UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **General Purposes Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield on Monday 20 July 2026 at 7.00pm

PRESENT:

Cllr. C. Macve (Chair)
Cllr. D. Ward (Vice-Chair)
Cllr. K. Butler
Cllr. P. Selby

IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Karen Bedwell (Town Mayor)
Holly Goring – Chief Officer (Town Clerk)
James Hollingdale – Facilities & Compliance Manager
Louise Slaughter – Hospitality Manager
Minutes taken by Holly Goring

1.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members and officers were reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on the agenda. None received.

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

There were no statements from members of the public.

3.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received prior to the meeting from Councillors J. Love, D. Manvell and A. Smith.

4.0 MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on the 8 June 2026

GP08.07.26 Members **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee on 8 June 2026 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4.2 Action list

The action list remained unchanged.

4.3 Project list

Members noted the update provided.

4.4 Forward plan

Members noted the forward plan.

5.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS

5.1 To note bills paid

Members noted the bills paid.

5.2 <u>To review early drafts of income and expenditure reports</u>
Members reviewed the early picture of income and expenditure for quarter one for General Purposes and Luxfords. Members noted the accounts to date.

6.0 BUILDINGS

6.1 <u>To note the current position with the Council's buildings</u>
The progress on the Signal Box was discussed. The final works to be delivered by the Town Council included the replacement of the steps and the windows. Officers were awaiting a date from the appointed contractors to undertake these works. A draft lease would be prepared with Solicitors for consideration by the interested party.
Members noted the contents of the report.

7.0 POLICY

7.1 <u>To review the Member Audit Policy (No. 63)</u>

<u>GP09.07.26</u> Members **RESOLVED** to approve the updates to the Member Audit Policy, and recommend to Full Council for ratification.

7.2 <u>To consider proposals for improvements to Website Accessibility (WCAG 2.2)</u>
The Chief Officer presented a powerpoint presentation to members which outlined the requirements around Website Accessibility Guidelines and specifically WCAG 2.2. These guidelines looked at improving digital accessibility on websites, for those with impairments (visual, hearing, mobility and thinking and understanding).

Contact had been made by Officers with a company who specialised in this work, who would run compliance tests across the website, as well as identify every PDF that required upgrading. They proposed a phased programme of work over three years due to the material on the Town Council website. This would run in quarterly cycles. As improvements were made to the site, the accessibility statement would be updated.

Members discussed the work involved and the quotation received.
It was agreed that quotations needed to be sought from at least two other companies, not only to review value for money, but also the method used to approach this work.

8.0 ADMINISTRATION

8.1 <u>To receive Member audit reports</u>
Members noted the reports received for February and March 2026.

9.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

(iii) Wealden District Association of Local Council (Mgt Committee)
Councillor Ward provided members with a verbal update on the items shared at the most recent meeting. Members thanked her for her report.

10.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair expressed that it was lovely to see the Chief Officer (Town Clerk) back in the office, and once again thanked the Deputy Chief Officer and wider managers for their additional work and support in her absence.

11.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chief Officer advised members that Buxted Parish Council were currently looking at future options for a piece of land located adjacent to Uckfield Town Council's parish boundary, off Nevill Road. This was a small triangular area of land, mainly wooded.

The Estates Manager had visited the site, along with the Head Groundsman to review what works may be required and their advice was presented to members.

Members were happy for the Chief Officer to pursue an enquiry in regards to the land, and obtain more information such as value, utilities etc.

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

GP10.07.26 It was **RESOLVED** that pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it was advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

12.1 To note bad debts

Members were very encouraged to see such a short list of bad debtors and wished to record their thanks to office staff for their hard work on credit control.

12.2 To note the Health & Safety update

Members noted the update.

12.3 To consider an update from Luxfords Restaurant and the Civic Centre

The Hospitality Manager updated members on how the new EPOS till system was working, the recent stocktake and staffing. The pre-school holiday Roller Disco had been at full capacity and very successful. The Hospitality Manager informed members of the plans for Late Night Shopping.
Members received and noted the update, and recorded their thanks to staff for the success of these recent events.

12.4 To consider leaseholder enquiries relating to lease agreements

The Chief Officer talked members through two recent enquiries:
(i) Community Fridge – works to the exterior and the granting of a licence;
(ii) Source – agreement of proposed terms plus works required to interior of building and car parking area, to improve safety

GP11.07.26 Members **RESOLVED**, to:
(i) Community Fridge
(a) agree to the preparation of a licence for a period of 5 years, with a 2.5 or 3yr break clause term, as recommended by Solicitors;
(b) agree to the extension of the lean-to roof up to the boundary of the planter (under permitted development, and as a temporary structure);

(ii) The Source
(a) agree to the Facilities & Compliance Manager investigating the options available and costs associated for the requested interior and exterior improvements identified. This should be reported back to GP Committee in September.

The meeting closed at 8.02pm.