



UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

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

Town Clerk – Holly Goring

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO A MEETING OF UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

on

**Wednesday 25 June 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 MAYOR'S DISCRETION

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

(this part of the agenda should not be used to report day to day issues such as potholes. These should be reported direct to: <https://live.eastsussexhighways.com/report-problem>)

4.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

5.0 MINUTES

5.1 To **RESOLVE** that the minutes of the Annual Statutory meeting of the Council on 19 May 2025 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

5.2 Action list – for information only

5.3 Forward plan – for information only

6.0 COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| (a) Plans Committees | 2 June and 23 June 2025. |
| (b) Environment and Leisure Committee | 27 May 2025. |
| (c) General Purposes Committee | 9 June 2025. |

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

- 8.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS**
(i) Events Working Group
- 9.0 TO RECEIVE, CONSIDER AND NOTE THE INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2025**
- 10.0 TO RECEIVE, CONSIDER AND APPROVE SECTION 1 - THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2025**
- 11.0 TO RECEIVE, CONSIDER AND APPROVE SECTION 2 - THE TOWN COUNCIL'S DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2025**
- 12.0 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON UCKFIELD HIGH STREET**
- 13.0 TO CONSIDER A DRAFT RESPONSE TO THE EAST SUSSEX LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION SURVEY**
- 14.0 TO CONSIDER PROVIDING A RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT EAST SUSSEX RAIL STRATEGY 2025-30**
- 15.0 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE TENDER PROCESS FOR THE UPGRADE OF VICTORIA PLAY AREA, AND REPLACEMENT OF THE ZIP LINE AT HEMPSTEAD**
- 16.0 TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS**
- 17.0 SIGNING OF GRAVE CERTIFICATES AND TO NOTE TRANSFERS OF DEEDS OF GRANT**
- 18.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED**
- 19.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- 20.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**



Town Clerk
19 June 2025

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the Annual Statutory Meeting of **UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber of the Civic Centre on Monday 19 May 2025 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT:

Cllr. K. Bedwell	Cllr. D. Manvell
Cllr. D. Bennett	Cllr. S. Mayhew
Cllr. D. French	Cllr. P. Selby
Cllr. V. Frost	Cllr. B. Reed
Cllr. J. Love	Cllr. A. Smith
Cllr. M. McClafferty	Cllr. P. Ullmann (observed online)
Cllr. C. Macve	Cllr. D. Ward

IN ATTENDANCE:

4 members of the public.

Sarah D'Alessio Assistant Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Holly Goring Town Clerk
Minutes taken by Holly Goring

Before the meeting commenced, the Town Mayor wished to say a big thank you to Councillor Ben Cox for his commitment to the role of Town Councillor, in particular with his work on Finance Sub-Committee and his support to residents with community initiatives. Councillor Ben Cox had been a Town Councillor for a period of six years (since May 2019). We would now await further information from the Wealden DC Elections team to understand if the vacancy would be filled by election or co-option.

1.0 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR

Eight nominations were received in advance of the meeting for the position of Town Mayor. The councillor nominated for Town Mayor were:
Councillor K. Bedwell

The Town Clerk asked if any further nominations wished to be made from the table. No other nominations were received.

FC.01.05.25 With no further nominations, members **RESOLVED** for Councillor Karen Bedwell to be re-elected as Town Mayor for a second year.

- 1.1 The Town Mayor to receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office
Councillor K. Bedwell thanked members for their support and accepted the chain of office for a second year.
Councillor K. Bedwell then signed the declaration of acceptance of office in the presence of the Proper Officer (Town Clerk).

2.0 ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR

The Town Clerk advised that two nominations had been put forward for the role of Deputy Mayor.

The names put forward for Deputy Mayor, were:
Councillor S. Mayhew

The Town Clerk asked again if any further nominations wished to be made at the meeting. None were received.

FC.02.05.25 With ten votes in favour, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor S. Mayhew be re-elected for a second year as Deputy Town Mayor.

3.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillor P. Ullmann due to work commitments, but Cllr Ullmann was able to observe the meeting online.

4.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and officers were reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on the agenda. They were advised that notice should be given at this part of the meeting of any intended declaration and that the nature of the interest should then be declared later at the commencement of the item or when the interest became apparent. None were forthcoming.

5.0 STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON MATTERS ON THE AGENDA AT THE MAYOR'S DISCRETION

None.

6.0 MINUTES

6.1 To resolve that the minutes of the Full Council meeting of the 7 April 2025 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

FC.03.05.25 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Full Council on the 7 April 2025 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

6.2 Action List

The action list was a reminder of matters outstanding from previous Full Council discussions.
Members subsequently noted the report.

6.3 Forward Plan

Members noted the forward plan and advised that they found it helpful.

7.0 COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

(a) Environment & Leisure Committee of the 14 April 2025
FC.04.05.25 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Environment & Leisure Committee of the 14 April 2025.

(b) Plans Committee of the 22 April and 12 May 2025
FC.05.05.25 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Plans Committee of the 22 April and 12 May 2025.

(c) General Purposes Committee of the 28 April 2025
FC.06.05.25 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the General Purposes Committee of the 28 April 2025.

Councillor D. Manvell arrived at 7.14pm.

8.0 TO CONSIDER THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Members were presented with the Scheme of Delegation (and Committee Terms of Reference). This would be presented to members on an annual basis, to ensure adequate opportunity to review the contents.

The terms of reference had been updated with minor amendments to ensure delivery of the Strategic Plan aligned with the governance structure of the organisation.

FC.07.05.25 It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the updated Scheme of Delegation and Committee Terms of Reference.

Councillor P. Selby arrived at 7.21pm.

9.0 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE UNDER MENTIONED STANDING COMMITTEES

General Purposes - 9 members

FC.08.05.25 It was **RESOLVED** that eight of the nine seats of the General Purposes Committee be as follows:-

Councillors V. Frost, J. Love, C. Macve, D. Manvell, P. Selby, A. Smith, P. Ullmann and D. Ward.

The vacant seat would be filled by the newly elected or co-opted Town Councillor in the summer months.

Environment and Leisure - 9 members

FC.09.05.25 It was **RESOLVED** that the nine members of the Environment and Leisure Committee be as follows:-

Councillors. K. Bedwell, D. Bennett, D. French, V. Frost, M. McClafferty, C. Macve, S. Mayhew, B. Reed and A. Smith.

Plans - 7 members

FC.10.05.25 It was **RESOLVED** that five of the seven seats of the Plans Committee be as follows:-

Cllrs. K. Bedwell, D. Bennett, J. Love, C. Macve, S. Mayhew.

This left two seats vacant. One seat would be filled by the newly elected or co-opted Town Councillor. The last seat remained vacant.

Councillor P. Selby advised that he would consider taking the position, and this would need to be discussed prior to the next Full Council meeting.

GP.01.05.25 In considering the appointment of Chair of the General Purposes Committee, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor. C. Macve be appointed as Chair.

GP.02.05.25 In considering the appointment of Vice-Chair of the General Purposes

Committee, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor. D. Ward be appointed as Vice-Chair.

EL.01.05.25 In considering the appointment of Chair of the Environment and Leisure Committee, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor. A. Smith be re-appointed as Chair.

EL.02.05.25 In considering the appointment of Vice-Chair of the Environment and Leisure Committee, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor. B. Reed be re-appointed as Vice-Chair.

P.01.05.25 In considering the appointment of Chair of the Plans Committee, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor. J. Love be re-appointed as Chair.

P.02.05.25 In considering the appointment of Vice-Chair of the Plans Committee, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor. C. Macve be re-appointed as Vice-Chair.

10.0 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE UNDER MENTIONED SUB-COMMITTEES AND THE VOICE EDITORIAL PANEL

In considering the appointment of members to the sub-committees, the Clerk reminded Members of Standing Order No. 19.1.8 which stated that the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee or in their absence the Vice-chairman of the committee shall be members of every sub-committee appointed by it, unless they signified that they did not wish to serve.

The Town Clerk asked the Chair of General Purposes Committee, Councillor C. Macve, if he wished to sit on Personnel Sub-Committee. Councillor C. Macve felt this wasn't necessary.

Further to the addition to the Standing Orders in 2024 to invite the Town Mayor (Chair of Full Council) to sit on Personnel Sub-Committee, this invitation had already been met through committee preferences.

Personnel - 5 members

FC.11.05.25 It was **RESOLVED** that the members of the Personnel Sub-committee be as follows:-

Councillors. K. Bedwell, J. Love, M. McClafferty, A. Smith and D. Ward.

Finance – 5 members

Four seats were automatically filled, with a further two members interested. Councillor C. Macve wished to rescind his interest in the sub-committee.

FC.12.05.25 It was **RESOLVED** that the members of the Finance Sub-committee be as follows:-

Councillors K. Bedwell, D. Manvell, S. Mayhew, P. Ullmann and D. Ward.

The meeting then adjourned to allow the sub-committees to meet and elect a Chair and Vice-chair.

PS.01.05.25 In considering the appointment of Chair of the Personnel Sub-committee it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor M. McClafferty be appointed as Chair.

PS.02.05.25 In considering the appointment of Vice-Chair of the Personnel Sub-committee it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor D. Ward be appointed as Vice-Chair.

FS.01.05.25 In considering the appointment of Chair of the Finance Sub-committee it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor D. Ward be appointed as Chair.

FS.02.05.25 In considering the appointment of Vice-Chair of the Personnel Sub-committee it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor D. Manvell be appointed as Vice-Chair.

The Voice Editorial Panel

The Clerk advised that two Members had expressed an interest in the Editorial Panel. Further interest was offered by Councillor M. McClafferty.

FC.13.05.25 It was subsequently **RESOLVED** that the three members of the Voice Editorial Panel would be as follows:-
Councillors. D. French, M. McClafferty and P. Selby.

11.0 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

FC.14.05.25 It was **RESOLVED** that the following Members be appointed as the Council's representatives to the following outside bodies:-

FULL COUNCIL

Organisation	No. Required	
Uckfield Town Centre Regeneration Joint Committee	2	Cllr Jackie Love Cllr Diane Ward
Uckfield Town Centre Regeneration Joint Committee – Substitute Members	2	Cllr Donna French Cllr Peter Selby
Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group	Up to 4	Cllr Jackie Love Cllr Bernadette Reed Cllr Angie Smith
Gatwick Airport Consultation Group	3	Cllr Chris Macve Cllr Bernadette Reed Cllr Peter Selby Cllr Peter Ullmann

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Wealden Citizens Advice	1	Cllr Donna French/ Cllr Angie Smith
-------------------------	----------	--

Emergency Planning Co-ordinators	4 (two south of river/two north of river)	Cllr Karen Bedwell Cllr Duncan Bennett Cllr Donna French
Wealden Volunteering	1	Cllr Peter Selby
Wealden District Association of Local Councils	(2) 1 member and 1 substitute	Cllr Diane Ward
Wealden District Association of Local Councils Parish Planning Panel/Local Plan Engagement Cluster	(2) 1 member and 1 substitute	Cllr Karen Bedwell

AGM meetings only:

East Sussex Association of Local Councils	1	Cllr Diane Ward
Ridgewood Village Hall Management Committee	1	Cllr Spike Mayhew

ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

All Weather Pitch Operational Advisory Group	(2) (1 member and 1 substitute)	Cllr Chris Macve
Biodiversity links: Conservators of Ashdown Forest and Weald to Waves	(2) (1 member and 1 substitute)	Cllr Donna French/ Cllr Bernadette Reed
Local Nature Reserve Supporters Group	(2) (1 member and 1 substitute)	<i>To be appointed at first E&L Committee after Annual Stat meeting</i>
Luxford Centre Management Committee	1	Cllr Val Frost
Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee	1	Cllr Chris Macve/ Cllr Val Frost
Uckfield Youth Club Trust Board	(2) (1 member and 1 substitute)	Cllr Dan Manvell
Wealden Bus Alliance/Weald Link Forum	1	Cllr Angie Smith/Town Clerk
Wealden Food Partnership Advisory Group	1	Cllr Angie Smith

AGM meetings only:

Uckfield & District Twinning Association	1	Cllr Spike Mayhew
--	----------	-------------------

12.0 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO FULL COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS

Members considered a report which sought to confirm membership of Full Council working groups for the year ahead. This agenda item would confirm the members appointed to:

Civic Centre Working Group
Ageing Well Forum
Events Working Group

FC.15.05.25 Members **RESOLVED to:**

(i) confirm appointments to:

Civic Centre Working Group –
Councillors Bennett, French, Frost, Mayhew and Ward

Events Working Group -
Councillors Bedwell, French, Frost, Love, Mayhew.

(ii) and, appoint Councillor K. Bedwell and P. Selby as Town Council representatives on the Ageing Well Forum.

13.0 TO RATIFY REVISED DOCUMENTATION FROM STANDING COMMITTEES:

(i) Standing Orders

(ii) Financial regulations

(iii) Equality & Diversity Policy

These documents had already been reviewed by General Purposes Committee

(i) Subject to changing references to his/he/him within the contents of the Standing Orders, members

FC.16.05.25 **RESOLVED to adopt the updated Standing Orders;**

FC.17.05.25 (ii) Members **RESOLVED to adopt the Town Council's updated Financial Regulations;**

FC.18.05.25 (ii) Members **RESOLVED to adopt the Town Council's updated Equality & Diversity Policy.**

14.0 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY, AND CIVILITY AND RESPECT PLEDGE

Town Councillors were provided with a copy of the Town Council's Code of Conduct Policy for reference and review alongside the Civility and Respect Pledge. There were no changes, but provided an opportunity for members to review the contents.

Councillor D. Ward advised that NALC were looking at civility and respect in more detail, and were in talks with the UK Government to review Standards to address poor behaviour. She also spoke of the varying views of members' home address details being in the public domain.

The Town Clerk advised that there were two places that personal details could be shared – contact details on the Town Council website, and the details in the Member Register of Interest forms. At present, there was no blanket redaction of home address within Wealden District.

Councillor D. Manvell advised members of a talk that had been arranged at Wealden DC the previous week which referenced the 'debate not hate' campaign. He advised of the Police 'Operation Ford' which could be stated via 999 if a member was ever at risk.

FC.19.05.25 It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the Town Council's Code of Conduct Policy.

15.0 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S ASSET REGISTER

This was being reviewed as part of financial year end, the annual review by the Internal Audit and in the preparation of the AGAR process (Annual Governance and Accountability Return).

This would be shared with members.

16.0 TO NOTE MEMBERSHIP OF OTHER BODIES AND ANNUAL FEES

Members were presented with a short report which provided details of annual subscriptions, memberships and associated fees. These were categorised by advisory bodies on legislation, guidance and best practice (e.g. National Association of Local Councils), specialist memberships such as those relating to cemetery or allotment management and other.

Members noted the contents of the report, and the annual subscriptions and memberships in place for 2025-26.

17.0 TO RECEIVE THE TOWN COUNCIL'S CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2025-26

Members were provided with a calendar of meetings up until May 2026, for all standing committees, full council meetings, the annual town meeting, allotment conference, and annual finance sub-committee meeting where they reviewed the community grants programme.

Members noted and received the calendar of dates for 2025-26.

18.0 TO NOTE THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO COMPLETE AUDITS UNTIL THE ANNUAL STATUTORY MEETING IN MAY 2026

Members were presented with a report which confirmed that audits had been completed for 2024-25. A new schedule had been drawn up for 2025-26 which members were asked to approve.

FC.20.05.25 Members **RESOLVED** to approve the proposed schedule for member audits for the financial year 2025-26.

19.0 TO RECEIVE UPDATES FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES
None.

20.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM FULL COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS

(i) Uckfield – Events Working Group

Members noted the report.

(ii) Ageing Well Forum

Members noted the report.

(iii) Civic Centre Working Group

Nothing to report at present.

21.0 TO NOTE THE ENGAGEMENTS OF THE MAYOR, DEPUTY MAYOR AND TOWN CRIER

Members noted the engagements.

22.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED

No questions were received by the deadline.

23.0 TO CONSIDER THE DESIGN OF A NEW BUS SHELTER TO BE INSTALLED ON LONDON ROAD

This item was deferred to Environment & Leisure Committee the following week.

24.0 TO CONSIDER HOW TO RESPOND TO THE DRAFT EAST SUSSEX FREIGHT AND RAIL STRATEGIES CONSULTATION

The Town Clerk welcomed suggestions from members to consider how best to respond to the consultations. There were mixed views on whether this should fall under Full Council or Plans and members noted that the Plans Committee had a number of major applications to consider during May and early June so would not have capacity.

FC.21.05.25 With nine votes in favour, members **RESOLVED** to set up a working group to review the contents of the consultations and prepare a response on behalf of Uckfield Town Council. The working group would consist of Councillors Bennett, Frost, Love and Reed.

25.0 UPDATE ON A NEW BANKING HUB FOR UCKFIELD

The Town Clerk advised that a meeting had taken place in April, with Cash Access UK. Two members were present, along with the Director of Uckfield Chamber of Commerce. The meeting sought to provide background on how Banking Hubs worked. It could be triggered by the last bank leaving the village/town, or through community support. The requirement for a hub in Uckfield was triggered by the planned closure of Santander.

Members were informed that Cash Access UK allowed for up to 12 months to get the hub up and running, and would be looking for a minimum of a 10-year commercial lease. They looked within a small radius and they would look for somewhere they could make or already was DDA compliant. The details of the local commercial estate agents were provided to them as a result. They had specific branding and marketing ready to issue in the lead up to the opening of a hub but until further details were known about the location, it would be premature to promote at this stage.

Cash Access UK was a not-for-profit company, but the setup of the banking hubs was financially supported by the five national banks and associated businesses. It would be a walk-in service with a glass meeting pod, for private conversations. They normally had two counter staff (post office and community banker). At present they didn't intend to provide an additional ATM, but it was suggested this would be important within the High Street.

145 banking hubs were already open across the country. The Town Clerk reminded members that Halifax and Lloyds were running community banking services from the Civic Centre each week. Members noted the update provided.

26.0 SIGNING OF GRAVE CERTIFICATES AND TO NOTE TRANSFERS OF DEED OF GRANT

Three grave certificates had been received:

Mrs Tracey Doherty

Maria Wren

Robert Dean

FC.22.05.25 Members **RESOLVED** for three members to sign these deeds of grant.

27.0 TOWN MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

28.0 TOWN CLERKS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Clerk spoke on:

(i) Member Register of Interest forms – members needed to include the full name and address of employers, the details of their personal address whether renting or owning the property, and completed forms needed to be returned by 27 May 2025;

(ii) a Joint meeting had been called with Wealden District Council, East Sussex County Council and Uckfield Chamber of Commerce to explore all options relating to the dangerous structure and associated traffic management;

(iii) The next SLR meeting was due to take place early July. Members were asked to make the Senior Administrative Officer aware of potential agenda items;

(iv) the suggestion that Councillor Manvell and relevant officers from Wealden DC, liaise with Uckfield Town Council's Plans Committee members to explain the changes to the Planning Committee governance arrangements at Wealden DC;

(v) how upsetting it was to read the comments on social media in relation to lack of Beacon lighting for VE Day. The Town Council purposely held an event on the Bank Holiday as staff/councillors were unable to accommodate and host the event on the day itself. There were also a large number of events taking place on the weekends and day itself. The Town Clerk reminded members that a number of Councillors and staff were experiencing some serious and difficult personal issues at the current time. People tended to forget that public servants were human too. It was also very sad to feel unsupported by former Councillors. The Town Clerk advised that she had wanted to respond to some of those comments to state "you might want to reach out to your former colleagues because some of them aren't doing so great right now." The Town Mayor added, that based on the comments online, she felt she needed to make a statement. Not just Councillors but staff took a bashing and this was not ok. To see comments from ex councillors, was very upsetting. Staff should not have been treated in that way and for people to be so unpleasant.

The Town Clerk wished to thank those who helped on the Bank Holiday Monday, and spoke of what a lovely day the veterans who attended had, with positive feedback received.

The feedback had been taken on board, and the Council would do the best it could to carry out beacon lightings in the future.

The meeting closed at 8.46pm.

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

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

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

<u>Resolution No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Date Raised</u>	<u>Action By</u>	<u>Date Complete</u>
<u>FC.115.04.24</u>	<p><u>10.0 To consider current issues with pavement parking and proposals for undertaking a campaign</u></p> <p>With unanimous support, members RESOLVED to approve for the Town Clerk and Marketing & Community Engagement Officer to proceed with a communications campaign around poor parking behaviour.</p>	08.04.24	HG/ WH	In progress.
<u>FC.29.06.24</u>	<p><u>12.0 – To consider a request to review the opening times of the toilet(s) at Victoria Pleasure Ground</u></p> <p>With six votes in favour, and three members against the proposal (including Cllr Selby), members RESOLVED to address this matter through the Town Council's budget setting process which would begin September 2024, to ensure the correct service provision was in place.</p>	26.06.24	SD/HG /JH	Unable to be considered at this time.
<u>FC.44.09.24</u>	<p><u>11. To consider a motion from Councillor Bernadette Reed</u></p> <p>With seven votes in favour, two votes against and two members abstaining from voting, it was RESOLVED for the Town Clerk to nominate Luxford Field Car Park as an Asset of Community Value.</p>	09.09.24	HG	In progress.
<u>FC.49.09.24</u>	<p><u>15.0 To consider the relocation of the substation in Shepherds Way</u></p> <p>Members RESOLVED to request that a meeting be arranged onsite with UKPN, to understand what difficulties they were experiencing with the current location and what would be involved with any movement.</p>	09.09.24	Grnds/ TC	We await an update from UKPN on their updated proposals following our site visit.
<u>FC.50.09.24</u>	<p><u>16.0 To consider setting up a working group to establish a Heritage Plaque Project</u></p> <p>Members RESOLVED to select Option B, and prepare a localised scheme for Uckfield, with the following members appointed to join a member-led working group (Councillors D. Bennett, D. French, J. Love and B. Reed).</p>	09.09.24	WH	In progress.

<u>Resolution No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Date Raised</u>	<u>Action By</u>	<u>Date Complete</u>
<u>FC.63.10.24</u>	<p><u>15.0 To consider a motion from Councillor D. French</u> Members RESOLVED to approve the purchase and installation of a central locked box housing a public access trauma kit on the exterior of the Civic Centre, with plans to look wider in the town, in due course. Research should be undertaken to source funding or partnership working to deliver this project in association with local emergency services as well as the Freemasons, Rotary Club and Uckfield Lions.</p>	21.10.24	HG	Quotations have been obtained and contact made with Uckfield & District Lions to deliver as a joint project. Should be completed shortly. NFA.
<u>FC.64.10.24</u>	<p><u>16.0 To consider further expansion of a motion from Councillor B. Reed</u> (i) approve the broadening of the Town Council representative role for the Conservators of Ashdown Forest to also include the Weald to Waves initiative, and (Councillor D. French and Councillor B. Reed); (ii) approve for Councillor Reed to utilise that role to liaise with the relevant agencies involved in the Weald to Waves initiative, and understand what the partner role entails in terms of resource and if a financial contribution is required. Councillor Reed was asked to bring back a report with this information.</p>	21.10.24	BR	(i) completed, and storymaps produced of the Uckfield area. NFA.
<u>FC.103.04.25</u>	<p><u>10.0 To consider legal advice on the village green status of Ridgewood Recreation Ground</u> With 9 members voting in favour and one member abstaining, it was RESOLVED to agree to: (i) proceed with exploring the re-positioning of the village green status on Ridgewood Recreation Ground and preserve the correct areas of the open space for the future, and; (ii) to seek further information on the proposed changes to the Millennium Green (as a SANG) and consider this within the investigations.</p>	07.04.25	HG	To be progressed.

FULL COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN – 2025

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

FULL COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN – 2025

DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	REPORT OFFICER
June 2025	Internal Audit Report for 2024-25 (for the year ending 31 March 2025)	Asst Town Clerk
	Annual Governance Statement – Section 1 of AGAR	Asst Town Clerk
	Sections 2 of AGAR and draft financial statements	Asst Town Clerk
	Standing Orders and Direct Debit payments	Asst Town Clerk
	Update on High Street	Town Clerk
	Rail Strategy consultation	Town Clerk
	Consider a response to Local Government Reorganisation Survey	Town Clerk
	Update on Play Area Upgrade	Town Clerk
CONFIDENTIAL		
DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	REPORT OFFICER
September 2025	Q1 Progress Update for 2025/26 Annual Priorities	Town Clerk
	Snapshot of Budget and Balance Sheet position at end of June 2025 (Q1)	Asst Town Clerk
	To consider costs of establishing a Changing Places toilet	Town Clerk
	To further consider the Greenway Proposals and rail track bed	Town Clerk
	Discussion on the Town Council's viewpoint on parking issues in Uckfield	Town Clerk
	Signing of lease agreements	Town Clerk
	Motions received by Town Councillors	Town Clerk
CONFIDENTIAL		

FULL COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN – 2025

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

DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	REPORT OFFICER
December 2025	To consider draft content of Strategic Plan 2026-2031	Town Clerk
	To consider draft content of the Annual Plan 2026/27	Town Clerk
	To consider draft content of the Annual Budget 2026/27	Asst Town Clerk
	To consider draft content of the Asset Management Plan 2026-31	Town Clerk
	Calendar of meetings for 2026	Town Clerk
CONFIDENTIAL		

Meeting of the Full Council

Wednesday 25 June 2025

Agenda Item 8.0(i)

TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM FULL COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS: UCKFIELD EVENTS WORKING GROUP

Weald on the Field – Saturday 9 August 2025

The working group met on 12 June 2025 to run through the arrangements for this year's Weald on the Field day festival which is scheduled for Saturday 9 August 2025.

All facilities except the First Aid has been booked. Staff were currently obtaining quotations for this service. Additional toilets were recommended to those already booked.

A new airstream stage was coming to Uckfield this year, which was exciting, and working group members confirmed the line up for live music and entertainment.

The main focus at present for those organising the event was spreading the word about business sponsorship opportunities, and marketing and communication.

Further details would be communicated in July.

Town Councillors were advised to let the Town Clerk know if they were available to assist on the day, with either set up on the morning of Saturday 9 August 2025 (7.30/8.00am – 11.30am), during the day (anytime between 12noon – 7.00pm) or when the event finished at 7.00pm. Help was required to share the load from across full Council.

VJ Day – Friday 15 August 2025

Members noted the support from the local community to make arrangements to mark the anniversary of VJ Day (the end of WWII in Japan).

Members also reflected on the feedback from the community on social media, in relation to beacon lightings.

So close to the day festival, and during the summer season, it would be difficult to accommodate a full beacon lighting event with music, food and entertainment, but members were keen to light the beacon and pay tribute to the Second World War generation.

It was therefore suggested that a lighting of the beacon be arranged in the form of a remembrance service, rather than a larger town event. Staff were asked to start exploring the arrangement of this.

Town Clerk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

<https://www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk/> PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2025, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2024/25 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
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, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2023/24, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2023/24 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2024-25 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2023-24 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2023/24 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

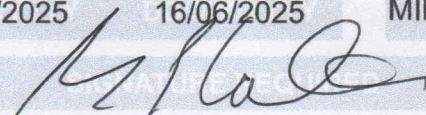
Date(s) internal audit undertaken

12/11/2024 26/03/2025 16/06/2025

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

MIKE PLATTEN CPFA INTERNAL AUDITOR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

19/06/2025

***If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).**

****Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).**

Holly Goring
Uckfield Town Council

19 June 2025

Dear Holly

Uckfield Town Council

Internal Audit 24-25 - Final Audit Report

The internal audit for the 24-25 financial year is now complete. I am pleased to be able to report that I have signed off the internal audit section of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for with no comments.

As stated in the engagement letter, the scope of our work is limited to completing the audit testing and enquiries we deem necessary to complete Section 4 of the Annual Report for Local Councils in England. We do not provide assurance over or accept responsibility for areas of work not included in this scope, unless specifically agreed with the Council during the financial year. For clarity :

- my audit reviews the statement of accounts included within the AGAR
 - I do not review the 6 page Financial Statements Document produced by the Council.
- This is not required by regulations and is therefore outside the scope of this audit.

In providing internal audit services we are not conducting a financial statement audit in accordance with standards and guidelines issued by the Audit Practices Board and our procedures are not designed to provide assurance over the reliability and quality of your financial statements and management information – that is the job of external audit.

We are required by the Annual Internal Audit Report included in 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 my internal audit work for 24-25. Recommendations are set out at Appendix A-C. I set out a schedule of tests not completed at this audit at Appendix D, these tests are not relevant to this Council.

The audit was carried out during three visits to the Council. The interim audits were completed on 12 November and 26 March, these concentrated on in year financial transactions and governance controls. The final audit was carried out on 16 June and concentrated on the statement of accounts and balance sheet.

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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.

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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

Final Audit

The accounting statements have been agreed back to year end reports produced by the Council's external accountant. I have checked from accounting statements, back to the sage trial balance, via working papers prepared by the Council's accountant. All comparatives reported in the financial statements have been agreed back to the audited 23-24 accounts, as published on the Council website. Box 6 and 7 have been restated, in line with recommendations made by external audit in their 23-24 audit certificate, and the accounting statements are marked "restated."

Compilation of Financial Statements

Whilst I was able to agree the accounting statement back to the trial balance, the exercise was complex and time consuming. This is for the following reasons:

- The trial balance includes fixed assets. This is not required in the Town Council sector, and makes the general ledger less user friendly
- the year end journal was not posted to the ledgers in advance of my audit. This should be actioned before the accounting statements are finalised
- the compilation of the year end accounts is based on a complex multi spreadsheet process, which is reliant on manual input. More use should be made of reporting from the Sage accounting system.

I would like to repeat a recommendation from my 23-24 audit that the Council should review statutory accounting processes. This review should consider:

- Removing fixed assets and capital accounts from the trial balance
- Ceasing production of company style accounts, which are currently produced each year but not used.
- Writing reports in Sage Accounts that enable year end accounts to be produced directly from the accounting system, with minimal reliance on spreadsheets
- Ensuring all year end journals are posted prior to the year end internal audit.

The Council may need to use an accountant with Sage and town council sector knowledge to assist with this.

VAT Accounting

The Council has received the VAT report from the Parkinson Partnership. This concluded that the Council is charging and accounting for VAT correctly on most of its activities, with a few minor exceptions. These are being reviewed by the Town Clerk and RFO.

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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

I confirmed that the year-end VAT return has been completed and submitted to HMRC. VAT of £5,091 was claimed. I have however identified an issue with the Council's VAT control account.

- At my initial review, the balance on the VAT control account on Sage at 31.3.25 was £40,458, meaning the VAT control account and Council general reserves were overstated by £35,367.
- Further work was completed by the RFO and the following accounting issues were identified:
 - o The imbalance partly relates to historic issues in VAT accounting - it appeared that a number of journal postings had not occurred in 2021.
 - o Journal postings for partial exemption VAT calculations have been incorrectly posted for a number of years.

Journals have been posted to the general ledger to correct issues identified, which have been written back against the general reserve balance at 31.3.25.

- I have rechecked the VAT control account (Account 2202 on the Sage general ledger)
 - o balance at 31.3.25 (post year end journal) £5,091 – this now agrees to the year-end VAT return

The Council has further work to do on the VAT control account in 25-26. The VAT control account should be reconciled to the VAT return quarterly, and reasons for any differences examined and corrected.

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.

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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

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.**

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

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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

Final Audit

Non pay expenditure per box 6 to the accounts amounted to £ 1,036,851, up from £826,974 in 23-24 (restated).

The 23-24 balance for all other payments recorded in box 6 to the accounts has been restated. This is in accordance with recommendations raised by external audit in the 23-24 audit certificate.

I did not carry out any further testing at my year end audit, transaction testing was concluded at my second interim audit in late March . 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.

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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

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.

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:

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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

- 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.

Final Audit

Reserves at 31 March 2025 were £1,206,466 (23-24 £1,249,896 Restated).

The 23-24 balance for balances carried forward recorded in box 7 to the accounts has been restated. This is in accordance with recommendations raised by external audit in the 23-24 audit certificate.

Earmarked reserves at 31.3.25 were £970,933. This has been agreed to SAGE and to a schedule of earmarked reserves maintained outside of the accounting system. Earmarked reserves were reviewed by Council in January 2025, and via year end reporting by F&GP Committee in June 25. I am please to note that extensive work has been completed in consolidating earmarked reserves since my last audit. There are now 27 earmarked reserves, which are maintained on a spreadsheet that reconciles to the accounting system. The Council should now look to consolidate earmarked reserves on the accounting system, and use reporting from Sage to manage these reserves, rather than the spreadsheet.

Major earmarked reserves are as follows;

- Building Maintenance - £198K
- Building Renovation - £50K
- Civic Centre £65K
- Play Area Upgrade - £81K
- Town Centre Regeneration £101K
- Community Infrastructure Levy £190K

General reserves at year end were £236K. This represents 21% of precept, which is slightly below recommended levels set out in the NALC Practitioners' Guide. Whilst I note that the Council has well developed earmarked reserves to cover most contingencies, care should be taken to ensure that the general reserve does not reduce further. This must be considered at the next budget setting cycle.

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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

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

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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

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.

Final Audit

Precept per box 2 to the accounts was £1,127,348 (23-24 £1,051,151). This has been agreed to third party documentation provided by central government

Income per box 3 to the accounts was £778,244 (23-24 £569,719). No further testing carried out at year end, sufficient assurance obtained at previous two interim audits. The second interim audit was very late in the financial year and covered transactions to month 12.

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

Petty cash is checked as part of regular member audits. I checked the February audit record. The petty cash recorded in the member audit agreed to petty cash records for the three petty cash accounts (UTC / Luxfords / Luxford Float)

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 HRMC 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.

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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

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 .

Final Audit

Staff costs per box 4 to the accounts were £854,564 (23-24 £795,577).

At the final audit I confirmed that box 4 on the accounting statements only records expenditure relating to the employment of staff, including salary / HMRC payments and pension contributions. The Council has posted an adjustment to move member allowance to box 6 on the accounting statements (other expenditure). This is in accordance with regulations.

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

Final Audit

Fixed assets per box 9 to the accounts were £ 6,692,709 (23-24 £6,591,178). The change in asset values in 24-25 was £101,531.

The asset register accounting value has been agreed back to the fixed asset register, which lists assets at cost or proxy cost. Arithmetic within the asset register has been checked and found to be accurate.

Deletions from the asset register were £28.4K and were as follows:

- Tractor / mower and Ford Van – Vehicles sold in part exchange in 24-25. Historic cost removed from asset register, and exchange value booked to income, this is the correct accounting treatment

Additions to the asset register were £130K and were as follows:

- Vehicles – tractor and 2 electric vans
- Grounds Equipment – Brush cutter and 2 mowers

All items were correctly added to the asset register at cost.

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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

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 my interim audit. I confirmed that these checks had been completed by a councillor for August 24.

Final Audit

Cash per box 8 to the accounts was £1,109,041 (23-24 £1,230,875)

I reperformed the year end bank reconciliation. I checked to agree the balance on the bank reconciliation back to bank statements and cashbook balances recorded on the accounting system . At the time of my audit, the reconciliations had not been reviewed by a councillor. The RFO confirmed that this was scheduled for the Full Council meeting in June, prior to despatch of audit files to external audit.

The Council still holds £21K in an old Lloyds bank account. Efforts should be made to close this as soon as possible, as the account serves no useful purpose.

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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

I note that the Council has now completed the review of bank accounts, in line with the investment policy. Satisfactory rates of interest are being earned on cash balances, given the need to maintain sufficient liquidity to meet cash requirements.

Loans per box 10 to the accounts were £442,400 (23-24 £441,600)

This has been agreed to a year end statement available on the Debt Management Office website.

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.

Satisfactory – Accounts have been produced on the income and expenditure basis, this is appropriate as income and expenditure at the Council is above £200k. A box 7 to 8 reconciliation has been prepared, alongside the year on year variance analysis. These are to be checked by external audit.

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, limited assurance review completed at UTC

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

Final 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 final audit and sample checked the following:

- Expenditure data – transactions over £250 published to the end of March 2025
- Grants awarded – published showing awards made in for 25-26
- 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
- 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.

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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

I would like to thank you and Sarah for your assistance with the audit. I attach my invoice for your consideration together with the internal audit report from the AGAR. I look forward to working with you again next year, in the meantime please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance.

Yours sincerely



Mike Platten CPFA

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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

APPENDIX A

MATTERS ARISING 24-25 AUDIT

FIRST INTERIM AUDIT

Matter Arising	Recommendation	Council Response
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.	Now actioned and report to be taken to Council in summer 25
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	Noted for future projects
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). 	Reviewed and consolidated in time for year end

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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

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.	

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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

FINAL AUDIT

Matter Arising	Recommendation	Council Response
Preparation of year end statutory accounts	<p>I would like to repeat a recommendation from my 23-24 audit that the Council should review statutory accounting processes. This review should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Removing fixed assets and capital accounts from the trial balance - Ceasing production of company style accounts, which are currently produced each year but not used. - Writing reports in Sage Accounts that enable year end accounts to be produced directly from the accounting system, with minimal reliance on spreadsheets - Ensuring all year end journals are posted prior to the year end internal audit. <p>The Council may need to use an accountant with Sage and town council sector knowledge to assist with this.</p>	
At my initial review, the balance on the VAT control account on Sage at 31.3.25 was £40,458, meaning the VAT control account and Council general reserves were overstated by £35,367.	The VAT control account should be reconciled to the VAT return quarterly, and reasons for any differences examined and corrected.	
I am please to note that extensive work has been completed in consolidating earmarked reserves since my last audit.	The Council should now look to consolidate earmarked reserves on the accounting system, and use reporting from Sage to manage these reserves, rather than the spreadsheet.	

☎ 07958 990310

✉ mike@aprilskies.co.uk

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

General reserves at year end were £236K. This represents 21% of precept, which is slightly below recommended levels set out in the NALC Practitioners' Guide.	Whilst I note that the Council has well developed earmarked reserves to cover most contingencies, care should be taken to ensure that the general reserve does not reduce further. This must be considered at the next budget setting cycle.	
---	--	--

APPENDIX D

Internal Audit Control Objectives – Marked as not covered

Control Objective	Area for Audit	Why this has not been audited
K	Exemption from Audit	UTC has external audit
O	Trust Funds	No trusts at this council

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

We acknowledge as the members of:

EN Uckfield Town Council IT

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk OTHER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2024/25 for

EN Uckfield Town Council IT

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2025 £	
1. Balances brought forward	1,291,130	1,249,896	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	1,051,151	1,127,348	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	569,719	778,244	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	795,577	873,444	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	39,553	38,727	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	Revised 826,974	1,036,851	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	Revised 1,249,896	1,206,466	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	1,230,875	1,109,041	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	6,591,178	6,692,709	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	441,600	422,400	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)		✓		The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above exclude any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

Signed **SIGNATURE REQUIRED**

Date

18/06/2025

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

DD/MM/YYYY

as recorded in minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND ACCOMPANYING INFORMATION FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

INDEX

PAGE	CONTENTS
1	Variance analysis
2	Income Statement
4	Other Comprehensive Income
5	Statement of Financial Position
6	Earmarked Reserves note

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
INCOME STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Comparison of income and expenditure in year with original budget

The following shows a comparison of the budget and outturn figures in 2024/25 analysed by the cost centres as disclosed on the Income and Expenditure account. The effect of depreciation and pension adjustments are excluded from this analysis.

	Budgeted £	Actual £	Variance £
Income			
Grants received	-	8,424	8,424
Rental income, interest and investment income	266,680	265,911	(769)
Charges made for services	281,200	275,040	(6,160)
Other income or contributions	40,204	228,869	188,665
	<u>588,084</u>	<u>778,244</u>	<u>190,160</u>
Expenditure			
Direct service costs:			
Salaries and wages	435,321	529,755	94,434
Grant aid expenditure	52,000	49,500	(2,500)
Other direct service costs	636,643	709,903	73,260
Democratic, Management and Civic costs:			
Salaries and wages	367,557	343,689	(23,868)
Other democratic, management and civic costs	170,754	166,999	(3,755)
	<u>1,662,275</u>	<u>1,799,845</u>	<u>137,570</u>
Net expenditure	<u>1,074,191</u>	<u>1,021,600</u>	<u>(52,591)</u>
General Reserves		(307,065)	(307,065)
Earmarked Reserves*	(259,328)	100,328	359,656
Net charge to Precept	<u>814,863</u>	<u>814,863</u>	<u>-</u>

*Earmarked Reserves is represented by £198,297 of income and £247,933 of costs. The net surplus is therefore £100,328.

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
INCOME STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	31.03.25	31.03.24
	£	£
Income		
Precept	1,127,348	1,051,151
Grants received	8,424	133
Rental income, interest and investment income	265,911	229,326
Charges made for services	275,040	276,145
Other income or contributions	228,869	64,116
	1,905,592	1,620,871
Expenditure		
Direct service costs:		
Salaries and wages	529,755	459,202
Grant aid expenditure	49,500	52,301
Other direct service costs	709,903	642,931
	1,289,158	1,154,434
Democratic, Management and Civic costs:		
Salaries and wages	343,689	336,375
Other democratic, management and civic costs	166,999	132,421
Depreciation	111,080	89,116
Net pension costs	(5,000)	(2,000)
	616,768	555,912
Net operating surplus/(deficit) for year	(332)	(89,474)
Statutory charge for capital	(19,200)	(19,200)
Reversal of annual depreciation charge	111,080	89,116
Capital expenditure from the General Fund	(129,977)	(19,674)
Pension fund adjustment	(5,000)	(2,000)
Net transfer from/(to) Earmarked Reserves	(100,328)	(39,214)
Net surplus/(deficit) for year	(143,756)	(80,447)

The lines regarding net pension interest cost and depreciation are required to be recorded for accounting purposes, but do not impact on the level of Council precept

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
INCOME STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Trade operations

The totals shown in the Income and Expenditure account include the following trading operations relating to the Luxfords restaurant, Uckfield Civic Centre:

	31.03.25	31.03.24
	£	£
Income	228,039	238,997
Expenditure	289,249	306,325
Net surplus/(deficit)	(61,211)	(67,328)

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	31.03.25 £	31.03.24 £
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(332)	(89,474)
Re-measurements related to pensions	531,000	(25,000)
	<u>530,668</u>	<u>(114,474)</u>

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	31.03.25 £	31.03.24 £
Fixed Assets		
Land and buildings	4,195,680	4,269,372
Vehicles and plant	181,900	89,311
	<u>4,377,580</u>	<u>4,358,683</u>
Current Assets		
Stocks	3,626	4,267
Debtors	217,591	67,223
Cash at bank and in hand	1,109,041	1,230,875
	<u>1,330,259</u>	<u>1,302,365</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		
Creditors	75,729	52,470
Current portion of long term debt	19,200	19,200
	<u>94,929</u>	<u>71,670.00</u>
Net current assets	<u>1,235,330</u>	<u>1,230,695</u>
Total assets less current liabilities	<u>5,612,910</u>	<u>5,589,378</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year		
Creditors	48,064	-
Long term borrowing	403,200	422,400
	<u>451,264</u>	<u>422,400</u>
Pension Liability/(Asset)	(536,000)	-
Total assets less liabilities	<u>5,697,646</u>	<u>5,166,978</u>
Reserves		
Capital Receipts Reserve	15,795	15,795
Revaluations Reserve	519,173	519,173
Pensions Reserve	536,000	-
Capital Financing Account	3,436,007	3,397,910
Earmarked Revenue Reserves	954,598	854,271
General Fund	236,074	379,831
	<u>5,697,646</u>	<u>5,166,978</u>

These financial statements were approved on _____.

Chair of Full Council

Sarah D'Alessio
Responsible Financial Officer

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
EARMARKED RESERVES NOTE TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	1 April 2024	Contribution to reserves	Contribution from reserves	31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£
Ash Dieback	9,224	25,000	(11,630)	22,594
Branding and communications	2,908	-	(908)	2,000
Building Maintenance	237,053	81,605	(120,146)	198,512
Building Reconfiguration and Renovation	50,222	-	-	50,222
Car Park improvements	31,543	-	(1,270)	30,273
Civic Centre	73,088	21,000	(28,152)	65,936
Climate Change Initiatives	28,153	1,000	(7,434)	21,718
Community Infrastructure Levy	38,744	161,506	(9,835)	190,415
Community Initiatives	834	2,100	(2,103)	831
Community safety initiatives	5,200	-	-	5,200
Conservation and wildlife monitoring	1,665	150	(1,315)	500
Elections	21,359	1,500	-	22,859
Future land purchases/expansion	2,000	-	-	2,000
Grounds machinery and equipment	-	38,250	(28,551)	9,699
Grounds vehicles	20,000	7,500	(7,783)	19,718
Luxfords Restaurant	531	500	(1,031)	-
Office administration, IT and training	5,541	-	(3,192)	2,349
Old Timbers Lane Maintenance	16,750	-	-	16,750
Open spaces and street furniture	5,279	150	(316)	5,114
Play Area Upgrades	61,525	20,000	-	81,525
Professional expertise	1,507	-	-	1,507
Public Conveniences	30,000	-	-	30,000
S106 agreements and deeds of easements	22,909	-	-	22,909
Snatts Road Cemetery and Cemetery Wall	8,145	-	-	8,145
Sports pitch and recreational improvements	5,888	13,000	(4,530)	14,358
Streetlighting	43,003	-	(15,038)	27,965
Town Centre Regeneration Masterplanning	126,500	(25,000)	-	101,500
Tree works	4,701	-	(4,701)	-
	854,271	348,261	(247,933)	954,598

Meeting of the Full Council

Wednesday 25 June 2025

Agenda item 13.0

TO CONSIDER A DRAFT RESPONSE TO THE EAST SUSSEX LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION SURVEY

1.0 Summary

1.1 Local authorities in East Sussex are inviting feedback from local residents, and separately, local organisations such as the parish and town council sector to respond to a survey on the early parameters of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

1.2 The survey starts by explaining the context of the survey:

Right now in East Sussex, there are different councils that run and look after our area. They each take care of different things. East Sussex County Council covers the whole of East Sussex and looks after things like schools, roads, and social care and education for children and adults. Then there are five smaller councils, the district and borough councils, that do things like collect bins, help people find homes, and give permission to build new things. In some towns and villages, there are also smaller town and parish councils that look after very local things like parks and graveyards.

This way of working has been around for 50 years. But now, the government thinks it's time for a change. They want to bring these services together, so that there is a new council (or councils) that takes care of everything, instead of having lots of separate ones. Except for the much smaller town and parish councils, that will stay the same. This process is called Local Government Reorganisation and is planned to happen by 2028.

An initial plan was sent to the government in March to explain how this process might work in East Sussex. You can view this plan here eastsussexcouncils.org. The current idea is to have one council for the whole of the area covered by East Sussex County Council and the five district and borough councils, but this could change depending on what people think and what the government decides.

The government has a few rules about what the new council should be like:

- It should do all the jobs the current councils do.
- It should be big enough to save money, withstand financial shocks, and handle problems well.
- It should cover a population area of 500,000 people or more.
- It should prioritise delivering high quality services.
- Councils should work together to create a new council or councils that has listened to what local people need.
- It should help the whole of the Sussex area to work better together
- It should help local people have a stronger say in decision making and feel empowered where they live.

1.3 When Wealden DC submit their final proposal to government it will be accompanied by a proposal for any changes to the existing unitary authority in Brighton & Hove. The county and district neighbours in West Sussex will also submit a proposal to government in September. The three areas have agreed to join a devolved Sussex Strategic Authority in 2026 and new unitary authorities will be part of that when they start work in 2028.

1.4 The deadline to submit a response falls on Monday 30 June 2025.

2.0 Compiling a response

2.1 As with the initial survey opportunity earlier in 2025, it was recognised that individuals would have different views on the UK Government's proposals. It was therefore difficult to provide a response on behalf of the organisation, but it was considered possible by trying to reflect the majority view and suggestions of all within this response.

2.2 By Sunday 22 June 2025, six responses had been received out of 15 councillors. These views have been compiled as a starter for ten and available to view in appendix A.

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 Members are asked to consider the draft response in appendix A, and advise the Clerk if they wish to add any further comments.

Appendix A - Initial draft response

4. Please pick the two things that would be most important to your organisation in any new council(s):

Members felt that all were equally important and to select two would be difficult. From those who did respond to the question, the highest voted were:

(i) Good access for residents so it is easy to get help or contact the new council

(joint ii) High quality services that work really well

Clear, open and honest decision making

- Good access for residents so it is easy to get help or contact the new council
- High quality services that work really well
- Clear, open and honest decision making
- Regularly listening to our professional partners about what they want and need
- Value for money - using money wisely

5. As explained before, right now there is a plan to have just one council for all of East Sussex. This one council would replace the six councils (Eastbourne Borough Council, East Sussex County Council, Hastings Borough Council, Lewes District Council, Rother District Council and Wealden District Council) that work in East Sussex at the moment. We are still open to other options.

What do you think would be the benefits or some of the potential problems to your organisation of having just one single council across the area covered by East Sussex County Council and all five District and Borough councils?

Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It should be beneficial that we have one council to contact• Easy point of access, reduce duplication and overlap. Potential to reduce costs and reduce economies of scale with the amalgamation of offices;• Combining strategy to one major unit should create better efficiency after the initial period of disruption with less duplication and policy development;• More direct control
Any problems?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The district varies widely. Towns on the coast have completely different requirements to a rural village surrounded by Ashdown Forest. Would their own unique needs be met?• Could mean that local issues get lost in the bureaucracy, establishing during the LGR;• Like any major reorganisation not all disadvantages are evident at first and this could in the beginning cause disruption including the initial removal of facilities, during the transfer. And will the centralisation see the reduction of specific services – libraries, recycling sites, etc.• Loss of expertise once staffing restructures commence;• Becomes impersonal;• Despite the change, it could still be very confusing for the public and we could see the loss of local contact centres/facilities;

6. Other than a single council for the whole of the area covered by East Sussex County Council and the five District and Borough councils, do you think there are any other geographical boundaries that should be considered?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Mixed views on the above. In the main, those who responded felt that the proposed geographical boundaries based on the current county council seems practical.

7. As you said you thought there were other geographical boundaries that should be considered, please write your idea in the box below:

It was questioned whether the proposed reorganisation should align more closely with the Mayoral authority.

8. Would you like to tell us what you think the benefits or potential problems to your organisation would be?

- Yes
- No, I'm not sure at the moment

9. Use the boxes below to tell us about your idea for other geographical boundaries.

- It's early days, and therefore dependent on openness, transparency throughout the process.
- With parish and town councils only being referenced in the first White Paper twice, it was very clear that the UK Government, haven't considered the next stage, following the establishment of unitary authorities. We have seen up North and in the West Country that the parish and town council sector has taken on greater responsibilities and a far wider breadth of asset management.
- The benefits could be that with less layers of local government, responsibilities will be clearer to the general public, but local issues and concerns could get further lost.
- To make this successful the mayoral and unitary authorities will need to have a structured means of communication with the parish and town council sector, to ensure the voices of those on the ground and local communities are better engaged and communicated with Westminster.

Meeting of the Full Council

Wednesday 25 June 2025

Agenda Item 16.0

TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

1.0 Summary

1.1 The report sets out the engagements of the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor between 19 May 2025 and 25 June 2025.

1.2 Please note that Councillor K. Bedwell was re-elected as Mayor and Councillor S. Mayhew re-elected as Deputy Mayor on 19 May 2025.

TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

- 22.05.25 Attended Chamber of Commerce meeting. Bluebell Vineyard, Furners Green, Uckfield.
- 24.05.25 Plant Swap Fest. The Source. Uckfield.
- 25.05.25 Participation in Coppafeel 10k walk. Uckfield.
- 29.05.25 Guest at Uckfield Theatre Guilds performance of 'Joseph'. Civic Centre, Uckfield.
- 30.05.25 Attended meeting with Mayors/Chairs and Town Clerks re impact of Devolution Government and Unitary Council on our Towns and Parishes. Heathfield Community Centre, Heathfield.
- 01.06.25 To officially open Uckfield & District Lions Fete. Luxford Field, Uckfield.
- 04.06.25 Community Lunch with Father John Wall. The Rectory, Holy Cross Church, Uckfield.
- 04.06.25 Reception for new Mayors and Chairs of the County. Southover Grange, Lewes.
- 07.06.25 Nature Walk. MP Mims Davies, Cllr. Reed, Cllr. Lunn, Cllr. Coleman and resident of Owlsbury Farm re SANG, biodiversity and green corridors. Seghers Place, Boothland Wood. Uckfield.
- 07.06.25 Attended Barn Dance with guest from Arques la Bataille hosted by Uckfield Town Twinning Association. Ridgewood Village Hall, Ridgewood.
- 14.06.25 2025 Fund-Raising Wing Walk for Raystede Centre for Animal Welfare. Headcorn aerodrome.
- 18.06.25 Visit to St Wilfred's Hospice. Broadwater Way, Eastbourne.

TO NOTE THE DEPUTY MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

- 24.05.25 Plant Swap Fest. The Source. Uckfield.
- 04.06.25 Community Lunch with Father John Wall. The Rectory, Holy Cross Church, Uckfield.

TO NOTE THE TOWN CRIER'S ENGAGEMENTS/CRIS

- 24.05.25 Cry to promote busy day of events – Plant Swap, Streets of Wealden, Three Acres Brewery Luxford Beer Garden and Robbie & Kylie event at CC.
- 25.05.25 Launch start of CoppaFeel 10k walk
- 01.06.25 Attendance at Uckfield & District Lion's Fete
- 07.06.25 Cry to welcome visitors from Uckfield's French Twin Town
- 14.06.25 Cry to promote events taking that place over the weekend

14.06.25	Attendance with Town Mayor to Fund-raising Wing Walk
16.06.25	Sussex Day Reading
21.06.25	Cry to promote July events in Uckfield