

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the **General Purposes Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield on Monday 23 March 2026 at 7.00pm

PRESENT:

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

Cllr. P. Selby
Cllr. A. Smith
Cllr. D. Ward (Vice-Chair)

IN ATTENDANCE:

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 C. Macve declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 5.4 due to his position at the Luxford Centre and their application for community grant funding. The Town Clerk advised that he would need to leave the room for this item.

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

There were no statements from members of the public.

3.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillors V. Frost and D. Manvell due to sickness and personal commitments.

4.0 MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on the 9 February 2026

GP48.03.26 Members **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee on 9 February 2026 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4.2 Action list

Members agreed to remove the following items which had now been completed:
GP44.02.26 – Chair's announcements (Prioritisation of Strategic Projects)
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 reviewed the income and expenditure reports for both General Purposes Committee and Luxfords Restaurant. Members subsequently noted the reports.

5.3 To receive and note the minutes from Finance Sub Committee on 25 February and 12 March 2026
Members received and noted the minutes from Finance Sub-Committee on 25 February and 12 March 2026.

5.4 To consider the recommendations of the Finance Sub Committee held on 25 February and 12 March 2026
Members were presented with three recommendations, which they were required to ratify to ensure completion:
(i) proposals for the allocation of community grant funding for 2026/27;
(ii) adoption of the revised Annual Investment Strategy 2026;
(iii) for staff to host a workshop in April 2026 to enable members to review and prioritise the Town Council's strategic projects – specifically sports, recreation and community assets, collectively.

Councillor Macve left the room whilst members considered the first recommendation of Finance Sub-Committee. Councillor Love declared a personal interest in this item.

One member recognised the difficult decisions that sub-committee members would have had to take. They asked, where applications were turned down, had feedback been given on why their application was not successful on this occasion. The Chair of Finance Sub-Committee (Cllr Ward) advised that applications totalled £41,000 with only £19,000 of funding available. The Assistant Town Clerk & RFO advised that applicants would receive feedback following the decision of General Purposes Committee. In some cases, alternative support had been identified in circumstances where funding was unavailable.

GP49.03.26 Members **RESOLVED** to ratify the allocation of Community Grant funding for 2026-27.

Community Grant Funding under the General Power of Competence		
	Organisation Name	Total Awarded
1.0	New Town Action Group	£500
2.0	Uckfield Concert Brass	£500
3.0	Family Support Work (FSW)	£750
4.0	Uckfield Foodbank	£500
5.0	Baby Umbrella	0
6.0	Uckfield Camera Club	£500
6A	St Wilfrid's Hospice	£1000

7.0	Origami Wings	£1500
8.0	East Sussex Vision Support	0
9.0	Uckfield Phab Club	£714.5
10.0	Manor Park and Hempstead Fields Residents' Association	£830
11.0	Children's Respite Trust	£1000
12.0	Uckfield Youth Trust	£990
13.0	Uckfield Music Club	£500
14.0	Dame Vera Lynn Children's Charity	0
15.0	Uckfield Theatre Guild	£640
16.0	The Luxford Centre	0
17.0	Wealden Works	£1338
18.0	Sussex Support Service CIC	£1000
19.0	Uckfield Community Orchestra	£450
20.0	Uckfield & Area Community First Responders	£1000
21.0	Care for the Carers	£2338
22.0	Uckfield Chess Club	£274.75
23.0	Uckfield Proms on the Pitch	£500
24.0	4th Uckfield Scouts	£1074
25.0	Instructions Not Required	£750
26.0	Buxted Symphony Orchestra	0
27.0	Proud to be Ukrainian	0
28.0	The Royal British Legion (Uckfield)	£350
TOTAL		£18,999.25

The Chair, Councillor Macve returned to the room.

GP50.03.26 Members **RESOLVED** to ratify the adoption of the Annual Investment Strategy.

GP51.03.26 Members **RESOLVED** to ratify the arrangement of an All-Member workshop in April 2026 to assist with the prioritisation of the Town Council's strategic projects – specifically sports, recreation and community assets.

5.5 To receive and note the Internal Audit report from March 2026
Members referred to the interim report and second visit, by the Internal Auditor.

The Chair wished to record his huge congratulations to everyone for a superb report. It was extremely positive. Members subsequently noted the contents.

6.0 BUILDINGS

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

The Town Clerk highlighted that in addition to the excellent work carried out by the Assistant Town Clerk & RFO with the Town Council's finances to ensure sound audit reviews, the Town Clerk also wished to highlight the recent annual inspections of the Town Council's fire safety, and excellent results achieved by the Facilities & Compliance Manager. All three buildings managed daily by the Town Council were in the green.

Members supported these achievements and noted the report.

6.2 To consider designs for new finger post signage by the Civic Centre

Members had been presented with photos of current signage in close proximity to

the Civic Centre which needed replacing. Members were asked to provide input on their preferred designs and colour finish in order to give a steer to staff.

When asking for a show of hands, the following feedback was received:

- (i) five votes were received in favour of the traditional design;
- (ii) three votes were received in favour of the green/gold colour scheme;
 - one vote received in favour of black and gold;
 - one vote received in favour of black and white signage;

(iii) members were uncertain as to whether a feature should be added on top of the signage. The Town Clerk advised that she would seek indicative costs of this addition.

7.0 POLICY

7.1 To review the Town Council's Policy on Unreasonably Persistent Complaints and Unreasonable Customer Behaviour (appendix to Complaints Policy)

One member explained that it was common practice for organisations (private or charitable) to have such a policy in place.

GP52.03.26 Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the policy, which would feature as an appendix to the Town Council's Complaints Policy.

7.2 To review the Annual Investment Strategy for 2026 (No. 45)

Members had already resolved to adopt the revised Annual Investment Strategy when ratifying the recommendations of Finance Sub-Committee in agenda item 5.4.

8.0 ADMINISTRATION

8.1 To receive Members' audit reports (December 2025)

Members noted the completed audit report for December 2025.

9.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

Nothing to report.

10.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

11.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

GP53.03.26 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

Members referred to the decision taken at the last meeting and the positive feedback received by the bad debtor. The Chair also acknowledged how pleasing it was to see such a small number of bad debts. Members noted the report.

12.2 To consider an update on Luxfords Restaurant

The Vice Chair, Cllr Ward, noted how enjoyable the afternoon tea was that was

served for International Womens Day within the Civic Centre. She wished to thank all staff. Members noted the report.

- 12.3 To consider quotations for the development of a new Civic Centre website
Members were advised that the Civic Centre website was created in January 2018. Eight years on the current website was now slow, and looking dated. Members considered the three quotations and proposals received from local companies, as well as the input provided by officers.

GP54.03.26 Members **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) agree to the reallocation of 'Civic Centre' earmarked reserves to the sum of £6,500 for the creation of a new Civic Centre website, and;
- (ii) proceed with Proposal 3.

- 12.4 To receive a report on Health & Safety
Members noted the report.

- 12.5 To consider the draft lease agreement for the Victoria Storage Garage
The Town Clerk was awaiting the final draft from the Solicitors, subject to an amendment being made. The draft would be circulated to committee members for comment by email.

- 12.6 To receive an update on the Signal Box
A report was tabled by the Facilities & Compliance Manager. The report confirmed the work that had been completed to date, but also identified further works that were required to ensure the safety and security of the building. The proposed works would meet the requirements of Building Control, as well as landlord responsibilities before reletting the property.

The works identified were associated with addressing water ingress, retaining wall support, adding additional air source facilities, insulation and replacing the windows and stairs.

GP55.03.26 Members **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the works required to bring the site up to a rentable standard and agreed to the expenditure of up to £40k from the Town Council's 'Building Maintenance Fund' earmarked reserves to ensure the building could be preserved for the future, and;
- (ii) authorise officers to liaise with the Town Council's solicitors to prepare a draft lease agreement for the Signal Box.

The meeting closed at 7.57pm.