

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the **General Purposes Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield on Monday 9 February 2026 at 7.00pm

PRESENT:

Cllr. C. Macve (Chair)
Cllr. K. Butler
Cllr. J. Love

Cllr. D. Manvell
Cllr. P. Selby
Cllr. D. Ward (Vice-Chair)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Cllr K. Bedwell
Sarah D'Alessio – Assistant Town Clerk & RFO
Holly Goring – Town Clerk
Louise Slaughter – Hospitality Manager
Minutes taken by Holly Goring

1.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members and officers were reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on the agenda.

Councillor J. Love declared an interest in agenda item 12.3, as a result of employment links. The Town Clerk advised that Councillor Love should leave the room for this item.

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

There were no statements from members of the public.

3.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillors V. Frost, A. Smith and P. Ullmann due to sickness and personal commitments.

4.0 MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on the 15 December 2025

GP42.02.26 Members **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee on 15 December 2025 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2 Action list

Members agreed to remove the following items which had now been completed:
GP27.11.25 – Finance Sub (Community Grant preparations)
GP35.12.25 – Draft Service Level Agreement for Bonfire & Carnival Society
GP37.12.25 – Town Clerk's Announcements (drainage at Hempstead)
Members noted the report.

4.3 Project list
Members noted the report.

4.4 Forward plan
Members noted the forward plan.

5.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS

5.1 To note bills paid
Members noted the bills paid.

5.2 To note the income and expenditure reports
Members first reviewed the income and expenditure report for GP Committee and discussed with service managers, areas of under and over spend. The Chair had a query in relation to underspend on salaries in both the office and caretaking teams, to which the Assistant Town Clerk clarified that these teams currently held vacancies.

Members reviewed the income and expenditure report for Luxfords Restaurant and discussed the rising cost of food purchases, with the Hospitality Manager providing input.
Members subsequently noted the reports.

5.3 To receive and note the minutes from Finance Sub Committee on 6 January and 3 February 2026
Members received and noted the minutes from Finance Sub-Committee on 6 January and 3 February 2026.

6.0 BUILDINGS

6.1 To note the current position with the Council's buildings
Members noted the report.

7.0 POLICY

7.1 To review the Town Council's Policy on Unreasonably Persistent Complaints and Unreasonable Customer Behaviour (appendix to Complaints Policy)
This item was deferred as the review had not been fully completed.

Councillor D. Ward arrived at 7.12pm.

7.2 To review the Town Council's Scheme of Delegation
The Town Clerk explained that the documentation had been reviewed to take account of a recommendation by Finance Sub Committee on 3 February 2026, relating to internal bank transfers. Amendments were also made to reflect the job titles of specific managerial roles.

A suggestion was made to remove the reference 'authority given by General Purposes Committee' as once this was ratified it had been granted.

GP43.02.26 Members **RESOLVED** that subject to the one amendment to the tracked changes, that the revised Scheme of Delegation be adopted.

8.0 ADMINISTRATION

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

Prior to noting the report, members discussed whether it would be helpful to separate out sickness records by mental or physical conditions/health related issues.

Members and staff recognised the importance of recording the cause of sickness and recognised the equal impact of mental health, with physical conditions. The only concern was the reporting of this information within the public domain. The organisation was fairly small, and could lead to the identification of individuals. The Town Clerk suggested that the report be considered for inclusion under confidential business moving forward.

Members noted the discussion and report.

8.2 To receive Members' audit reports (November 2025)

Members noted the completed audit report for November 2025.

9.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

9.1 To consider reports from: -

(i) Wealden Citizen's Advice

Nothing to report.

(ii) Wealden Volunteering

The Town Clerk provided an update on plans scheduled for the Wealden Volunteering office, and their upcoming Networking Lunch.

(iii) Wealden District Association of Local Councils – Mgt Committee

No meetings have taken place.

(iv) Wealden District Association of Local Councils – Planning Panel

No meetings have taken place.

10.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair, Councillor C. Macve, wished to record his sadness on receiving the news of the close family bereavement that his Vice Chair, Councillor Ward, had had to suffer. The Committee shared their condolences at this difficult time.

He then discussed a recent visit to an adjacent premise, which was available to purchase. Members acknowledged that there were a number of large projects identified within the Town Council's Strategic Plan for 2026-31 and it was important that the financial and governance workstreams were effectively monitored, and prioritised accordingly. A discussion followed as to how best to manage this process, with the Chair suggesting the set up of a new working group.

Being conscious of the large number of working groups already in progress, the Town Clerk advised that there were two potential options, (i) to re-establish the existing Infrastructure Working Group, or (ii) to refer to Finance Sub-Committee, with invitations to other members as and when required.

Members noted that it would be beneficial to bring together a mix of Finance Sub and Plans Committee representatives. It was therefore concluded that the Finance Sub Committee can investigate funding options, and Plans Committee feed into the process, with their knowledge.

GP44.02.26 Members **RESOLVED** to refer this matter to the Finance Sub-Committee.

11.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

GP45.02.26 It was **RESOLVED** that pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it was advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

12.1 To note bad debts

The Assistant Town Clerk provided an update to members on the bad debtors and the work undertaken to date.

GP46.02.26 Members **RESOLVED** to write off the longer-term bad debt based on the current situation, the large amount paid to date, and amount now outstanding.

12.2 To consider an update on Luxfords Restaurant

Members noted the report.

Cllr. J. Love left the room at 7.59pm for agenda item 12.3.

12.3 To consider the draft lease agreement for Victoria Pavilion

Members were provided with a draft lease agreement for a further ten years.

GP47.02.26 With three votes in favour and one abstention, members **RESOLVED** to approve the contents of the draft lease agreement.

Cllr. J. Love returned to the room shortly after this item.

12.4 To receive an update on the Signal Box

Due to sickness, this item was deferred.

The meeting closed at 8.04pm.