

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** held on
Monday 7th September 2020 at 7.00pm

REMOTE MEETING (VIA ZOOM)

PRESENT:

Cllr. J. Beesley (Chairman)
Cllr. B. Cox
Cllr. S. Mayhew
Cllr. K. Bedwell
Cllr. D. Bennett

Cllr. D. French (Vice Chairman)
Cllr. J. Edwards
Cllr. A. Smith

IN ATTENDANCE:

Two members of the press (recorded meeting)
Two members of the public
Councillor C. Macve

Mark Francis - Estates & Facilities Manager
Rachel Newton – Senior Administrative Officer
Minutes taken by Rachel Newton

1.0. 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. No declarations of interest were announced.

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

Councillor C. Macve was granted permission to speak in relation to item 7.4 on the agenda regarding dog fouling on Horsted Green Park. He highlighted the issue of dog walkers not taking personal responsibility and although this was not strictly within our parish this would be allied to the development at Ridgewood Farm and Wealden would need to take much stronger enforcement and apprehend those dog owners who were causing the problem.

Councillor C. Macve also asked to speak in relation to item 12.2 later in the meeting.

One member of the public was also given permission to speak in relation to discussions held at the last Environment and Leisure meeting to re-introducing sports activities at Ridgewood Village Green due to there being a shortage of football pitches. It was suggested that due to an additional number of residents coming to live in Uckfield and with many located at the Ridgewood end of town, long term requirements would be needed and suggested that approaching

developers should be a priority and that funding could also be sought, although it was accepted that this was not the best of times for obtaining grants.

3.0. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology was received prior to the meeting from Councillor G. Johnson who would not be attending.

4.0. **MINUTES**

4.1. Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 27th July 2020

EL.15.09.20 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 27th July 2020 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2. Action list

Councillor Edwards referred to item EL26.10.19 – Review of sheltered seating area in Ridgewood Play Area. The ongoing issue with anti-social behaviour was raised and discussed between Council members and it was highlighted that a follow-up meeting would be scheduled shortly after refurbishments to Ridgewood Village Hall. Three ongoing matters were raised by Councillor. K. Bedwell - the gate, car park and CCTV. Councillor. J. Beesley referred to prior discussions regarding these matters in a meeting earlier this year with regard to what impact PCSOs were having on anti-social behaviour. A further suggestion was made to get feedback from residents before the next meeting and to acquire any crime reference numbers from local residents if possible.

Members noted the action list and Councillor J. Beesley raised items that no longer required action:

EL09.06.19 – Town Council's involvement in commemorating VE Day 75. The VE Day Afternoon would be taking place on a smaller scale on 10th September 2020 in Luxfords Restaurant. Members agreed to remove this item from the list.

EL04.06.20 – To consider where to use the budget from general reserves to cover the costs of repairs to the tractor. Repairs to the tractor had now been completed. Members agreed to remove this item from the list.

EL12.07.20 – Purchase of the land adjacent to 10 Wilson Grove. The resident had been informed of decision and there was no further action. Members agreed to remove this item from the list.

EL13.07.20 – To review current procedures and options re-opening the Town Council's play areas. The company had been asked to do the work for an initial three months and Framfield had joined to save on costs. Members agreed to remove this item from the list.

Members agreed to remove all above items and subsequently noted the action list.

4.3. Project Monitoring List – For information only Members noted the report.

5.0. FINANCE

5.1. To note bills paid

Members noted the bills paid.

5.2. To note the income and expenditure report

There would be no income and expenditure reports until accounts were completed for 2019/20.

6.0. ADMINISTRATION

(nothing to report at this time)

7.0. ENVIRONMENT

7.1 To note the current position of the Town Council's Estates

The Estates and Facilities Manager wanted to make members aware of the position with lockdown along with Wealden DC's lack of resources and the whole process of getting an application for works to a tree processed which came under a blanket Tree Preservation Order; one application having taken several months to be finally agreed/ . A specific location was required and the scale of the map was incorrect and they would not send out an officer if the application was not completed. The Estates and Facilities Manager raised the point that if residents wished to raise any tree enquiries to please note that it would take longer to process.

Another member raised an ongoing issue concerning the lock on the new gate recently installed at Bird in Eye allotments leading from Keld Avenue. The Senior Administration Officer explained that an allotment tenant had taken it upon himself to input a new code but did not recall the code so a new lock had to be ordered by the Head Groundsman who would arrange for this to be fixed.

EL.16.09.20 Members **RESOLVED to:**

- (i) note the report and;
- (ii) the Senior Administration Officer would investigate when the new lock and code would be installed on the gate on Bird-in-Eye allotments.

7.2 To consider – DEFRA consultation on their Tree Strategy'

A proposal was given for any comments to be forwarded to Uckfield Town Council by the end of the week and that Councillors may also submit their own comments online. Proposal was seconded by Councillor. J. Beesley.

EL17.09.20 Members **RESOLVED to:**

- (i) note the report, and;
- (ii) for members to submit any comments on the DEFRA 'Tree Strategy' to the Senior Administration Officer by the end of the week or alternatively submit comments via the link provided on their website.

7.3 To consider – Sharing boxes idea from local resident

This idea was submitted by Councillor. D. French who was asked by a local resident whether consideration could be given to introduce sharing boxes in and around Uckfield. Councillor. D. French added that this would be down to residents to design, implement and deliver with one person to look after a sharing box each if this were agreed in principal. Councillors would also need to decide where these would be best placed. There were various suggestions given to ask if any groups could assist with this project, one to approach community groups such as the Men's Shed or The Lions Club to monitor and maybe propagate a

little bit of advertising at the same time. Other clubs and residents' associations mentioned were Hempstead Meadows, Manor Park, Churchcombe, New Town and also to maybe approach Fernley Park residents. A proposal was given for the Senior Administration Officer to contact the Allotment Association to ask them if there were any entrepreneurial allotment tenants who might like to get involved with this idea. This was seconded as this might be a good opportunity to prepare during lockdown.

EL.18.09.20 Members **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the report and;
- (ii) the Senior Administration Officer to contact the Allotment Association about Sharing boxes and also to look back at previous minutes taken in recent years as this idea was thought to have been raised before.

7.4 **To consider – Wealden DC's consultation on the extension of their Public Spaces Protection Order for Dog Fouling**

Wealden District Council were looking to renew their Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) and Council members were asked for any ideas to stop the increase in dog walkers not cleaning up after their dogs on paths and fields. The areas most effected included the Harlands Estate on fields and pavements and the SANGS at Horsted Green Park. Members all agreed that this was disgusting and a situation that could only get worse over time with in increase in numbers so needed to be better maintained with education points to warn dog owners that a fine would be issued for any dog walkers caught not acting responsibly.

Councillor. S. Mayhew raised the point that more people appeared to have dogs since the beginning of lockdown and that it would be a good idea to include local media coverage to try to get the community involved. Councillor. A. Smith agreed and also requested a third dog bin specifically at Horsted Green Park near the farm and mentioned that there was no Protection Order there either. Seconded by Councillor J. Edwards who also asked for the dogs bins there to be emptied more regularly and for stronger wording on signage with a warning that this could result in a fine if caught not acting responsibly.

EL.19.09.20 Members **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the report and:
- (ii) agreed to Wealden DC's proposal to extend the current Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) but request that stronger wording be provided and warning of a fine if dog owners were caught not acting responsibly. Also, a request for extra signage and another dog bin specifically at Horsted Green Park.

8.0 LEISURE

Nothing to report at this time

9.0 REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

9.1 **Climate Change Working Group**

Nothing to report at this time

9.2 **2020 VE Anniversary Working Group**

(activities placed on hold until autumn 2020)

10.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

10.1 **Active Uckfield**

Nothing to report at this time.

- 10.2 Age Concern
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.3 West Park LNR and Hempstead Meadows LNR – Supporters Group
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.4 Luxford Centre Management Committee
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.5 Uckfield and District Twinning Association
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.6 Uckfield Parkrun Board
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.7 Uckfield Plastic Free Working Group
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.8 Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.9 Uckfield Youth Club Board
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.10 Wealden Bus Alliance/Weald Link
Nothing to report at this time.
- 10.11 All Weather Pitch Operational Group
Nothing to report at this time.

11.0 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor. J. Beesley announced that the re-opening of Luxfords Play Area would be a lovely occasion and above all, good news for local residents to enjoy.

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

EL.20.09.20 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 a report on the Marketing programme.
Members discussed and subsequently noted the report.
- 12.2 Update on Victoria Pleasure Ground
Members discussed and subsequently noted the report.

The meeting finished at 20.25pm