

# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the **General Purposes Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield on Tuesday 5 May 2026 at 7.00pm

## PRESENT:

Cllr. C. Macve (Chair)  
Cllr. J. Love  
Cllr. D. Manvell

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

## IN ATTENDANCE:

Town Mayor – Councillor Karen 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 a personal interest in agenda item 7.5 due to her association with Victoria Pavilion. The Town Clerk did not consider this to be relevant.

### 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, K. Butler 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 23 March 2026

**GP56.05.26** Members **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee on 23 March 2026 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### 4.2 Action list

Members discussed the item detailed within the action list, regarding the Town Council's strategic projects and referenced the recent workshop with members.

Members advised that the timeline for these strategic projects should be shared to all members, as some were unable to attend, and asked if a way of monitoring progress could be shared. The Town Clerk suggested that a progress update be

included on the quarterly updates to Full Council on the Annual Plan. This was supported. Members therefore agreed to remove the one action in the action list, and note the report.

4.3 Project list

Members were asked to remove the following projects due to their completion or the relevant phase of works being completed in the past year:

Project 80 – Building Maintenance Programme 2024/25

Project 84 – Funds for Signal Box 2024/25

Project 86 – Building Maintenance Programme 2025/26

Project 87 – Mayoral Chain

Members noted the report.

4.4 Forward plan

Members noted the forward plan.

**5.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

5.1 To note bills paid

Councillor A. Smith requested a detail of the report be redacted or removed, which the Assistant Town Clerk advised she would be happy to do moving forward.

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.

It was noted that the income levels for General Purposes Committee were down, but expenditure also being down, covered the deficit.

A member asked when the next Hospitality Review Working Group would be arranged, to which the Town Clerk confirmed shortly. Members subsequently noted the reports.

5.3 To consider carry forwards of unspent revenue budget from 2025/26

Members considered a report which set out areas of non-expenditure of allocated funding for projects, or underspend in revenue areas which could be utilised in 2026/27. Carry forwards had been identified in both Environment & Leisure Committee and General Purposes Committee.

**GP57.05.26** Members **RESOLVED** that the following unspent sums be carried forward from the 2025/26 financial year to earmarked reserves in 2026/27:

3.0 ***Specific Budget Request for the Environment & Leisure Committee***

3.1 ***New initiatives 2025/26 – projects not yet complete***

Project	Amount	Reason
Welfare facilities for Harlands (originally £12k)	£10,000	Only a small amount of the funding has been utilised as the project is still in the early stages. It is recommended that a sum of £10,000 be transferred into the <b>earmarked reserve named 'Sports pitch and recreational improvements.'</b>

<b>New top handled chainsaw (originally £1k)</b>	£1,000	This item was found not to be required and therefore the funds remain unspent. It is recommended that the funds be transferred to the existing <b>earmarked reserve named 'Grounds machinery and equipment.'</b>
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### 3.2 Underspend of revenue funding in 2025/26

<b>Project</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Reason</b>
<b>Fundraising income from Weald on the Field (4387)</b>	£683.81	Buckets were circulated at the end of the event in August 2025, for the specific purpose of gathering donations towards the 2026 event. The donations collected totalled £683.61. This should therefore be transferred to the <b>earmarked reserve named 'Community initiatives.'</b>
<b>Litter bins (originally £1k) (5079)</b>	£1,000	No new bins were purchased during 2025/26. There are plans to purchase new double bins in 2026/27 so this funding could be utilised for this purpose. It is therefore recommended to transfer to <b>earmarked reserve 'Open spaces and street furniture.'</b>
<b>Fencing (originally £3k) (5280)</b>	£2,000	Only £548.74 was spent from the fencing budget in 2025/26. It is therefore recommended to support future fencing works on the Town Council's estate, that a sum of £2,000 be transferred to <b>earmarked reserve 'Open spaces and street furniture.'</b>
<b>HMLNR &amp; WPLNR (originally £500) (5033)</b>	£500	This funding remained unspent in 2025/26. We therefore recommend to support the delivery of biodiversity action plans on the reserves, that the funds be transferred to the <b>earmarked reserve of 'Conservation and wildlife monitoring.'</b>

## 4.0 **Specific Budget Request for the General Purposes Committee**

### 4.1 New initiatives 2025/26 – projects not yet complete

<b>Project</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Reason</b>
<b>Upgrade of Mayoral Chain (originally £750)</b>	£750	An order has been placed, and should be ready for the meeting of Full Council on 24 June 2026. The funding was therefore unspent in 2025/26 and would recommend that the funding is transferred to the existing <b>earmarked reserve named 'Office administration, IT or training.'</b>
<b>Professional expertise for major projects and policy reviews (originally £30k)</b>	£23,250	From the original sum set aside of £30k, only a number of projects that required this expertise commenced in 2025/26. A number of workstreams are now underway and the funding can be utilised in 2026/27 and thereafter. We would therefore advise that the unspent funds be transferred to the existing <b>earmarked reserve named 'Professional expertise.'</b>
<b>New parish noticeboards for developments (originally £2k)</b>	£2,000	This project has not yet been completed. The unspent funds should therefore be transferred to the existing <b>earmarked reserve of 'Branding and communications.'</b>
<b>Contingency (originally £11k)</b>	£11,000	It was advised by our Internal Auditor to build up our general reserves. We therefore recommend that these unspent funds be transferred into a new <b>earmarked reserve named 'Contingency.'</b>

## 6.0 **BUILDINGS**

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

## 7.0 **POLICY**

### 7.1 Annual review of the Town Council's Financial Regulations

This was an opportunity for members of General Purposes Committee to review the existing regulations before the Annual Statutory meeting. The Town Clerk

advised that there had been no changes made to the model regulations since early 2025.

The Chair asked if staff obtained three quotes even for works valued under £10,000. The Town Clerk explained that in most cases, two quotations were sought, if not three. It was really dependent on what was being quoted for, and how urgent the work was i.e. if it was a health and safety matter. Members also reiterated their interest in using local contractors.

Members noted the existing regulations.

7.2 Annual review of the Town Council's Standing Orders

There had been no changes made to the model orders since early 2025. Members noted the Standing Orders.

7.3 To review the updated Publication Scheme

The Town Clerk advised that the document had been updated with the latest weblinks as well as printing/photocopying charges.

The Town Clerk answered a query about enquiries received under the Freedom of Information Act and it was suggested that responses provided be published on the Town Council website.

**GP58.05.26** Members **RESOLVED** to approve the Publication Scheme.

7.4 To approve the Pay Policy Statement

Personnel Sub-Committee had reviewed this new statement, which was a requirement of the Local Government Transparency Code. One member requested that the highest salary band be incorporated into the policy as well as the lowest.

**GP59.05.26** Subject to the inclusion of the above, members **RESOLVED** to approve the Pay Policy Statement.

7.5 To approve the revised CCTV Policy

With various changes and upgrades being made to the Town Council's CCTV, the policy had been revised by officers to reflect the latest legislation and guidance as well as the detail of the current cameras in place.

One member asked if we could specify whether they were static or rotating cameras.

**GP60.05.26** Members **RESOLVED** to approve the CCTV Policy.

**8.0 ADMINISTRATION**

8.1 To receive Members' audit reports (January 2026)

Members noted the completed audit report for January 2026.

**9.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

9.1(iii) WDALC

Councillor Ward provided a verbal update to committee members on the WDALC meeting from 9 April 2026. Appointments were made to the board of WDALC. Sadly, the former Chair had passed away. Councillor Ward advised that she had been appointed to the role of Director for East Sussex Association of Local

Councils.

At the meeting, Wealden DC advised that the next consultation on the proposals for local government reorganisation in East Sussex were due to be issued after the election. The new sports hub was progressing well near Boship roundabout, the medical centre at Polegate was progressing well, and Mayfield had just begun construction. Wealden DC had completed the construction of new employment units in Crowborough.

Issues raised by the Larger Parish Forum referred to communication and community asset transfers. Members noted the update provided.

#### **10.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

#### **11.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Town Clerk advised that she was waiting on more formal details on the sale of the double garages adjacent to the Civic Centre, before presenting a formal report. The Town Clerk presented on a screen the sale prices of garages in the region and would report back with information once available.

One member requested that information on access rights be included in any details for the garages. Members noted the update.

#### **12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

##### **GP61.05.26**

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. Members noted how positive it was to see a low number of bad debtors listed. Members noted the report.

##### **12.2 To note the Health & Safety update**

Members noted the update.

##### **12.3 To consider an update on the Civic Centre, Restaurant and noticeboard promotions**

Members discussed the proposed refund policy. It was agreed that refund enquiries should be directed to the Hospitality Manager, or Assistant Town Clerk in their absence, to determine a decision. It was also noted that the proposed wording mainly related to the circumstances where the Civic Centre had had to postpone or cancel an event and the possible reasons for this. There was no reference to any extenuating circumstances for the person purchasing tickets. Although office staff already advised hirers of when the event had been organised by an external hirer, it was suggested reference to this also be included.

##### **GP62.05.26**

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the refund policy for Civic Centre events.

12.4 To receive the minutes from Personnel Sub Committee on 26 March and 30 April 2026

Members received and noted the minutes from Personnel Sub Committee on 26 and 30 April 2026.

12.5 To consider the recommendations of Personnel Sub Committee on 26 March and 30 April 2026

(i) Workplace Pet Policy

**GP63.05.26** With four votes in favour and one abstention, members **RESOLVED** to accept the decision taken (policy) on pets within the workplace.

(ii) Pay Policy Statement – already been approved under Section 7.

(iii) Code of Conduct Policy Review – creation of Member/Officer Protocol

**GP64.05.26** Members **RESOLVED** to approve the creation of a Member Officer Protocol which would form an appendix to the Code of Conduct Policy.

(iv) DBS Checks

Members discussed that some of them already had DBS checks as a result of their positions or roles in other community organisations.

It was noted that officers should explore further, but in principle all elected members and staff should have a basic check undertaken.

(v) Re-title of Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk

**GP65.05.26** After a long discussion members **RESOLVED** to:

(i) change the title of Town Clerk to Chief Officer (Town Clerk) and Assistant Town Clerk & RFO to Deputy Chief Officer (RFO), and;

(ii) to undertake a review of the salary structure for these positions, to ensure they align with the sector.

12.6 To consider the draft lease for the Source

Due to sickness the draft lease had yet to be received.

The meeting closed at 8.43pm.