

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the Annual Statutory Meeting of **UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber of the Civic Centre on Monday 18 May 2026 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Cllr. K. Bedwell
Cllr. S. Mayhew
Cllr. D. French
Cllr. K. Butler
Cllr. J. Love
Cllr. M. McClafferty
Cllr. D. Manvell
Cllr. D. Ward
Cllr. P. Selby
Cllr. B. Reed
Cllr. A. Smith
Cllr. C. Macve

IN ATTENDANCE:

County/District Councillor Kelvin Williams
County Councillor Peter Griffiths
5 members of the public.

Sarah D'Alessio Assistant Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Louise Slaughter Hospitality Manager
Rachel Newton Senior Administrative Officer

Minutes taken by Sarah D'Alessio

Before the meeting commenced, members were advised that the Town Clerk, Holly Goring, had recently undergone an operation following an accident and would be absent from work for several weeks during recovery.

Members were requested not to contact Holly directly during this period. All council communications, operational matters and coordination were to be routed through the Assistant Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer, Sarah D'Alessio, who would act as Deputy clerk during the Town Clerk's absence.

1.0 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR

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

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

FC.01.05.26 With no further nominations, members **RESOLVED** for Councillor Karen Bedwell to be re-elected as Town Mayor for a third 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 third year.

Councillor K. Bedwell then signed the declaration of acceptance of office in the presence of the Proper Officer (Assistant Town Clerk).

2.0 ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR

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

The name put forward for Deputy Mayor, was:
Councillor S. Mayhew

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

FC.02.05.26 With ten votes in favour, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor S. Mayhew be re-elected for a third year as Deputy Town Mayor.

3.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillor P. Ullmann due to work commitments, Councillor V. Frost due to ill health and Councillor D. Bennett.

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

Standing Orders were suspended for a member of the public who raised concerns regarding:

- Drainage and flooding risks affecting West Park, Bell Farm Road, Ellis Way, Hart Close and Calvert Close, including blocked culverts and stagnant water channels;
- Ongoing visibility hazards caused by vegetation near Bachelor Way and Bell Farm Road;
- Overgrown pathways between Bachelor Way and the Mead Surgery were affecting accessibility for elderly residents.

Members agreed these concerns would require formal follow-up with East Sussex Highways, via County Councillors who present and relevant agencies.

Standing orders were reinstated.

6.0 MINUTES

6.1 To resolve that the minutes of the Full Council meeting of the 16 March 2026 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

FC.03.05.26 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Full Council on the 16 March 2026 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

6.2 To note the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of the 15 April 2026, and for the Town Council's committees to take forward the issues raised as appropriate.
The Mayor explained that this item would be deferred to the next Full Council meeting due to the absence of the Town Clerk.

6.3 Action List
Members agreed to remove FC.50.09.24, FC71.12.25, FC.72.12.25, FC.100.03.26 & FC.101.03.26. from the action list before noting the remaining contents.

6.4 Forward Plan
Members noted the forward plan.

7.0 COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

(a) Environment & Leisure Committee of the 13 April 2026
FC.04.05.26 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Environment & Leisure Committee of the 13 April 2026.

(b) Plans Committee of the 30 March, 20 April and 11 May 2026
FC.05.05.26 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Plans Committee of the 30 March, 20 April and 11 May 2026.

(c) General Purposes Committee of the 23 March and 5 May 2026
FC.06.05.26 It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the General Purposes Committee of the 23 March and 5 May 2026.

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.

FC.07.05.26 It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the updated Scheme of Delegation and Committee Terms of Reference.

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

The Council noted that any future vacancies would be addressed through the usual election or co-option process during the summer months.

General Purposes - 9 members

FC.08.05.26 It was **RESOLVED** that the nine members of the General Purposes Committee be as follows:-

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

Environment and Leisure - 9 members

FC.09.05.26 It was **RESOLVED** that the nine members of the Environment and Leisure Committee be as follows:-

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

Plans - 7 members

FC.10.05.26 It was **RESOLVED** that all seven seats of the Plans Committee be as follows:-

Councillors K. Bedwell, D. Bennett, V. Frost, J. Love, C. Macve, K. Butler, and P. Selby.

GP.01.05.26 In considering the appointment of Chair of the General Purposes Committee, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor C Macve be appointed as Chair.

GP.02.05.26 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.01.05.26 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.02.05.26 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.01.05.26 In considering the appointment of Chair of the Plans Committee, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor. J. Love be re-appointed as Chair.

P.02.05.26 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 Assistant Town Clerk & RFO 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 Assistant Town Clerk & RFO 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 2025 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.11.05.26 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

FC.12.05.26 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.01.05.26 In considering the appointment of Chair of the Personnel Sub-committee it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor M. McClafferty be appointed as Chair.

PS.02.05.26 In considering the appointment of Vice-Chair of the Personnel Sub-committee it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor A. Smith be appointed as Vice-Chair.

FS.01.05.26 In considering the appointment of Chair of the Finance Sub-committee it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor D. Manvell be appointed as Chair.

FS.02.05.26 In considering the appointment of Vice-Chair of the Personnel Sub-committee it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor D. Ward be appointed as Vice-Chair.

The Voice Editorial Panel

The Assistant Town Clerk advised that four Members had expressed an interest in the Editorial Panel.

FC.13.05.26 It was subsequently **RESOLVED** that the three members of the Voice Editorial Panel would be as follows:-
Councillors. D. French, J.Love and P. Selby.

11.0 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

FC.14.05.26 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 Kathy Butler
Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group	5	Cllr Jackie Love Cllr Bernadette Reed Cllr Angie Smith Cllr Donna French

		Cllr Karen Bedwell
Gatwick Airport Consultation Group	3	Cllr Peter Selby Cllr Peter Ullmann Cllr Chris Macve

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Wealden Citizens Advice	1	Cllr Peter Selby
Emergency Planning Co-ordinators	2	Cllr Karen Bedwell Cllr Duncan Bennett Cllr Donna French
Wealden Volunteering	1	Cllr Angie Smith
Wealden District Association of Local Councils	1	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 Cllr Jackie Love

AGM meetings only:

East Sussex Association of Local Councils	1	Cllr Peter Selby
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 Cllr Kathy Butler
Biodiversity links: Conservators of Ashdown Forest and Weald to Waves	(2) (1 member and 1 substitute)	<i>To be appointed at first E&L Committee after Annual Stat meeting</i>
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 Kathy Butler
Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee	1	Cllr Chris Macve
Uckfield Youth Club Trust Board	1	Cllr Dan Manvell
Wealden Food Partnership Advisory Group	1	Cllr Angie Smith Cllr Peter Selby

AGM meetings only:

Uckfield & District Twinning Association	1	Cllr Spike Mayhew
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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
Events Working Group
Ageing Well Forum

FC.15.05.26 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 Councillors 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) Annual Investment Strategy 2026
- (iv) Pay Policy Statement 2025-26
- (v) Publication Scheme
- (vi) CCTV Policy

These documents had already been reviewed by the relevant sub committees and General Purposes Committee.

FC.16.05.26 (i) Subject to changing references to his/he/him within the contents of the Standing Orders, members **RESOLVED** to adopt the updated Standing Orders, and;

FC.17.05.26 (ii) Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Town Council's updated Financial Regulations; and

FC.18.05.26 (iii) Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Annual Investment Strategy 2026, and;

FC.19.05.26 (iv) Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Pay Policy Statement 2025-26, and;

FC.20.05.26 (v) Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the Publication Scheme;

FC.21.05.26 (vi) Members **RESOLVED** to adopt the CCTV 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 it provided an opportunity for members to review the contents.

FC.22.05.26 It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the Town Council's Code of Conduct Policy.

15.0 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 others.

Members noted the contents of the report, and the annual subscriptions and memberships in place for 2026-27.

16.0 TO RECEIVE THE TOWN COUNCIL'S CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2026-27

Members were provided with a calendar of meetings up until May 2027, 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 2026-27.

17.0 TO NOTE THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO COMPLETE AUDITS UNTIL THE ANNUAL STATUTORY MEETING IN MAY 2027

Members were presented with a report which confirmed that audits had been completed for 2025-26. A new schedule had been drawn up for 2026-27, which members were asked to approve.

FC.23.05.26 Members **RESOLVED** to approve the proposed schedule for member audits for the financial year 2026-27.

18.0 TO RECEIVE UPDATES FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

(i) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Members received an update from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. The group had met with a planning consultant with experience in neighbourhood plans and intended to prepare a simplified and deliverable plan by May 2027.

19.0 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.

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

Members noted the engagements.

21.0 END OF YEAR PROGRESS UPDATE ON UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL'S ANNUAL PRIORITIES FOR 2025/26

Members noted the report.

22.0 TO REVIEW A SNAPSHOT OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S BUDGET AND BALANCE SHEET POSITION FOR Q4 OF 2025/26

Members were advised that Quarter 4 year-end financial work remained ongoing and would conclude on 15 June 2026.

The completed year-end position would be presented to Full Council on 24 June 2026.

23.0 TO CONSIDER A MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR D. MANVELL

Councillor Manvell introduced a motion marking the 10th anniversary of the murder of Jo Cox MP.

Members discussed increasing incidents of abuse, intimidation and hostile conduct towards public officials and councillors.

The Council reaffirmed its support for civility, respectful conduct and opposition to political intimidation and abuse.

The motion was supported unanimously as a statement of unity and intent.

FC.24.05.26 Members **RESOLVED** to support the motion of Councillor Manvell, which was detailed as follows:

“To mark the 10th anniversary of Jo Cox’s murder by promoting the Great Get Together, associated events, and the spirit of coming together across political differences, and:

To continue to support efforts to increase civility and reduce abuse in politics, including by reaffirming our support for the Local Government Association's Debate Not Hate campaign and the *Society of Local Council Clerk's civility and respect* campaign;”

24.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED

No questions had been received by the deadline.

25.0 TO SIGN AND SEAL LEASE AGREEMENTS

The Town Mayor confirmed that due to the Town Clerk’s absence the lease agreements would be presented at the next meeting.

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

Two grave certificates had been received:

Karen Evans

Mr Reginald George Hancock

FC.25.05.26 Members **RESOLVED** for three members to sign these deeds of grant.

27.0 TOWN MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Following the recent elections, on behalf of the Town Council, the Mayor wished to thank Chris and Claire Dowling, for their service and hard work as District Councillor and County Councillor, respectively, for Uckfield.

Congratulations was also given to the two newly elected Councillors, Kelvin Williams and Peter Griffiths.

Members received a verbal update following a visit to Crowborough Army Camp, currently operating as temporary asylum accommodation.

Councillors were advised that approximately 350 residents were accommodated on site, typically for periods of up to 90 days. Arrival procedures included biometric and medical screening, with accommodation provided in shared huts alongside communal recreation facilities. The site operated with 24-hour security, and Sussex Police attended incidents where necessary, although the camp remained MOD land.

Councillors commented that the visit had helped address several rumours circulating on social media.

It was agreed that liaison meetings with the Home Office and Sussex Police would continue every month to monitor any local community safety impacts arising from the Camp.

Information would also be helpful to identify where Houses in Multiple Occupation premises were located within the local area. Although first thought this could be obtained through a Freedom of Information Request, the Town Clerk has since advised that an enquiry could be made to Wealden DC Housing Department.

Members noted the update.

28.0 TOWN CLERKS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Assistant Town and RFO gave mutual thanks to Councillors for their help and support over the last year. Several operational matters would be deferred until the Town Clerk's return and next Full Council meeting in June.

The Assistant Town Clerk advised that the consultation for the proposals for local government reorganisation in Sussex was live. The Town Clerk would circulate the consultation questions for members to review and members were asked to respond individually and copy their responses to both the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk so an organisational response be made before the deadline of 15 June.

The meeting closed at 8.28pm.