



UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

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Town Clerk – Holly Goring

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO A MEETING OF UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

on

**Monday 29 June 2026 at 7.00pm
in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield**

AGENDA

Under The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, members of the public are able to film or record during a committee meeting.

1.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers are reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on this Agenda. Should any Member consider that they require a dispensation in relation to any prejudicial interest that they may have, they are asked to make a written application to the Clerk well in advance of the meeting.

Notice should be given at this part of the meeting of any intended declaration. The nature of the interest should then be declared later at the commencement of the item or when the interest becomes apparent.

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

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

(this part of the agenda should not be used to report day to day issues such as potholes. These should be reported direct to: <https://live.eastsussexhighways.com/report-problem>)

4.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

5.0 MINUTES

5.1 To **RESOLVE** that the minutes of the Annual Statutory meeting of the Council on 18 May 2026. be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

5.2 To receive and note the minutes of the Annual Town meeting on 15 April 2026.

5.3 Action list – for information only

5.4 Forward plan – for information only

6.0 COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| (a) | Plans Committees | 1 June and 22 June 2026 |
| (b) | Environment and Leisure Committee | 26 May 2026 |
| (c) | General Purposes Committee | 8 June 2026 |

- 7.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES** (none received)
- 8.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS**
(i) Events Working Group
- 9.0 TO APPROVE PERIODIC POLICY REVIEWS**
(i) IT, Email and Social Media Policy – No. 18
(ii) Handling ‘Access to Information Requests’ Policy – No. 16
(iii) General Data Protection Policy – No. 87
- 10.0 TO RATIFY A RECOMMENDATION FROM STANDING COMMITTEES:**
General Purposes Committee
(i) Ratification of AGAR Assertion 10 Compliance
- 11.0 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE TOWN COUNCIL’S ASSET REGISTER**
- 12.0 TO RECEIVE, CONSIDER AND NOTE THE INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2026**
- 13.0 TO RECEIVE, CONSIDER AND APPROVE SECTION 1 - THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2026**
- 14.0 TO RECEIVE, CONSIDER AND APPROVE SECTION 2 - THE TOWN COUNCIL’S DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2026**
- 15.0 TO CONSIDER APPENDIX B OF THE MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY: MEMBER/OFFICER PROTOCOL**
- 16.0 TO REVIEW THE TOWN COUNCIL’S FINANCIAL REGULATIONS (CONTRACTORS/TENDERS)**
- 17.0 TO NOTE CURRENT DIRECT DEBITS AND STANDING ORDERS**
- 18.0 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE MAYORAL CHAIN AND FORMER MAYOR PIN BADGES**
- 19.0 TO SIGN AND SEAL LEASE AGREEMENTS**
- 20.0 TO NOTE THE MAYOR’S ENGAGEMENTS**
- 21.0 SIGNING OF GRAVE CERTIFICATES AND TRANSFERS OF DEEDS**
- 22.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED** (none received)
- 23.0 TOWN CLERK’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- 24.0 CHAIR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- 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 draft Emergency Plan



Town Clerk
23 June 2026

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.

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

**ACTION LIST – FOR INFORMATION ONLY
FULL COUNCIL**

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<p><u>FC.105.02.17</u></p> <p><u>FC.95.01.20</u></p>	<p><u>14.0 To sign and seal the byelaws for Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve and West Park Local Nature Reserve</u> Members RESOLVED to sign and seal the byelaws for Hempstead Meadows and West Park Local Nature Reserves.</p> <p><u>18.0 To sign and seal the Town Council’s byelaws for Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve and West Park Local Nature Reserve</u> Members RESOLVED to:</p> <p>(i) authorise the affixing of the common seal to the byelaws for both Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve and West Park Local Nature Reserve and signing by two named councilors, and;</p> <p>(ii) authorise the Town Clerk for Uckfield Town Council to carry out the necessary procedures and apply to the Secretary of State for confirmation.</p>	<p>20.02.17</p> <p>20.01.20</p>	<p>HG</p>	<p>In progress.</p>
<p><u>FC.55.10.21</u></p>	<p>Members RESOLVED to approve the motion “<i>Uckfield Town Council supports the increase in the provision of Changing Place Toilets across the country, and will approach East Sussex County Council to understand if they:</i></p> <p>(i) <i>have submitted an expression of interest to central government to draw down funding to the county of East Sussex, and:</i></p> <p>(ii) <i>if ESCC have expressed an interest, that Uckfield Town Council lobby for such facilities to be introduced in Uckfield.</i>”</p>	<p>25.10.21</p>	<p>HG</p>	<p>UK Govt funding is not available, but officers will prepare necessary financial information to understand what’s involved in creating a Changing Place Toilet. Members were asked to consider suitable locations.</p>
<p><u>FC.105.02.24</u></p>	<p><u>14.0 To consider the issues being experienced with parking at Victoria Pleasure Ground</u> Members RESOLVED to give permission for officers to proceed with the above three proposals for monitoring vehicles parking at Victoria Pleasure Ground, and to also replace signage which emphasised the purpose of the car parking area.</p>	<p>26.02.24</p>	<p>HG</p>	<p>This needs to be reviewed in 2026/27.</p>

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<u>Resolution No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Date Raised</u>	<u>Action By</u>	<u>Date Complete</u>
<u>FC.29.06.24</u>	<p><u>12.0 – To consider a request to review the opening times of the toilet(s) at Victoria Pleasure Ground</u> With six votes in favour, and three members against the proposal (including Cllr Selby), members RESOLVED to address this matter through the Town Council's budget setting process which would begin September 2024, to ensure the correct service provision was in place.</p>	26.06.24	SD/HG /JH	This will be reviewed in 2026. Other priorities have taken precedence.
<u>FC.49.09.24</u>	<p><u>15.0 To consider the relocation of the substation in Shepherds Way</u> Members RESOLVED to request that a meeting be arranged onsite with UKPN, to understand what difficulties they were experiencing with the current location and what would be involved with any movement.</p>	09.09.24	Grnds/ TC	We await an update from UKPN on their updated proposals.
<u>FC.103.04.25</u>	<p><u>10.0 To consider legal advice on the village green status of Ridgewood Recreation Ground</u> With 9 members voting in favour and one member abstaining, it was RESOLVED to agree to: (i) proceed with exploring the re-positioning of the village green status on Ridgewood Recreation Ground and preserve the correct areas of the open space for the future, and; (ii) to seek further information on the proposed changes to the Millennium Green (as a SANG) and consider this within the investigations.</p>	07.04.25	HG	In progress.
<u>FC.45.09.25</u>	<p><u>17.0 Consider the placement of storage and temporary toilet facility at Harlands Playing Fields</u> Eight out of 12 members voted in favour and RESOLVED to: (i) agree to the Uckfield Grasshoppers Junior Football Club siting a storage container to the southern eastern corner nestled behind the trees at Harlands Recreation Ground, and;</p>	08.09.25	JH	To be delivered by Grasshoppers in due course. Site preparations have been completed.

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

<u>Resolution No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Date Raised</u>	<u>Action By</u>	<u>Date Complete</u>
<u>FC.59.10.25</u>	<p><u>17.0 To consider concerns relating to road safety on Lewes Road, Ridgewood</u> 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.</p>	20.10.25	HG	Multi-agency meeting took place on 28 January 2026.
<u>FC.89.01.26</u>	<p><u>20.0 To consider providing a contribution to the Our Parks Initiative up to 31 March 2026</u> Members RESOLVED to: (ii) identify alternative funding for the programme for 2026/27, and; (iii) support Our Parks with the promotion of the Coach Parker programme and overall initiative in Uckfield, in order to maintain access to free exercise for local residents.</p>	12.01.26	HG/RN	(iii) In progress. Sadly the application submitted for grant funding by Ridgewood Village Hall Committee was unsuccessful so we are seeking further funding sources.
<u>FC99.03.26</u>	<p><u>10.0 To consider an enquiry relating to land adjacent to 10, Wilson Grove</u> Members RESOLVED to report the matter to Environment & Leisure Committee and for a policy to be developed by the Town Council on the handling of enquiries from residents on the purchase of Town Council land.</p>	16.03.26	TW/ RN	To be progressed.
<u>FC.24.05.26</u>	<p><u>23.0 To consider a motion from Cllr Dan Manvell</u> Members RESOLVED to support the motion of Councillor Manvell, which was detailed as follows:</p>	18.05.26	Cllrs	To be progressed.

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

	<p>“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 <i>Society of Local Council Clerks’ civility and respect</i> campaign;”</p>			
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FULL COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN – 2026/27

STANDING ITEMS FOR FULL COUNCIL AGENDA	REPORT LEAD
Any written reports from District or County Councillors	District/County Councillors
Minutes from the last meeting	Town Clerk
Action List	Town Clerk
Forward Plan	Town Clerk
Reports from outside bodies	Councillor representatives for NPlan and Gatwick
Reports from working groups	Councillor reps
Signing and sealing of lease agreements	Town Clerk/E&F Mgr
Check for any review of service level agreements	Town Clerk
Check for any urgent consultation panel decisions	Town Clerk
Mayor and Deputy Mayor engagements	Administrative Officer
Cemetery deeds of grant (any prepared are usually left in the box for Full Council)	Senior Administrative Officer

DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	REPORT OFFICER
June 2026	Annual review of Town Council's Asset Register	Chief Officer
	Internal Audit Report for 2025-26 (for the year ending 31 March 2026)	Deputy Chief Officer
	Annual Governance Statement – Section 1 of AGAR	Deputy Chief Officer
	Sections 2 & 3 of AGAR and draft financial statements	Deputy Chief Officer
	Standing Orders and Direct Debit payments	Deputy Chief Officer
	Appendix to Member Code of Conduct Policy (Member/Officer Protocol)	Chief Officer
	Review of Financial Regulations (contracts/tenders)	Chief Officer
CONFIDENTIAL	To consider the draft Emergency Plan	

FULL COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN – 2026/27

DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	REPORT OFFICER
September 2026	Presentation of new Mayoral Chain and former Mayoral pin badges (if agreed)	Chief Officer
	Q1 Progress Update for Annual Priorities	Chief Officer
	Q1 Snapshot of budget and balance sheet position	Deputy Chief Officer
	To confirm the appointment of an Internal Auditor for 2026/27	Deputy Chief Officer
CONFIDENTIAL		

DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	REPORT OFFICER
October 2026	Note the report of the External Auditor for 2025/26	Deputy Chief Officer
	Q2 Progress Update for Annual Priorities	Chief Officer
	Q2 Snapshot of budget and balance sheet position	Deputy Chief Officer
	Six monthly review of Asset Register	Mgt Team
	Calendar of meetings for 2027	Chief Officer
	Review of Service Level Agreements for 2027/28	Chief Officer
CONFIDENTIAL		

DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	REPORT OFFICER
December 2026	To consider the Draft Strategic Plan 2027-32	Chief Officer
	To consider the Draft Annual Plan 2027-28	Chief Officer
	To consider the Draft Budget 2027-28	Deputy Chief Officer
	To consider the Draft Asset Management Plan 2027-32	Chief Officer
	Calendar of meetings for 2027	Chief Officer
	Review of Service Level Agreements for 2027/28	Chief Officer
CONFIDENTIAL		

FULL COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN – 2026/27

To remain on the horizon, subject to changes through LGR and UK Government funding streams/initiatives:

Parking in Uckfield – consideration of a jointly funded traffic warden (only possible when accreditation given);

Affordable housing – keep a close watch on the levels of need for affordable homes in Uckfield.

Registered Assets of Community Value in Uckfield

Site/Location	Date current registration expires	Nomination made by
The Dene, Manor Park	15 July 2026	Residents' Association. Now in ownership of Town Council. <i>Have recommended that RA renew registration to ensure future protection.</i>
Land at Selby Road (Selby Meadows)	16 September 2026	Town Council. In ownership of Town Council. Licenced to Newtown Action Group to cultivate until December 2030.
Uckfield Leisure Centre	20 November 2028	Town Council
Ridgewood Post Office & Stores	7 December 2028	Town Council
Uckfield Family Hub	9 September 2030	Town Council
Uckfield Rugby Club	9 September 2030	Town Council
Highlands Inn	28 September 2030	Town Council
Police Station	-	In progress.

Unsuccessful nominations for Assets of Community Value in Uckfield

Site/Location	Date of removal from list of unsuccessful nominations	Nomination made by
Holy Cross Primary School & Playing Fields	Rejected.	Town Council
Luxfords Car Park	Rejected.	Town Council
Brickmakers Arms	14 December 2028	Town Council Update – planning application has been submitted for this site. Reviewed by UTC Plans Committee on 22.06.26.

Meeting of the Full Council

Monday 29 June 2026

Agenda Item 8.0(i)

TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM FULL COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS: UCKFIELD EVENTS WORKING GROUP

Weald on the Field – Saturday 8 August 2026

The working group met again on 11 June 2026 to discuss preparations for the day.

The main topics of discussion within this meeting, focused on:

- (i) Festival logistics - reconfiguration of the field layout, to assist with accommodating numbers and safety around the marquee. This will see a specific area for food created;
- (ii) Volunteer recruitment – the need for more assistance on the field on the day, and marshalling duties. Enquiries would be made with more community groups in the town;
- (iii) Entertainment line-up - confirmation was given of the music line up and interval acts;
- (iv) Power supply – need for at least one further generator;
- (v) Event and Risk Management – work was underway on this;
- (vi) Confirming the identity of the festival – balancing new attractions with the main focus of food, drink and live music.
- (vii) Big 100 Hundred Project – focus on the space required to accommodate the giant puppet;

Interest in our business sponsorship opportunities were still coming in.

Contact has been made with former sponsors, and support is being provided by Uckfield Chamber of Commerce.

Members and their friends/relatives were asked to consider what time they could give on the day of the event, even if an hour, and to help spread the word for business sponsorship opportunities.

Town Clerk

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, EMAIL AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Policy Number 18		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	12.2.08	PS 12.02.08
2	25.03.08	GP.065.03.08
3	29.09.08	
4	12.12.11	GP.66.12.11
5	June 2026	Review and ratification at Full Council

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 IT systems are essential to the effective operation of the Council. The policy applies to councillors, employees, contractors, volunteers and any other authorised users.

2.0 Purpose of an IT Policy

- 2.1 The purpose of an IT policy is to establish clear parameters for how councillors, staff, and other authorised users use council-provided technology or equipment in the course of their duties. A well-defined policy helps to:

- Set expectations for appropriate use of equipment and systems;
- Raise awareness of risks associated with IT use;
- Safeguard the council's data and digital assets;
- Clarify what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable use;
- Outline the consequences of policy breaches.

3.0 Monitoring of IT Use

- 3.1 As an IT provider, the council has the right to monitor the use of its IT equipment and systems, provided there is a legitimate reason for doing so and councillors, employees and other authorised users are informed that such monitoring may take place. Any monitoring must be proportionate and comply with relevant data protection and privacy laws. Other persons may be included if they access or use council systems e.g. if they have a council e-mail address

4.0 Scope of this policy

- 4.1 This policy applies to all councillors, staff, and other authorised users, regardless of their working location or pattern, including those who are home-based, office-based, or work on a flexible or part-time basis. It sets out the expectations for the appropriate use of IT equipment and systems provided by the council.

5.0 Computer Use

Hardware

- 5.1 Council computer equipment is provided for council purposes, however reasonable personal use is permitted ("reasonable" as is interpreted by the opinion of the Town Council). Any personal use of our computers and systems should not interrupt our daily council work in any way. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users are asked to restrict any personal use to official lunch breaks or before or after working hours.
- 5.2 Locking computers when leaving desk.
All councillors, staff, and other authorised users must lock their computers when leaving their desks to prevent unauthorised access. This applies to all council and personal devices used for work. Failure to comply may lead to disciplinary action.
- 5.3 All computer and other electronic equipment supplied should be treated with good care at all times. Computer equipment is expensive, and any damage sustained to any equipment will have a financial impact on the council.

- 5.4 Computer and electronic hardware should be kept clean, and every precaution taken to prevent food and drink being dropped or spilled onto it.
- 5.5 All computer and mobile equipment will carry a number which is logged against the current owner of that equipment. A log of equipment issued will be kept.
- 5.6 Equipment should not be dismantled or reassembled without seeking advice.
- 5.7 Councillors and staff are not to purchase any computer or mobile equipment (including software), unless previously authorised.
- 5.8 Personal disks, USB stick, CDs, DVDs, data storage devices etc cannot ~ be used on council computers without the prior approval of Uckfield Town Council's Management Team.
- 5.9 Any faults or necessary repairs must be reported to the Facilities & Compliance Manager.

6.0 Equipment

Portable equipment

- 6.1 Portable equipment includes laptop computers, netbooks, tablets, mobile and smart phones with email capability and access to the internet etc.
- 6.2 It is particularly emphasised that council back-up procedures specific to portable equipment should be followed at all times.
- 6.3 All portable computers must be stored safely and securely when not in use in the office, i.e. when travelling or when working from home. Portable equipment (unless locked in a secure cabinet or office) should be kept with or near the user at all times; should not be left unattended when away from council premises and should never be left in parked vehicles or at any council or non-council premises, where possible.
- 6.4 It is important to ensure all portable devices are protected with encryption in case they are lost or stolen. All smartphones or tablets that hold council data, including emails and files, must be protected with a pin code. Where possible, these devices should also be programmed to erase all content after several unsuccessful attempts to break in. Any security set on these devices must not be disabled or removed.
- 6.5 If an item of portable equipment is lost or damaged this should be reported to Uckfield Town Council's Management Team, who will inform the Town Council's IT company immediately. If the loss or damage is due to an act of negligence, the individual responsible may be liable to contribute to the loss/damage.

- 6.6 To protect confidential information, unless it is necessary for the job and this has been authorised, it is forbidden for photographs or videos to be taken on council premises, without the prior written permission of the employee's line manager. This includes mobile telephones with camera function, camcorder, tape or other recording device for sound or pictures - moving or still.
- 6.7 Under no circumstances should any non-public meeting or conversation be recorded without the permission of those present. This does not affect statutory rights (under The Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014).
- 6.8 In addition, the council does not permit webcams (which may be pre-installed on many laptops) to be used in the workplace, other than for conference calls for council purposes. If there is any doubt as to whether a device falls under this clause, advice should be sought from the employee's line manager.

7.0 Use of own devices

- 7.1 Personal laptops and other computers or other devices should not be brought into work and used by staff to access council IT systems during working hours, unless this has been authorised by the employee's line manager. This is to ensure that no viruses enter the system, to prevent time being wasted during working hours on personal use and to assist in maintaining security, confidentiality, and data protection.
- 7.2 The Council recognises that some councillors, staff, and other authorised users may wish to use their own smartphones, tablets, laptops etc to access our email accounts for normal council purposes, including, but not limited to, reading their emails. Any such use of personal devices will be at the discretion of the council, but consent for standard systems (MS Windows, Mac OS X, Linux - in commercial configurations) will normally be permitted. Such devices should be kept up to date so that any vulnerabilities in the operating system or other software on the device are appropriately patched or updated.
- 7.3 However, the same security precautions apply to personal devices as to the council's desktop equipment. Any emails sent from own devices should be sent from a council email account and should not identify the individual's personal email address.
- 7.4 Councillors, staff, and other authorised persons that use council systems are expected to use all devices in an ethical and respectful manner and in accordance with this policy. Accessing inappropriate websites or services on any device via the IT infrastructure that is paid for or provided by the council carries a high degree of risk, and, for employees, may result in disciplinary action, including summary dismissal (without notice). For Workers or Contractors, we may terminate the worker agreement. This is irrespective of the ownership of the device used. An example would be downloading copyrighted music illegally or accessing pornographic material.

- 7.5 In cases of legal proceedings against the council the council may need to temporarily take possession of a device, whether council-owned or personal to retrieve the relevant data.
- 7.6 Wherever possible the user should maintain a clear separation between the personal data processed on the council's behalf and that processed for their own personal use, for example, by using different apps for council and personal use. If the device supports both work and personal profiles, the work profile must always be used for work-related purposes.
- 7.7 Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who intend to use their own devices via the council's infrastructure must ensure that they:
- use a strong pin or password (i.e. one which uses three random words (e.g. PurpleCandleRiver) or finger print (preferably the latter)) to protect their device(s) from being accessed. For smartphones and tablets this should lock the device after three failed login attempts;
 - configure their device(s) to automatically prompt for a password after a period of inactivity;
 - always password protect any documents containing confidential information that are sent as attachments to an email, and notify the password separately (preferably by a means other than email);
 - for smartphones and tablets, activate the automatic device wipe function (where available). Note that use of the remote wipe function may also involve the removal of the individual's personal data. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users are therefore advised to keep personal data separate from council data where possible;
 - ensure secure WiFi networks are used;
 - ensure that work-related data cannot be viewed or retrieved by family or friends who may use the device;
 - inform Management Team if their device(s) is/are lost, stolen, or inappropriately accessed where there is risk of access to council data or resources. To prevent phones being used, they will need to retain the details of their IMEI number and the SIM number of the device as their provider will require this to deactivate it.
- 7.8 Personal data relating to [specify, e.g. "councillors, staff, and other authorised users, associates, residents, external stakeholders"] should not be saved to any personal accounts with third-party storage cloud service providers as this may breach data protection legislation or create a security risk if the device is lost or stolen. This applies especially if the passwords used to store/access data are saved onto the device, or if the service permits councillors, staff, and other authorised users to remain logged in between sessions.
- 7.9 Personal information and sensitive data should never be saved on councillors, staff, or other authorised users own devices as this may breach confidentiality agreements, especially if the device is used by other people from time to time.

- 7.10 If removable media are used to transfer data (e.g. USB drives or CDs), the user must also securely delete the data on the media once the transfer is complete.
- 7.11 Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who open any attachments should ensure that any cached copies are deleted immediately after use. Assistance or training in doing this is available within the UTC Office team.
- 7.12 Any work done on user's own equipment should be stored securely and password protected.
- 7.13 If transferring data, either by email or by other means, this should be done through an encrypted channel, such as a virtual private network (VPN) or a secure web protocol (https://). Unsecured wireless networks should not be used.
- 7.14 Prior to the disposal of any device that has work data stored on it, and in the event of a user leaving the council, councillors, staff, and other authorised users are required to hand back the device and if necessary, allow the Town Council's IT company access to the device to ensure that all passwords, user access shortcuts and any identifiable data are removed from the device.
- 7.15 Councillors, staff, and other authorised users must take responsibility for understanding how their device(s) work in respect to the above rules if they are accessing council servers/services via their own IT equipment. Risks to the user's personal device(s) include data loss as a result of a crash of the operating system, bugs and viruses, software or hardware failures and programming errors rendering a device inoperable. The council will use reasonable endeavours to assist, but councillors, staff, and other authorised users are personally liable for their own device(s) and for any costs incurred as a result of the above.

8.0 Health and safety

- 8.1 Staff and other authorised users who work in council offices will be provided with an appropriate workstation.
- 8.2 The council has a duty to ensure that regular appropriate eye tests, carried out by a competent person, are offered to employees using display screen equipment. Further details are set out in the council's staff handbook.
- 8.3 Any VDU user who feels that their workstation requires changes to make it compliant must speak to the Facilities & Compliance Manager.
- 8.4 If any hazards are detected at a workstation, including 'noises' from the IT equipment, this should be reported immediately to their line manager and/or Facilities & Compliance Manager, who can advise the appropriate contractor.

9.0 Password and Authentication Policy

9.1 All user accounts must be protected by strong, secure passwords. The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) recommendations for creating passwords using three random words (e.g. PurpleCandleRiver) is followed where possible. This method helps create passwords that are both strong and easy to remember, while offering effective protection against common cyber threats such as brute-force attacks.

9.2 In addition to strong passwords, Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) should be enabled wherever possible and is currently used on software such as Sage Accounts. MFA requires users to provide two or more independent forms of verification—for example, a password (something you know) and a code sent to your phone (something you have). This significantly reduces the risk of unauthorised access to systems and personal data.

To further strengthen account security:

- Initial user account passwords must be generated by the IT provider.
- Default passwords provided by vendors or the IT provider must be changed immediately upon installation or setup.
- Service or System (e.g. Website) account passwords are generated and managed by the IT provider.
- The council recommends these practices as part of its commitment to robust information security and to support compliance with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

9.3 Access to Passwords

- Passwords are personal and must not be shared.
- Only the assigned user of an account may access or use the associated password.
- In exceptional cases (e.g., incident response or employee offboarding), access to system credentials may be granted to authorised personnel from the IT provider with appropriate approvals and logging.
- Administrative credentials must be stored securely and only accessible to authorised personnel with a copy provided to the Chief Officer (Town Clerk), only to be accessed in an emergency.

9.4 Password Storage and Management

- Passwords must not be stored in plain text or written down in insecure locations.

9.5 Password Change Requirements

- Immediately change password if compromise is suspected.

9.6 Password Access Control and Logging

- All access to administrative or shared credentials must be logged and auditable.
- Attempts to access unauthorized passwords will be treated as a security incident.

9.7 Responsibility

- Users are responsible for creating and maintaining secure passwords for their accounts.

- The Town Council's IT Company is responsible for:
- Managing system/service credentials.
 - Enforcing password policies. Auditing and monitoring password-related security practices.

10.0 Monitoring

- 10.1 The council reserves the right to monitor and maintain logs of computer usage and inspect any files stored on its network, servers, computers, or associated technology to ensure compliance with this policy as well as relevant legislation. Internet, email, and computer usage is continually monitored as part of the council's protection against computer viruses, ongoing maintenance of the system, and when investigating faults.
- 10.2 The council will monitor the use of electronic communications and use of the internet in line with the Investigatory Powers (Interception by Councils etc for Monitoring and Record-keeping Purposes) Regulations 2018.
- 10.3 Monitoring of an employee's email and/or internet use would only be conducted in exceptional circumstances and in accordance with an impact assessment that the council has carried out to ensure that monitoring is necessary and proportionate. Monitoring is in the council's legitimate interests and is to ensure that this policy is being complied with.
- 10.4 The information obtained through monitoring would only be shared with those necessary, should it be required by the Chief Officer/Deputy Chief Officer to understand access and usage by Councillors, or in as part of a staff investigation. The information may also be shared with external HR or legal advisers for the purposes of seeking professional advice. Any external advisers will have appropriate data protection policies and protocols in place.
- 10.5 The information gathered through monitoring will be retained only long enough for any breach of this policy to come to light and for any investigation to be conducted.
- 10.6 Councillors, staff, and other authorised users have a number of rights in relation to their data, including the right to make a subject access request and the right to have data rectified or erased in some circumstances. You can find further details of these rights and how to exercise them in the council's data protection policy.
- 10.7 Such monitoring and the retrieval of the content of any messages may be for the purposes of checking whether the use of the system is legitimate, to find lost messages or to retrieve messages lost due to computer failure, to assist in the investigation of wrongful acts, or to comply with any legal obligation.
- 10.8 The council reserves the right to inspect all files stored on its computer systems in order to assure compliance with this policy. The council also reserves the right to monitor the types of sites being accessed and the extent and frequency of use of the internet at any time, both inside and

outside of working hours to ensure that the system is not being abused and to protect the council from potential damage or disrepute.

- 10.9 Any use that the council considers to be 'improper', either in terms of the content or the amount of time spent on this, may result in disciplinary proceedings.

11.0 Remote working

- 11.1 Increased IT security measures apply to those who work away from their normal place of work (e.g. whilst travelling, working from home or at a different venue), as follows:
- if logging into the council's systems or services remotely, using computers that either do not belong to the council or are not owned by the user, any passwords must not be saved, and the user must log out at the end of the session deleting all logs and history records within the browser used. If the configuration of the device does not clearly support these actions (for example at an internet café), council services should not be accessed from that device;
 - the location and direction of the screen should be checked to ensure confidential information is out of view. Steps should be taken to avoid messages being read by other people, including other travellers on public transport etc;
 - any data printed should be collected and stored securely;
 - all electronic files should be password protected and the data saved to the council's system/services when accessible;
 - papers, files or computer equipment must not be left unattended unless arrangements have been made with a responsible person;
 - any data should be kept safely and should only be disposed of securely;
 - papers, files, data sticks/storage, flash drive or backup hard drives should not be left unattended in cars, except where it is entirely unavoidable for short periods, in which case they must be locked in the boot of the car. If staying away overnight, council data should be taken into the accommodation, care being taken that it will not be interfered with by others or inadvertently destroyed;
 - where possible the ability to remotely wipe any mobile devices that process sensitive information should be retained in the case of loss or theft;
 - Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who work away from the office with sensitive data should be equipped with a screen privacy filter for mobile devices and should use this at all times when accessing such data away from the office.
- 11.2 Similarly, use of paid for Wi-Fi access, for example at airports should be carefully monitored and restricted to essential council use.

12.0 Email

- 12.1 Council email facilities are intended to promote effective and speedy communication on work-related matters. Although we encourage the use of email, it can be risky. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users

need to be careful not to introduce viruses onto council systems and should take proper account of the security advice below.

- 12.2 All councillors, staff, and other authorised users who need to use email as part of their role will normally be given their own council email address and account. The council may, at any time, withdraw email access, should it feel that this is no longer necessary for the role or that the system is being abused.
- 12.3 Email messages sent on the council's account should be for council use only. Personal communications are permitted provided they do not encroach upon working time or interrupt council business in any way. Employees and other authorised users are asked to restrict their personal use to official lunch breaks or before or after working hours, and to use their personal email accounts, rather than council addresses.

13.0 Use of the Internet

13.1 *Copyright*

Much of what appears on the Internet is protected by copyright. Any copying without permission, including electronic copying, is illegal and therefore prohibited. The Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 set out the rules. The copyright laws not only apply to documents but also to software. The infringement of the copyright of another person or organisation could lead to legal action being taken against the council and damages being awarded, as well as disciplinary action, including dismissal, being taken against the perpetrator.

Councillors, staff, and other authorised users should not assume that because a document or file is on the Internet, it can be freely copied. There is a difference between information in the 'public domain' (which is no longer confidential or secret information but is still copyright protected) and information which is not protected by copyright (such as where the author has been dead for more than 70 years).

13.2 *Trademarks, links and data protection*

The council does not permit the registration of any new domain names or trademarks relating to the council's names or products anywhere in the world, unless authorised to do so. Nor should they add links from any of the council's web pages to any other external sites without checking first with Uckfield Town Council's Management Team.

Special rules apply to the processing of personal and sensitive personal data. For further guidance on this, see the council's data protection policy.

13.3 *Accuracy of information*

One of the main benefits of the internet is the access it gives to large amounts of information, which is often more up to date than traditional sources such as libraries. Be aware that, as the internet is uncontrolled, much of the information may be less accurate than it appears.

14.0 Use of social media

- 14.1 Social media includes blogs; Wikipedia and other similar sites where text can be posted; multimedia or user generated media sites (YouTube); social networking sites (such as Facebook, LinkedIn, X (formerly known as Twitter), Instagram, TikTok, etc.); virtual worlds (Second Life); text messaging and mobile device communications and more traditional forms of media such as TV and newspapers. Care should be taken when using social media at any time, either using council systems or at home.
- 14.2 Personal use of social networking/media and chat sites should be restricted to breaks during working hours, or after hours with permission, unless the site(s) are being used for marketing purposes.
- 14.3 Inappropriate comments and postings can adversely affect the reputation of the council, even if it is not directly referenced. If comments or photographs could reasonably be interpreted as being associated with the council, or if remarks about [external stakeholders] could be regarded as abusive, humiliating, sexual harassment, discriminatory or derogatory, or could constitute bullying or harassment, the council will treat this as a serious disciplinary offence. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users should be aware that parishioners or other local organisations may read councillors, staff, and other authorised users' personal weblogs, to acquire information, for example, about their work, internal council business, and employee morale. Therefore, even if the council is not named, care should be taken with any views expressed.
- 14.4 To protect both the council and its interests, everyone is required to comply with the following rules about social media, whether in relation to their council role or personal social networking sites, and irrespective of whether this is during or after working hours:
- Any blog that mentions the council, its current work, councillors, employees, other users associated with the council, partner organisations, local groups, suppliers, parishioners, should identify the author as one of its councillors or employees and state that the views expressed on the blog or website are theirs alone and do not represent the views of Uckfield Town Council. Even if the council is not mentioned, care should be taken with any views expressed on social media sites and any views should clearly be stated to be the writer's own (e.g. via a disclaimer statement such as: "The comments and other content on this site are my own and do not represent the positions or opinions of my employer/ the council.") Writers must not claim or give the impression that they are speaking on behalf of the council.
 - Any employee who is developing a site or writing a blog that will mention the council, [e.g. "our current or potential plans, councillors, staff, and other authorised users, partners"], must inform the Chief Officer that they are writing this and gain agreement before going 'live'.
 - The council expects councillors, staff, and other authorised users to be respectful about the council and its current or potential employees and work programmes, and not to engage in any name calling or any behaviour that will reflect negatively on its reputation. Any unauthorised use of copyright materials, any unfounded or derogatory statements, or

any misrepresentation is not viewed favourably and could constitute gross misconduct.

- Photos or videos that include employees or other workers wearing uniforms or clothing displaying the council's name or logo should not be posted on social media if they could reflect negatively on the individual, their role, their colleagues, or the council. Additionally, photos, videos, or audio recordings must not be taken on council premises without explicit permission
- Comments posted by councillors, staff, and other authorised users on any sites should be knowledgeable, accurate and professional and should not compromise the council in any way.
- Inappropriate conversations should not take place on any social networking sites, including forums.
- Any writing about or displaying photos or videos of internal activities that involves current councillors, staff, and other authorised persons, might be considered a breach of data protection and a breach of privacy and confidentiality. Therefore, their permission should be gained prior to uploading any such material. Details of any kind relating to any events, conversations, materials or documents that are meant to be private, confidential or internal to the council should not be posted. This may include manuals; procedures; training documents; non-public financial or operational information; personal information regarding other councillors, staff, and other authorised users anything to do with a disciplinary case, grievance, allegation of bullying/harassment or discrimination, or legal issue; any other secret, confidential, or proprietary information or information that is subject to confidentiality agreements. This does not affect statutory requirements to publish information including under the Freedom of Information Act.
- Councillors, staff, and other authorised users must be aware that they are personally liable for anything that they write or present online (including on an online forum or blog, post, feed or website). Councillors should always be mindful of the Members Code of Conduct and Nolan Principles. Employees may be subject to disciplinary action for comments, content, or images that are defamatory, embarrassing, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libellous, or that can create a hostile work environment. They may also be sued by other organisations, and any individual or council that views their comments, content, or images as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libellous or creating a hostile work environment. In addition, other councillors, staff, and other authorised users can raise grievances for alleged bullying and/or harassment.
- Postings to websites or anywhere on the internet and social media of any kind, or in any press or media of any kind, should not breach copyright or other law or disclose confidential information, defame or make derogatory comments about the council or its councillors/staff or disclose personal data or information about any individual that could breach data protection legislation.
- Contacts by the media relating to the council, should be referred to the Marketing & Community Engagement Officer.
- Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who use sites such as LinkedIn and Facebook must ensure that the information on their profile is accurate and up to date and must update their profile on leaving the council.

- Staff who use social media/networking sites for council development purposes must ensure they provide the council with login details, including password(s), so that these sites can be accessed and updated in their absence.
 - Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who have left the council must not post any inappropriate comments about the council or its councillors, staff, and other authorised users on LinkedIn, Facebook, or any other social media/networking sites.
 - During your employment/ involvement with the council, you may create or obtain access to a variety of professional contacts and confidential information. This includes, but is not limited to, contacts made through professional networking platforms such as LinkedIn, where those contacts have been established or maintained in your capacity as a councillor, member of staff, or other authorised user. All such contacts will be considered council property and may be subject to disclosure upon request.
- 14.5 Note that the council may, from time to time, monitor external postings on social media sites. Any employee who has a profile (for example on LinkedIn or Facebook) must not misrepresent themselves or their role with the council. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users are also advised that social media sites are not an appropriate place to air council concerns or complaints: these should be raised with the council or formally through the grievance procedure.

15.0 Misuse

- 15.1 Misuse of IT systems and equipment is not in line with the council's standards of conduct and will be taken seriously. Any inappropriate or unauthorised use may lead to formal action, including disciplinary proceedings or, in serious cases, dismissal.

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



HANDLING 'ACCESS TO INFORMATION' REQUESTS POLICY

Policy Number 16		
Issue No.	Date Agreed	Details of amendments
1	25.03.08	GP.065.03.08
2		Formerly Freedom of Information Requests Policy - revised to incorporate provisions for requests made under Environmental Information Regulations 2004.
3	22.05.2018	Formerly Freedom of Information Requests and Environmental Information Regulations Requests Policy. Revisions made to policy to strengthen procedures and update in line with the General Data Protection Regulations.
4	June 2026	Review undertaken. To be ratified by Full Council 24.06.26.

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1.0 Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI)

Under the Freedom of Information Act, individuals have the right to access information held by the Council. The Council must also advise and assist the individual in making their request.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) was passed on 30th November 2000. It gives a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities. It sets out exemptions from that right and places a number of obligations on public authorities.

The Act came into force in January 2005 and anyone wishing to exercise the right has to make a written request to the local authority. If such a request is made the Council is under obligation to inform the person whether or not the requested information exists and to supply access to the information, unless it is subject to an exemption.

Section 39 of the Freedom of Information Act exempts environmental information from being dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act and provides it should be dealt with under the Environmental Information Regulations [EIR], which also came into force on 1 January 2005.

2.0 Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR)

The Environmental Information Regulations 2004 provide the public with access to environmental information held by public authorities that relate to or affect the environment.

When reviewing a request for information, officers at the council will need to determine, whether the information requested sits under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

These regulations initially derived from European Law set out to increase public awareness of issues affecting the environment.

Environmental Information is defined in the EIR as information falling into one of the six categories below:

1. the state of the elements of the environment, such as air and atmosphere, water, soil, land, landscape and natural sites including wetlands, coastal and marine areas, biological diversity and its components, including genetically modified organisms and the interaction among these elements.
2. factors, such as substances, energy, noise, radiation or waste, including radioactive waste, emissions, discharges and other releases into the environment, affecting or likely to affect the elements of the environment referred to in 1.
3. measures (including administrative measures), such as policies, legislation, plans, programmes, environmental agreements, and activities affecting or likely to affect the state of the elements and factors mentioned above, and as well as measures or activities designed to protect those elements.
4. reports on the implementation of environmental legislation.

5. cost-benefit and other economic analyses and assumptions used within the framework of the measures and activities referred to above.
6. the state of human health and safety, including the contamination of the food chain, where relevant, conditions of human life, cultural sites and built structures in as much as they are or may be affected by the state of the elements of the environment or, through those elements by any of the factors or measures referred to above.

3.0 Procedure for handling requests for information

- 3.1 The FOI Act requires that all requests must be made in writing (by letter or email). Requests can also be made via the website if an online form is available or via social media accounts.

We advise that requests are made by email to townclerk@uckfieldtc.gov.uk or by post to:

Freedom of Information (Town Clerk)
Uckfield Town Council
Civic Centre
Uckfield, TN22 1AE

When receiving a request for environmental information, the person making the request does not have to specify that the request is being made under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, this is for the officer to determine.

Under the EIR regulations, requests can be made verbally or in writing.

- 3.2 Requests for information under either legislation must however clearly indicate:
- what information is being required and if there is a specific time period that relates to the information requested;
 - the name of the applicant and contact details for correspondence.

Applicants do not have to state the purpose of their request and public authorities have an obligation to provide advice and assistance to requesters if further information is required to understand the request.

- 3.3 On receipt of a request for information under the FOI Act or EIR, an acknowledgement should be sent out within three working days advising whether the information is subject to the Act or not and how the Council will be responding to the request.

Where the information is subject to the Act or Regulations, it should be dealt with accordingly and a response given to the enquirer, in writing, within 20 working days. The time allowed for complying with the request starts when the Council receives the request. The Act or Regulations allow the Council to extend this deadline if further clarification of the request is needed but must advise the individual accordingly.

Where the information is not subject to the FOI Act or EIR, it should be dealt with in line with the Council's general handling of enquiries or the Council's complaints procedure.

3.4 Most requests for information will be free of charge.

The individual may request that the information be given to them in a particular format (excel, word, csv etc) and the Council may take into account the cost of providing the information in this form before complying with the request.

If the Council believes that it will cost more than £450 (in excess of 18 hours) to find the information and prepare it for release, then the request can be refused or the part of the request that has taken 18 hours can be provided. However, in all such cases the Council will ask the enquirer to narrow down the request by being more specific.

3.5 The FOI Act and EIR do not place restrictions on how the individual may use the information, but does not transfer copyright in any information sent to the enquirer. The Council should advise the enquirer in writing if any of the information is copyrighted.

3.6 Under Section 36 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 the Town Clerk will be the only "Qualified Person" when making decisions about the disclosure of information that is believed to prejudice the conduct of public affairs. In the absence of the Town Clerk, this will be performed by the Assistant Town Clerk.

3.7 If the Council refuses a request or withholds some of the information that has been requested, the enquirer will be advised of the reasons for the refusal. (see Section 3.0 Exemptions in regards to the FOI Act, and Exceptions in regards to the EIR).

3.8 Under Section 16 of the FOIA and Section 9 of the EIR, The Town Council has a duty to provide advice and assistance to applicants. The Council will provide advice and assistance so far as it would be reasonable to expect it to do so to anybody who proposes to make or have made an Information Request.

3.9 Where the cost of compliance in providing the information to a number of related requests, whether from the same or different individuals, exceeds the "appropriate limit" the Council will not be obliged to comply with the request. However, the Council may, on a discretionary basis, be prepared to offer assistance as to what could be disclosed in a more cost effective manner. It will be a matter for the Council to determine whether the various requests are related and form part of an organised campaign.

3.10 If the Council received an Information Request for information that it does not hold, but is aware that another public authority holds this information, the Council will provide assistance to the applicant and transfer their request to the public authority known to hold the requested information. If the Council holds any part of the information that has been requested by

the applicant it will treat that part of the request as an official Information Request and process it accordingly.

4.0 Exemptions (FOI Act) and Exceptions (EIR)

4.1 In certain instances, the Council will withhold information if it considers an information disclosure would be subject to one or more of the exemptions included in the FOI Act or exceptions in EIR.

4.2 In the case of the FOI Act, exemptions must be applied under the following:

Absolute Exemptions

- s.21 – Information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means;
- s.23- Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters;
- s.32 – Court records;
- s.34 - Parliamentary privilege;
- s.36 – Prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs;
- s.40 – Personal information;
- s.41 – Information provided in confidence (*only if it would constitute an actionable breach in confidence*);
- s.44 – Prohibitions on disclosure;

Qualified Exemptions (i.e. subject to public interest test)

- s.22 – Information intended for future publication;
- s.24 – National Security;
- s.26 – Defence;
- s.27 – International relations;
- s.28 – Relations with the UK;
- s.29 – The economy;
- s.30 – Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities;
- s.31 – Law enforcement;
- s.33 – Audit functions;
- s.35 – Formulation of government policy etc;
- s.36 – Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs;
- s.37 – Communications with her Majesty and honours;
- s.38 – Health and Safety;
- s.39 – Environmental information;
- s.42 – Legal professional privilege;
- s.43 – Commercial interests

4.3 In the case of requests relating to EIR, exceptions apply but all are subject to the public interest test:

- Regulation 13 - Personal Information
- Regulation 12(4) – exemptions based on the type of information:
 - Regulation 12(4)(a) – the Council does not hold the information
 - Regulation 12(4)(b) – the request for information is manifestly unreasonable
 - Regulation 12(4)(c) – the request is too general
 - Regulation 12(4)(d) – the request relates to information which is unfinished or in the course of being completed
 - Regulation 12(4)(e) – the request involves the disclosure of internal communications.

- Regulation 12(5) – exceptions based on the content of the information requested
 - Regulation 12(5)(a) – international relations, defence, national security and public safety.
 - Regulation 12(5)(b) – the course of justice, the ability of a person to obtain a fair trial or the ability of a public authority to conduct an inquiry of a criminal or disciplinary nature.
 - Regulation 12(5)(c) – Intellectual property rights.
 - Regulation 12(5)(e) – the confidentiality of commercial or industrial information where such confidentiality is provided by law to protect a legitimate economic interest.
 - Regulation 12(5)(f) – the interests of the supplier of the information
 - Regulation 12(5)(g) – Protection of the environment
- Regulation 12(9) – Emissions

4.4 The Council will always explain its reasons for applying an exemption to the applicant within 20 days.

4.5 The Council will not classify information as exempt unless there are reasons for doing so. Where documents contain exempt information, the remaining information contained within the requested document will be available under the FOI Act and EIR.

4.6 Qualified exemptions will only be applied if the Council believes it is not in the public interest to disclose the information having considered the Public Interest Test. The PIT requires that information should be withheld under an exemption if, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

5.0 Appeals

5.1 If the Council refuses a request for information, the individual has the right to appeal the decision and should, in the first instance, request an internal review of the decision in writing within 5 working days of notification of the refusal.

5.2 The Council does have the right to refuse to review the decision.

5.3 The review should be conducted by a panel of three Councillors who were not connected with the initial decision who will be appointed by the Chair of the General Purposes Committee. The individual should be advised of the outcome of the review within 15 working days.

- 5.4 If the individual is unhappy with the outcome of the review, or the Council has refused to undertake a review, the individual has the right to appeal directly to the independent Information Commissioner. The Commissioner has the power to investigate the way the Council handled the request and the response given by the Council. If the Commissioner agrees that the Council has wrongly withheld information, the Council can be ordered to disclose it.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted as follows:

Information Commissioner's Office Helpline:
0303 123 1113

By post: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Online: An online form is available at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

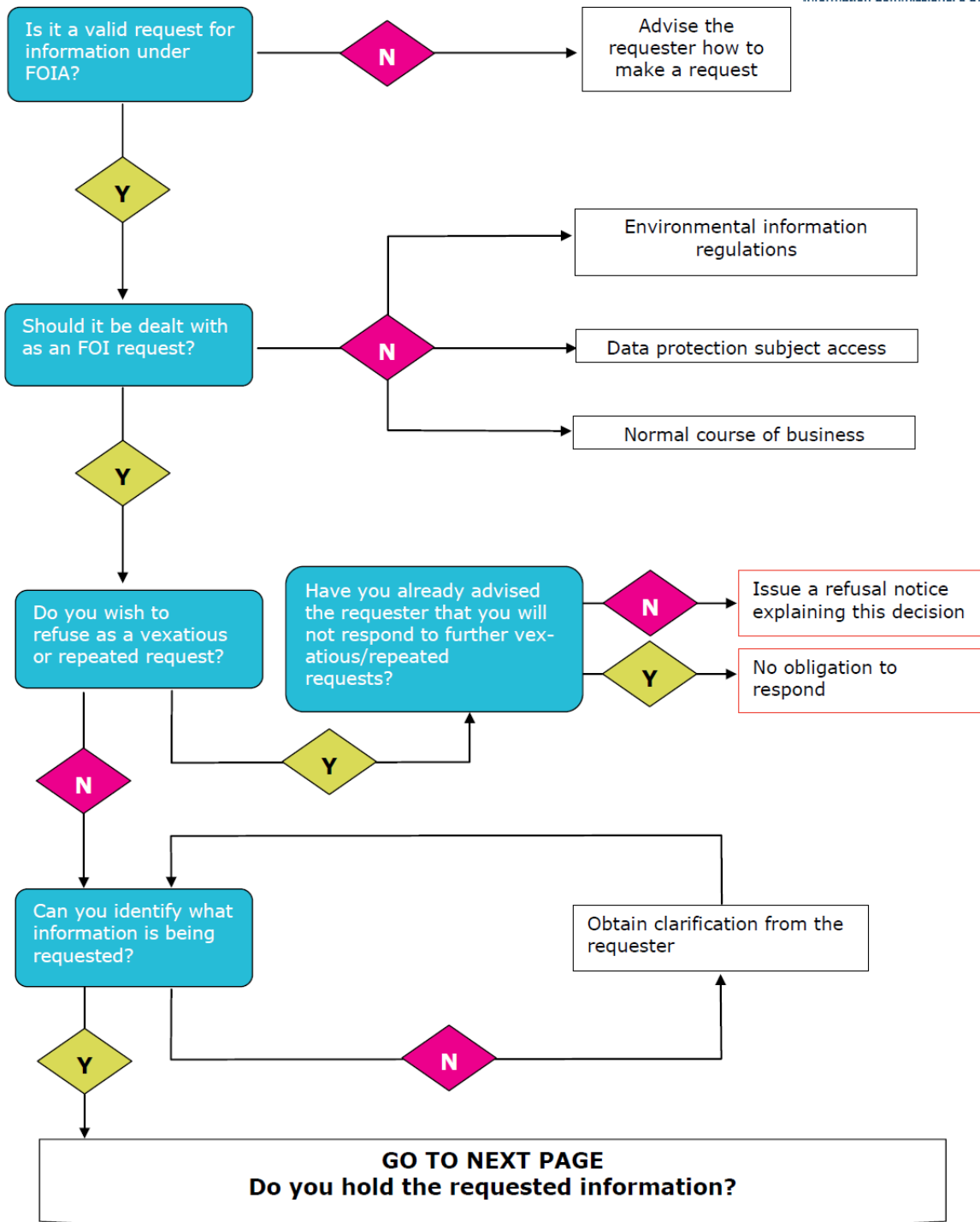
6.0 Right of access to your personal information

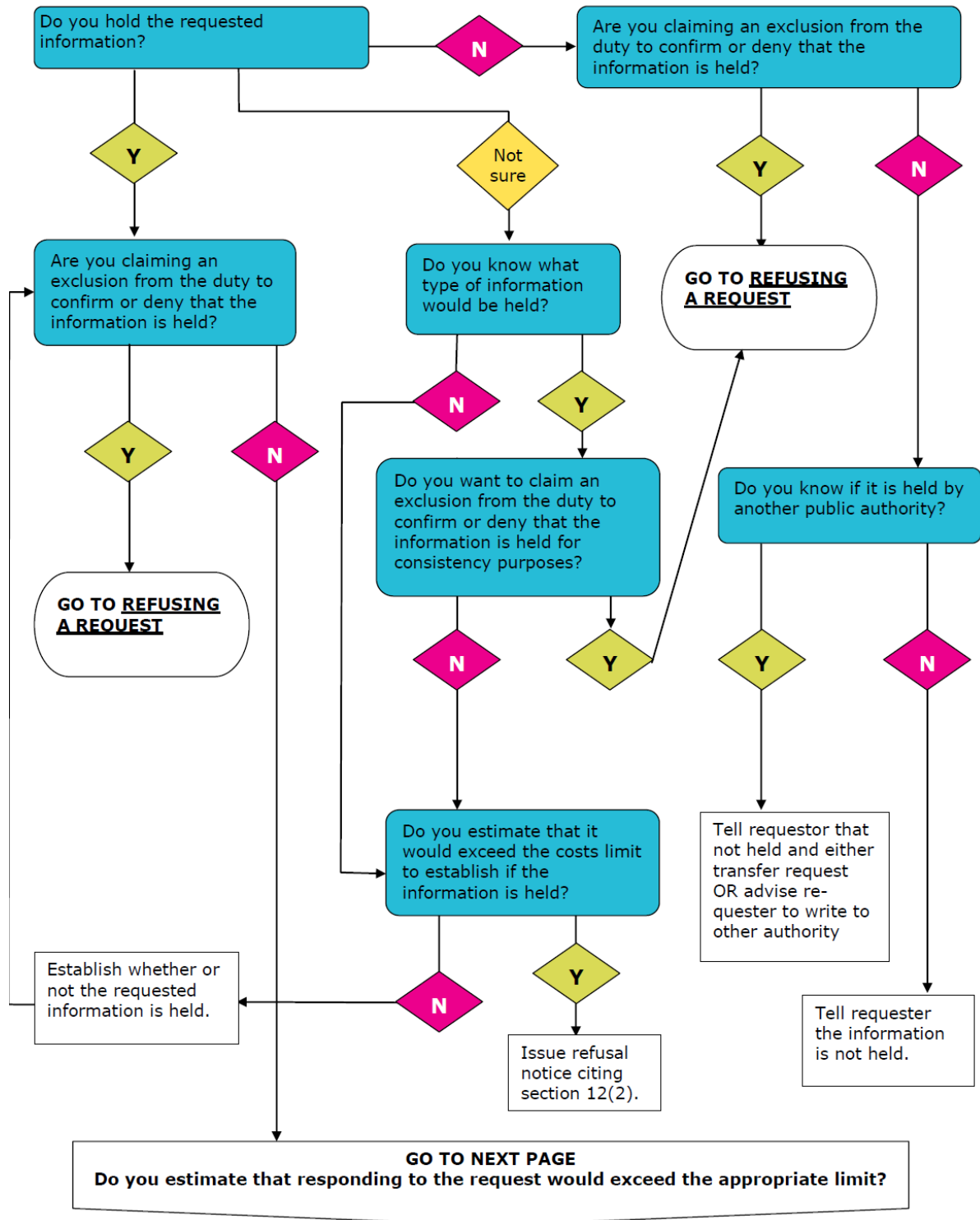
- 6.1 Individuals have the right to access information held about them. Any request for personal information is known as a Subject Access Request.
- 6.2 The right of access was first provided under the Data Protection Act 1998, and this right has since been strengthened by the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018. This enables individuals to ask an organisation, who they think is holding, using or sharing their personal information, to supply them with a copy.
- ## **7.0 Procedure for handling requests to access personal information**
- 7.1 To make a request for information that Uckfield Town Council holds about an individual, the individual would need to make contact in writing to the Town Clerk, and specify in the subject line or reference 'Subject Access Request' and attach or enclose the appropriate identification and any other documentation relevant to the request.
- 7.2 Local authorities now have a period of one month in which to deal with the request, upon receipt. This time period can be extended up to two months if the request is complex but an explanation must be given to the individual to explain how much extra time is required and why.
- 7.3 As with requests for information received under FOI and EIR, officers must ensure that the request is clear at the start and the Town Council fully understand what information is specifically being requested.
- 7.4 If the information provided includes information about other individuals, this should be removed or redacted from the response, unless the person in questions has agreed to it being included.
- 7.5 If the information requested is considered 'manifestly unfounded or excessive,' in particular because of its repetitive character, the organisation can charge a reasonable fee or refuse to provide the

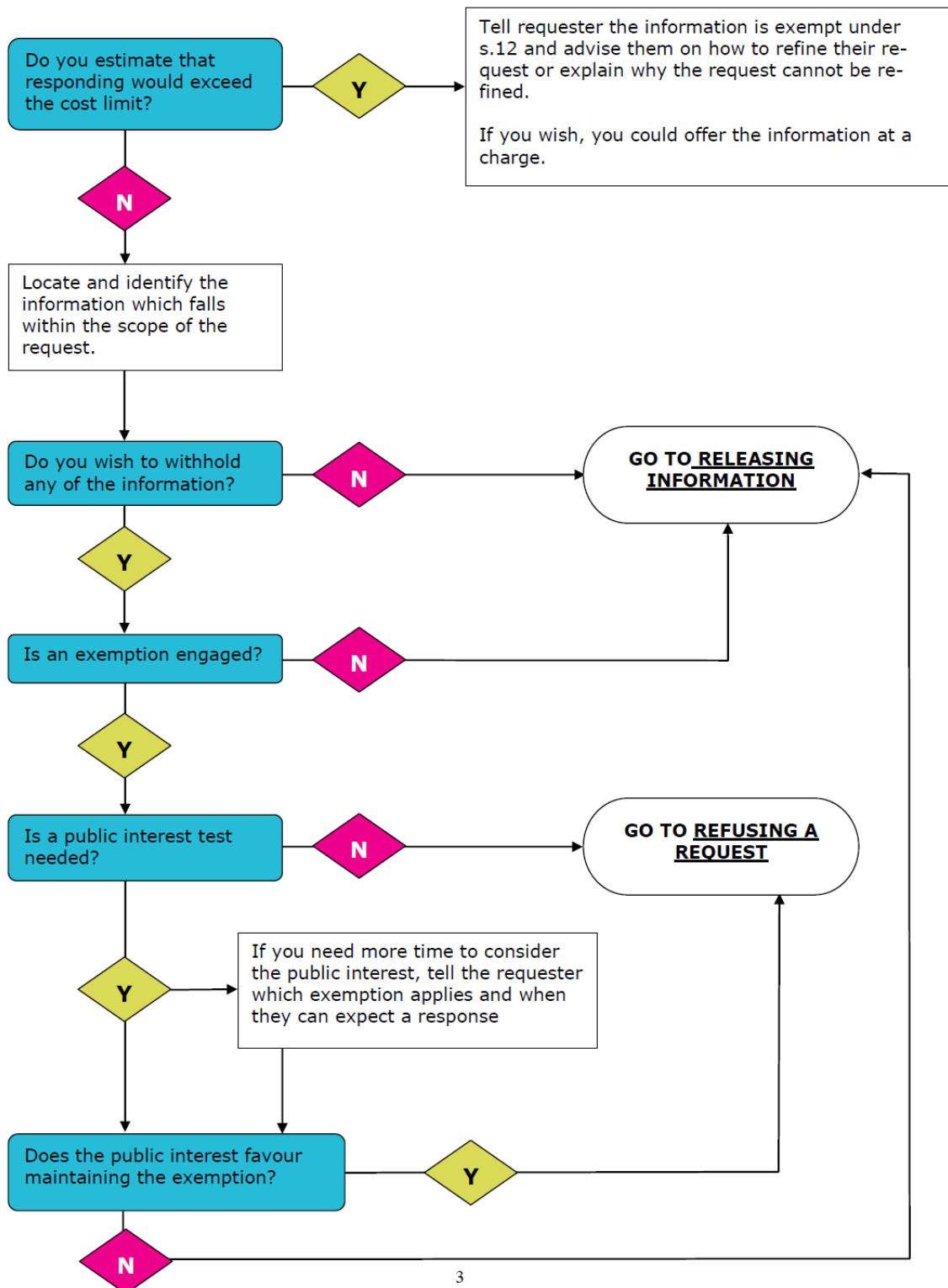
information requested. Evidence needs to be provided in these cases, to explain why that decision was taken.

- 7.6 Measures must also be taken to ensure that the information being disclosed is being provided to the relevant person. The organisation therefore requires proof of identity such as a photo ID (drivers licence or passport), and check undertaken of the electoral roll.

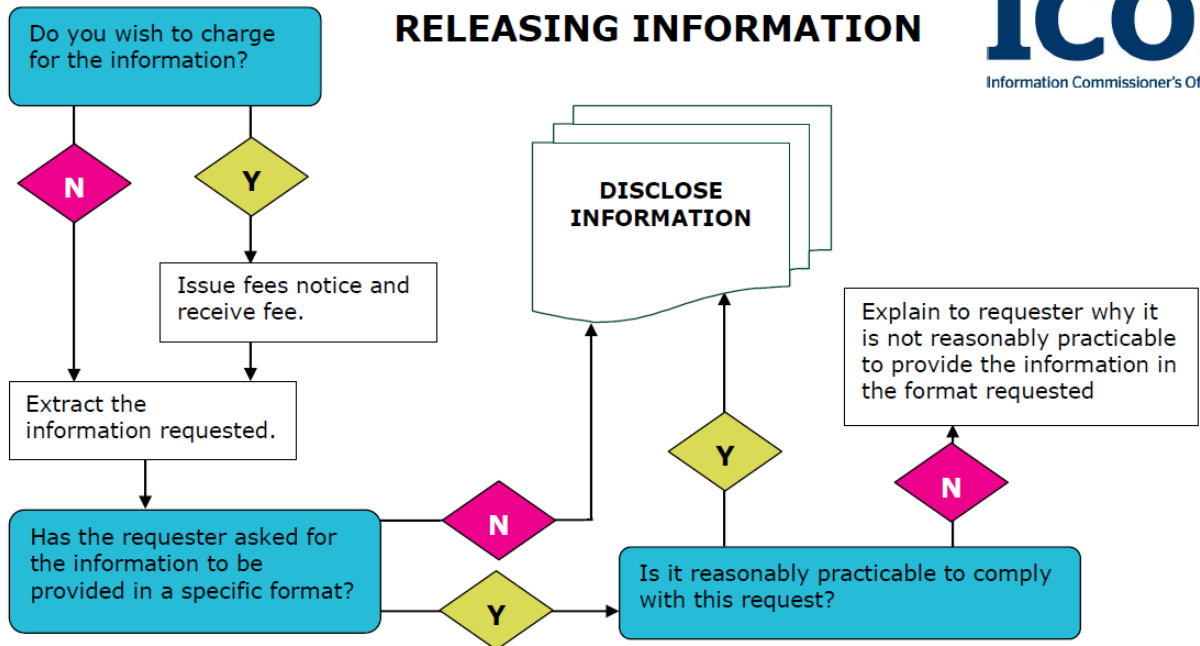
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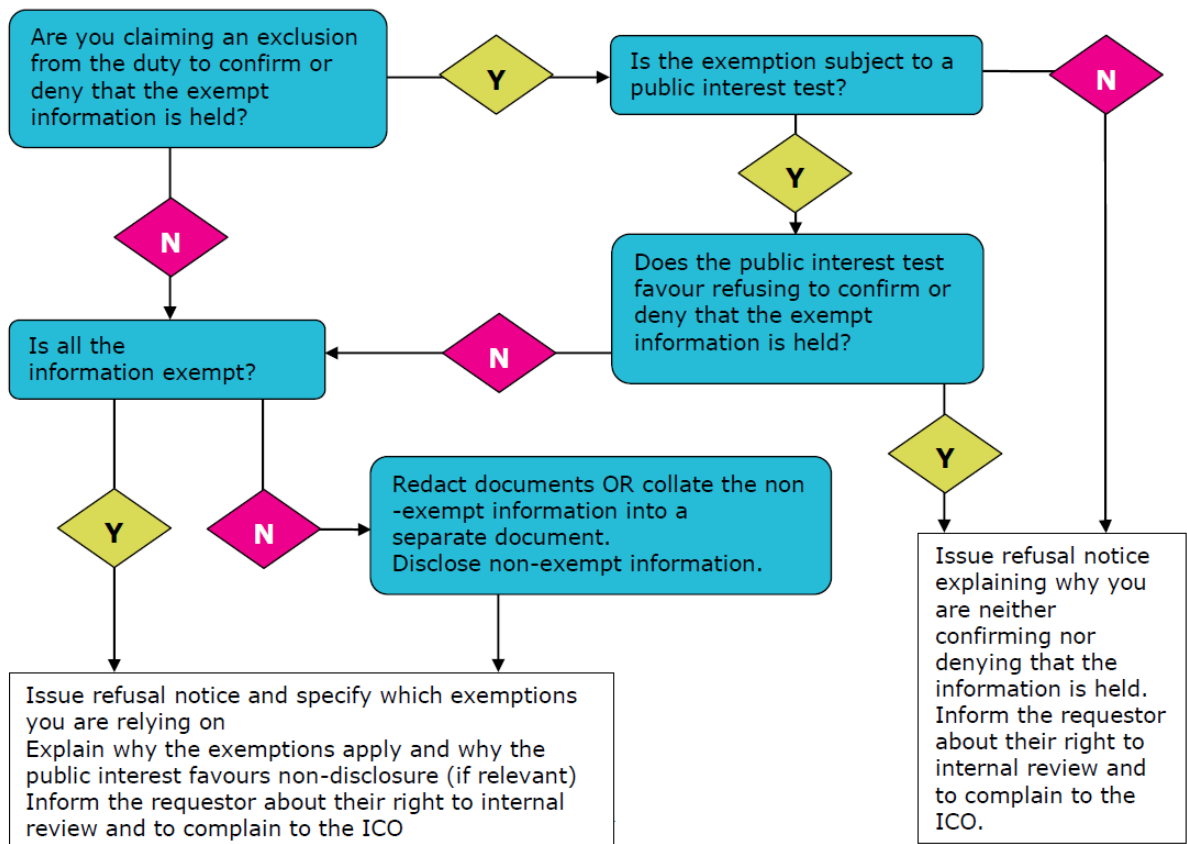




RELEASING INFORMATION



REFUSING A REQUEST



UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



DATA PROTECTION POLICY

Policy Number 87		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1.	June 2026	Ratification at Full Council – 29.06.26

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Uckfield Town Council is committed to protecting the privacy and security of personal information held about residents, service users, councillors, employees, volunteers, contractors and other individuals.
- 1.2 The Council recognises that the lawful and responsible handling of personal data is essential to maintaining public confidence and meeting its legal obligations.
- 1.3 This policy sets out the Council's approach to data protection and explains how personal information must be collected, used, stored, shared and disposed of.
- 1.4 This policy has been developed to support compliance with:
 - The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR);
 - The Data Protection Act 2018;
 - Other relevant legislation relating to confidentiality and information governance.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to:
 - Councillors;
 - Employees (full time and part-time);
 - Volunteers;
 - Contractors;
 - Temporary workers;
 - Anyone acting on behalf of the Council who accesses or processes personal data.
- 2.2 It applies to personal information held in any format, including:
 - Electronic records;
 - Emails;
 - Computer systems;
 - Mobile devices;
 - Paper files;
 - Meeting records;
 - Photographs;
 - CCTV recordings;
 - Audio or video recordings.

3.0 What is Personal Data?

- 3.1 Personal data is any information relating to an identifiable living individual.

Examples include:

- Name;
- Address;
- Telephone number;
- Email address;
- Photographs;

- Financial information;
- Employment information;
- Records relating to Council services.

3.2 Consideration also has to be given to consider whether the Town Council holds any categories of personal data, known as sensitive personal data, which require additional protection, including information relating to:

- Health;
- Disability;
- Ethnic origin;
- Religious beliefs;
- Trade union membership;
- Criminal convictions;
- Biometric or genetic information.

3.3 Sensitive data will only be processed where there is a lawful basis and appropriate safeguards are in place. Uckfield Town Council has no reason to process this level of data for its customers or residents. The only data held of this nature would such as health records for employees.

4.0 Data Protection Principles

The Town Council will ensure that personal data is:

4.1 Lawfully, fairly and transparently processed

Individuals will be informed about how their information is used and the Council will only process information where there is a lawful basis.

4.2 Collected for specific purposes

Personal information will only be collected for clear, legitimate purposes and will not be used in ways incompatible with those purposes.

4.3 Adequate, relevant and limited

The Council will only collect information necessary for the purpose required.

4.4 Accurate

The Council will take reasonable steps to ensure information is accurate and kept up to date.

4.5 Retained only as long as necessary

Information will only be kept for as long as required by legislation, operational needs or the Council's retention schedule.

4.6 Securely processed

Appropriate technical and organisational measures will be used to protect information from:

- Unauthorised access;
- Loss;
- Damage;
- Accidental disclosure;
- Unlawful processing.

4.7 Accountability

The Council will maintain appropriate records and procedures to demonstrate compliance with data protection legislation.

5.0 Lawful Basis for Processing Information

5.1 The Council may process personal data where one or more of the following applies:

- It is necessary to comply with a legal obligation;
- It is necessary to perform a public task or exercise official authority;
- It is necessary for a contract;
- Consent has been provided;
- It is necessary to protect an individual's vital interests;
- It is necessary for legitimate interests where appropriate.

5.2 Where consent is relied upon, individuals will be informed that they may withdraw consent at any time.

6.0 How the Council Uses Personal Data

6.1 The Council may use personal information to:

- Deliver Council services;
- Respond to enquiries;
- Manage bookings, facilities and events;
- Maintain accounts and records;
- Process payments;
- Manage grants;
- Communicate Council information;
- Meet statutory obligations;
- Support safeguarding responsibilities;
- Prevent fraud and misuse of public funds;
- Monitor and improve services;
- Maintain accurate records.

7.0 Responsibilities

7.1 The Chief Officer (Town Clerk) /Data Protection Lead

The Town Clerk is responsible for ensuring appropriate data protection arrangements are maintained.

Responsibilities include:

- Advising the Council on data protection matters;
- Maintaining policies and procedures;
- Ensuring compliance monitoring takes place;
- Maintaining records of processing activities where required;
- Arranging appropriate training;
- Managing data breaches;
- Supporting responses to information requests.

7.2 Councillors and Staff

All councillors and staff must:

- Handle personal information responsibly;
- Follow this policy and related procedures;
- Keep information secure;
- Only access information required for their role;
- Report concerns, losses or breaches immediately;
- Avoid unauthorised disclosure.

7.3 Managers and Supervisors

Managers must ensure:

- Staff handling personal information understand their responsibilities;
- Appropriate training is provided;
- Contractors and volunteers understand confidentiality requirements;
- Information is managed securely.

8.0 Information Security

8.1 The Council will use appropriate safeguards including:

- Password protection;
- Secure storage systems;
- Access controls;
- Secure disposal arrangements;
- Appropriate backup systems;
- Confidentiality procedures.

8.2 Paper records must be:

- Stored securely;
- Protected from unauthorised access;
- Removed from public view;
- Destroyed securely when no longer required.

9.0 Email and Electronic Communication

9.1 Care must be taken when sending emails containing personal information. Staff and councillors must:

- Check recipients' details before sending;
- Avoid forwarding information unnecessarily;
- Use secure methods when sharing sensitive information;
- Not disclose personal information without authority.

9.2 Personal information received through Council email accounts must not be forwarded externally without appropriate authorisation.

10.0 Sharing Personal Information

10.1 The Council may share information where necessary and lawful. Information may be shared with:

- Other public authorities;
- Contractors and suppliers;
- Service providers;
- Partner organisations;
- Legal or regulatory bodies.

10.2 Where information is shared with external organisations, appropriate agreements and safeguards must be in place.

10.3 Personal information will never be sold.

11.0 Retention and Disposal

11.1 The Council will retain information in accordance with the Town Council's Retention Policy.

11.2 Information will be securely destroyed when:

- It is no longer required;
- The retention period has expired;
- There is no legal reason to retain it.

11.3 Confidential waste, including handwritten notes containing personal information, must be securely destroyed.

12.0 Individuals' Rights

Individuals have rights under data protection legislation, including:

12.1 Right to be informed

Individuals have the right to understand how their information is used.

12.2 Right of access

Individuals may request copies of personal information held about them.

This is referred to as a Subject Access Request. Details can be found on the Town Council website,

<https://www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk/your-council/transparency-on-spend/data-protection-and-privacy/>

12.3 Right to rectification

Individuals may request correction of inaccurate information.

12.4 Right to remove

Individuals may request deletion of information where appropriate.

12.5 Right to restrict processing

Individuals may request limits on how information is used.

12.6 Right to data portability

Individuals may request transfer of certain information in a structured format where applicable.

12.7 Right to object

Individuals may object to certain processing activities.

13.0 Data Breaches

13.1 A personal data breach includes:

- Loss of personal information;
- Unauthorised access;
- Accidental disclosure;
- Theft;
- Destruction of information.

13.2 Any suspected breach must be reported immediately to the Chief Officer (Town Clerk)/Data Protection Lead.

13.3 The Town Council will:

- Assess the risk;
- Take steps to reduce harm;
- Record the breach;
- Notify the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) where required.

14.0 Confidentiality

14.1 Everyone working for or with the Council has a duty of confidentiality.

Personal information must not be:

- Discussed where it may be overheard;
- Shared without authority;
- Used for personal purposes;
- Removed without permission.

14.2 Unauthorised disclosure may result in disciplinary action and may constitute a criminal offence.

15.0 Training and Awareness

15.1 The Town Council will ensure appropriate training and guidance is available for councillors, employees and others handling personal information.

15.2 Everyone handling personal data must understand their responsibilities.

16.0 Related Policies

16.1 This policy should be read alongside the following documents which are available to view on the Town Council's website:

- Handling 'Access to Information' Requests Policy
- Freedom of Information Procedures;
- Publication Scheme;
- Retention Policy;
- IT Policy;
- Complaints Policy.

17.0 Complaints

17.1 Individuals who believe their information has been handled incorrectly should contact:

Data Protection Lead:

Chief Officer (Town Clerk)

Email:

townclerk@uckfieldtc.gov.uk

Individuals may also contact:

Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

18.0 Review

18.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if:

- Legislation changes;
- Guidance changes;
- Council procedures change;
- A significant data protection issue occurs.

Meeting of the Full Council

Monday 29 June 2026

Agenda Item 10.0

RATIFICATION OF AGAR ASSERTION 10 COMPLIANCE

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 As part of the Annual Governance Annual Return for the year ending 31 March 2026, Assertion 10, requires compliance with digital and data compliance.
- 1.2 Uckfield Town Council has been making improvements and strengthening its compliance with both Web accessibility requirements and information governance over the past few months, and wishes to update members on the progress made to date.

2.0 Action taken

2.1

AGAR requirements	Description	Action taken
Email management	Every authority must have a generic email account hosted on an authority owned domain	We can confirm that Uckfield Town Council has a robust email system with the appropriate security measures and authority owned domain 'gov.uk.' All staff utilise 'gov.uk' email accounts. We have generic accounts for key areas of contact (admin/finance/grants/mayor). Town Councillors utilise gov.uk email accounts.
Legal requirements for websites	All smaller authorities must meet legal requirements for all existing websites regardless of what domain is used.	The Town Council website meets all of these requirements in terms of hosting, and uses an authority owned domain gov.uk. We transferred the domain to a new Registrar (Cloud Next) in 2023.
Web Accessibility	All websites must meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 AA and Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018	We have to date met the basic requirements but have recently appointed a company who can undertake more detailed work to ensure our Town Council website meets the full guidelines.

AGAR requirements	Description	Action taken
FOI Act 2000 and Transparency Code	All websites must publish documentation as specified in the FOI Act and Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities	An updated Publication scheme is available on the Town Council website, in addition to the Town Council's retention policy. All information required as per the Transparency Code for Local Government is published and available to view on our website: https://www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk/your-council/transparency-on-spend/
GDPR 2016 and DPA 2018	Must follow this legislation.	Privacy notices have been updated. The Town Council's CCTV policy has been updated. Website content has been updated to direct customers/residents to our key policies and procedures... https://www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk/your-council/transparency-on-spend/freedom-of-information/ https://www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk/your-council/transparency-on-spend/data-protection-and-privacy/ Work is underway to refresh the last completed information audit and book updated training in for staff and members before the summer.
IT policy	Must have an IT policy	The Town Council's existing IT policy has been updated.

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 Members are asked to note the update provided.

Contact Officer: Holly Goring

Uckfield Town Council
FIXED ASSETS SCHEDULE
For the year ended 31/03/2026

	Date	Brought forward		Carried forward	
		Cost + Revaluation	Addits/Disps	Cost + Revaluation	
	31/03/2025	£	£	31/03/2026	£
OPERATIONAL ASSETS					
Land and Buildings					
Civic Centre, Bell Farm Lane		2,167,690.00	-	2,167,690.00	
Victoria Pavilion, Old Timbers Lane		428,600.00	-	428,600.00	
West Park Pavilion, Markland Way, West Park		188,600.00	-	188,600.00	
Cemetery Buildings (East & West workshops, Snatts Road)		66,340.00	-	66,340.00	
Victoria Park Sports Field (Pleasure Ground)		88,000.00	-	88,000.00	
Luxford Sports Field, off High Street		43,000.00	-	43,000.00	
West Park Sports Field, off Markland Way		90,000.00	-	90,000.00	
West Park Sports Field (25% disposal in 2008)	2008	-	-	-	
Hempstead Lane Sports Field		42,000.00	-	42,000.00	
Land at New Road, Ridgewood		75,000.00	-	75,000.00	
Ridgewood Pavillion, New Road		34,900.00	-	34,900.00	
Harlands Farm Sports Field, Harlands Farm, Mallard Drive		64,000.00	-	64,000.00	
Land at New Barn Farm Recreation Ground, New Barn Lane		115,000.00	-	115,000.00	
The Hub, Civic Approach	2008	173,500.00	-	173,500.00	
Unknown amounts re 2003 revaluation contra cost/dep'n		-	-	-	
Cemetery Improvements - new garden & wall of remembrance	2012	71,923.00	-	71,923.00	
Storage facilities Victoria	2013	111,347.00	-	111,347.00	
Victoria ramp wall and rails	2013	13,368.00	-	13,368.00	
Storage facilities/Mezzanine Victoria (20 years SL)	2015	3,809.00	-	3,809.00	
Victoria Tennis Court Project (10 years SL)	2015	81,065.00	-	81,065.00	
Bird-in-Eye Allotment parking (10 years SL)	2015	8,435.00	-	8,435.00	
Victoria Tennis Court Project (10 years SL)	2016	14,165.00	-	14,165.00	
C/C Refurbishment of toilets (10years SL)	2016	18,754.79	-	18,754.79	
Land known as the Dene (purchased amenity land from Buxted	2024	5,001.00	-	5,001.00	
		3,904,497.79	-	3,904,497.79	
Vehicles, Plant, Furniture & Equipment					
<u>Building Contents:</u>					
Civic Centre		20,000.00	-	20,000.00	
Victoria Pavilion		13,800.00	-	13,800.00	
Lighting upgrade Civic Centre - 25% (4 years) SL	2012	17,196.00	-	17,196.00	
PV Panel installation C/C - 25% (4 years) SL	2012	30,562.00	-	30,562.00	
Civic Centre toilet refurbishment - 6.67% (15 years) SL	2013	42,681.00	-	42,681.00	
Civic Centre boiler replacement - 6.67% (15 years) SL	2013	131,041.00	-	131,041.00	
Civic Centre boiler replacement - 6.67% (15 years) SL	2014	11,669.00	-	11,669.00	
Civic Centre chairs/tables Council Chambers (10 years) SL	2014	8,628.00	-	8,628.00	
Civic Centre computer equipment (3 years) SL	2015	5,330.00	-	5,330.00	
Civic Centre audio visual equipment (5 years)	2015	10,710.00	-	10,710.00	
Civic Centre Acoustic curtaining installation (5 years)	2017	20,630.07	-	20,630.07	
new radio microphones for the Weald Hall	2017	2,669.00	-	2,669.00	
New unvented electric water heaters	2017	1,890.00	-	1,890.00	
New screen for foyer	2017	667.50	-	667.50	
Mini Bowser Washer	2017	1,500.00	-	1,500.00	
New ceiling o/s green room	2018	1,925.00	-	1,925.00	
		-	-	-	
<u>Vehicles:</u>					
Tractor - Ford		4,814.00	-	4,814.00	
Tata Truck GX53 RHZ (on HP)	2004	7,734.00	-	7,734.00	
Fiat Truck		6,108.00	-	6,108.00	
Grass roller	2006	6,405.00	-	6,405.00	
Chipper	2012	-	-	-	
Movano Vehicle	2016	17,221.00	-	17,221.00	
New Holland Tractor - GU24 JMV - HP	2025	46,492.00	-	46,492.00	
Toyota Proace City Electric Icon Van - AO74 UDT - HP	2025	21,560.42	-	21,560.42	
Toyota Proace City Electric Icon Van - AO74 UCN - HP	2025	24,320.22	-	24,320.22	
Toyota Hilux AO25 WZU	2026	-	27,185.50	-	27,185.50
		-	-	-	
<u>Play Equipment:</u>					
Luxford Field		-	-	-	
Oakwood		936.00	-	936.00	
Hempstead		3,930.00	-	3,930.00	
Victoria		12,381.00	(12,381.00)	-	

	Date	Cost + Revaluation		Cost + Revaluation	
		31/03/2025	Addits/Disps	31/03/2026	
		£	£	£	
Ridgewood		-	-	-	
Old Hospital Site		7,333.00	-	7,333.00	
Rocks Park Play Area		23,086.00	-	23,086.00	
Computers		-	-	-	
Skate Park	2010	91,092.00	-	91,092.00	
New swing at Oakwood Drive	2012	6,980.00	-	6,980.00	
Play area Hempstead Lane (15 years) SL	2014	105,289.00	-	105,289.00	
Multi-use Games Area New Barn area Victoria Pleasure Ground	2014	55,267.00	-	55,267.00	
Victoria Artificial Wicket (7 years) SL	2015	5,360.00	-	5,360.00	
Sound system - Weald Hall (5 years)	2016	14,575.00	-	14,575.00	
Audio visual equipment - Weald Hall (5 years)	2016	13,223.00	-	13,223.00	
Stage lighting W/H	2017	9,951.97	-	9,951.97	
Play areas rolling programmes	2017	135,000.00	-	135,000.00	
Safety surface victoria	2018	7,465.00	-	7,465.00	
Hughes way play area	2018	50,350.00	-	50,350.00	
Upgrade to computer system - office	2018	5,798.00	-	5,798.00	
Upgrade to server	2018	1,426.30	-	1,426.30	
Cold room chiller	2018	7,820.69	-	7,820.69	
21" Rotary Mower (Sept 23) (Nominal code - 5202)	2024	1,072.00	-	1,072.00	
RM4RTP Mulch Mower (Sept 23) (Nominal code - 5202)	2024	1,158.34	-	1,158.34	
Upgrade to server (July 23) (Nominal code 5430)	2024	2,526.00	-	2,526.00	
Upgrade to Wi-Fi (Aug 23) (Nominal code 5430)	2024	5,417.00	-	5,417.00	
Upgrade to 7 x computers (Aug 23 and Mar 24) (Nom code 543)	2024	4,500.00	-	4,500.00	
Grillo Brush Cutter 10 AWD 27 - HP	2025	11,855.58	-	11,855.58	
Grillo Mower FD900 - HP	2025	23,000.00	-	23,000.00	
Grillo CL75 Pedestrian Mower - £2,748.33 plus VAT	2025	2,748.33	-	2,748.33	
Victoria Play Area - full upgrade (nominal code 5175) (15 years	2026	-	107,009.55	107,009.55	
Hempstead new Coco Swing (nominal code 5175) (15 years SL	2026	-	17,992.63	17,992.63	
		-	-	-	
		-	-	-	
		-	-	-	
<u>Street Furniture</u>		-	-	-	
Unknown amounts pre 2003 cost/dep'n		400,316.00	-	400,316.00	
Part exchanged tractor re new tractor & flail purchase	2008	(13,500.00)	-	(13,500.00)	
Total		1,451,910.42	139,806.68	1,591,717.10	
NON-OPERATIONAL ASSETS					
<u>Land and Buildings:</u>					
Forester's Hall, Harcourt Road		546,200.00	-	546,200.00	
Baptist Chapel, adj Foresters Hall		59,730.00	-	59,730.00	
2A Vernon Road		139,100.00	-	139,100.00	
Bridge Cottage	2005	80,000.00	-	80,000.00	
Signal Box, High Street		47,495.00	-	47,495.00	
Guide Hut, Hempstead Lane		70,000.00	-	70,000.00	
Shop adjoining Bridge Cottage	2010	85,000.00	-	85,000.00	
Bridge Cottage major refurbishment contribution	2015	280,000.00	-	280,000.00	
		-	-	-	
<u>Building Contents:</u>		-	-	-	
Foresters Hall		9,490.00	-	9,490.00	
Total		1,317,015.00	-	1,317,015.00	
COMMUNITY ASSETS					
Hempstead Meadows LNR/Millennium Walk		1,700.00	-	1,700.00	
Hempstead Meadows LNR/Millennium Walk	2001	17,561.00	-	17,561.00	
Hempstead Meadows LNR/Millennium Walk	2002	23.00	-	23.00	
Total		19,284.00	-	19,284.00	
SUMMARY					
<u>Operational Assets</u>					
Land & Buildings		3,904,497.79	-	3,904,497.79	
Vehicles, Plant, Furniture & Equipment		1,451,910.42	139,806.68	1,591,717.10	
<u>Non-operational Assets</u>		1,317,015.00	-	1,317,015.00	
<u>Community Assets</u>		19,284.00	-	19,284.00	
TOTAL		6,692,707.21	139,806.68	6,832,513.89	

Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/26

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk IF PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2026, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2025/26 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2024/25, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. <i>(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2024/25 AGAR tick "not covered")</i>			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations <i>(during the 2025/26 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2024-25 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set)</i> .	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2024/25 AGAR <i>(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes)</i> .	✓		
O. The authority has complied with laws, regulations & proper practices relating to digital and data compliance.	✓		
P. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.	Yes	No	Not applicable
			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

15/10/2025

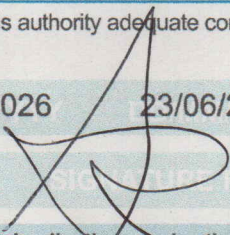
16/03/2026

23/06/2026

MIKE PLATTEN CPFA

INTERNAL AUDITOR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date

25/06/2026

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Holly Goring

Uckfield Town Council

25 June 2026

Dear Holly

Uckfield Town Council

Internal Audit 25 -26 - Final Audit Report

The internal audit for the 25-26 financial year is now complete. I am pleased to be able to report that I have signed off the internal audit section of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for with no comments.

As stated in the engagement letter, the scope of our work is limited to completing the audit testing and enquiries we deem necessary to complete Section 4 of the Annual Report for Local Councils in England. We do not provide assurance over or accept responsibility for areas of work not included in this scope, unless specifically agreed with the Council during the financial year. For clarity :

- my audit reviews the statement of accounts included within the AGAR
- I do not review the 6 page Financial Statements Document produced by the Council.
This is not required by regulations and is therefore outside the scope of this audit.

In providing internal audit services we are not conducting a financial statement audit in accordance with standards and guidelines issued by the Audit Practices Board and our procedures are not designed to provide assurance over the reliability and quality of your financial statements and management information – that is the job of external audit.

We are required by the Annual Internal Audit Report included in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to review controls in place at the Council against predefined control assertions. These control assertions are set out below, together with the results of my internal audit work for 25-26. Recommendations are set out at Appendix A. I set out a schedule of tests not completed at this audit at Appendix B, these tests are not relevant to this Council.

The audit was carried out in three stages. The interim audits were completed on 15 October and 16 March, these concentrated on in year financial transactions and governance controls. The final audit was carried out remotely on 23 June and concentrated on the statement of accounts and balance sheet.

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Company Registration Number 14174016
6 Uplands Road. Farnham GU9 8BP

A - Appropriate books of account have been kept properly throughout the year

First Interim Audit

The Council maintains financial records on the Sage Accounting system. My testing confirmed that income and expenditure is balanced to the cashbook and reconciled to bank statements on a regular basis. During my testing I confirmed there is a clear audit trail from the accounts to supporting documentation such as invoices.

The Council has a system of member audits. These are carried out each month, and a member is tasked with reviewing the following:

- Supplier invoices
- Sales ledger transactions
- Staff timesheets
- Bank and petty cash reconciliations

I checked that the member audit process has been operating in 25-26. I confirmed that member audits have been completed to the end of July 2025. The review of the August accounts has been booked in to be completed on 28 October. I reviewed the member audit file and this showed all checks are being completed and properly evidenced by councillors.

Second Interim Audit

I tested the brought forward balances on the Sage accounting system.

Opening Balance sage	£5,161,644
AGAR accounting statements box 7	£1,206,466
Difference	£3,955,179

This is explained by 2 accounts recorded on Sage

Revaluation Reserve	£ 519,173
Capital Financing	£3,436,007
Total	£3,955,180

Revaluation reserves and capital financing accounts are not included in statutory accounting in this sector. I am therefore satisfied that the opening balances on Sage can be agreed back to the audited accounts for 24-25.

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The Council is registered for VAT, and submits VAT returns to HMRC on a quarterly basis. I checked the VAT return for quarter 3. The Council submitted the VAT return on 6 February, just before the deadline of 7 February. VAT reclaimed was £18,043, this is supported by VAT reports extracted from the accounting system. The refund was received at bank on 12 February; I have checked this to the bank statement. I could not agree the VAT return to the VAT control account at 31 December, a number of entries have not yet been input into the accounting system. This must be actioned as part of year end closedown, and the Q4 VAT return should be agreed to the VAT control account at 31 March.

Final Audit

I have agreed the figures in the AGAR accounting statements back to the sage trial balance, via working papers prepared by the Council's externally contracted accountant. I have also checked that the complete trial balance has been included in the accounting statements. All comparatives reported in the financial statements have been agreed back to the audited 24-25 accounts, as published on the Council website.

Compilation of Financial Statements

I again report that the council should look simplify accounting processes. I note that whilst significant improvements have been made in 25-26;

- the Council continues to record fixed assets / stock and loans on the trial balance. This is not required in the Town Council sector and makes the general ledger and balance sheet less user friendly.
- the compilation of the year end accounts is based on a complex multi spreadsheet process, which is reliant on manual input. More use should be made of reporting from the Sage accounting system.
- the Council cannot readily identify the general reserve balance; this can only be calculated by adjusting the profit and loss account to reflect a number of accounting entries not relevant to accounting standards in this sector.

The Council should continue to streamline statutory accounting processes. This review should consider:

- Removing fixed assets and capital accounts from the trial balance
- Ceasing production of company style accounts, which are currently produced each year but not used.
- Writing reports in Sage that enable year end accounts to be produced directly from the accounting system, with minimal reliance on spreadsheets

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External accountancy support with sector knowledge should be obtained to support this process.

VAT Accounting

VAT accounting processes have been significantly improved in 25-26. I confirmed that the quarter 4 VAT return has been submitted to HMRC. A date stamp from Sage confirms this was submitted on 7 May, and the due date was met. VAT of £9,675 was reclaimed. VAT owed to the Council recorded on Sage at 31.3.26 was £16,800. There is therefore a difference of £7,125 on the Council VAT account. The RFO has completed a reconciliation and confirms the following:

- £6,338 relates to VAT incurred but not yet claimed back, relating to vehicle purchases
- £787 is due to timing issues on VAT accounting not yet identified.

The Council should reclaim outstanding VAT owed in the next VAT return and seek to reconcile the VAT return to the VAT control account at the end of quarter 1 26-27.

B - The Council's financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved, and VAT was appropriately accounted for **First Interim Audit**

Financial Regulations are based on NALC templates. The Council reviewed financial regulations at the Full Council meeting in May 2025. Standing Orders are also up to date, these were ratified at the May 2025 Full Council meeting, alongside the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

Second Interim Audit

The Council has a clear process for making payment to suppliers. Invoices are sent into the office; these are then reviewed against orders and coded and signed off for processing by the Town Clerk. The invoice is passed to the RFO, who inputs the invoice into Sage. Every 2 weeks a BACS run report is run from Sage. The RFO rechecks invoices against this report and the payment is entered by the RFO on to the Council bank account. Payments and payment run information is then presented to Councillors, who physically sign bank payment reports, and approve payments at bank.

I carried out a sample test of non-pay expenditure transactions selected from the cashbook from the whole of the financial year (to 16 March 2026). Transactions were selected from the Day Books: Paid Invoices Report. I was able to confirm the following for all transactions:

- Payment agreed to invoice

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- Invoice passed for payment by Town Clerk, evidenced on the face of the invoice
- Invoice signed off by 2 councillors on face of invoice
- VAT accounting correct
- Expenditure appropriate for this Council

There is a clear audit trail from Sage to source documentation which demonstrates compliance with Council financial regulations in the processing of payments to suppliers.

I confirmed that the Council advertised a contract for playground equipment on the Find a Tender website, as required by Financial Regulations – see extract from website below:

[Victoria Play Area](#)

Uckfield Town Council

Design, supply and installation of a play area at Victoria Pleasure Ground up to £80-90k, and supply and installation of the replacement of one piece of equipment at Hempstead Recreation Ground up to £20k.

Notice type UK4: Tender notice

I have one minor recommendation. The Council should obtain a VAT invoice from UHY for a payment made in July 25, the document on file was a demand for payment that does not meet HMRC requirements.

Final Audit

Non pay expenditure per box 6 to the accounts amounted to £ 1,125,128, up from £1.036,851 in 24-5.

I did not carry out any further testing at my year end audit; transaction testing was concluded at my second interim audit in late March. I have now concluded my testing of expenditure for the year, and I am satisfied that the Council has been following financial regulations in the way that expenditure and payments are approved.

C - The Council assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.

Second Interim Audit

The Council insures its assets with QBE insurance on a standard local authority policy. I checked property insurance, this was in date at the time of my audit, with an expiry date of 18.10.26. Lists of assets insured were as follows:

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Schedule of Locations

Premises Number	Address	Postcode	Buildings	Buildings	Machinery plant and all other contents	Machinery plant and all other contents	Stock and materials in trade
			Declared Value £	Sum Insured £	Declared Value £	Sum Insured £	Sum insured £
1	Uckfield Civic Centre	TN22 1AE	£6,549,750	£7,532,213	£48326	£55,575	£6,000
2	Cemetery Chapels, Uckfield	TN22 2AL	£346,450	£398,418	£5,125	£5,894	£0
3	The Museum, Bridge Cottage	TN22 1AZ	£2,121,750	£2,440,013	£0	£0	£0
4	The Foresters Hall & 2a Vernon Road	TN22 5DT	£1,326,350	£1,525,303	£2,500	£2,875	£0
5	Foresters Chapel	TN22 5DT	£233,778	£268,845	£0	£0	£0
6	The Pavilion, West Park	TN22 5DU	£725,700	£834,555	£728	£837	£0
7	Uckfield Signal Box	TN22 1PU	£291,100	£334,765	£0	£0	£0
8	(Main) Victoria Pavilion, Uckfield	TN22 5DJ	£2,039,750	£2,345,713	£61,500	£70,725	£0
9	(Green Shed) Victoria Pavilion	TN22 5DJ	£325,950	£374,843	£76,373	£87,829	£0
10	(Storage units) Victoria Pavilion	TN22 5DJ	£26,137	£30,058	£0	£0	£0
11	The Village Clock, Uckfield, East Sussex	TN22 1AN	£3,530	£4,060	£0		£0
12	Osborn Hall, Hempstead Road	TN22 1DZ	£472,525	£543,404	£0	£0	£0
13	Snatts Road Cemetery Wall	TN22 2AL	£59,757	£68,721	£0	£0	£0
14	The Source, Civic Approach	TN22 1AL	£272,650	£313,548	£0	£0	£0
15	Ridgewood Village Hall, New Road	TN22 5TG	£1,219,750	£1,402,713	£0	£0	£0
16	Machinery, Plant and all other contents floating over Uckfield Civic Centre & The Hub, Civic Approach	TN22 1AE, TN22 1AL	£0	£0	£259,325	£259,325	£0
Totals			£16,014,927	£18,417,166	£453,877	£483,060	£6,000

The Town Clerk confirmed that asset restatement value is to be reviewed in 26-27, budget has been set aside for this purpose.

General insurance is with Zurich Municipal, I reviewed the policy schedule and confirmed fidelity insurance of £2m is in place.

The Council has completed the review of the Risk Management Policy for 25-26 at the Full Council meeting in January 2026 – minute below:

FC.81.01.26 Members **RESOLVED** to ratify the adoption of the revised Town Council's Risk Management Policy.

I have reviewed the Risk Management Policy, which is published on the Council website. The policy is sufficient for this Council, and there is evidence of update in year (assertion 10 references).

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D - The annual precept requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate

Second Interim Audit

The Council has completed the budget and precept setting process for 26-7. These were approved at the January Full Council meeting – minutes below:

FC.86.01.26 Members **RESOLVED** to ratify the recommendation of Finance Sub-Committee and adopt the annual budget for 2026/27 of £2,121,082 with a precept of £1,432,188. This would result in an increase of £16.62 (7.55%) per annum for the average Council Tax Band D household (approx. £1.66 per month).

Precepting authority deadlines were met. The budget is supported by an Asset Management Plan and a Council Strategic Plan, both approved at the same meeting. The budget was reviewed at Finance Committee prior to Full Council approval, after a detailed budget setting process, worked through by officers and councillors. The 26-27 budget is published on the Council website.

The Council receives reports on budget v actuals on a quarterly basis. I sample checked Q2 reporting – this occurred at the October meeting of Full Council.

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.

Q3 reporting was minuted at the January Full Council meeting and individual committees continue to receive regular updates on budget v actuals.

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Final Audit

Reserves at 31 March 2026 were £1,181,368 (24-25 £1,206,466).

Reserve Accounting

As stated in section A above, the current accounting process in place at the Council does not make it straightforward to identify the value of the council reserves. I have reviewed the accounts presented for audit, these show there is a balance of £15K not currently allocated to earmarked or general reserves.

Type of Reserve	Balance at 31.3.26 per year end working papers and trial balance reconciliation (£)	Source document
General Reserve	233,844	Reconciliation between Sage and General Reserve spreadsheet
Earmarked Reserves	931,729	Earmarked reserves spreadsheet agreed to trial balance
TOTAL	1,165,673	
Total reserves per statutory accounts at 31.3.26	1,181,368	Box 7 Accounting Statements in AGAR
Difference - Unallocated reserve at 31.3.26	£15,695	

Reasons for this unallocated reserve balance should be identified and appropriate accounting adjustments posted.

Earmarked reserves

Earmarked reserves at 31.3.26 were £931K. This has been agreed to SAGE and to a schedule of earmarked reserves maintained outside of the accounting system – the accounting system balances reconciled to the reserves spreadsheet at 31.3.26. The Clerk confirms that all year end income/expenditure reports for committee areas were presented to General Purposes Committee on 8 June, alongside the year end view on earmarked reserves. Further work on reserves is anticipated in quarter 2 26-27.

Major earmarked reserve balances at 31 March 2026 were:

- Building Maintenance £188K
- Civic Centre £69K
- Town Centre Regeneration £101K
- Community Infrastructure Levy £315K

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General Reserves

General reserves at year end were £233K. This represents 17% of precept, which is below recommended levels set out in the Practitioners' Guide. **General reserves are not sufficient for a Council of this size, dependent on income from non-precept activities and with an extensive fixed asset base.** The Practitioners Guide states the following

- cover unexpected inflation, unforeseen events and unusual circumstances.
- 5.34. The generally accepted recommendation with regard to the appropriate minimum level of a smaller authority's **general reserve** is that this should be maintained at between three and twelve months of net revenue expenditure.
 - 5.35. The reason for the wide range is to cater for the large variation in activity level between individual authorities. The smaller the authority, the closer the figure may be to 12 months expenditure, the larger the authority, the nearer to 3 months. In practice, any authority with income and expenditure in excess of £200,000 should plan towards 3 months equivalent **general reserve**.
 - 5.36. In all of this it is important that each authority adopt, as a **general reserve** policy, the level appropriate to their size, situation, risks and plan their budget so as to ensure that the adopted level is maintained. Consideration of the minimum level of reserves requires not only consideration of level of income and expenditure but also the risks to that income.
 - 5.37. Authorities with significant self-generated income (other than the precept or levy) should take into account situations that may lead to a loss in revenue as well as increased costs and adapt their **general reserve** accordingly.

It is therefore recommended that the Council adopts a general reserve policy before the next round of budget setting, compliant with the requirements of the Practitioners' Guide. Budget setting for 27-28 should aim to increase the general reserve to recommended levels.

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E - Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for

Interim and Final audits

Precept per box 2 to the accounts was £1,321,884 (24-25 £1,127,348). This has been agreed to third party documentation provided by central government.

Income per box 3 to the accounts was £802,968 (24-25 £778,244).

I tested a sample of 15 income transactions selected from the cashbook extracted from Sage for the first 6 months of the financial year.

For Luxfords and functions income I completed the following tests:

- Income per sage agreed back to z reading on till
- I checked cash figure on till report to physical cash count signed off by supervisor and RFO
- Cash banking agreed to paying in slip and to bank statement
- Credit card banking per till report agreed to bank statement

Other income was also tested:

- Ticket sales through eventbrite agreed to report from ticket agency and to bank statement
- Room Hire – a sample of room hire credits were tested from the ledger back to invoices. I then recalculated invoices and checked these had been raised in line with approved fees and charges.
- Rental Income – agreed to shorthold tenancies
- Cemetery income – checked to approve fees and charges

For all transactions reviewed, I was able to agree credit on the accounting system back to the relevant documentation. Invoices were all raised in line with approved fees and charges, and till records showed evidence of appropriate count and authorisation by senior officers.

I have two recommendations:

- The Council should no longer accept cash when selling food / drink at functions. This would reduce workload by eliminating the need for a cash float, and the controls needed around cash takings.

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- Consideration should be given to purchasing a small number of card machines (such as Zettle / Sum Up / Square) for use at functions and in Luxfords. This would provide
 - o back up to the till
 - o enable additional sales at busy events
 - o enable sales at offsite events

The Council should look to use a system that has an interface with the accounting system.

F - Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts; all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for

Second Interim Audit

I confirmed that both petty cash accounts had been counted and reconciled to accounting records at end of February 2026.

Final Audit

Petty cash balances held at year end on the balance sheet were as follows:

Code	Description	Balance
1230	UTC - Petty Cash	164.19
1235	Luxfords - Petty Cash	184.85
1236	Luxfords Float	200.00

I confirmed that the 2 petty cash accounts had been reconciled at year end, the Luxford float is managed via till processes.

G- Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with council approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.

Interim and Final Audits

Final Audit

Staff costs per box 4 to the accounts were £986,921 (24-25 £873,444).

The RFO logged into the HMRC account on 15 October. This showed that the Council is up to date with HRMC submissions and no payments are outstanding.

Payroll is processed monthly by the RFO, using Sage Payroll, in good time for monthly payments to staff. Timesheets are sent into the office; these are inspected and signed off by the Town Clerk. The RFO sets up the monthly payroll on the Sage payroll system, and checks outputs prior to further processing. Payroll is set up on Natwest Bankline. The Bankline report is signed by the RFO and checked and signed by the Town Clerk.

Authorisation for payment is provided by a councillor, evidenced by signature on the Sage Payroll Summary page

I checked the August 2025 payroll. The payment for salaries on the bank statement was agreed to the Sage payroll summary and to the bankline report. I confirmed the bankline report had been reviewed and signed off by the RFO / Town Clerk and a councillor. Payments to HMRC and the pension provider were agreed back to payroll reports.

I selected 4 members of staff from the bankline report. For all staff selected I was able to agree pay to payslip. I tested gross pay for each officer and confirmed that this could be agreed to the annual cost of living pay rise calculation, as prepared by the RFO (August 25 is the month at which the pay award was applied) . Correct scale point was applied, as set out in payscales published by NALC.

I am satisfied that the Council has a robust payroll system, is up to date with HMRC submissions and payments, and that staff tested are being paid in line with approved rates of pay .

At the final audit I confirmed that box 4 on the accounting statements only records expenditure relating to the employment of staff, including salary / HMRC payments and pension contributions. Member allowances are accounted for on a separate ledger code and are correctly coded to box 6 on the accounting statements (other expenditure).

H - Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.

Final Audit

Fixed assets per box 9 to the accounts were £ 6,832,516 (24-25 £6,692,709). The change in asset values in 25-26 was £139,807.

The asset register accounting value has been agreed back to the fixed asset register, which lists assets at cost or proxy cost. These include some revaluations that were posted prior to my involvement as internal auditor, these contribute to the proxy cost valuation of assets at the Council. Arithmetic within the asset register has been checked and found to be accurate.

Additions to the asset register were £130K and were as follows:

Victoria Play Area - full upgrade (nominal code 5175) (15 years SL)	107,009
Hempstead new Coco Swing (nominal code 5175) (15 years SL)	17,992
Toyota Hilux AO25 WZU	27,185
Total additions	152,186

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I deletion - old play Equipment at Victoria Park 12,381
 I am satisfied that the change in the asset register can be agreed to new assets added at cost, less assets deleted at asset register value.

I – Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.

First Interim Audit

I reviewed the bank reconciliation file. There is clear evidence that bank reconciliations are being completed on a regular basis, the member audit file provided confirmation that these bank reconciliations are being reviewed by members each quarter, as required by financial regulations. Bank accounts held by the Council are set out below:

Account	Sage Balance	Note on reconciliation
1210 – clerks account	0	Reconciled 1.9.25 by RFO – audit checked sage and bank statement
1200 – General Account	200,012– End Aug	Reconciled to end of august, audit checked sage and bank statement
1221 – Fixed Rate Bond	322,105 - Once a year statement	Reconciled annually when bank sends statement
1224 – Lloyds Bank	21,058	Reconciled annually when bank sends statement
1225 – 35 Day account	235,995 – End Aug	Reconciled 1.9.25 by RFO – audit checked sage and bank statement
1226 – 95 Day account	422,459– End Aug	Reconciled 1.9.25 by RFO – audit checked sage and bank statement
1227 – Business Reserve	107,184 – End Aug	Reconciled 1.9.25 by RFO – audit checked sage and bank statement

I reperformed the August bank reconciliations for accounts highlighted in green,. No reconciliation has been prepared in 25-26 for the fixed rate and Lloyds accounts, the bank only issues statements annually. The next member review of bank reconciliations is due for the September bank reconciliations.

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Final Audit

Cash per box 8 to the accounts was £1,153,723 (24-25 £1,109,041) - this includes petty cash accounts

I reperformed the year end bank reconciliations for the following bank accounts.

1200	General Account	201,788.22
1221	Fixed Rate Bond	339,382.76
1224	Lloyds Bank Account	20,956.65
1225	Liquidity Manager - 35 Day Account	106,861.70
1226	Liquidity Manager - 95 Day Account	429,789.42
1227	Bus Res. (WAS Special Int. Bearing	54,241.70
1228	Luxfords Debit Account	153.40

I agreed the balance on the bank reconciliation back to bank statements and cashbook balances recorded on the Sage. All bank reconciliations had been prepared by the RFO and signed off by a councillor, this is properly evidenced on the bank reconciliations and the bank statements.

There was a difference of £1795 between sage and the bank statement on the current account at 31.3.26. This has been agreed to a schedule of cash takings from the restaurant in the final week of the financial year, this cash was held in the safe at balance sheet date. The year end reconciliation on the current account should be redrafted before financial year end to ensure this is clear to external audit.

Loans per box 10 to the accounts were £403,200 (24-25 £422,400)

This has been agreed to a year end statement available on the Debt Management Office website, and to relevant balance sheet codes on the sage balance sheet.

J - Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.

Satisfactory – Accounts have been produced on the income and expenditure basis, this is appropriate as income and expenditure at the Council is above £200k. A box 7 to 8 reconciliation has been prepared, alongside the year-on-year variance analysis, and details of creditors and debtors. I do not audit these working papers; these are to be checked by external audit.

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K: If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 24-25 , it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt.

Not applicable, limited assurance review completed at UTC

L: The Authority publishes information on a free to access website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with any relevant transparency code requirements

Final Audit

The Council meets the requirements of the 2015 Transparency Code by publishing information on the “Transparency on Spend” tab on the website. I checked data at my final audit and sample checked the following:

- Expenditure data – transactions over £250 published to the end of February 2026 - March will be added on conclusion of this audit
- Grants awarded – published showing awards made in for 25-26
- Land - asset register and property management plan published.

Data was up to date and Transparency Code requirements are being met.

M - Arrangements for Inspection of Accounts

Inspection periods for 24-25 accounts were set as follows

Inspection - Key date	24-25 Actual
Accounts approved at Full Council	25 June
Announcement	26 June
Inspection period begins	27 June
Inspection period ends	7 August
Correct length	Yes – 30 days

The Council met the requirements of this control objective.

N: Publication requirements 24-25 AGAR

The Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and the external audit certificate for 24-25 are published in financial statements section of the Council website. The external audit certificate was clear.

The Conclusion of Audit certificate was published on 15 September, after the date of the audit certificate (13 September), and before the regulatory deadline of 30 September. The external audit certificate is to be reported to the meeting of Full Council on 20 October (agenda item 10.0).

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The Council is required by regulations to publish AGAR documentation for the previous 5 years. I have checked the Council website, and I was able to view AGAR documentation going back to the 2017-18 financial year.

O: The authority has complied with laws, regulations & proper practices relating to digital and data compliance.

Final Audit

The Council has completed a review of data management practices following the addition of Assertion 10 to the Annual Governance Statement. This was discussed at the General Purposes Committee meeting on June 8, with further review due at the Full Council meeting at the end of June. The Council confirmed it is compliant with the requirements of the Practitioners' Guide in this area, specifically setting out the following:

- IT policy in place, in process of update
- GDPR legislation followed, with policy and training updates underway
- Transparency Code requirements met
- Email management requirements met
- Website accessibility requirements met, the Council is undergoing a review to improve the website

P - Trust funds (including charitable) The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.

Satisfactory –The Council has confirmed to me that the Council is not sole trustee of a charity.

I would like to thank you and Sarah for your assistance with the audit. I attach my invoice and the Internal Audit Report from the AGAR for your consideration. I look forward to working with you again in 26-27.

Yours sincerely



Mike Platten CPFA

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APPENDIX A

MATTERS ARISING 25-26 AUDIT - FIRST INTERIM AUDIT

Matter Arising	Recommendation	Council Response
The Council should no longer accept cash when selling food / drink at functions.	This would reduce workload by eliminating the need for a cash float, and the controls needed around cash takings	Not agreed at General Purposes Committee Follow up in 26-7
Consideration should be given to purchasing a small number of card machines (such as Zettle / Sum Up / Square) for use at functions and in Luxfords.	This would provide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ back up to the till ○ enable additional sales at busy events ○ enable sales at offsite events <p>The Council should look to use a system that has an interface with the accounting system</p>	Follow up in 26-7

SECOND INTERIM AUDIT

Matter Arising	Recommendation	Council Response
I could not agree the VAT return to the VAT control account at 31 December, a number of entries have not yet been input into the accounting system.	This must be actioned as part of year end closedown, and the Q4 VAT return should be agreed to the VAT control account at 31 March.	Actioned see section A above
The Council should obtain a VAT invoice from UHY for a payment made in July 25.	The document on file was a demand for payment that does not meet HMRC requirements.	Obtained
For 25-26, an additional assertion has been added to the Annual Governance Statement, this covers digital and data compliance. The Council is largely compliant with the requirements of the Practitioners' Guide in this area.	For clarity, it is recommended that the Council considers compliance with paragraphs 1.47 to 1.54 on page 14 of the Practitioners' Guide at a meeting before the end of the financial year. The Town Clerk is currently preparing a report on assertion 10 for consideration by the Council before the AGAR is approved.	Actioned see section o above

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YEAR END AUDIT

Matter Arising	Recommendation	Council Response
Compilation of Financial Statements	<p>The Council should continue to streamline statutory accounting processes. This review should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Removing fixed assets and capital accounts from the trial balance - Ceasing production of company style accounts, which are currently produced each year but not used. - Writing reports in Sage Accounts that enable year end accounts to be produced directly from the accounting system, with minimal reliance on spreadsheets <p>External accountancy support with sector knowledge should be obtained to support this process.</p>	
There is a difference of £7,125 on the Council VAT account. The RFO has completed a reconciliation and has identified reasons for this.	The Council should reclaim outstanding VAT owed in the next VAT return and seek to reconcile the VAT return to the VAT control account at the end of quarter 1 26-27.	
I have reviewed the accounts presented for audit, these show there is a balance of £15K not currently allocated to earmarked or general reserves.	Reasons for this unallocated reserve balance should be identified and appropriate accounting adjustments posted.	

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April Skies

Accounting

<p>General reserves at year end were £233K. This represents 17% of precept, which is below recommended levels set out in the Practitioners' Guide. General reserves are not sufficient for a Council of this size, dependent on income from non-precept activities and with an extensive fixed asset base.</p>	<p>It is recommended that the Council adopts a general reserve policy before the next round of budget setting, compliant with the requirements of the Practitioners' Guide. Budget setting for 27-28 should aim to increase the general reserve to recommended levels.</p>	
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Appendix B

Internal Audit Control Objectives – Marked as not covered

Control Objective	Area for Audit	Why this has not been audited
K	Exemption from limited assurance review	Council had limited assurance review last year
P	Trusts	No Trusts

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6 Uplands Road. Farnham GU9 8BP

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

We acknowledge as the members of:

ENTER NAME OF AUTHORITY

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.			<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.			<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We have assured ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.			<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.			<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.			<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.			<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.			<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A <i>has met all of its responsibilities where as a body corporate it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>
10. We have put in place arrangements for the effective IT and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review.			<i>has made suitable arrangements for its IT and data management and has complied with proper practices in doing so.</i>

*For any statement to which the response is 'no', an explanation **must** be published

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

DD/MM/YYYY

and recorded as minute reference:

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Clerk

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Information required by the Transparency Code (not part of the Annual Governance Statement)

Yes No

The authority website is up to date and the information required by the Transparency Code has been published.

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025/26 for

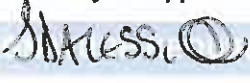
ENT Uckfield Town Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2026 £	
1. Balances brought forward	1,249,896	1,206,466	<i>Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.</i>
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	1,127,348	1,321,884	<i>Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.</i>
3. (+) Total other receipts	778,244	802,968	<i>Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.</i>
4. (-) Staff costs	-873,444	-986,921	<i>Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.</i>
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	-38,727	-37,901	<i>Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).</i>
6. (-) All other payments	-1,036,851	-1,125,128	<i>Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).</i>
7. (=) Balances carried forward	1,206,466	1,181,368	<i>Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).</i>
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	1,109,041	1,153,723	<i>The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.</i>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	6,692,709	6,832,516	<i>The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.</i>
10. Total borrowings	422,400	403,200	<i>The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).</i>

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	
11 Do the figures in the accounting statements above exclude any trust transactions?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>For guidance refer to the Practitioners' Guide sections 2.31 to 2.33.</i>

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2026 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval.


Date 26/06/2026

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:



as recorded in minute reference:



Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved



UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND ACCOMPANYING INFORMATION FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

INDEX

PAGE	CONTENTS
1	Variance analysis
2	Income Statement
4	Other Comprehensive Income
5	Statement of Financial Position
6	Earmarked Reserves note

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
INCOME STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026**

Comparison of income and expenditure in year with original budget

The following shows a comparison of the budget and outturn figures in 2025/26 analysed by the cost centres as disclosed on the Income and Expenditure account. The effect of depreciation and pension adjustments are excluded from this analysis.

	Budgeted £	Actual £	Variance £
Income			
Grants received	-	153	153
Rental income, interest and investment income	300,986	267,877	(33,109)
Charges made for services	307,600	314,419	6,819
Other income or contributions	56,434	220,519	164,085
	<u>665,020</u>	<u>802,969</u>	<u>137,949</u>
Expenditure			
Direct service costs:			
Salaries and wages	519,380	604,541	85,161
Grant aid expenditure	54,000	54,097	97
Other direct service costs	576,736	749,867	173,131
Democratic, Management and Civic costs:			
Salaries and wages	414,418	382,380	(32,038)
Other democratic, management and civic costs	173,701	187,677	13,977
	<u>1,738,235</u>	<u>1,978,562</u>	<u>240,328</u>
Net expenditure	<u>1,073,215</u>	<u>1,175,593</u>	<u>102,378</u>
General Reserves		(11,009)	(11,009)
Earmarked Reserves*	68,500	(22,869)	(91,369)
Net charge to Precept	<u>1,141,715</u>	<u>1,141,715</u>	<u>(0.00)</u>

*Earmarked Reserves is represented by £295,103 of income and £317,972 of costs. The net deficit is therefore £22,869.

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
INCOME STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026**

	31.03.26 £	31.03.25 £
Income		
Precept	1,321,884	1,127,348
Grants received	153	8,424
Rental income, interest and investment income	267,877	265,911
Charges made for services	314,419	275,040
Other income or contributions	220,519	228,869
	<u>2,124,853</u>	<u>1,905,592</u>
Expenditure		
Direct service costs:		
Salaries and wages	604,541	529,755
Grant aid expenditure	54,097	49,500
Other direct service costs	749,867	709,903
	<u>1,408,505</u>	<u>1,289,158</u>
Democratic, Management and Civic costs:		
Salaries and wages	382,380	343,689
Other democratic, management and civic costs	187,677	166,999
Depreciation	126,719	111,080
Net pension costs	(56,000)	(5,000)
	<u>640,777</u>	<u>616,768</u>
Net operating surplus/(deficit) for year	<u>75,572</u>	<u>(332)</u>
Statutory charge for capital	(19,200)	(19,200)
Reversal of annual depreciation charge	126,719	111,080
Capital expenditure from the General Fund	(152,188)	(129,977)
Pension fund adjustment	(56,000)	(5,000)
Net transfer from/(to) Earmarked Reserves	22,869	(100,328)
Net surplus/(deficit) for year	<u>(2,227)</u>	<u>(143,757)</u>

The lines regarding net pension interest cost and depreciation are required to be recorded for accounting purposes, but do not impact on the level of Council precept

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
INCOME STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026**

Trade operations

The totals shown in the Income and Expenditure account include the following trading operations relating to the Luxfords restaurant, Uckfield Civic Centre:

	31.03.26	31.03.25
	£	£
Income	258,198	228,039
Expenditure	319,771	289,249
Net surplus/(deficit)	(61,573)	(61,211)

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026**

	31.03.26	31.03.25
	£	£
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	75,572	(332)
Re-measurements related to pensions	134,000	531,000
	<u>209,572</u>	<u>530,668</u>

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026**

	31.03.26 £	31.03.25 £
Fixed Assets		
Land and buildings	4,121,988	4,195,680
Vehicles and plant	<u>281,061</u>	<u>181,900</u>
	<u>4,403,049</u>	<u>4,377,580</u>
Current Assets		
Stocks	4,417	3,626
Debtors	158,065	217,591
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>1,153,723</u>	<u>1,109,041</u>
	<u>1,316,206</u>	<u>1,330,259</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		
Creditors	85,879	75,729
Current portion of long term debt	<u>19,200</u>	<u>19,200</u>
	<u>105,079</u>	<u>94,928.79</u>
Net current assets	<u>1,211,126</u>	<u>1,235,330</u>
Total assets less current liabilities	<u>5,614,175</u>	<u>5,612,910</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year		
Creditors	48,958	48,064
Long term borrowing	<u>384,000</u>	<u>403,200</u>
	<u>432,958</u>	<u>451,264</u>
Pension Liability/(Asset)	<u>(726,000)</u>	<u>(536,000)</u>
Total assets less liabilities	<u>5,907,218</u>	<u>5,697,646</u>
Reserves		
Capital Receipts Reserve	15,795	15,795
Revaluations Reserve	519,173	519,173
Pensions Reserve	726,000	536,000
Capital Financing Account	3,480,675	3,436,007
Earmarked Revenue Reserves	931,729	954,598
General Fund	<u>233,846</u>	<u>236,074</u>
	<u>5,907,218</u>	<u>5,697,646</u>

These financial statements were approved on _____.

Chair of Full Council

Sarah D'Alessio
Responsible Financial Officer

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
EARMARKED RESERVES NOTE TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
AS AT 31 MARCH 2026**

	1 April 2025	Contribution to reserves	Contribution from reserves	31 March 2026
	£	£	£	£
Ash Dieback	22,594	12,500	(9,507)	25,587
Branding and communications	2,000	-	-	2,000
Building Maintenance	198,512	57,500	(67,179)	188,833
Building Reconfiguration and Renovation	50,222	10,000	(29,808)	30,414
Car Park improvements	30,273	-	(13,203)	17,070
Civic Centre	65,936	13,500	(10,305)	69,131
Climate Change Initiatives	21,718	-	(3,700)	18,018
Community Infrastructure Levy	190,415	150,403	(25,568)	315,250
Community Initiatives	831	-	-	831
Community safety initiatives	5,200	-	(2,728)	2,472
Conservation and wildlife monitoring	500	8,700	(7,890)	1,310
Elections	22,859	1,500	(9,987)	14,372
Future land purchases/expansion	2,000	-	-	2,000
Grounds machinery and equipment	9,699	3,000	(10,296)	2,403
Grounds vehicles	19,718	5,000	(8,768)	15,950
Luxfords Restaurant	-	-	-	-
Office administration, IT and training	2,349	-	-	2,349
Old Timbers Lane Maintenance	16,750	-	-	16,750
Open spaces and street furniture	5,114	500	-	5,614
Play Area Upgrades	81,525	20,000	(81,525)	20,000
Professional expertise	1,507	5,000	-	6,507
Public Conveniences	30,000	-	-	30,000
S106 agreements and deeds of easements	22,909	-	(17,909)	5,000
Snatts Road Cemetery and Cemetery Wall	8,145	-	(3,487)	4,658
Sports pitch and recreational improvements	14,358	-	(1,280)	13,078
Streetlighting	27,965	-	(8,422)	19,543
Town Centre Regeneration Masterplanning	101,500	-	-	101,500
Tree works	-	7,500	(6,410)	1,090
	954,598	295,103	(317,972)	931,729

MEMBER/OFFICER PROTOCOL

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this protocol is to guide members and employees of the Town Council in their working practices.
- 1.2 The protocol is not intended to be prescriptive but to provide guidance on those situations which most commonly arise.
- 1.3 Town Councillors and employees of Uckfield Town Council are servants to the public, and depend on each other to ensure high standards of service delivery and to resolve issues or concerns within the community.
- 1.4 Members are responsible to their electorate and represent the constituents of their ward area. Employees are responsible to the Council. Employees are required to provide advice (financial, professional, legal) and guidance to the Council and its standing committees, as well as individual elected members. Employees focus on day to day service provision, as well as delivery of the Town Council's priorities.

2.0 ROLES OF MEMBERS

- 2.1 Members undertake the following:
 - (i) Members represent their ward area and are advocates for the residents that live in the area;
 - (ii) Members will be involved in active partnerships with local organisations as representatives of outside bodies;
 - (iii) Members contribute to the decisions taken at Full Council, as well as standing committees, and contribute to the recommendations and work of sub-committees and/or working groups;
 - (iv) Members play a key role in the annual review of the Town Council's business planning documentation (strategic plan, annual plan and annual budget);
 - (v) Members review progress towards delivery of the priorities set out within the Town Council's business planning documentation and ensuring good standards of service delivery;

3.0 ROLES OF EMPLOYEES

- 3.1 Employees are responsible for:
 - (i) The day to day management of service provision, which includes ensuring maintenance, compliance, safety and cleanliness, efficiency and effectiveness;
 - (ii) Providing advice such as legal, financial, technical, and professional, to members, on service provision, changes in legislation and ensuring the Town Council remains transparent, accountable, and has sound financial and internal controls;
 - (iii) Reviewing and initiating the development of key policies and procedures to strengthen operations of the Town Council;
 - (iv) Implementing and delivering the priorities and set projects within the Strategic Plan, Annual Plan and Annual budget;

(v) The Chief Officer and Management Team, are responsible for the day to day running of the Town Council in accordance with the decisions of Full Council, and its standing committees. Their functions are set out within the Scheme of Delegation.

(vi) Officers are accountable to their direct reports, and whilst officers should always seek to assist a Town Councillor, they should not, in doing so, go beyond the bounds of whatever authority they have been given by their direct report, the Chief Officer or Management Team;

(vii) The Chief Officer is Head of Paid Service, and both they and members of Management Team are responsible for the management of employees. They are therefore responsible for giving instructions and handling any matters of concern or disciplinary action. Town Councillors have no involvement in the management of staff.

(viii) The role of Chief Officer is there to provide the necessary advice and guidance to Town Councillors, with the support of Management Team. This advice should be seen as objective. Members should refrain from attempting to direct the content or conclusion of such advice.

4.0 PROVISION OF ADVICE AND INFORMATION TO MEMBERS

4.1 Members are free to approach employees of the Town Council to provide them with such information and advice as they may reasonably need in order to assist them in discharging their role as a member of the Town Council. This can range from a request for generic information or specific information on behalf of a constituent.

4.2 Employees should always endeavour to respond to requests for information promptly and advise the member if there is likely to be any delay. The legal rights of members to inspect council documents are covered partly by statute and partly by common law (on a need to know basis, mere curiosity is not sufficient).

4.3 It is important for service areas to keep members informed both about any major issues concerning the Council or about issues or events affecting the members' ward area.

4.4 Officers have to advise members from time to time, that a certain course of action cannot be carried out. Officers are employed to give unbiased professional advice. This advice is often to protect Town Councillors, and the overall reputation of the Council.

5.0 RESPECT AND COURTESY

5.1 For the effective conduct of Town Council business there must be mutual respect, trust and courtesy in all meetings and correspondence – both formal and informal, between members and employees. This is vital to the reputation of the Town Council.

5.2 Undue pressure and or unreasonable behaviour

It is important when members and employees are working together, that neither should seek to take unfair advantage of their position.

A member should not apply undue pressure on an employee. Examples of undue pressure and unreasonable behaviour, includes:

- (i) Excessive contact – repeated phone calls, messages, emails or contacting multiple officers about the same issue;
- (ii) Contact outside of working hours – except by prior agreement or in the case of a genuine emergency, members should not be messaging, or calling officers outside of working hours. And even in that situation, correspondence should only be directed to Senior Officers. An email can be sent and a request to meet with the relevant officer at a time that is convenient for both parties. The end of Council or committee meetings late at night is also not the time, to pursue long conversations with officers. A meeting should be arranged at an alternative time.
- (iii) Unreasonable demands – insisting on unrealistic deadlines or expecting outcomes outside parish/town council sector policy and guidance;
- (iv) Obsessive behaviour – pursuing complaints with no clear purpose, submitting repeated complaints, with minor variations or raising irrelevant/trivial issues.

Similarly, an employee, must neither seek to use undue influence on an individual member to make a decision in their favour, nor raise personal matters to do with their job.

5.3 **Familiarity**

Close personal familiarity between individual members and employees can damage the principal of mutual respect. It could also accidentally lead to the passing of confidential information or personal details. Such familiarity could also cause embarrassment to other members or employees.

6.0 **HANDLING A BREACH OF THIS PROTOCOL**

6.1 Breach by Officer

If a member considers that he has not been treated with proper respect or courtesy, they may raise this with the relevant member of Management Team for that service area.

If this does not resolve the complaint, the matter should be referred to the Chief Officer (Town Clerk). If breach of the protocol is found, this may give rise to disciplinary proceedings against the employee if relevant.

6.2 Breach by Member

If an employee considers that a member has contravened the protocol, they should advise their line manager, who will if necessary involve the relevant member of Management Team for that service area. In certain circumstances, breach of the Protocol may also constitute a breach of the Members' Code of Conduct, which could in serious circumstances require notification to the District Authority's Monitoring Officer.

For the handling of a breach, it would be dealt with in a similar fashion to a disciplinary:

- (i) First an informal conversation would be conducted by the Chief Officer (Town

Clerk) with the member;

(ii) If the matter remains unresolved, a representative would be appointed from Personnel Sub Committee, and a representative from Management Team to review the reported breach and obtain the necessary facts;

(iii) A letter would be sent by the Chief Officer to inform the member of their concerns;

(iv) If the matter still remains unresolved, the above representatives would convene a formal hearing/meeting and set parameters through which further correspondence is communicated within the Town Council – for example appointing a single point of contact, and set timeframes within which contact can be made.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 It is hoped that, by following good practice and securing sensible and practical working relationships between members and employees, Uckfield Town Council can ensure high standards of service delivery, customer service, openness and transparency, as well as safeguard the integrity of the Town Council.

Meeting of the Full Council

Monday 29 June 2026

Agenda Item No 16.0

TO REVIEW THE TOWN COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL REGULATIONS (CONTRACTORS/TENDERS)

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Members have enquired previously as to how officers appoint contractors, and how many quotations are obtained. They have also discussed the importance of appointing local contractors where possible.
- 1.2 There are a number of considerations in appointing contractors for regular service provision, for one off projects and/or specialist work.
- 1.3 First and foremost, officers are required to work to the Town Council's financial regulations. The relevant extract of the financial regulations on Procurement has been included at appendix A.
- 1.4 Being a local authority, Uckfield Town Council has to follow the Procurement Act 2023 and the Procurement Regulations 2024. This sets out parameters for the number of quotations required for the value of the contract or works. This is detailed within paragraphs 6.6 to 6.9 of appendix A. Even for works valued under £10k, officers would normally obtain at least two quotations unless the works required at some speed, due to an emergency or health and safety matter for example. For major works such as the demolition of the Hub or the upgrade of the play area, an invitation to tender is formally advertised on the 'Find a Tender' website and due process is followed to award the contract. For example for Victoria Play Area, a working group of members, and officers reviewed all tenders, by the following considerations:
 - (i) design met project brief;
 - (ii) design met requirements for age range;
 - (iii) provides value for money;
 - (iv) sustainability and environmental considerations by the company;
 - (v) experience and track record;
- 1.5 Officers take a number of factors into account when selecting a suitable contractor. This can include:
 - (i) specialist knowledge and experience;
 - (ii) quality/track record of past work;
 - (iii) value for money;
 - (iv) location of contractor;
- 1.6 The Procurement Act 2023, sets out these key principles:

The Act emphasizes several core objectives that councils must follow:

 1. Value for Money
 - Ensure public funds are used efficiently
 - Consider both immediate and long-term cost implications

2. Maximizing Public Benefit
 - Focus beyond just cost considerations
 - Consider wider benefits to the community
 - Evaluate long-term impact of procurement decisions
3. Transparency
 - Openly share procurement policies
 - Document and publish decision-making processes
 - Make contract details accessible
 - Maintain clear evaluation records
4. Integrity
 - Act ethically throughout the procurement process
 - Maintain professional standards
 - Avoid conflicts of interest
5. Fairness
 - Treat all suppliers equally unless there's justified reason for difference
 - Provide equal access to information
 - Maintain consistent evaluation criteria
6. SME Accessibility
 - Actively remove barriers for small and medium-sized enterprises
 - Consider splitting larger contracts into lots
 - Simplify procurement processes where possible

1.7 It is therefore recommended that the above is strengthened further within the financial regulations to demonstrate the considerations taken by officers and members when awarding a contract/supplier to undertake regular or one off works.

1.8 Particular focus should be given to:

- (i) Specialist knowledge/experience
- (ii) Quality/Track record of past work
- (iii) Provision of relevant health and safety/risk management documentation
- (iv) Value for Money
- (v) Maximising public benefit/social value
- (vi) Location of supplier/contractor
- (vii) Commitment to sustainability

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 Members are asked to support the addition of the above key considerations in paragraph 1.8, into the Town Council's financial regulations.

Contact Officer: Holly Goring

6.0 PROCUREMENT

- 6.1 All Members of the Council and Officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** An Officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure as far as reasonable and practicable, that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers.
- 6.2 The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the legal power being used shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised so that the minutes can record the power being used.
- 6.3 Every contract, whether made by the Council or by a committee to which the power of making contracts has been delegated, shall comply with the Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exception from any of the following provisions of these Regulations shall be made other than in an emergency.
- 6.4 For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Procurement Act 2023 and the Procurement Regulations 2024 or any superseding legislation ("the legislation") must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.
- 6.5 Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of the items listed below in paragraph 6.12) obtain prices as follows:
- 6.6 For contracts estimated to exceed £60,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the Council, or advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.
- 6.7 For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation regarding the publication of invitations and notices.**
- 6.8 For any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works or specialist services with an estimated value greater than £10,000 but not exceeding £30,000, the Town Clerk/Assistant Town Clerk & RFO, Estates Manager or Facilities & Compliance Manager shall invite quotations from at least three appropriate firms from a preferred list of contractors as set out in the Financial Regulations.
- 6.9 Where the value is of £10,000 or less in value, the Town Clerk or a duly approved Officer shall have authorisation to obtain such goods or services from an appropriate firm, but try and obtain three estimates to evidence online prices or recent prices from regular suppliers

- 6.10 For smaller purchases, the Clerk shall seek to achieve value for money.
- 6.11 **Contracts must not be split to avoid compliance with these rules.**
- 6.12 The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:-
- (i) For specialist services such as are provided by legal professionals acting in disputes (solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants or other services) identifies to be of a specialist nature by the Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk & RFO, Estates Manager or Facilities & Compliance Manager;
 - (ii) For work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;
 - (iii) For work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council;
 - (iv) for goods or materials that are only available from one supplier and/or are only sold at a fixed prices
- 6.13 When applications are made to waive this financial regulations to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason shall be set out in a recommendation to the Council or General Purposes Committee. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.
- 6.14 Neither the Council, nor any committee is bound to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate
- 6.15 Only the Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk & RFO, Estates Manager & Facilities & Compliance Manager or Hospitality Manager, may initiate orders which shall be endorsed by a second Officer. No individual member or group of members may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.
- 6.16 No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council or duly delegated committee acting within its Terms of Reference, except in an emergency or approval granted through the Urgent Consultation Panel.
- 6.17 In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the Estates Manager, Facilities & Compliance Manager, Assistant Town Clerk & RFO or Town Clerk may authorise expenditure on behalf of the council which is necessary to carry out any repair, replacement, Health & Safety or other work, subject to a limit of £5,000 (exclusive of VAT). If time allows, the Clerk shall report the action or request for funding to the Urgent Consultation Panel. The outcome of the action taken by senior officers or decision taken by Urgent Consultation Panel, should be reported to the relevant committee.
- 6.18 No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the council or relevant committee is

satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.

- 6.19 An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate, e.g. petty cash purchases. Where an order number is given verbally, a written order must be raised. Copies of all orders issued shall be retained.
- 6.20 Goods and services received shall be checked against the relevant copy of the purchase order. Access to the ordering programme shall be controlled by the RFO.
- 6.21 Invitations to tender shall state the period and the general nature of the intended contract and the Town Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. In addition, the invitation shall state that tenders must be addressed to the Town Clerk and the last date by which such tenders should reach the Town Clerk. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specially marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.
- 6.22 All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by either the Town Clerk or Assistant Town Clerk & RFO or Estates Manager or Facilities & Compliance Manager in the presence of at least two Members of the Council.
- 6.23 The Officer shall record the details of the tender, the names and addresses of each tenderer, the amount or price of the tender, the time and place of opening, and the names and signatures of those present at the opening of the tenders. The above details shall be reported to the Council, or where the tenders have been sought by a committee to that committee.
- 6.24 If fewer than three tenders are received for contracts valued above £60,000 or if all the tenders are identical, the Council may make such arrangements as it thinks fit for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works.
- 6.25 Any invitation to tender issued under this Regulation shall contain a statement of the effect of Standing Orders Nos: 25.1. 25.2 and 25.3.
- 6.26 Should it occur that the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, that the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was undertaken.

Meeting of the Full Council

Monday 29 June 2026

Agenda Item No 17.0

TO NOTE CURRENT DIRECT DEBIT AND STANDING ORDERS

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report provides an update on the current suppliers who are paid by standing order and/or direct debit.

2.0 Details

2.1 The following table shows the current list of companies we have set up:

Supplier Name	Description
Adams Catering	Luxfords food supplier
British Telecom	Utilities – Broadband
Scottish Water/Business Stream	Utilities – Water
CF Corporate Finance Ltd	Lease rental – Photocopier
EDF	Utilities – Gas/Elec
Elite Fine Foods	Luxfords Supplier
Focus Group	Utilities – Telephone
Gardiff	Luxfords new till system
Harvey's Brewery	Luxfords Supplier
Investec Asset Finance PLC	Telephone Lease Rental
John Deere	Estates Mower
Long Man Brewery	Luxfords Supplier
Morgan Fuelcards	Estates Vehicles
NatWest Bank	Credit Card Payments
Public Work Loan Board	Loan Repayments
SAGE Software Ltd	Software Subscription
Toyota	Estates vehicles
UTP and Barclaycard	Credit Card charges
Wealden District Council	Rates
WPA Health	NHS Top-up Scheme

2.2 When setting up payment by direct debit, two councillors act as signatories on the direct debit mandate.

2.3 The Deputy Chief Officer (RFO) has devised a process whereby members authorising the BACs run, can review these payments once a month.

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 Members are asked to note the up-to-date list of accounts currently set up by direct debit.

Contact Officer: Sarah D'Alessio

Meeting of the Full Council

Monday 29 June 2026

Agenda Item No 18.0

TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE MAYORAL CHAIN AND FORMER MAYOR PIN BADGES

1.0 Background

- 1.1 At the meeting of Full Council on 1 December 2025, members discussed the need to replace the Mayoral chain, as the current chain was in need of retirement, due to the silver hook that held the medallion being very weak and unable to be safely repaired, all metal plates having now been utilised, and the medallion needing to be re-enamelled by a professional.
- 1.2 Members resolved to prepare the replacement of the Mayoral chain (in gold, enamelled medallion and engraved details). They also tasked staff with exploring the cost of the creation of a small pin to recognise former Mayors.

2.0 Mayoral Chain

- 2.1 A new gold Mayoral chain is on order in line with the proposals of the full Council – in gold, with enamelled medallion, and a suitable number of plates. It was hoped it would be ready for the June meeting of Full Council, but taking a little longer, so will be formally presented in September 2026.
- 2.2 The following chain and medallion has been ordered, after some detailed liaison on the design and enamelling of the pendant.
 - 1) Die creation cost: **£270.00** plus VAT extra
 - 2) Single pressing and enamelling of the pendant is **£140.00** plus VAT extra
 - 3) Style 17 "Consort" chain: **£440.00** plus VAT extra
 - 4) Mounting to a black velvet base is **£100.00** plus VAT extra

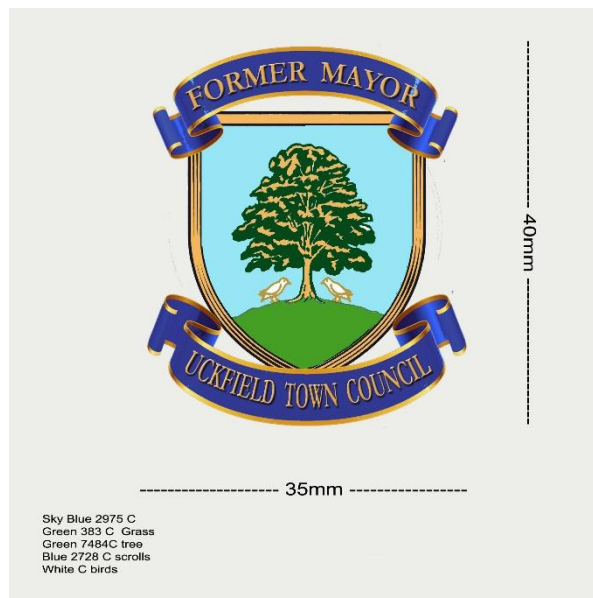
Total cost of **£950.00** plus VAT. Sufficient funds are available from that allocated for the Chain (£750.00) plus revenue budget in 2026/27.



3.0 Proposal for pin badges for former Mayors

3.1 The same company have put together a design for a pin badge for former Mayors for consideration. They have tried to incorporate the Town Council's branding as well as the title 'Former Mayor.'

3.2 The badge would be 35mm wide by 40mm high, which is not too small, but not too large either. They have proposed to fill with coloured enamels. The back fitment would be a "butterfly clutch" lapel pin fitment for safety and ease of use.



3.3 The cost of a die to make this badge would be a once only cost of £160.00 plus VAT. A single pin or small batch would cost £30.00 each, plus VAT. It would be prudent to order approximately 10 for use this year, as well as moving forward. The total of £460.00 could be funded from the earmarked reserve – Office administration.

4.0 Presentation of new Mayoral chain and former Mayor pin badges

4.1 It is proposed that the current Mayor be presented with the new Mayoral Chain at the start of the meeting of Full Council on Monday 7 September 2026.

4.2 If members do support the creation and purchase of former Mayor pin badges, those selected to hold the badge could be invited to a short presentation with refreshments in Luxfords Restaurant prior to Full Council that same evening.

5.0 Recommendations

5.1 Members are asked to:

- (i) note the design of the new Mayoral chain, currently on order;
- (ii) consider the creation and purchase of former Mayor pin badges, and;
- (iii) consider the proposal for the presentation of the chain, and pin badges.

Contact Officer: Holly Goring