial

		Controls and Procurement (Section 34) (FC.29.06.22)
15	15 May 2023	FC – Annual statutory meeting annual review
16	20 May 2024	Annual review at Annual Statutory meeting, adopted (FC.17.05.24).
17	9 Sept 2024	FC.46.09.24 - Minor amendment to Section 34.0
<u>18</u>	<u>28 April 2025</u>	<u>Review of changes in Section 34, in line with changes to the Procurement legislation and Finance Regulations.</u>

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STANDING ORDERS

Standing Orders set out how all committees, sub-committees and associated groups of the Council conduct their business and should be read in conjunction with the Council's

- Financial Regulations
- Code of Conduct Policy (No. 43).

Reference to the masculine gender should also be construed as a reference to the feminine gender except where the context suggests otherwise.

Reference to, 'the Mayor', should also be construed as reference to the Chair of any committee or sub-committee, except that of Full Council.

1.0 ROLE OF STANDING ORDERS

- 1.1 The Town Clerk shall provide a copy of the Council's Standing Orders to a Councillor upon delivery of his declaration of acceptance of office.
- 1.2 The Chairman's decision as to the application of Standing Orders at meetings shall be final.
- 1.3 A Councillor's failure to observe Standing Orders more than three times in one meeting may result in him being excluded from the meeting in accordance with Standing Orders.

2.0 VARIATION, REVOCATION AND SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

- 2.1 Any or every part of these Standing Orders except those printed in **bold type** may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business. Standing Orders printed in **bold type** cannot be altered.
- 2.2 A resolution permanently to add, vary or revoke a Standing Order shall when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

3.0 MEETINGS

Timing and Business

- 3.1 **Full Council - meetings shall not take place in premises, which at the time of the meeting, are used for the supply of alcohol unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- 3.2(a) **Full Council - the minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- 3.2(b) **Committee meetings - the minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice OR (*the minimum three clear days' public notice of a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issues or the day of the meeting*)**

- 3.3 The duration of all Council committee or sub-committee meetings shall not exceed two hours, unless before this period is exceeded a proposal to suspend this Standing Order for a nominated length of maximum time receives a majority vote from those present. After this time the meeting shall be adjourned and any business not completed shall be completed at a resumed meeting to be notified by the Clerk; such resumed meeting shall be held before the next scheduled meeting. At the resumption, only the business not completed at the previous meeting shall be considered.
- 3.4 Meetings of the Council and its committees shall be held at the Uckfield Civic Centre normally from 7.00 pm on such dates as the Council may direct.

Questions by the Public

- 3.5 **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion by means of the following resolution:-**

"That in view of the special or confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960".

- 3.6 Subject to Standing Order 3.5 above, members of the public are permitted to make representations, statements, ask or answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda.
- 3.7 The period of time which is at the Mayor's discretion shall not exceed fifteen minutes.
- 3.8 Subject to Standing Order 3.6 above, each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than three minutes.
- 3.9 In accordance with Standing Order 3.6 above, a question asked by a member of the public during a public participation session at a meeting shall not require a response or debate.
- 3.10 In accordance with Standing Order 3.9 above, the Mayor may direct that a response to a question posed by a member of the public be referred to a Councillor for an oral response or to an employee for a written or oral response.
- 3.11 A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.
- 3.12 A person shall raise their hand when requesting to speak. They must address the meeting through the Chair and use the microphone provided.
- 3.13 Any person speaking at a meeting shall address their comments to the Mayor.
- 3.14 Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak, the Mayor shall direct the order of speaking.

Press and public attending and reporting on meetings

- 3.15(a) **Subject to standing order 3.5, a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To “report” means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to the persons not present.**
- 3.15(b) **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**
- 3.15(c) **Filming and recording of all Council, committee and sub-committee meetings open to the public is welcomed but restrictions do apply to protect confidential information and those individuals who do not wish to be recorded. The Town Council will provide assistance to anyone who wishes to carry out any recording in accordance with its Recording of Meetings Policy. (No. 72)**
- 3.16 **The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**

Members’ conduct at meetings

- 3.17 **Subject to Standing Orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Mayor may in his absence be done by, to or before the Deputy Mayor.**
- 3.18 **The Mayor, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Mayor is absent from a meeting, the Deputy Mayor, if present, shall preside. If both the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor are absent from a meeting, a Councillor as chosen by the Councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- 3.19 **When a Member speaks at Full Council, and the Town Council’s standing committees (General Purposes, Environment & Leisure and Plans), they must address the meeting through the Chairman and use the microphone. If more than one Member indicates that they wish to speak, the Chairman will ask one to speak and the others must wait in the order in which they notified the Chairman of their intention to speak, unless in the case of paragraph 8.16 when a Councillor wishes to interrupt on a point of order.**
- 3.20 **Subject to Standing Order 3.26 below, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting thereon.**
- 3.21 **The Mayor may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.**
- 3.22 **Members shall vote by a show of hands or, if at least two Councillors so request, by signed ballot. At the request of a Councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each Councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.**

- 3.23 The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:
- (i) the time and place of the meeting;
 - (ii) record the names of Councillors who are present and the names of the councillors who are absent;
 - (iii) interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights (as detailed below);
 - (iv) the grant of dispensations to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
 - (v) whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
 - (vi) if there was a public participation session; and;
 - (vii) the resolutions made

3.24(a) **The Code of Conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to Councillors in respect of the entire meeting.**

3.24(b) **A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable prejudicial interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on their right to participate and vote on that matter.**

3.25 **An interest arising from the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council, the existence and nature of which is required to be disclosed by a Councillor at a meeting shall be recorded in the minutes.**

3.26 **Five Members or one-third of the total membership, whichever is the greater, shall constitute a quorum at meetings of the Council.**

(For a quorum relating to committees, sub-committees and other meetings, please refer to Standing Order 19.1.9)

3.27 **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be adjourned.** Any outstanding business of a meeting so adjourned shall be completed at a resumed meeting to be notified by the Clerk; such resumed meeting shall be held before the next scheduled meeting. At the resumption, only the business not completed at the previous meeting shall be considered.

4.0 ORDINARY MEETINGS

4.1 **In an election year, the Annual Meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new Councillors elected take office.**

4.2 **In a year which is not an election year, the Annual Meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.**

4.3 **The Annual Meeting of the Council shall take place at 7.00pm.**

4.4 **In addition to the Annual Meeting of the Council, at least five other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council directs.**

4.5 **The election of the Mayor of the Council and Deputy Mayor shall be the first business conducted at the Annual Meeting of the Council.**

- 4.6 **The Mayor, unless they have resigned or become disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the Annual Meeting until their successor is elected at the next Annual Meeting of the Council.**
- 4.7 **The Deputy Mayor of the Council, if any, unless they resign or become disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Mayor at the next Annual Meeting of the Council.**
- 4.8 **In an election year, if the current Mayor has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the meeting until a successor Mayor has been elected. The current Mayor shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Mayor but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- 4.9 **In an election year, if the current Mayor has been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the meeting until a new Mayor has been elected. They may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the Mayor and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- 4.10 Following the election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Council at the Annual Meeting of the Council, the order of business shall be as follows.
 - 4.10.1 **In an election year, delivery by the Mayor and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chair of the Council (Town Mayor) of their acceptance of office form unless the Council resolved for this to be done at a later date;**
 - 4.10.2 To elect a Deputy Town Mayor.
 - 4.10.3 **In the ordinary year of election of the Council to fill any vacancies left unfilled at the election by reason of insufficient nominations.**
(Co-option Policy No. 44)
 - 4.10.4 **To decide when any declarations of acceptance of office which have not been received as provided by law shall be received.**
 - 4.10.5 Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
 - 4.10.6 Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee
 - 4.10.7 Consider the recommendations made by a committee
 - 4.10.8 Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities
 - 4.10.9 Review of the terms of reference for committees
 - 4.10.10 To appoint committees, sub-committees and other groups as necessary.
 - 4.10.11 To appoint any new committees in accordance with standing order 19.0

- 4.10.12 Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations
- 4.10.13 Review of arrangements with other local authorities, not for profit bodies and businesses
- 4.10.14 Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back
- 4.10.15 In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
- 4.10.16 Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment;
- 4.10.17 Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of insurable risks;
- 4.10.18 Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
- 4.10.19 Review of the Council's complaints procedure
- 4.10.20 Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation
- 4.10.21 Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media
- 4.10.22 Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures
- 4.10.23 Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence
- 4.10.24 Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council
- 4.10.25 **Business as specified in the summons including:-**
- 4.10.26 **To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done.**
- 4.10.27 To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
- 4.10.28 To receive such communications as the person presiding may wish to lay before the Council.
- 4.10.29 To answer previously notified questions from Councillors.
- 4.10.30 To receive the minutes and consider reports and recommendations of committees.
- 4.10.31 To consider resolutions or recommendations in the order in which they have been notified.

- 4.10.32 To receive and consider reports from officers of the Council.
- 4.10.33 To authorise the sealing of documents.
- 4.10.34 Councillors may request an item to be placed on an agenda of the relevant committee at least seven days prior to the publication of the agenda supported by a written report. Questions do not require a seconder but the Chair of the committee would use their discretion as to the inclusion of an item.
- 4.10.35 Any other business specified in the summons.

5.0 PROPER OFFICER

5.1 The Council's Proper Officer shall be either:

- (i) the Clerk or such other employee as may be nominated by the Council from time to time or
- (ii) such other employee appointed by the Council to undertake the role of the Proper Officer during the Proper Officer's absence.

The Proper Officer and the employee appointed to act as such during the Proper Officer's absence shall fulfil the duties assigned to the Proper Officer in Standing Orders.

5.2 The Council's Proper Officer shall do the following:

- 5.2.1 **At least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee, - Sign and serve on Councillors electronically if agreed, by delivery or post at their residences a signed summons confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda, and ;**
- 5.2.2 **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by Councillors is signed by them).**
- 5.2.3 Subject to Standing Orders 6.1 – 6.5 below, include in the agenda all motions in the order received unless a Councillor has given written notice at least five days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it.
- 5.2.4 **Convene a meeting of Full Council for the election of a new Mayor of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office, in accordance with Standing Order 5.2.1 above.**

To receive nominations for the position of Mayor and Deputy Mayor by a deadline of seven working days prior to the Annual Statutory Meeting of full Council. Any nominations put forward must include a short paragraph on why they would be suitable i.e. their background, desires etc.

If no nominations are received prior to the meeting, nominations are entitled to be put forward at the Annual Statutory meeting of Council.

If during the Municipal Year, the office of Town Mayor becomes vacant, then the Deputy Mayor will normally become Mayor for the remainder of that year.

- 5.2.5 **Make available for inspection the minutes of meetings.**
- 5.2.6 **Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities.**
- 5.2.7 Hold declarations of acceptance of office forms from Councillors.
- 5.2.8 Hold a copy of every Councillor's register of interests and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection.
- 5.2.9 Keep proper records required before and after meetings.
- 5.2.10 Assist with responding to all requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998, in accordance with and subject to the Council's procedures relating to the same.
- 5.2.11 Liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer (if there is one)
- 5.2.12 Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary.
- 5.2.13 assist in the organisation of, storage of and access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).
- 5.2.14 Arrange for legal deeds to be executed (signed and sealed using the Council's common seal).
- 5.2.15 Arrange for the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.
- 5.2.16 Record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose.
- 5.2.17 Refer any planning application received by the Council outside the normal Plans Committee cycle to the Chair or in their absence the Vice chair of the Plans Committee for consideration in accordance with the Council's Late Planning Applications Policy. (No. 74)
- 5.2.18 manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
- 5.2.19 Retain custody of the seal of the Council which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.

- 5.2.20 Action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in Standing Orders.

6.0 MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER

- 6.1 A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- 6.2 Except as provided by these Standing Orders, no resolution may be moved unless the business to which it relates has been put on the agenda by the Town Clerk or the mover has given notice in writing of its terms and has delivered the notice to the Town Clerk at least seven clear days before the next meeting of the Council.
- 6.3 The Town Council may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 6.2, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- 6.4 If the Town Clerk considers the wording of the motion received in accordance with 6.2 is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, so that it can be understood, in writing to the Proper Officer, at least seven clear days before the meeting.
- 6.5 If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Chair of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- 6.6 The decision of the Town Clerk as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- 6.7 The Town Clerk shall record in the summons for every meeting, all notices of motion or recommendation properly given in the order in which they have been received unless the Councillor giving a notice of motion has stated in writing that he intends to move at some later meeting or that he withdraws it.
- 6.8 Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Town Clerk of the reason for rejection.

7.0 MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE

- 7.1 Motions in respect of the following matters may be moved without written notice.
- 7.1.1 To appoint a person to preside at a meeting.
- 7.1.2 To approve the absences of Councillors.
- 7.1.3 To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.
- 7.1.4 To correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of the previous meeting.
- 7.1.5 To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.

- 7.1.6 To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience.
- 7.1.7 To proceed to the next business on the agenda.
- 7.1.8 To close or adjourn debate.
- 7.1.9 To refer by formal delegation a matter to a committee or to a sub-committee or an employee.
- 7.1.10 To appoint a committee or sub-committee or any Councillors (including substitutes) thereto.
- 7.1.11 To receive nominations to a committee or sub-committee.
- 7.1.12 To dissolve a committee or sub-committee.
- 7.1.13 To note the minutes of a meeting of a committee or sub-committee.
- 7.1.14 To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a committee or a sub-committee or an employee.
- 7.1.15 To consider a report and/or recommendations made by an employee, professional advisor, expert or consultant.
- 7.1.16 To authorise legal deeds to be sealed by the Council's common seal and witnessed.
- 7.1.17 To authorise the payment of monies in accordance with Financial Regulations.
- 7.1.18 To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under consideration which shall not have the effect of nullifying it.
- 7.1.19 To extend the time limit for speeches.
- 7.1.20 To exclude the press and public for all or part of a meeting.
- 7.1.21 To silence or exclude from the meeting a Councillor or a member of the public for disorderly conduct.
- 7.1.22 To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by Standing Orders.
- 7.1.23 **To suspend any Standing Order except those which are mandatory by law.**
- 7.1.24 To adjourn the meeting.
- 7.1.25 To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies.
- 7.1.26 To answer questions from Councillors.

7.1.27 To require a written report

7.1.28 To defer consideration of a motion;

7.1.29 To refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee

8.0 RULES OF DEBATE

8.1 Motions included in an agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda unless the order is changed at the Chair's direction for reasons of expedience.

8.2 Subject to Standing Orders 6.1 - 6.5 above, a motion shall not be considered unless it has been proposed and seconded.

8.3 Subject to Standing Order 5.2.3 above, a motion included in an agenda not moved by the Councillor who tabled it, may be treated as withdrawn.

8.4 A motion to amend an original or substantive motion shall not be considered unless proper notice has been given after the original or substantive motion has been seconded and notice of such amendment, shall, if required by the Chair, be reduced to writing and handed to the Chair who shall determine the order in which they are considered.

8.5 A Councillor may move amendments to his own motion. If a motion has already been seconded, an amendment to it shall be with the consent of the seconder.

8.6 Any amendment to a motion shall be either:

8.6.1 to remove words;

8.6.2 to add words;

8.6.3 to remove words and add other words, it shall not negate the motion

8.7 A proposed or carried amendment to a motion shall not have the effect of rescinding the original or substantive motion under consideration.

8.8 Only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chair. No further amendment to a motion shall be moved until the previous amendment has been disposed of.

8.9 Subject to Standing Order 8.8 above, one or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chair considers this expedient but shall be voted upon separately.

8.10 Pursuant to Standing Order 8.8 above, the number of amendments to an original or substantive motion, which may be moved by a Councillor, is limited to one.

8.11 If an amendment is not carried, other amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chair.

8.12 If an amendment is carried, the original motion, as amended, shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the substantive motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.

- 8.13 The mover of a motion or the mover of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding three minutes.
- 8.14 Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply in respect of the substantive motion at the very end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of the debate on the final substantive motion and immediately before it is put to the vote.
- 8.15 Subject to Standing Orders 8.13 and 8.14 above, a Councillor may not speak further in respect of any one motion except to speak once on an amendment moved by another Councillor or to make a point of order or to give a personal explanation.
- 8.16 During the debate of a motion, a Councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the Councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A Councillor raising a point of order shall identify the Standing Order which he considers has been breached or specify the irregularity in the meeting he is concerned by.
- 8.17 A point of order shall be decided by the Chair and their decision shall be final.
- 8.18 With the consent of the seconder and/or of the meeting, a motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer. A Councillor shall not speak upon the said motion or amendment unless permission for the withdrawal of the motion or amendment has been refused.
- 8.19 Subject to Standing Order 8.15 above, when a Councillor's motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except:
- 8.19.1 to amend the motion;
 - 8.19.2 to proceed to the next business;
 - 8.19.3 to adjourn the debate;
 - 8.19.4 to put the motion to a vote;
 - 8.19.5 to ask a person to be silent or for him to leave the meeting;
 - 8.19.6 to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
 - 8.19.7 to exclude the public and press;
 - 8.19.8 to adjourn the meeting;
 - 8.19.9 to suspend any Standing Order, except those which are mandatory.
- 8.20 In respect of Standing Order 8.19.4 above, the Chair shall first be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated before it is seconded and put to the vote. The Chair shall call upon the mover of the motion under debate to exercise or waive their right of reply and shall put the motion to the vote after that right has been exercised or waived.

At the end of any speech a Councillor may, without comment, move "*that the question be now put*", "*that the debate be now adjourned*" or "*that the Council do now adjourn*". If such motion is seconded, the Mayor shall put the motion but, in the case of a motion "*that the question be now put*", only if they are of the opinion that the question before the Council has been sufficiently debated. If the motion "*that the question be now put*" is carried, they shall call upon the mover to exercise or waive their right of reply and shall put the question immediately after that right has been exercised or waived. The adjournment of a debate or of the meeting shall not prejudice the mover's right of reply at the resumption.

9.0 CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS

9.1 All Councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council. (Policy No. 43)

9.2 All Councillors shall undertake training in the Code of Conduct within 6 months of the delivery of their declaration of acceptance of office.

9.3 Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a Councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary (prejudicial) interest. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest. In all cases the Councillor must leave the room and not take part in any debate or vote unless a dispensation has been authorised by the Clerk.

9.4 An interest arising from the Code of Conduct shall be recorded in the minutes.

9.5 Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Town Clerk as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.

9.6 A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Town Clerk and that decision is final.

9.7 A dispensation request shall confirm:
(i) the description and the nature of the prejudicial interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
(ii) whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
(iii) the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
(iv) an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought

9.8 The Clerk, may authorise a dispensation for Councillors under the Code of Conduct, if having regard for all relevant circumstances, any of the following apply:-

9.8.1 without the dispensation, the number of persons prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business; or

- 9.8.2 without the dispensation the representation of different political groups on the meeting transacting any particular business would be so upset as to alter the likely outcome of any vote relating to the business; or
- 9.8.3 **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area; or**
- 9.8.4 **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**
- 9.9 A dispensation granted under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 must specify the period for which it has effect, and that period may not exceed four years.
- 10.0 CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS**
- 10.1 On receipt of a notification by the District Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Code of Conduct, the Clerk shall report this to the council.
- 10.2 Where the notification in standing order 10.1 relates to a complaint made by the Clerk, the Clerk shall notify the Chair of the Council of this fact, and the Chair shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Clerk in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the Council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 10.4.
- 10.3 The Council may:
- (i) provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement;
 - (ii) seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter. .
- 10.4 **Upon notification by the District Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**
- 11.0 QUESTIONS**
- 11.1 A Councillor may seek an answer to a question concerning any business of the Council provided seven clear days notice of the question has been given to the Proper Officer.
- 11.2 Questions not related to items of business on the agenda for a meeting shall only be asked during the part of the meeting set aside for such questions.
- 11.3 Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.
- 12.0 DRAFT MINUTES**
- 12.1 If a copy of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting has been circulated to Councillors no later than the day of service of the summons to attend the scheduled meeting they shall be taken as read.
- 12.2 No discussion of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting shall take place except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the minutes shall be raised in accordance with Standing Order 7.1.4 above.

- 12.3 Minutes, including any amendment to correct their accuracy, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chair of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- 12.4 Upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, any previous draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.
- 12.5 If the Chair of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, they shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms of to the same effect:

“The Chair of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the () held on (date) in respect of () were a correct record but their view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.

13.0 DISORDERLY CONDUCT

- 13.1 No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the Chair of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- 13.2 If, in the opinion of the Chair, there has been a breach of Standing Order 13.1 above, the Chair shall express that opinion and thereafter any Councillor (including the Chair) may move that the person no longer be heard or be excluded from the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion.
- 13.3 If a resolution made in accordance with Standing Order 13.2 above, is ignored, the Chair may take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

14.0 RESCISSION OF PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

- 14.1 A resolution (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within six months except either by a proposal, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least five members of the Council, or by a resolution moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a Committee.
- 14.2 When a resolution moved under the provision of Standing Order 14.1 above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further six months.
- 14.3 Any resolution passed by a committee reporting to Full Council may be placed on the next Full Council agenda for discussion in its own right if so requested in writing by at least five members of the Council. Once such a request has been received, further activities, clarification and information gathering excepted, shall cease on the original resolution

15.0 VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS

- 15.1 Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a

majority of votes is given in favour of one person. Any tie may be settled by the Chair's casting vote.

- 15.2 The Mayor and Deputy Mayor should not serve longer than three complete consecutive municipal years in their respective offices.
- 15.3 Chairs of committees and sub-committees should not serve as Chair longer than three consecutive years. Nor should any member of the Council be Chair of more than one committee or sub-committee at any one time.
- 15.4 Neither shall the Mayor or Deputy Mayor be Chair of a full committee.
- 15.5 The Chair (Mayor) of the Town Council shall be assigned a seat on Personnel Sub-Committee, unless they have already been appointed through the annual committee appointment process (via submission of preference by priority order).

16.0 EXPENDITURE

- 16.1 Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.
- 16.2 **The Council's Financial Regulations shall be reviewed once a year.**
- 16.3 **The Council's Financial Regulations may make provision for the authorisation of the payment of money in exercise of any of the Council's functions to be delegated to a committee, sub-committee or to an employee.**

17.0 RESOLUTIONS ON EXPENDITURE

- 17.1 A resolution, by any committee, which would increase the expenditure upon any service which is under the management of that committee, or which would reduce the revenue at the disposal of the Council, or which would involve capital expenditure, shall be referred to the General Purposes Committee for decision.

18.0 EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS

- 18.1 A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless the same has been authorised by a resolution.
- 18.2 **In accordance with a resolution made under Standing Order 18.1 above, the Council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Proper Officer in the presence of two councillors of the Council who shall sign the deed as witnesses.**

19.0 COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

- 19.1 The Council may at its Annual Statutory Meeting, appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as are necessary, but subject to any statutory provision in that behalf:-
 - 19.1.1 Shall not appoint any member of a committee so as to hold office later than the next Annual Statutory Meeting.
 - 19.1.2(a) **Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**

19.1.2(b) **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.** Such appointed members will have no voting rights.

19.1.2(c) **Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**

19.1.3 The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and;

(i) shall determine their terms of reference;

(ii) shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;

(iii) shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;

(iv) shall, subject to standing orders 19.1.2(b) and (c) appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee

(v) may, subject to standing orders 19.1.2(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer five days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;

(vi) shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chair of a standing committee;

(vii) shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chair at the first meeting of the committee;

(viii) shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee, and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be no less than three or one third of its members;

(ix) shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;

(x) shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;

(xi) shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend and:

19.1.4 May, subject to the provisions of Standing Order No.14, at any time dissolve or alter the membership of a committee;

19.1.5 Every committee shall at its first meeting before proceeding to any other business, elect a Chair and may elect a Vice-chair who shall hold office until the next Annual Statutory Meeting of the Council;

19.1.6 In the event of the ballot failing to determine the Chair and Vice- chair because of an equality of votes the candidate or candidates to be elected from those having an equal number of votes shall be determined at the first committee meeting which will be chaired by the Mayor. Any tie may then be settled by the Chair's casting vote;

- 19.1.7 The Chair of a committee or the Mayor of the Council may summon an additional meeting of that committee at any time. An additional meeting shall also be summoned on the requisition in writing of not less than a third of the members of the committee. The summons shall set out the business to be considered at the special meeting and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting;
- 19.1.8 Each committee may appoint working groups or steering groups for purposes specified by the committee. Sub-committees will be appointed by Full Council;
- 19.1.9 The Standing Orders on rules of debate, (except those parts relating to standing and speaking more than once), and the Standing Order on interests of Councillors in contracts and other matters shall apply to committees, sub-committees.

20.0 WORKING GROUPS AND STEERING GROUPS

- 20.1 Any committee may create working or steering groups, whose name and number of members and the bodies to be invited to nominate members shall be specified.
- 20.2 The working and steering groups will conduct their business in accordance with Working Group Policy No. 39 and Steering Group Policy No. 57.
- 20.3 Working and steering groups may make recommendations and give notice thereof to the parent committee.
- 20.4 Working and steering groups may consist wholly of persons who are not members of the Council.

21.0 EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

- 21.1 **The Mayor of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
- 21.2 **If the Mayor of the Council does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested to do so by two Councillors, those two Councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two Councillors.**
- 21.3 The Chair of a Committee (or a sub-committee) may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee (or sub-committee) at any time;
- 21.4 If the Chair of a committee (or a sub-committee) does not call an extraordinary meeting within seven days of having been requested to do so by two members of the committee (or sub-committee), any two members of the committee (or sub-committee) may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee (or sub-committee).

22.0 ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

22.1 The Council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

22.2 "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of the "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioner's Guide"

22.3 All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's Financial Regulations.

22.4 The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each Councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to General Purposes Committee or Environment & Leisure Committee to summarise:

- (i) the Council's income and expenditure for that committee;
- (ii) the Council's aggregate income and expenditure for the year to date;
- (iii) the balances held at the end of that period being reported;

which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends (these are reported at each committee meeting so more frequently than quarterly).

22.5 As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:

- (i) each councillor with a statement summarising the council's income and expenditure for the last quarter and the year to date for information, and;
- (ii) to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.

22.6 The year-end statement of accounts shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the council for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors at least 14 days prior to the anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

23.0 ESTIMATES AND PRECEPTS

23.1 **The Council shall review the estimates not later than the end of January each year and shall fix the precept to be levied for the ensuing financial year. The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply each Councillor with a copy of the approved estimates.**

23.2 Any committee desiring to incur expenditure shall give the Proper Officer a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year no later than the end of November each year.

23.3 The annual capital and revenue expenditures shall form the Council's budgets and the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

24.0 INTERESTS

24.1 **If a Councillor has a personal interest as defined by the Code of Conduct (Policy No. 43) then they shall declare such interest as soon as it becomes**

apparent, disclosing the existence and nature of that interest as required which shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

24.2 If a Councillor who has declared a personal interest then considers the interest to be a disclosable interest, they must withdraw from the room during consideration of the item to which the interest relates unless a dispensation has been authorised by the Clerk in advance of the meeting.

24.3 The Clerk may be required to compile and hold a register of Councillors' interests in accordance with any agreement with the Monitoring Officer of Wealden District Council and/or as required by statute.

24.4 If a candidate for any appointment under the Council is to their knowledge related to any Councillor or the holder of any office under the Council, they and the person to whom they are related shall disclose the relationship in writing to the Clerk. A candidate who fails so to do, shall be disqualified for such appointment, and, if appointed, may be dismissed without notice. The Clerk shall report to the Council or to the appropriate committee any such disclosure. Where relationship to a Councillor is disclosed, Standing Orders No. 24.1 and 24.2 shall apply. The Clerk shall make known the significance of this Standing Order to every candidate.

25.0 CANVASSING OF AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY COUNCILLORS

25.1 Canvassing Councillors or the members of a committee or sub-committee, directly or indirectly, for appointment to or by the Council shall disqualify the candidate from such an appointment. The Clerk shall disclose the requirements of this Standing Order to every candidate.

25.2 A Councillor or a member of a committee or sub-committee shall not solicit a person for appointment to or by the Council or recommend a person for such appointment or for promotion; however any such person may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.

25.3 This Standing Order shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

26.0 INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

26.1 Subject to Standing Orders to the contrary or in respect of matters which are confidential, a Councillor may, for the purpose of his official duties (but not otherwise), inspect any document in the possession of the Council or a committee or a sub-committee, and request a copy for the same purpose. The minutes of meetings of the Council, its committees or sub-committees shall be available for inspection by Councillors.

27.0 RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES

27.1 Unless specifically authorised to do so by the Council or relevant committee or sub-committee by a resolution, no individual Councillor shall in the name or on behalf of the Council, a committee or a sub-committee:

27.1.1 inspect any lands or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect;

27.1.2 issue orders, instructions or directions

28.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

- 28.1 No member of the Council or of any committee, sub-committee, working or steering group shall disclose to any person not a member of the Council any business declared to be confidential by the Council, the committee, sub-committee, working or steering group as the case may be.
- 28.2 Any Councillor in breach of the provisions of paragraph 28.1 of this Standing Order shall be removed from any committee, sub-committee, working or steering group of the Council by the Council and reported to the Standards Committee.

29.0 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

- 29.1 Before exercising the General Power of Competence, a meeting of the Full Council shall have passed a resolution to confirm that it has satisfied the prescribed statutory criteria required to qualify as an eligible Council. The prescribed statutory criteria are:-

29.1.1 the number of ordinary members of the Council that have been declared to be elected, whether at ordinary elections or at a by-election, is equal or greater than two-thirds of the total number of members of the Council;

29.1.2 the Clerk to the Town Council holds an appropriate qualification;

and

29.1.3 the Clerk to the Town Council has completed the relevant training, unless such training was required for the purpose of obtaining a qualification of a description mentioned in paragraph 29.1.2.

30.0 HANDLING STAFF MATTERS

- 30.1 If a meeting considers any matter personal to a Council employee, it shall not be considered until the Council, committee or sub-committee, (as the case may be), has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded pursuant to Standing Order 3.5 above.
- 30.2 Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of Council employees shall keep written records confidential of all meetings relating to their performance, and capabilities, grievance and disciplinary matters.
- 30.3 The Council shall keep written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured under lock and electronic records shall be password protected.
- 30.4 Records documenting reasons for an employee's absence due to ill health or details of a medical condition shall be made available only to those persons with responsibility for the same.
- 30.5 Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to employee records referred to in Standing Orders 30.3 and 30.4 above if so justified.
- 30.6 Access and means of access by computer passwords to detailed personnel records of employment referred to in Standing Orders 30.3 and 30.4 above shall be provided only to The Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk & Responsible

Financial Officer. Access to the personnel files of direct reports only, shall be made available to the Estates & Facilities Manager and Hospitality Manager in addition to the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk & RFO.

- 30.7 Subject to the Town Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's Assistant Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer shall notify the Chair of the Personnel Sub-Committee, or if they are not available, the Vice Chair, of frequent or continued absence.
- 30.8 Subject to the Town Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Assistant Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer shall contact the Chair of the Personnel Sub-Committee in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed in accordance with the Town Council's policy.
- 30.9 Subject to the Town Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter is raised by a member of the management team of Uckfield Town Council which relates to the Mayor or Deputy Mayor of the Town Council, this shall be communicated to the Chair of General Purposes Committee, which shall be reported back and progressed in accordance with existing HR policies.

31.0 RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION

- 31.1 **In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme (policy no. 54) and respond to requests for information held by the Council as per the Council's policy 'Handling Access to Information' requests (Policy No. 16)**
- 31.2 **The Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements)(England) Regulations 2015.**

32.0 RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS AND MEDIA

- 32.1 All requests from the press or other media for an oral or written statement or comment from the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media. (Policy No 26)

33.0 COMMUNICATING WITH DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

- 33.1 An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the Councillors of the District and County Council representing their electoral wards.
- 33.2 When requested, letters ordered to be sent to the County or District Council shall be transmitted to the County Councillors for the division or to the District Councillors for the ward as the case may be.

34.0 FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT

- 34.1 The Council shall consider and approve Financial Regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - 34.1.1 the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal control;

- 34.1.2 the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
- 34.1.3 the work of the internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
- 34.1.4 the inspection and copying by Councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments;
- 34.1.5 procurement policies (subject to Standing Order 34.2 below) including the setting of values for different procedures;
- 34.1.6 whether contracts with an estimated value ~~below £25,000~~ below £60,000 due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- 34.1.7 financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for the fitness of purpose.

34.25 Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services, or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:

(i) a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;

(ii) an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm

(i) the Council's specification,

(ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders

(iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and,

(iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;

(iii) the invitation shall be advertised in the local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;

(iiiiv) tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Town Clerk (Proper Officer);

(iv) All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by either the Town Clerk or Assistant Town Clerk & RFO or Estates & Facilities Manager in the presence of at least two Members of the Council, after the deadline for submissions has passed;

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(vi) The Officer (shall record the details of the tender, the names and addresses of each tenderer, the amount or price of the tender, the time and place of opening, and the names and signatures of those present at the opening of the tenders. The above details shall be reported to the Council, or where the tenders have been sought by a committee to that committee.

34.36 Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.

34.47 Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time, the Council

~~must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 apply to the contract is subject to requirements of the current procurement legislation, and if so, the Council must comply with procurement rules. and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.~~

~~34.2 For any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value between £10,000 but not exceeding £30,000, the Town Clerk shall invite quotations from at least three appropriate firms from a preferred list of contractors as set out in the Financial Regulations.~~

~~34.3 For contracts estimated to exceed £60,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the Council, or advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.~~

~~34.4 For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation (requiring councils to use the Contracts Finder website and to publicise the award of contracts over £30,000 including VAT, regardless of whether they are advertised), regarding the advertising of contract opportunities and the publication of notices about the award of contracts.~~

~~34.5 Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services, or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:~~

- ~~(i) a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;~~
- ~~(ii) an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification, (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;~~
- ~~(iii) the invitation shall be advertised in the local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;~~
- ~~(iv) tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Town Clerk;~~
- ~~(v) All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by either the Town Clerk or Assistant Town Clerk & RFO or Estates & Facilities Manager in the presence of at least two Members of the Council;;~~
- ~~(vi) The Officer (shall record the details of the tender, the names and addresses of each tenderer, the amount or price of the tender, the time and place of opening, and the names and signatures of those present at the opening of the tenders. The above details shall be reported to the Council, or where the tenders have been sought by a committee to that committee.~~

~~34.6 Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.~~

~~34.7 Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time, the Council~~

~~must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 apply to the contract and, if either of these Regulations apply, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.~~

35.0 TRAINING

- 35.1 All Councillors appointed to the Council will attend appropriate training courses.
- 35.2 Chairmen shall be expected to undertake appropriate training courses.

36.0 URGENT BUSINESS

- 36.1 If a matter is deemed "urgent" and if outside scheduled committee meetings or Full Council and with the consent of the Mayor and Chairs of committee, it can be agreed by the use of an Urgent Consultation Panel. The Panel will consist of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and Chairs of committees. All decisions agreed by the panel will be reported to Full Council or the appropriate standing committee at the earliest opportunity.

37.0 MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

- 37.1 See also standing order 31.0
The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.
- 37.2 **The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).**
- 37.3 **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**
- 37.4 **Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

38.0 RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION

- 38.1 The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.
- 38.2 **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning his personal data.**
- 38.3 **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**
- 38.4 **The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.**

- 38.5 The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.**
- 38.6 The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



PUBLICATION SCHEME

Policy Number 54		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1		This policy should be read in conjunction with the Freedom of Information (Requests) Policy (No. 16).
2	05.06.17	Review by General Purposes Committee of document in line with ICO guidance document.
3	11.09.23	Review by General Purposes Committee. There has been no change to the model publication scheme of the ICO since 2015.
4	28.04.25	Review of documentation at General Purposes Committee.

1.0 Introduction

This publication scheme has been prepared in association with the Model Publication Scheme produced by the Information Commissioner's Office.

Through this document, the Town Council commits to make information available to the public as part of its normal business activities. The information covered is included in the classes of information mentioned below, where this information is held by the authority.

The scheme commits Uckfield Town Council to:

- Proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information, including environmental information, which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below;
- Specify the information which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below;
- Proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information in line with the statements contained within this scheme;
- Produce and publish the methods by which the specific information is made routinely available so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public;
- Review and update on a regular basis the information the authority makes available under this scheme;
- Produce a schedule of any fees charged for access to information which is made proactively available;
- Make this publication scheme available to the public;
- Publish any dataset¹ held by the authority that has been requested, and any updated versions it holds, unless the authority is satisfied that it is not appropriate to do so; to publish the dataset, where reasonably practicable, in an electronic form that is capable of re-use.

¹ 'Dataset' is defined in section 11(5) of the Freedom of Information Act (information comprising a collection of information held in electronic form)

2.0 Classes of Information

Who we are and what we do

Organisational information, locations and contacts, constitutional and legal governance.

What we spend and how we spend it

Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, tendering, procurement and contracts.

What our priorities are and how we are doing

Strategy and performance information, plans, assessments, inspections and reviews.

How we make decisions

Policy proposals and decisions. Decision-making processes, internal criteria and procedures, consultations.

Our policies and procedures

Current written protocols for delivering our functions and responsibilities.

Lists and Registers

Information held in registers required by law and other lists and registers relating to the functions of the authority.

The Services we offer

Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases. A description of the services offered.

The classes of information will not generally include:

- The disclosure of information which is prevented by law, or exempt under the Freedom of Information Act, or is otherwise properly considered to be protected from disclosure;
- Information in draft form;
- Information that is no longer readily available as it is contained in files that have been placed in archive storage, or is difficult to access for similar reasons;

3.0 The method by which information published under this scheme will be made available

Where it is within the capability of a public authority, information will be provided on a website. Where it is impracticable to make information available on a website or when an individual does not wish to access the information by the website, a public authority will indicate how information can be obtained by other means and provide it by those means.

In exceptional circumstances some information may only be available by viewing in person. Where this manner is specified, contact details will be

provided. An appointment to view the information will be arranged within a reasonable timescale.

Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language that is legally required. Where an authority is legally required to translate any information, it will do so.

Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats will be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this scheme.

4.0 Charges which may be made for Information published under this scheme

The purpose of this scheme is to make the maximum amount of information readily available at minimum inconvenience and cost to the public. Charges made by the authority for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum.

Most information is now readily available online but charges may be made for actual disbursements incurred such as:

- Photocopying;
- Postage and packaging;

Charges may also be made for information provided under this scheme where they are legally authorised, they are in all the circumstances, including the general principles of the right of access to information held by public authorities, justified and are in accordance with a published schedule or schedules of fees which is readily available to the public.

Charges may also be made for making datasets (or parts of datasets) that are relevant copyright works available for re-use. These charges will be in accordance with the terms of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015, where they apply, or with regulations made under section 11B of the Freedom of Information Act, or with other statutory power of public authority.

If a charge is to be made, confirmation of the payment due will be given before the information is provided. Payment may be requested prior to the provision of the information.

5.0 Written requests

Information held by a public authority that is not published under this scheme can be requested in writing, when its provision will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act or Environmental Information Regulations.

6.0 Information available from Uckfield Town Council

It is expected that Uckfield Town Council makes the information in the following pages available unless:

- It does not hold the information;
- The information is exempt under one of the FOI exemptions or Environmental Information Regulation exceptions, or its release is prohibited by another statute;
- The information is readily and publicly available from an external website;
- The information is archived, out of date, or otherwise inaccessible, or it would be impractical or resource intensive to prepare the material for routine release.

Information to be published	Definition	How to access
Class 1 – Who we are and what we do	Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts	Website
	Who's who on the Council and it's Committees	
	Contact details for the Town Council Office and Town Councillors	
	Location of main Council office and accessibility details	
	Staffing structure	
Class 2 – what we spend and how we spent it	Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure	Website
	Procurement, contracts	
	Financial audits (current and previous years)	
	Annual Governance & Accountability return form (AGAR) and report by auditor	
	Finalised budget	
	Precept (incorporated on finalised budget above)	
	Financial Regulations	
	Community Grants given and received	
	List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	
	Members' allowances and expenses* * available in the Annual Town Report	

Information to be published	Definition	How to access
Class 3 – what our priorities are and how we are doing	Strategic Plan Annual Plan Progress updates on annual priorities Audits, inspections and reviews	Website
	Annual Report to Town Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum)	
Class 4 – how we make decisions	Decision-making processes and records of decisions	Website
	Timetable of meetings	
	Agendas of meetings	
	Minutes of meetings (as above) – NB. This will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	
	Reports presented to Council meetings – NB. This will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	
	Responses to consultation papers	
	Responses to planning applications	
	Bye-laws	
Class 5 – Our policies and procedures	Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services	Website
	Policies and procedures for the conduct of Council business: Standing orders (our Constitution) Committee and sub-committee terms of reference Policy statements Code of Conduct Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff: Internal policies relating to the delivery of services Equality and diversity policy Health and safety policy Recruitment policies (including current vacancies) Policies and procedures for handling requests for information Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme)	

	Information security policy	
	Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive)	
	Data protection policies	
	Schedule of charges (for the publication of information)	
Information to be published	Definition	How to access
Class 6 – Lists and Registers	Currently maintained list and registers only	Website
	Assets register	
	Register of Members' interests	Website
	Register of gifts and hospitality	Only available in person
	Burial Registers	Only available in person
	Electoral Registers	Only available in person
Class 7 – The services we offer	Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses.	Website
	Current information only	
	Allotments	
	Burial grounds and closed churchyards	
	Community centres and village halls	
	Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	
	Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorial and lighting	
	Bus shelters	
	A summary of services for which the Council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g., burial fees)	
	Newsletter (The Uckfield Voice)	
Additional Information	This will provide Councils with the opportunity to publish information that is not itemised in the lists above.	Website

7.0 Contact details

Uckfield Town Council
 Council Offices
 Civic Centre
 Uckfield
 East Sussex
 TN22 1AE

Telephone: 01825 762774

Website: www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk
 Email: admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk

8.0 Schedule of Charges

Fees for photocopying/printing to be updated. Members' input welcome.

Disbursement cost	Photocopying			
	Black and white		Colour	
	A4	A3	A4	A3
Single sided	20p	30p	30p	50p
Double sided	35p	50p	50p	90p
Disbursement cost	Laminating			
	A4		A3	
	£1.00		£1.80	
Disbursement cost	Postage			
	£1.00 (based on midway point of 1 st class and 2 nd class stamp cost)			

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Policy Number 19		
Issue No.	Date agreed	Details of amendments
1	17.09.07	GP.037.09.07
2	24.01.11	Complete revision of policy following changes to the Equality Act 2010. (GP.078.01.11)
3	23.01.17	General review at GP Committee
<u>4</u>	<u>28.04.25</u>	<u>Review at GP Committee</u>

1.0 OUR COMMITMENT

Uckfield Town Council is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoid unlawful discrimination.

This policy is intended to assist the Town Council to put this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

Striving to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities in employment.

2.01.0 LEGAL POSITION

Under the Equality Act 2010 it is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment against an individual on the following grounds:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

These are known as “protected characteristics.”

Discrimination after employment may also be unlawful, e.g. refusing to give a reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics.

The Town Council will not discriminate against or harass a member of the public in the provision of services or goods. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

3.0 PURPOSE

This Equality Policy helps us to meet our statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010. The Act requires us to have due regard to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

In particular, the Town Council intends to provide equal opportunities to all employees, irrespective of their characteristics (unless there are genuine occupational qualifications or objectively justified reasons for a different approach to be taken). We have due regard under The Public Sector Equality Duty to oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination whether it be direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010. This Policy underpins all policies, procedures and strategies developed and delivered by the Town Council.

4.0 TYPES OF UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION

Direct discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic.

In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that they have a particular protected characteristic when they don't, in fact, have that protected characteristic.

Third-party harassment occurs where an employee is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties.

Victimisation occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because they made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because they are suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if they acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EMPLOYMENT

The Town Council will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy.

Recruitment

Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

Working practices

The Town Council will consider any possible indirectly discriminatory effect of its standard working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done, when considering requests for variations to these standard working practices and will refuse such requests only if the council considers it has good reasons, unrelated to any protected characteristic, for doing so. The Town Council will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations. The Town Council will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability.

Equal opportunities monitoring

The council will monitor the ethnic, sex/gender and age composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups, and will consider and take any appropriate action to address any problems that may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

The council treats personal data collected for reviewing equality and diversity in accordance with the data protection policy. Information about how data is used and the basis for processing is provided in the council's privacy notices.

6.0 DIGNITY AT WORK

The Town Council has a separate dignity at work policy concerning issues relating to bullying and harassment on any ground, and how complaints of this type will be dealt with.

7.0 PEOPLE NOT EMPLOYED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL

The Town Council will not discriminate unlawfully against those using or seeking to use the services provided by the council.

You should report any bullying or harassment by suppliers, visitors or others to the council who will take appropriate action.

8.0 TRAINING AND PREVENTION

The Town Council will raise awareness of equal opportunities to those likely to be involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise.

The Town Council will raise awareness with all staff engaged to work at the council to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under the dignity at work policy and what they can do to help create a working environment free of bullying and harassment. The Town Council will provide additional training to managers to enable them to deal more effectively with complaints of bullying and harassment.

We will carry out an assessment to assess the risk of different forms of harassment, including sexual harassment and third-party harassment, occurring in our workforce, in 2025/26. These forms could include the risks in different roles or service areas, the steps the Town Council could take to reduce those risks and which of those possible steps are reasonable.

9.0 EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Every employee is required to assist the Town Council to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination. Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the council for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the council's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

10.0 GRIEVANCES

If you consider that you may have been unlawfully discriminated against, you should advise the Assistant Town Clerk & RFO, who will refer to the Town Council's Grievance Policy in reviewing the complaint. If the complaint involves bullying or harassment, the grievance procedure is modified as set out in the dignity at work policy.

The Town Council will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. Employees will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if their grievance is not upheld, unless their complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

11.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be monitored periodically by the Town Council to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law.

Date of policy: April 2025

Approving committee: General Purposes Committee

Date of meeting: 28 April 2025 (to be ratified by Full Council on 19 May 2025)

Policy version reference: v2

Supersedes: Equality Policy (revised 2017)

Policy effective from: May 2025

Date for next review: October 2026

Meeting of the General Purposes Committee

Monday 28 April 2025

Agenda Item 8.1

TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON HEALTH AND SAFETY WITHIN THE COUNCIL

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update for members on the various elements of health and safety that need to be considered within the organisation.

2.0 Health and wellbeing of staff

- 2.1 The following table provides an update on sickness levels for the period between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. Across the year, we had three members of staff on long-term sick leave (2 x Restaurant, 1 x Grounds team).
- 2.2 We were also impacted by the surge in viruses this winter, which further affected staffing levels across all areas of the organisation.

	As of 31 March 2025 (sickness recorded since 1 April 2024) (29 staff)	As of 31 March 2024 (sickness recorded since 1 April 2023) (30 staff)
Actual days taken as short-term Doctors' certificate	8.0 days	36.0 days
Actual days taken as self-certificated sick leave	107.0 days	125.0 days
Actual days taken as long-term sick leave	88.0 days	10.0 days

- 2.3 If we then look at the starting period for April 2025, this has been further impacted by seasonal viruses, and we have one member of staff currently recovering from an operation.

	As of 22 April 2025 (sickness recorded since 1 April 2025) (30 staff)
Actual days taken as short-term Doctors' certificate	0.0 days
Actual days taken as self-certificated sick leave	7.0 days
Actual days taken as long-term sick leave	5.0 days

- 2.4 The Assistant Town Clerk & RFO continues to liaise with the East Sussex Wellbeing at Work Programme.

3.0 Personal learning and development

- 3.1 Following on with the training plan that has been drawn together by Management Team, the Grounds team are due to attend training during April and May 2025 including PA1 & PA6 spraying, Brushwood Chipper, Brush cutter, Handheld hedge cutter, Pedestrian mower and Tractor driving.

We have one member of staff undergoing a Level 4 Apprenticeship in Community Engagement with LDN. We secured Apprenticeship Levy funding from East Sussex County Council to do this, and thank them for their support.

All other online training is still under review.

4.0 Health and Safety Risk Assessments

- 4.1 First aid kits in all buildings have been replaced due to reaching the end of their three-year lifespan. They will continue to be checked regularly using a new streamlined form. The defibrillator has failed its monthly check within the Civic Centre, despite having new batteries fitted recently. A replacement has been ordered.
- 4.2 Regular water monitoring continues to be carried out in each building to ensure Uckfield Town Council remains compliant. This includes reviewing the Legionella's risk assessment, tank cleans and water samples for all managed buildings. An external contractor has been appointed to audit these checks for review by the Estates and Facilities Manager. Remedial works have been priced by two contractors for comparison with a view to completing this in the next few months.
- 4.3 Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICRs) have now been carried out in 2A Vernon Road, Foresters Hall, Foresters Chapel, The Source, Luxford Field power box, Uckfield Community Fridge, Civic Centre, Bridge Cottage, Ridgewood Village Hall, Victoria Pavilion, West Park, the Cemetery Chapels, Osborn Hall. Bridge Cottage, Ridgewood Village Hall, Osborn Hall and West Park Pavilion have funded their EICRs as a result of having a full repairing lease. The remedial follow up works have all been completed apart from the Civic Centre which is scheduled in for a quieter time in May 2025 so as not to disrupt the users on the building.

5.0 Fire Safety

- 5.1 Fire compliance is being carried out and recorded as well as a new Fire Folder having been created.
- 5.2 Quarterly fire alarm and emergency lighting servicing has been carried out and has changed over to the new contractor. This will provide a more inclusive service and a reduced cost.
- 5.3 External Fire Risk Assessments were carried out in December with a very small amount of remedials still outstanding.
- 5.4 Fire training is being continually carried out to aid with evacuations and fire drills.
- 5.5 Fire doors have been replaced in each of the buildings (Foresters Hall, Victoria Pavilion and West Park Pavilion) and final snagging works are due to be completed by the end of April 2025.

- 5.6 Fire extinguishers have been serviced and replaced with the inclusion of Snatts Road Chapel.
- 5.7 Fire dampers have been serviced with a small amount of remedial works to be carried out.
- 5.8 The evacuation chair at the Civic Centre has had its 6 monthly service.
- 5.9 East Sussex Fire & Rescue attended in March to carry out a Fire Safety Audit and signed off all sites with no further actions.

Contact Officer: Sarah D'Alessio/James Hollingdale

Appendix A

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



MEMBERS AUDIT FORM

MONTH: FEBRUARY 2025

Checklist:

Documents will be chosen at random by Members carrying out the Audit.

SAGE AUDIT TRAIL (DETAILED)

Check source documents including nominal code and authorisation.

Supplier Invoices	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Customer Invoices	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Timesheets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

BANK RECONCILIATION AND VERIFICATION TO NOMINAL CODE:

Check bank reconciliation to SAGE print outs, bank statement and nominal codes.

Clerks Account	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Current/General Account	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Business Reserve	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
35 day account	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
95 day account	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

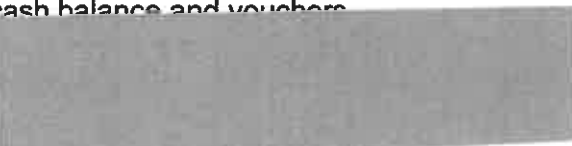
BANK RECONCILIATION QUARTERLY VERIFICATION

Clerks Account	<input type="checkbox"/>
Current/General Account	<input type="checkbox"/>
Business Reserve	<input type="checkbox"/>
35 day account	<input type="checkbox"/>
95 day account	<input type="checkbox"/>

PETTY CASH

Check cash balance and vouchers

Town Council	<input type="checkbox"/>
Luxford	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signed 
Print Name B. MAYHEW

Dated 08-04-25

Supplier Invoice Checked

Supplier Name	Invoice No. and Date	P. Order No	Confirmed stamped, signed, correct nominal code	Confirmed signed by two Cllrs	BACs payment no.
KD Catering	F36661863 07/02/25	18099	Yes	Yes	1204659710
ENGIE	204594 204 11/02/25	N/A	Yes	Yes	1211023065

Customer Invoices Checked

Customer Name	Invoice No.	Are hire charges correct?	Payment date on invoice	Bank Statement Date/Pg No.
South East Martial Arts	50814	? COM/ NOW COM	16/03/25	4 of 8 March
Drivers for the Elderly	50801	Yes	24-02-25	C Card

Timesheets checked

Staff Name	Are hours correct?	Is payment correct?	Payslip date	Ref code on BACS payment record
Jo Brooker	Yes	Yes	28/02/25	1210277641
Michelle Castelli	Yes	Yes	26/02/25	1210277641

Bank Reconciliation Checked

Bank Account	Bank statement date/ Pg. no.	RFO has signed both records	Amount reconciled and if not reasons noted	Nominal Code
Clerks Account	28/2/25	Yes	0.00	1210
General Account	28/02/25	Yes	199000.07	1200
Business Reserve	28/02/25	Yes	139241.32	1227
35 day account	12/03/25	Yes	103078.17	1225
95 day account	12/03/25	Yes	415383.17	1226

Quarterly bank reconciliation verification

Bank Account	Bank statement Date/ Pg. no.	RFO has signed both records	Member has signed both records	Notes
Clerks Account				
General Account				
Business Reserve				
35 day account				
95 day account				

Petty Cash Checked

Account Name	Is reconciliation correct?	Selected Voucher name and findings	At time of visit, are petty cash floats aligned to SAGE balance
Town Council	Yes Feb	TESCO 26/02/25 £5.90	
Luxfords	Yes Feb	Morrisons 07/02/25	

Appendix A

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



MEMBERS AUDIT FORM

MONTH: JANUARY 2025

Checklist:

Documents will be chosen at random by Members carrying out the Audit.

SAGE AUDIT TRAIL (DETAILED)

Check source documents including nominal code and authorisation.

Supplier Invoices	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Customer Invoices	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Timesheets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

BANK RECONCILIATION AND VERIFICATION TO NOMINAL CODE:

Check bank reconciliation to SAGE print outs, bank statement and nominal codes.

Clerks Account	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Current/General Account	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Business Reserve	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
35 day account	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
95 day account	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

BANK RECONCILIATION QUARTERLY VERIFICATION

Clerks Account	<input type="checkbox"/>
Current/General Account	<input type="checkbox"/>
Business Reserve	<input type="checkbox"/>
35 day account	<input type="checkbox"/>
95 day account	<input type="checkbox"/>

PETTY CASH

Check cash balance and vouchers

Town Council	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Luxfords Farm	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signed

Print Name Z. M. AGRE

Dated 19-03-25

Supplier Invoice Checked

Supplier Name	Invoice No. and Date	P. Order No	Confirmed stamped, signed, correct nominal code	Confirmed signed by two Cllrs	BACs payment no.
Zhefs Party	275704 18021 24-01-25		yes	yes	1198328499
SEVCOM	51802 18105 27-01-25		yes	yes	1204718550

Customer Invoices Checked

Customer Name	Invoice No.	Are hire charges correct?	Payment date on invoice	Bank Statement Date/Pg No.
Roxstede	50743	yes	07-02-25	on line
Longs Bank	50711			
Freedom Leisure	50710	yes	17-02-25	on line

11129. ~

Timesheets checked

Staff Name	Are hours correct?	Is payment correct?	Payslip date	Ref code on BACS payment record
J. Connor	yes	yes	31-01-25	1197314744
L. Ridley	yes.	yes	31-01-25	1197314744

Bank Reconciliation Checked

Bank Account	Bank statement date/ Pg. no.	RFO has signed both records	Amount reconciled and if not reasons noted	Nominal Code
Clerks Account	1 of 2	Yes	0.00 8.00	1210
General Account	1 of 7	Yes	200,000.53	1200
Business Reserve	1 of 2	Yes	193,770.43	1227
35 day account	1 of 2	Yes	102,863.54	1225
95 day account	1 of 2	Yes	414,289.90	1226

Quarterly bank reconciliation verification

Bank Account	Bank statement Date/ Pg. no.	RFO has signed both records	Member has signed both records	Notes
Clerks Account				
General Account		N	A	
Business Reserve				
35 day account				
95 day account				

Petty Cash Checked

Account Name	Is reconciliation correct?	Selected Voucher name and findings	At time of visit, are petty cash floats aligned to SAGE balance
Town Council	Yes	Tesco Sole Man	Yes.
Luxfords	Yes	Tesco Tesco	£2.00 query

