

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of **UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL** held
on Monday 20 October 2025 at 7.00pm
in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield

PRESENT:

Cllr. K. Bedwell (Town Mayor)	Cllr. D. Manvell
Cllr. S. Mayhew (Deputy Mayor)	Cllr. B. Reed
Cllr. K. Butler	Cllr. P. Selby
Cllr. D. French	Cllr. A. Smith
Cllr. J. Love	Cllr. P. Ullmann
Cllr. M. McClafferty	Cllr. D. Ward
Cllr. C. Macve	

IN ATTENDANCE:

County Councillor Chris Dowling
County Councillor Claire Dowling
James Hollingdale Estates & Facilities Manager
Holly Goring Town Clerk
Minutes taken by Holly Goring

1.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Councillor A. Smith recorded a personal interest in agenda item 18.0 as a close relative was now working for Wealden Citizens Advice.

Councillor B. Reed declared an interest in agenda item 15.0 as a result of being co-opted onto the Town Council. This would be the same for Councillors V. Frost and P. Ullmann.

Councillors K. Bedwell, J. Love and D. Manvell had interests in lease or licence agreements for assets owned by Uckfield Town Council which were noted in agenda item 13.0 (review of fixed asset register).

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

None received.

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

FC.49.10.25 Members **RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders to enable updates to be shared by County Councillors.

Councillor Chris Dowling provided an update on matters within his constituency. He had recently attended a New Town Action Group. They had raised the need for new deer signage, as it was rutting season, and increased deer movements had been witnessed on Framfield Road/Bird in Eye Hill. He would arrange for some to be installed. If members knew of any other areas, they should let him know.

He was also liaising with East Sussex County Council in relation to current speed restrictions in Framfield Road/Bird in Eye Hill.

He referred to agenda item 17.0 (Lewes Road) and current issues relating to road safety. He would welcome a meeting with the relevant authorities, and would await the organisation of this by the Town Clerk.

Councillor J. Love expressed the need for deer signage in Snatts Road near to the cemetery. Speeding on Framfield Road – it was hoped this could be reviewed once the reserved matters application was submitted for the Bird in Eye South.

Councillor B. Reed referred to deer movements on the A22 Uckfield Bypass. In relation to the Red Clover Road junction and traffic calming measure on Lewes Road, she was aware of two accidents, and the post had recently been hit.

Councillor A. Smith thanked Councillor Dowling for facilitating a conversation with East Sussex County Council regarding their refuge contract.

Councillor Claire Dowling updated members on the dip in Bell Farm Road. Investigations had been undertaken. It was confirmed that it was not drainage related and would need deep patching works. Other matters - the streetlighting column in the High Street by Greggs had been replaced the previous week. Concerns relating to Copwood roundabout had been escalated.

Councillor Dowling referenced the winter maintenance talks being delivered to parishes by East Sussex Highways. A representative from Uckfield Town Council had attended that day. Councillor B. Reed advised that the tarmac was breaking up on the A22 Uckfield bypass (evidence of subsidence).

Councillor B. Reed provided her District Council update, advising that she had recently attended the Conservators of Ashdown Forest meeting.

Councillor D. Manvell referred to the work undertaken by the Planning Service, relating to Grampian conditions applied to planning applications on drainage. A possible solution had been found, which would need further interrogation.

Wealden DC didn't support the options presented for East Sussex for local government re-organisation.

Councillor D. French had also attended the Ashdown Forest meeting, the New Town Action Group meeting, and had recently provided input to planning applications in her ward.

Councillor J. Love referred Councillor Manvell to the planning application 'Land at Mockbeggars Farm' and change since the application was approved for the delivery of affordable homes. Councillor Manvell expressed that this was a national issue. He understood the need for affordable rented and would investigate further options with the Housing Service.

Councillor Love also requested support from Planning services when training new Parish or Town Councillors.

FC.50.10.25 Members **RESOLVED** to reinstate standing orders.

The Town Mayor welcomed Councillor Selby back to council meetings and reiterated the advice of both the Town Clerk and her, to take things slowly.

The Town Mayor advised that they had learnt that day of the passing of former Mayor and Town Councillor Cameron-Waller. Town Councillors were sad to hear of this news and wished to send their condolences to the family.

4.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillors D. Bennett and V. Frost due to sickness.

5.0 MINUTES

5.1 To resolve that the minutes of the meeting of Full Council on 8 September 2025 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

FC.51.10.25 Members **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of Full Council be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

5.2 Action List

Members noted the update.

5.3 Forward plan

Councillor J. Love asked for a document to be referenced on the forward plan. Members subsequently noted the forward plan. The Town Mayor also reminded members of the nominations put forward for assets of community value within the town, which had been listed towards the end of this document for future reference.

6.0 COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

(a) Plans Committee of the 15 September and 6 October 2025

FC.52.10.25 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Plans Committee of the 15 September and 6 October 2025.

(b) Environment & Leisure Committee of the 13 October 2025

It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Environment & Leisure Committee of the 13 October 2025.

(c) General Purposes Committee of the 22 September 2025

FC.54.10.25 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the General Purposes Committees of the 22 September 2025.

7.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES
(ii) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Councillor Reed wanted to thank those previously involved in developing the plan. Their contribution and hard work was recognised.

8.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM FULL COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS
(iii) Ageing Well Forum

Members noted the update on the recent event.

9.0 TO RATIFY DOCUMENTATION FROM STANDING COMMITTEES:
Finance Sub Committee

(i) Investment review

A fixed term bond was due to mature imminently. Members of Finance Sub Committee were asked for their preferred rate of interest for investment into a new fixed term bond. Members were keen to transfer to NatWest for a period of 12 months. Action had to be taken prior to the meeting, due to the timescales involved.

FC.55.10.25 Members **RESOLVED** to ratify this recommendation.

10.0 NOTE THE REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2024/25

Members wished to extend exceptional thanks to the Assistant Town Clerk & RFO on her work to prepare year end and finalise the accounts and audit process.

Members noted the report of the External Auditor for year ending 31 March 2025.

11.0 QUARTERLY PROGRESS UPDATE ON UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL'S ANNUAL PRIORITIES FOR 2025/26 (Q2)

Members were pleased to see the progress made towards delivery of the Town Council's annual priorities. Councillor Love wished to thank the team for their hard work and to see the large number of green circles!

Members noted the report.

12.0 TO REVIEW A SNAPSHOT OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S BUDGET AND BALANCE SHEET POSITION FOR Q2 OF 2025/26

Members noted the update.

13.0 SIX MONTHLY REVIEW OF THE FIXED ASSET REGISTER

The Town Clerk referenced current plans for the Town Council's built and green assets. The presentation of this report, provided an opportunity for members to discuss key assets. The draft Property Asset Management Plan would also be presented to Full Council on 1 December 2025, prior to adoption in January.

To be looked into further:

(i) clarification to be given on the ID and size of land on the north side of Brown's lane;

(ii) potential funding streams to support the development of a new community building;

(iii) confirmation of land registration in Mallard Drive;

(iv) clarification on the alignment of the current balance sheet with the Fixed Asset Register/AGAR return.

Members noted the update provided.

14.0 TO RECEIVE THE TOWN COUNCIL'S CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2026
Members noted the calendar of meetings for 2026.

Councillors B. Reed and P. Ullmann left the room at 7.47pm.

15.0 TO CONSIDER A MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR McCLAFFERTY

Councillor McClafferty submitted a motion, which sought to task the Town Clerk with investigating whether co-opted members could receive member allowances.

FC.56.10.25 With 10 votes in favour, and one voting against, members **RESOLVED** to task the Town Clerk with making enquiries as to whether co-opted members could receive a member allowance.

Councillors B. Reed and P. Ullmann re-entered the room at 7.56pm.

16.0 TO CONSIDER A RESPONSE TO A CONSULTATION ON THE SITE OF HOLY CROSS PRIMARY SCHOOL AND PLAYING FIELDS

East Sussex County Council and the Chichester Diocesan Fund had advertised through the means of a public notice, their intention to sell these assets at a future date. The County Council required the consent of the Secretary of State for Education under Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to dispose of the playing fields which formed part of the school and under Schedule 1, Part 1 of the Academies Act 2010 for the school building (owned by The Chichester Diocesan Fund and Board of Finance).

Members agreed for the Town Clerk to prepare a draft response based on their initial feedback and circulate for comment prior to sending to the relevant bodies prior to the deadline of 21 November 2025.

17.0 TO CONSIDER CONCERNS RELATING TO ROAD SAFETY ON LEWES ROAD, RIDGEWOOD

Members reviewed a report which set out a number of concerns relating to road safety (vehicular and pedestrian) in Lewes Road. In particular near to the junction of New Road, and near the traffic calming measure and Red Clover Road.

Members watched a video from that day, displayed by the Town Clerk of a vehicle trying to exit New Road and head north along Lewes Road. Members discussed at some length their experiences in this area.

It was noted that:

- pavements had also been badly damaged;
- signage needed to be re-visited for New Road and the size of vehicles allowed in this road. Large vehicles were currently using the road from construction sites and Ridgewood Industrial estate;
- heritage properties located on the corner of the junction of New Road/Lewes Road needed protection;
- an update was required on traffic monitoring for Lewes Road to assess whether it met the criteria of LTN1/20;
- an update was needed for Horsted Pond Farm and the work being undertaken to prepare their reserved matters application and associated highway works;

FC.57.10.25 Members **RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders to enable the County Councillors to provide input on this agenda item.

Councillor Chris Dowling felt strongly that a joint meeting was required with the elected members for Ridgewood ward. An action plan should be established and for the right organisations to be approached to address the relevant points within the action plan.

Councillor Claire Dowling suggested we move forward with the information we had to hand at present, and identify the relevant stakeholders for each concern.

Members felt that the bus company should also be invited to the discussions, as they too might be experiencing issues.

FC.58.10.25 Members **RESOLVED** to reinstate standing orders.

FC.59.10.25 Members **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the current concerns with road safety in Lewes Road and New Road;
- (ii) obtain information from local residents and nearby businesses to assist with making a case to applicants, contractors, planning enforcement and East Sussex County Council Development Control and Traffic Safety;
- (iii) task the Town Clerk with convening a meeting of the relevant organisations/parties to discuss:
 - the location of the bus stop;
 - parking restrictions in Lewes Road, and;
 - pedestrian and vehicular safety at the junction of New Road/Lewes Road;
- (iv) write to Brighton & Hove Buses regarding our concerns and to obtain their views, and;
- (v) write to Sussex Police to seek their support with the handling of obstructions at junctions and property entrances.

Councillor D. Manvell left the room briefly at 8.28pm.

18.0 TO UNDERTAKE AN INITIAL REVIEW OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS:

(i) Wealden Volunteering

(ii) Wealden Citizens Advice

Members discussed the current services provided by the above organisations.

The Town Mayor, Councillor Bedwell, also wished to establish a new service level agreement for the Uckfield Bonfire & Carnival Society.

Councillor J. Love declared a prejudicial interest, as she was Chair of the Uckfield Bonfire & Carnival Society, and advised that she would leave the room as a result.

FC.60.10.25 Members **RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders and extend the meeting by 25 minutes.

FC.61.10.25 With 10 votes in favour and one member abstaining (Cllr A. Smith), members **RESOLVED** for Town Council staff to prepare a draft service level agreement for consideration by members for Uckfield Bonfire & Carnival Society, prior to the adoption of the budget in January 2026.

Councillors J. Love returned to the room at 9.07pm and Councillor D. Ward left the room briefly.

19.0 TO NOTE NEW POWERS TO REVITALISE HIGH STREETS

Members noted the report.

20.0 TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS

Members noted the report.

21.0 SIGNING OF GRAVE CERTIFICATES AND TO NOTE TRANSFERS OF DEEDS OF GRANT

One deed of grant was received:

Gillian Arlene Brennan and Robert Brennan

FC.62.10.25 It was **RESOLVED** for three councillors to sign the above deeds of grant.

22.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED

None received.

23.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

In addition to the Town Council's request for funding towards delivery of a 3G Football Pitch, Uckfield Rugby Club had also approached Wealden District Council for support with the funding of improvements to their grounds and clubhouse. This would see improvements to their changing space, accessibility and facilities to support current sport provision and meet wider needs. This was due to be presented to Wealden DC's next Cabinet meeting alongside the Town Council's request for support for the 3G pitch. The Town Clerk would invite representatives from the Rugby Club to present their intentions, in due course. Members noted this update.

24.0 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor, Cllr Bedwell wished to thank all staff involved in the Model Railway weekend for their hard work. It was the busiest weekend of the year and all went smoothly.

The Town Mayor would be attending the Wealden Parish Conference the following day and delivering questions raised over the previous weeks and months by the Larger Parish Forum.

Reminders:

Remembrance Parade/Service on Sunday 9 November 2025.

Mayor's Carol Service on Thursday 11 December 2025.

25.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

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

25.1 To consider the purchase of one additional CCTV Camera

This item was deferred as a result of the quotation(s) being delayed.

The meeting closed at 9.17pm.