



UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

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Town Clerk – Holly Goring

Meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** to be held on
Monday 10 January 2022 at 7.00pm
in the Weald Hall, 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 CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION

3.0. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

4.0. MINUTES

- 4.1. Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on 15 November 2021 (Attached)
- 4.2. Action list – For information only (Attached)
- 4.3. Project Monitoring List – for information only (Attached)

5.0. FINANCE

- 5.1. To note bills paid (Attached)
- 5.2. To note the provisional Income and Expenditure report ending 31 December 2021 (Attached)

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 (Attached)
- 7.2. To consider a street lamp outside 21 Mount Pleasant (Attached)
- 7.3. To consider enquiry relating to litter left at the Ridgewood MUGA (Attached)
- 7.4. To consider a request for a litter bin from the Scarlett's Close Residents' Association (to follow)

8.0. LEISURE

- 8.1. Revised proposals for changes to the Allotment fees and charges from 1 April 2023 (to follow)
- 8.2. To consider if Uckfield Town Council wishes to hold an event which can be incorporated within Uckfield Festival week 2022 (Attached)

9.0. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

(nothing to report at this time)

10.0. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

- 10.1. Active Uckfield
- 10.2. Age Concern
- 10.3. All Weather Pitch Operational Group
- 10.4. Conservators of Ashdown Forest
- 10.5. West Park LNR and Hempstead Meadows LNR – Supporters Group
- 10.6. Luxford Centre Management Committee
- 10.7. Uckfield and District Twinning Association
- 10.8. Uckfield Festival Association
- 10.9. Uckfield Parkrun Board
- 10.10. Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee
- 10.11. Uckfield Youth Club Board
- 10.12. Wealden Bus Alliance/Weald Link

11.0. CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

12.0. 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: -

- 12.1. To consider a report on the Marketing programme (Attached)



Town Clerk

4 January 2022

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** held on
Monday 15th November 2021 at 7.00pm
in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre

PRESENT:

Cllr. S. Mayhew (Chairman)
Cllr. K. Bedwell
Cllr. D. Bennett
Cllr. J. Edwards

Cllr. A. Smith
Cllr. J. Beesley
Cllr. B. Cox
Cllr. D. French

IN ATTENDANCE:

One member of the press (recorded meeting)
One member of the public
Councillor C. Macve

Holly Goring – Town Clerk
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

None received.

3.0. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

4.0. MINUTES

4.1. Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 18th October 2021

EL.43.11.21 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 18th October 2021 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2. Action list

Members considered the action list which had been previously circulated and agreed to remove the following item which had been completed:

EL.37.10.21 – To consider the draft licence agreement between Manor Park & Hempstead Fields Residents’ Association and Uckfield Town Council for Brown’s Lane Rockery

The licence had been prepared and since been signed at the Full Council meeting on 25 October 2021 before being sent to the Residents’ Association for signing. No further action.

4.3. Project Monitoring List – For information only

Members noted the report and agreed to remove the following item:

FC.64.01.21 – Animal friendly bins – Victoria Pleasure Ground & Hempstead Rec
Six bins had been ordered with the budget available. No further action.

Cllr. J. Edwards asked if the covid contingency funding for play area spraying would still be going ahead in autumn. The Town Clerk said a request had been made by the Estates and Facilities Manager for a swab test to be carried out at the end of this month and a report would then be taken to full Council on 6 December for a decision going forward.

5.0. FINANCE

5.1. To note bills paid

Members noted the report.

5.2. To note the Income and Expenditure report ending September 2021

Members noted the report – no comments.

5.3 To review fees and charges for our sports facilities in 2022/23

The Chair referred to a question that had arisen by a member of the public at the recent allotment conference on 10 November 2021 about whether all spending reviews would be dealt with the same way following the announcement that the allotment fees and charges were due to rise in April 2023.

A member from that committee explained that since the allotments had been making a loss over a long period of time, those fees needed to increase and those reasons had been explained. The allotment tenants had been informed that we would be looking at the same format to review other provisions such as room charges, the cemetery and playing fields.

This review would need to look at the structure of the income and outgoings of sports facilities and whether we needed to cover more costs in the budget setting from April 2023.

Rather than setting up another working group members agreed that the same members of the allotments and the cemetery reviews would be best placed to carry on with this review of sporting facilities as well since they had a good understanding of the research involved. A mixture of the two groups was also suggested as a good idea so as not to double up on the workload. Equally, if members wished to withdraw from this review due to other commitments this would of course be validated.

It was also understood that with the upcoming review of allotment rules and regulations and the cemetery review in tow, each individual remit would involve an awful lot of work and furthermore, with a review of the sports facilities there would also be peculiarities involved with some areas such as sporting provision and specialist maintenance. Cllr Edwards had been involved in the review of the

football playing fields earlier this year, so it was thought to be a good idea to include his expertise on this committee.

One member wished to make it clear to what degree the town council would be subsidising, as this was one of the questions raised by a resident during the review of allotment fees. The Town Council would not be looking to double their fees and make it directly comparable to the percentage increases, but to provide a similar level of subsidy for all facilities and equally, if there was no subsidy available, the Town Council would not need to increase fees unduly.

Members agreed that it would be sensible to start this review in a few months time and after the budget setting process had been completed.

At the same sitting, members also needed to consider whether to increase the current rates for sports facilities in 2021/22. One member proposed that since inflation was set to rise by an average of 4% this year, fees should increase accordingly. Members agreed to this proposal of a 4% increase since there had been losses in sports and pitch hire due to various external reasons, especially during the pandemic.

The Estates and Facilities Manager said the Town Council had paid just under £18k this year alone, just to maintain six football pitches and the income received for playing fields and pitches was just over £13k so that was a huge loss. With fuel rises and everything else going up he did not think that the normal 1.5% increase would cover increasing expenses and suggested that it may be a good idea to have a working group look at this aspect too. He said that costs may vary and fluctuate depending on external factors but for this period this increase was necessary due to inflation and to help with running costs.

EL.44.11.21 Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) agree to increase the fees and charges for the hire of sports facilities in 2022/23 by 4%, and;
- (ii) agree to set up a working group to discuss the pricing structure and the provision of sports facilities (member volunteers to be re-dressed about this at the Environment and Leisure meeting on 16 May 2022).

6.0. ADMINISTRATION

- 6.1 To note the minutes of the Allotment Conference on 10 November 2021
Members noted the minutes of the Conference.

7.0 ENVIRONMENT

- 7.1 To note the current position of the Town Council's Estates
Members noted the report.

- 7.2 To consider the Town Council's draft woodland management plan
It was noted by members that this was an important development in order to manage the biodiversity of our woodlands, especially since the days were gone when woodlands could just be left to manage themselves.

The Estates and Facilities Manager said that this would be a rolling programme of changing pathways and with Boothland wood and the new development, there was a concern that there would be an increase in footfall along that route, especially during the winter when the paths became muddy and people tended to walk on the sides of the paths, making it even wider.

The Chairman highlighted that many years ago there had been a recommendation to install a floodlit footpath through Boothland Wood but the council did not want artificial street lights or a concrete footpath.

Members discussed the more informal exits and entrances into the woods and those routes created by walkers over the pandemic that were not particularly safe either. It was hoped that this would be taken in to account as part of the management plan.

One member said that he had once been a conservation volunteer on Ashdown Forest and they used to have a lot of issues with overwalked pathways. He said that the most ecological way forward perhaps would be to redirect people closely around any muddy areas by driving pales into certain areas and diverting them.

Areas mentioned where the muddy patches were at their worst were the entrance to the housing estate and a pathway leading to the west side on the right at the far end of the woods. It was suggested that it might be better to install some sort of wooden pathway here instead.

The Estates and Facilities Manager said that since there was a blanket Tree Preservation Order (TPO) bordering numerous properties specifically on Nightingale Wood, instead of having to apply for each individual tree, this would hopefully now supercede that with Wealden DC's approval, and the Town Council could manage the woodland as per the plan instead of having to jump through hoops. He added that this would also attract grant funding for specific works in future years.

EL.45.11.21 Members noted the report with thanks and **RESOLVED** to:

(i) agree to the proposed woodland management plan over a 10-year period for the Town Council owned woodlands and ancient woodlands of Nightingale Wood, Bridge Farm Wood and Boothland Wood.

- 7.3 To receive an update on tree planting proposals for Winter 2021/22
Members gave thanks again to the Ranger for his hard work and efforts in this report for the next phase of tree planting.

EL.46.11.21 Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** to:

(i) agree to the areas highlighted for the Winter 2021/22 tree planting programme.

- 7.4 To consider the amendments being proposed by DEFRA to the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 (as applied to groundwater Activities and related surface water discharge activities)
Members discussed a number of potential issues such as whether this proposal would prevent anyone from being interred within a certain distance being set away from a dry ditch, water course, field boundary or drain.

Also, as the cemetery would become limited with burial space and the Town Council would be exploring options to expand, members asked if this might affect those with pre-purchased graves.

The Estates and Facilities Manager said that potentially this could happen although he would find out more information and if there were any springs and water courses in the distance which met with any requirements.

The Town Clerk highlighted that the initial deadline to answer those questions was to NALC (The National Association of Local Councils) by 26 November, but

the deadline for the DEFRA consultation was 22 December 2021. Also, it stipulated in the report that cemeteries with low numbers of burials (which Snatts Road Cemetery came under) may be exempt from these proposals anyway.

Officers and members were asked to look at the information again in greater detail in order to decide if the cemetery would be entirely exempt before any detailed report be undertaken by the Town Council.

EL.47.11.21 Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** for officers to advise the Town Council if Snatts Road Cemetery would qualify as being:
(i) exempt from the permitting scheme for small cemeteries, and/or;
(ii) an 'exempt facility', to comply with the General Binding Rules (as outlined in the report).

8.0 LEISURE

Nothing to report at this time.

9.0 REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

Nothing to report at this time.

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 All Weather Pitch Operational Group

Nothing to report at this time.

10.4 Conservators of Ashdown Forest

Nothing to report at this time.

10.5 West Park LNR and Hempstead Meadows LNR – Supporters Group

Nothing to report at this time.

10.6 Luxford Centre Management Committee

Nothing to report at this time.

10.7 Uckfield and District Twinning Association

Nothing to report at this time.

10.8 Uckfield Festival Association

The Chair attended an AGM on 13 November 2021 and reported that there had been a new Chairman elected on the committee (Ian Smith) who was a former councillor as well as Mike Skinner as Vice Chair. There had also been proposals being made for a revamp of the festival to provide something a bit different for next year.

10.9 Uckfield Parkrun Board

Nothing to report at this time.

10.10 Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee

Nothing to report at this time.

10.11 Uckfield Youth Club Board
Nothing to report at this time.

10.12 Wealden Bus Alliance/Weald Link
Nothing to report at this time.

11.0 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following items which had been removed from previous action lists but were still outstanding and would need further consideration:

1. To consider resident parking on council land at West Park Local Nature Reserve (WPLNR) – Saunders Close

A letter had been posted to the resident on 16 September 2021: a polite notice asking the resident to stop parking in this area or placing bins here as it was council land and part of our nature reserve. It had also been requested that the fencing be re-installed.

The Estates and Facilities Manager had contacted the Council's solicitor since the resident was still parking on the nature reserve and staff were unable to repair the fence.

Members were informed that this item would have to be added to the action list again and that they would need to consider any options made by the solicitor going forward.

2. Covid bench installation – London Road/Southview Drive

Application S171 was completed in September 2021 (for consent to make an excavation in a street). However, ES Highways had not notified Uckfield TC that the incorrect form had been completed and with the delays generally (it took two months for a response) it might have been better just to install the bench (that had been in storage for six months) on council land such as Victoria/Luxfords field/Ridgewood or for members to provide an alternative location.

(The Licencing and Enforcement Officer had said that unfortunately, the contractor would also need to have all their information updated again in order to excavate on the public highway).

The Estates and Facilities Manager said the two issues were that we needed another contractor and another quote as the previous ones were now outdated. He agreed, we could carry on trying to get the licence for a standard bench instead on London Road.

One member asked if the bench could be placed near to one of the play parks, Luxford Field for example, especially for those with a dogs on leads who needed to watch over their children or grandchildren playing in the park. Members therefore suggested for the bench to be placed nearer the top of Luxfords Field as there were fewer benches there and to make sure that this was a safe distance from the car park .

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

EL.48.11.21 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 consider a report on the Marketing programme

Members noted the report.

The meeting finished at 20:10pm

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

ACTION LIST - FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Environment and Leisure Committee

Please note no resolutions can be made from the action list and is for information only.

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<u>EL.28.09.16</u>	<u>To consider revised byelaws for the Town Council's Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)</u> Members reviewed the amendments to the byelaws which still require Natural England and DEFRA's approval. It was RESOLVED to accept the revised byelaws.	05.09.16	HG	The Town Council has sealed and signed the byelaws. A public notice will be published soon to provide the public with an opportunity to view the byelaws, prior to their submission to the Secretary of State.
<u>EL.26.01.19</u>	It was RESOLVED that the Supporter Groups for both reserves be consulted with a view to shorten the byelaws in accordance with DEFRA's comments and report back to the Environment & Leisure committee.	28.01.19		
	<u>Harlands Farm Pond</u> The Ranger is to be asked for ideas to captivate children's interest whilst at the pond.	18.04.17	NM	These initiatives can be reviewed, by the new Ranger once they have settled in post.
	Harlands Farm Pond, VCT and Sussex Wildlife Trust are to be contacted to establish if they can assist with ideas etc. regarding children involvement in the pond.	30.04.18		
<u>EL.43.01.20</u>	<u>7.2 To receive an update on the ecological report on the Town Council's Land at Bellbrook</u> Members RESOLVED to: (i) note the report; (ii) investigate the costs involved of installing an otter holt at the base of the riverbank of Bellbrook open space; (iii) rename Bellbrook open space to 'Riverside Wood' to give it an identity.	06.01.20	MF/HG	Work in progress to explore these matters. Town Council Solicitors have been asked to arrange an update with land registry.

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<u>EL.03.06.20</u>	<p><u>7.1 To note the current position of the Town Council's Estates</u> <u>The Town Council had been offered a gingko tree from a resident who knew Councillor C. Macve; an 8-foot tall non-native tree</u> Members agreed for the Estates and Facilities Manager to liaise with Councillor A. Smith for further guidance on the best area to place the ginkgo tree.</p>	15.06.20	MF	<p>The resident wished to hold on to the tree until the Autumn, as it would be better to plant before the frost sets in. The resident has been in touch to arrange. In progress.</p>
<u>EL.11.07.20</u>	<p><u>7.3 To consider installing electric charging points at the council buildings</u> Members noted the report and discussed various areas for charging points and agreed for the Estates and Facilities Manager to look in to liaising with Wealden DC and proposals for installation of electric car parking points at various sites.</p>	27.07.20	MF	<p>This will require some timely investigative work to consider the future options and to understand the work already underway by WDC and ESCC. The Climate Change working group will remain engaged.</p>
<u>EL.18.09.20</u>	<p><u>7.3 To consider - Sharing boxes idea from local resident</u> This idea was submitted on behalf of a local resident by a council member who wished to add that this idea would be down to residents to design, implement and deliver with one person to look after a sharing box each. Councillors would decide on the best places to put them. Various suggestions were given at the meeting, one being to approach community groups such as the Men's Shed to make them or the Lions Club to monitor and maybe propagate a little bit of advertising at the same time. One member mentioned that this was raised in a previous meeting maybe last year and asked for the Senior Administration Officer to look at previous minutes to see if there was any action taken.</p>	07.09.20	RN	<p>The Senior Administrative Officer had previously spoken with the publisher of the Uckfield Allotments Association Newspaper to ask if anyone would like to take on this initiative. An email has also been sent to the Lions and Men's Shed recently to see if anyone is interested in harnessing this idea. The Men's Shed said they will present this idea at their next committee meeting.</p>

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<u>EL27.11.20</u>	<u>7.3 To note the current position with the Town Council's Grounds vehicles</u> Members agree to go down the fully electric route and for a Gator type vehicle and requested an update on what was currently available on the UK market at the next E&L meeting.	16.11.20	RN	The outcomes of the Carbon Audit highlighted that vehicle emissions were lower than that of utilities. This work will therefore remain on hold until an action plan has been agreed for a way forward.
<u>EL.49.05.21</u>	<u>To consider an allotment demand and understanding the legislation if there is demand</u> Members noted the report and RESOLVED to: (i) re-establish the allotment working group at the next meeting of Environment & Leisure Committee on 14 June 2021, and (ii) look at the issues and comments raised specifically about fees and charges and to explore options for allotment land in the future.	04.05.21	RN/MF/ SD/HG	The outcomes of the working group's more recent work will be reported to E&L Committee on 10 January 2022.
<u>EL18.07.21</u>	<u>To consider options to review the gate access to Ridgewood Recreation Ground off New Road</u> Members noted the report and RESOLVED to: (i) agree to Option 2 – to replace the gate at Ridgewood Recreational Grounds off New Road, Ridgewood (opposite the old terrace of cottages in New Road, specifically numbers 17 to 19) with a stile	26.07.21	MF	Uckfield Town Council has experienced staffing shortages in recent weeks/months. Work has not yet been carried out as a result.
<u>EL.27.09.21</u>	<u>To consider resident parking on council land at West Park Local Nature Reserve (WPLNR)</u> Members noted the report and RESOLVED to: (i) agree that a letter be sent to the resident requesting the vehicle be moved and fence reinstated and that no rubbish bins be placed there either.		RN	Letter was sent to resident on 16.9.21 - polite notice was sent asking for them to please stop parking in this area or putting bins here as it is council land and part of our nature reserve. Fencing to be re-instated. The Estates and Facilities Manager had contacted the Council's solicitor since the resident was still parking on the nature reserve and staff were unable to repair the fence. Members were informed that this item would have to be added to the action list again and that they would need to consider any options made by the solicitor going forward.

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<u>EL.29.09.21</u>	<u>To consider installing a new litter bin along Streatfield Road</u> Members noted the report and RESOLVED to: (i) agree to the installation of a new litter bin at the end of Streatfield Road next to the newly installed bench.	06.09.21	MF	The Licencing & Enforcement Team have been contacted to request a new licence for this bin to be placed next to the bench. In progress. NFA.
<u>EL31.09.21</u>	<u>To consider opportunities to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022</u> Members noted the report and RESOLVED to: (i) set up a working group after showing interest in activities to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022, led by Cllr. Bedwell including (so far) Cllrs. French and Firth.	06.09.21	HG	A working group has been set-up; first meeting to be arranged. A request was also made at Full Council requesting more volunteers.
<u>EL35.10.21</u>	<u>To review fees and charges for Snatts Road Cemetery for 2022/23</u> Members noted the report and RESOLVED to: (i) agree to increase the fees and charges for Snatts Road Cemetery in 2022/23 by 1.5%, and; (ii) set up a working group to discuss the pricing structure, the rules and regulations and the future progress of the cemetery provision. Member volunteers included Cllr H. Firth, Cllr B. Cox and Cllr A. Smith	18.10.21	RN/HG	A working group will be set up in 2022.
<u>EL38.10.21</u>	<u>To consider costs for moving the traditional red telephone box</u> Members noted the report and (if additional funding was sought) RESOLVED to: (i) agree to the relocation of the telephone box from its current location and to create a new space for it and place into position at the cost of £3,225.00 (including the Town Council's earmarked reserves of £1,000 and Harlands Primary School donation of £1,500), and; (ii) source the additional funding of £750 from elsewhere (preferably from the developers or by asking UKPN/Kier contractors for a contribution).	18.10.21	MF	The red telephone box has been transferred to a site just outside of Harlands Primary School. The school will be restoring the telephone box and the details provided by BT on paint colours and fixtures and fittings have been sent to the school for reference. Additional funding sources tbc. In progress.

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<u>EL44.11.21</u>	<p><u>To review fees and charges for our sports facilities in 2022/23</u> (i) agree to increase the fees and charges for the hire of sports facilities in 2022/23 by 4%, and; (ii) agree to set up a working group to discuss the pricing structure and the provision of sports facilities (member volunteers to be re-dressed about this at the Environment and Leisure meeting on 16 May 2022).</p>	15.11.21	RN	To be progressed in the New Year.

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE
PROJECT MONITORING FORM 2021/22**

Projects in 2020/21 Budget – Outstanding projects

The funding for the following two projects was agreed at Full Council on 12 April 2021 to be reallocated to install a Covid memorial (bench(es) and tree). Initial investigations were reported to members at the Annual Statutory meeting of the Council on 24 May 2021:

The Town Clerk confirmed that there were two projects from 2020/21 already closely aligned which had not yet been completed (memorial/art project - £1,500 and the bench at London Road £1,000).

FC.86.04.21 Based on the report and discussions that had taken place, members **RESOLVED** to request that staff explore the costings and potential location ideas for a tree and Covid memorial bench(es), and for the investigations to be reported back to Environment & Leisure Committee or Full Council.

FC18.05.21 Members **RESOLVED** to:
(i) note the report, and;
(ii) agreed to proceed with the first design but request that the Estates & Facilities Manager enquire as to whether the first design (East Grinstead) could be purchased but with a more rounded style of bench for comfort.

Project Name	Bench on London Road (by Southview Drive)		Project Number	53
<u>FC92.01.20</u>	£1,000	27.04.20	The covid bench is now going to be installed on Luxford field with a standard bench going on London Road due to delays with Highways.	

Project Name	Memorial Plaque/Art Project		Project Number	55
<u>FC92.01.20</u>	£1,500	27.04.20	-	

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE
PROJECT MONITORING FORM 2021/22**

Projects in 2021/22 Budget – New Initiatives

Project Name	Ridgewood Play Area patch resurfacing		Project Number	57
<u>FC.64.01.21</u>	£13,500 minus £11,975 =£1,525	04.01.22	Ridgewood play area patch repairs have been completed at a cost of £11,975. NFA.	
Project Name	Green Projects plus £5,000 in earmarked reserves		Project Number	58
<u>FC.64.01.21</u>	£18,000 minus £1,800 =£16,200	18.01.21	Carbon footprint audit carried out £1,800.	
Project Name	Speed reduction initiative (already have £3,700 in earmarked reserves)		Project Number	62
<u>FC.64.01.21</u>	Minus £500.36 =£3,199.64	08.05.21	<p>Starter kit 3 with the up to date speed monitoring device (bushnell) as recommended by Sussex Police has been purchased at a cost of £500.36 plus VAT as agreed by Environment & Leisure Committee on 22 March 2021. New recruits are currently being trained and registered on the system.</p> <p>Further correspondence will follow with Town Councillors to take a decision on what is purchased in terms of monitoring equipment and speed indicator devices at the roadside.</p>	

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE
PROJECT MONITORING FORM 2021/22**

Project Name	Covid contingency fund for play area spraying (until end June 2021)		Project Number	63
<u>FC.64.01.21</u>	£2,500 minus April - £630 May - £630 Jun - £630 = £610.00	18.01.21	<p>This was taken to Full Council on 6 December 2021 and members asked to monitor situation.</p> <p>Spraying was undertaken at the end of April, May and June 2021 at a cost of £630.00 per occasion. Plus swab tests were undertaken in September and November 2021 to check readings.</p>	
Project Name	Tree planting programme (plus carry forward of £700 from 2020/21 budget – now in earmarked reserves)		Project Number	64
<u>FC.64.01.21</u>	£1,000 -£974.00 =£26.00	18.01.21	<p>Trees have been ordered at a cost of £974.00 for the planting season during Winter 2021/22.</p> <p>NFA.</p>	

Environment Leisure Committee as at 31 December 2021

	Apr 21 Actuals £	May 21 Actuals £	Jun 21 Actuals £	Jul 21 Actuals £	Aug 21 Actuals £	Sep 21 Actuals £	Oct 21 Actuals £	Nov 21 Actuals £	Dec 21 Actuals £	Prov actuals at 31 Dec 21	Budgeted at 31 Dec 21	Jan 22 Budget £	Feb 22 Budget £	Mar 22 Budget £	Total 2021/22	2021/22 Budgets
Sales																
Contribution to Town Centre Security	0	0	0	575	0	0	0	0	0	575	0	0	0	0	575	650
Weald Hall Events	516	194	267	375	260	987	21	2,613	1,015	6,246	12,865	1,545	1,545	1,545	10,881	17,500
Allotments	37	0	0	85	0	0	0	0	0	122	0	6,000	0	0	6,122	6,000
Allotment Deposits	104	0	0	56	0	(100)	(52)	0	(102)	(94)	600	67	67	67	106	800
Playing Fields & Pitches, Sport Income	232	32	(95)	97	500	136	73	0	10,452	11,427	9,000	0	0	1,500	12,927	10,500
Playing Fields & Pitches, Event Income	24	103	258	3,963	338	291	(8)	0	0	4,969	3,000	0	0	0	4,969	3,000
WDC- WPark Culverts Agreement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	360	0	360	360
Cemetery - Interments	7,063	6,029	4,473	3,597	6,371	2,785	1,726	3,960	1,402	37,405	21,750	2,417	2,417	2,417	44,655	29,000
Cemetery - Memorials	471	691	214	746	471	214	168	979	0	3,954	4,500	500	500	500	5,454	6,000
Cemetery - Sundry income	0	0	0	0	131	0	0	0	0	131	0	0	0	300	431	300
Cemetery Maintenance Charge	490	588	392	392	686	294	392	392	98	3,724	2,250	250	250	250	4,474	3,000
Env Sundry Income	46	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	55	0	0	0	200	255	200
Litter/bus station	331	0	0	0	331	0	0	331	0	994	994	0	331	0	1,325	1,325
Roundabout income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	864	864	864	0	0	0	864	850
Total Sales	9,313	7,636	5,510	9,894	9,088	4,607	2,319	8,275	13,729	70,371	55,823	10,778	5,470	6,778	93,398	79,485

Highlighted expenditure is to be covered by new initiative or earmarked projects within earmarked reserves. For example £6,341 streetlighting will be covered by CIL earmarked reserves, £1,890 from Playing fields and pitches will be covered by contingency play area spraying new initiatives, £11,975 will be covered by the Ridgewood play area resurfacing new initiative 2021 and play area signage to the amount of £1,600 will be covered by new initiative 2021). This is a total of £21,806 from set aside funds which are not part of the revenue expenditure).

Purchases																
Clothing - Corp & Prot - Indoor staff	0	273	0	0	0	240	0	0	0	513	325	0	0	163	675	650
Street lights, New	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Street lights, supply & maintenance	16,291	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	16,341	10,000	0	0	0	16,341	10,000
Street light repairs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,500	2,500	2,500
Bus shelters	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100
Allotments	133	0	0	67	0	0	37	0	0	237	1,015	0	0	508	744	2,030
Playing fields and pitches	1,374	766	20,187	575	244	(337)	24	330	258	23,419	20,000	0	0	0	23,419	21,000
Play Areas	0	200	0	0	0	275	685	275	11,975	13,410	2,250	0	0	750	14,160	3,000
Cemetery, grave digging	0	2,560	0	640	1,490	0	0	1,600	0	6,290	3,900	0	0	1,300	7,590	5,200
Cemetery, rates & water	168	167	167	167	167	197	167	167	167	1,533	1,350	150	150	150	1,983	1,800
Cemetery, litter	143	122	194	143	224	173	284	234	0	1,517	1,200	133	133	133	1,917	1,600
Cemetery, maintenance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	400	400	400
General equipment repairs	0	137	8	0	0	213	0	402	0	760	0	0	0	2,000	2,760	2,000
New Equipment	379	46	0	0	131	786	902	87	0	2,330	2,400	0	0	100	2,430	2,500
Ground Maintenance Contract	0	0	0	0	0	16,023	0	0	0	16,023	16,500	0	0	0	16,023	16,500
Ground Maintenance General	103	93	213	136	118	717	145	36	0	1,561	1,350	0	0	450	2,011	1,800
Hire of Equipment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100
LNRS & Sites of Interest (Ranger)	1,881	1,900	1,881	1,881	1,881	1,881	1,881	1,881	1,881	16,945	19,995	2,222	2,222	2,222	23,610	26,660
LNRS & Sites of Interest (Working budget)	123	339	85	187	112	625	1,267	32	66	2,836	1,875	0	0	625	3,461	2,500
Transit	81	849	54	514	0	79	13	0	0	1,589	1,500	167	167	167	2,089	2,000
Ford Ranger	196	44	95	84	515	110	43	0	0	1,086	1,125	125	125	125	1,461	1,500
Tractor maintenance & running costs	47	24	0	52	18	55	450	17	0	663	1,125	125	125	125	1,038	1,500
Movana Vehicle	90	87	583	83	133	136	449	48	183	1,791	1,500	167	167	167	2,291	2,000
Fencing	178	0	0	0	452	75	0	0	0	705	0	0	0	0	705	750
Trees	922	314	1,598	728	3	550	0	975	125	5,215	4,000	0	0	0	5,215	4,000
Graffiti removal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	50
Litter bins	0	0	0	0	0	0	73	0	56	129	0	0	0	3,000	3,129	3,000
Litter collection, open spaces	683	561	607	665	699	689	630	703	0	5,237	2,775	308	308	308	6,162	3,700
Horticulture	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	150	150	300
Roundabout expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100
Weald Hall Events	0	250	75	0	70	750	1,500	75	1,575	4,295	5,000	0	0	8,500	12,795	13,500
Corp dev- signage outside areas	0	212	0	0	0	0	1,600	0	0	1,812	250	0	0	0	1,812	250
Groundsmen - salaries	5,813	7,370	7,360	7,360	7,360	7,360	7,360	8,060	7,870	65,915	60,122	6,680	6,680	6,680	85,956	80,163
Groundsmen - National insurance	497	611	609	609	609	609	609	705	680	5,537	4,679	520	520	520	7,097	6,239
Groundsmen - Pension	1,853	1,377	1,371	1,208	1,208	1,425	1,117	2,063	1,272	12,894	12,931	1,437	1,437	1,437	17,204	17,241
Town Security/CCTV	1,143	44	38	40	43	40	40	41	40	1,469	2,250	0	0	750	2,219	3,000
Floral displays	0	0	1,710	469	469	469	0	0	0	3,115	3,500	0	0	0	3,115	3,500
Repair and replace street furniture	0	0	0	1,250	0	0	0	0	0	1,250	1,250	0	0	250	1,500	1,500
Cleaning materials	15	0	0	0	0	75	0	0	0	90	75	0	0	75	165	150
Performing rights	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	89	89	500	0	0	0	89	500
Event Advertising Marketing	50	160	0	0	80	160	0	256	120	826	3,000	0	0	1,000	1,826	4,000

Environment Leisure Committee as at 31 December 2021

	Apr 21 Actuals £	May 21 Actuals £	Jun 21 Actuals £	Jul 21 Actuals £	Aug 21 Actuals £	Sep 21 Actuals £	Oct 21 Actuals £	Nov 21 Actuals £	Dec 21 Actuals £	Prov actuals at 31 Dec 21	Budgeted at 31 Dec 21	Jan 22 Budget £	Feb 22 Budget £	Mar 22 Budget £	Total 2021/22	2021/22 Budgets
HMLNR & WPLNR	0	0	0	0	500	0	0	0	0	500	500	0	0	0	500	500
Total Purchases	32,160	18,506	36,834	16,856	16,526	33,373	19,274	17,987	26,406	217,922	188,242	12,034	12,034	34,904	276,893	249,783

New initiatives 2021/22

Additional tree planting	0	0	21	0	(500)	0	0	1,267	186	974		0	0	0	974	1,700
Covid Memorial Bench on London Road	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	2,500
ESCC Grass Verge cutting	4,271	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,271		0	0	0	4,271	4,300
Ridgewood Play Area Patch surfacing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11,975	11,975		0	0	0	11,975	13,500
West Park LNR Boardwalk	0	0	0	0	0	25,900	0	0	0	25,900		0	0	0	25,900	26,470
Green Projects	0	0	0	1,800	0	0	0	0	0	1,800		0	0	0	1,800	23,000
Animal friendly bins	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1,000	0	0	1,000	1,000
New signage for play areas/recs	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,600	0	0	1,600		0	0	0	1,600	1,600
Total New Initiatives 2020/21	4,271	0	21	1,800	(500)	25,900	1,600	1,267	12,161	46,520		1,000	0	0	47,520	74,070

Weald on the Field Sponsorship and 50% pitch fee income	0	0	0	0	3,090	0	0	0	0	3,090		0	0	0	N/A	N/A
Weald on the Field Expenditure	0	0	42	2,658	4,627	1,021	175	0	0	8,522		0	0	0	N/A	3,000

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 10th January 2022

Agenda Item 7.1

TO NOTE THE CURRENT POSITION WITH THE COUNCIL'S ESTATES

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report sets out the current position with the Council's Estates.

Victoria Pleasure Ground

Town bin collections have increased significantly since the Easter bank holiday, resulting in an additional collection to keep up with demand, on a weekly basis. Temporary second additional collection booked until further notice, this will increase the overall bin collection budget and will be overspent by year end. Extra budget has been included for 2022/23 to cover additional service.

Victoria Skatepark

Investigation required in dealing with drainage issues, awaiting outcome of meeting with developers at Ridgewood site.

Hempstead Lane Play Area

Awaiting repair to crossbar of basket swing.

Hempstead Meadows

Minor work was carried out to the footpath however works have been postponed until 2022 due to weather conditions.

Rocks Park Play Area

Nothing new to report.

Snatts Road Cemetery

Works to Oak tree to be carried out in January 2022.

West Park Recreation ground

New trees planted, phase 1 of 3.

Boothland Wood

Nothing new to report.

Equipment & Vehicles

Nothing new to report.

Street Furniture & Lighting

Covid-19 memorial bench has been ordered in partnership with CPJ Field. Awaiting installation of concrete plinth for Luxford field. New bench and licence to be ordered for London Road bus stop.

Ridgewood Recreation Ground

Play area patch repairs completed.

Elizabeth Gardens

Nothing new to report.

Selby Meadows

Nothing new to report.

West Park Local Nature Reserve.

Nothing new to report.

Luxfords field and play area.

Nothing new to report.

Trees

Following a programme of tree surveys across the town, it is becoming very evident that the Town Council is starting to have to deal with a number of trees with Ash die back.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officers: Mark Francis

Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Monday 10 January 2022

Agenda Item 7.2

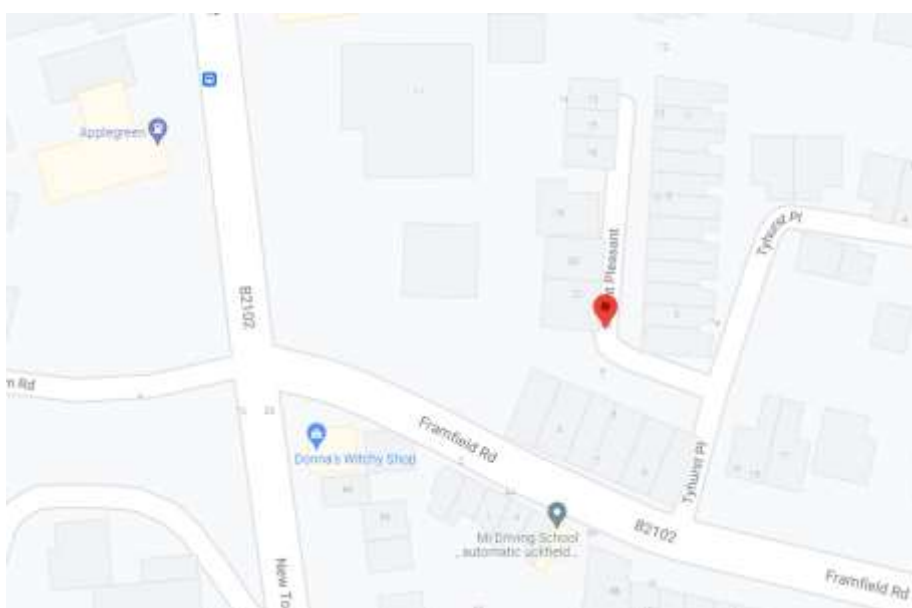
TO CONSIDER A STREET LAMP OUTSIDE 21 MOUNT PLEASANT

1.0 Summary

1.1 Two members of the public have reported that a street light is not working outside 21 Mount Pleasant (off Tyhurst Place, Uckfield), and this has now been out of action for a couple of months. This is the only streetlamp in the vicinity and located at the access to the alley meeting with Framfield Road. It is used by residents in both Mount Pleasant and Tyhurst Place. This road is unadopted.

2.0 Potential lighting survey

- 2.1 The Estates and Facilities Manager had a meeting with ES Highways in late November and a further meeting in December with the Town Clerk also present, to discuss the current lamp columns which need repairing/replacing across the town and this lamp was included in the list.
- 2.2 It has been advised due to changes in liability and design, all light repairs will need a lighting survey and design going forward, at an estimated cost of £950+ per road. This cost depends on the length of road and area.
- 2.3 It has been suggested for Uckfield Town Council to consider removing this particular lamp column rather than provide any replacement at 21 Mount Pleasant. If Uckfield Town Council were to proceed with replacing this lantern, it would not achieve the design standard for lighting in this type of road and would require a lighting design to be carried out by East Sussex Highways. This would potentially increase the lighting in this road by 3 to 5 new columns at a cost of £2,000 - £2,500 per column.
- 2.4 East Sussex Highways also advise as this road is unadopted there could be issues with increasing the number of columns in this area due to permissions and restrictions of space.



(Location of lamp column)



(Current lamp column in situ)

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 Members are asked to consider whether they wish to replace this lantern involving a new lighting design or remove the lantern altogether, and advise the clerk accordingly.

Contact Officer: Mark Francis

Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Monday 10 January 2022

Agenda Item 7.3

TO CONSIDER LITTER BEING LEFT AT RIDGEWOOD MUGA

1.0 Litter at the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) on Ridgewood Recreation Ground

1.1 A local resident has been in touch with a suggestion to target those who are disposing of their litter late at night at Ridgewood Recreation Ground.

1.2 The resident said that one evening just before dusk he had once again collected a bucket full of other peoples' rubbish from around the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA). They said that the majority of litter had been discarded by a group of teenagers who were playing football in the MUGA and that this happened frequently, even though they had politely requested that those using the MUGA clear the plastic bottles, wrappers, plastic tops etc. They said that sometimes they do clear their rubbish, but in most circumstances this was not the case.

1.3 The resident said that they believed that many of those who used the MUGA were members of local football clubs possibly Uckfield Grasshoppers and/or Uckfield College and asked if the Town Council could make contact with those organisations to request that students clear their litter when using the recreation ground and MUGA, and that if the problem persists that these individuals be stopped from using the facility.

2.0 Signage and bins

2.1 Signage for the town's play areas and open spaces have already been upgraded and at present the Town Council looks after the maintenance and emptying of in the region of seventy bins installed around the Town Council's open spaces. Although litter is a problem all over town, not just Ridgewood MUGA, it is a nuisance, particularly for those who make the effort to pick up litter left by others.

2.2 The resident asked if the following could also be considered by the Town Council;

(i) A litter bin placed next to the MUGA;

(ii) Signage erected in a prominent position adjacent to Ridgewood play area stating that equipment is not to be used after 10.00pm;

(iii) Signage erected on/within the Timber Shelter that it should not be used after 10.00pm.

3.0 Recommendation

3.1. Members are asked to note the report and advise the Clerk of how they wish to proceed.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Monday 10 January 2022

Agenda Item 7.4

TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR A LITTER BIN FROM THE SCARLETT'S CLOSE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Mention has been made previously and details were confirmed in December 2021, of a request for a litter bin to be reinstated on a grass verge adjacent to the Bell Lane allotments and footways between Scarletts Close, Belmont Road and Bell Farm Road.
- 1.2 Scarlett's Close Residents' Association had previously enquired about a litter bin that had been removed some years ago from a grass verge along the footways behind the Bell Lane allotments which link residential areas such as Scarletts Close with Tesco and the industrial estate.
- 1.3 With the pressures of the pandemic, this enquiry was placed on hold, but more information has recently come to light.
- 1.4 Due to the time that has passed and changes in staffing, it is unknown for what reason the bin was removed and who by, but this report seeks to advise members of the location, and to consider the request for the reinstatement of a litter bin, at cost to the Town Council.

2.0 Location of litter bin

- 2.1 Members of Scarlett's Close Residents' Association advise that a litter bin used to be located on the grass verge adjacent to the north eastern side of the Bell Lane allotments.



- 2.2 Having carried out a Land Registry search, it would appear that the grass verge adjacent to the footway is owned by East Sussex Highways (ESCC):



- 2.3 Scarletts Close Residents' Association are asking whether Uckfield Town Council would be in a position to fund a replacement bin and its installation.
- 2.4 There are currently limited litter bins along these well used footways, between the Rocks Park and West Park residential estates and the town centre.
- 2.5 Uckfield Town Council would have to apply for a licence from ES Highways, purchase the bin and add this bin to the Town Council's existing litter collection round, which would result in additional costs to the Town Council.
- 2.6 There is currently a budget of £3,000 for the purchase of new litter bins in the Town Council's revenue budget, and in the region of £1,000 has been spent, so there are still funds remaining within the current financial year.

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 Members are asked to:

(i) note the report; and

(ii) consider if they agree to the funding, installation and emptying of a new litter bin on the ES Highways owned verge adjacent to Bell Lane allotments.

Contact officer: Holly Goring/Mark Francis

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 10 January 2022

Agenda Item 8.1

REVISED PROPOSALS FOR ALLOTMENT FEES AND CHARGES FROM 1 APRIL 2023

1.0 Background

- 1.1 As members will be aware, following the agreement of Environment & Leisure Committee at their meeting on 21 March 2021 to work to a reviewed set of fees and charges for allotments from 1 April 2022, the Town Council received a number of comments from allotment tenants which expressed their dissatisfaction in the proposals being put forward. Allotment tenants felt the proposed increases were a shock, due to the steep nature of the proposals and the proposals may not provide fairness amongst tenants with varying size plots.
- 1.2 Environment & Leisure Committee agreed at their meeting in May 2021, for the Allotment Working Group to reconvene, and members and officers have been working hard over the past six to eight months to review the feedback received, the figures in finer detail, and a number of associated issues with the management of the allotments and existing procedures.
- 1.3 The Allotment Working Group presented their findings to the Allotment Conference held on 10 November 2021. Working group members explained at the conference that they felt that the allotment fees and charges needed to increase to contribute towards some of the costs incurred by the Town Council, but the current charging structure did not contribute sufficiently.
- 1.4 This therefore means the previous resolution put forward by Environment & Leisure Committee in March 2021 is now being revised. More than six months has passed and members have the opportunity to receive and consider the revised recommendations of the Allotment Working Group.
- 1.5 This means that the proposals now being put forward by the Allotment Working Group, if agreed by Environment & Leisure Committee, will not come into effect until 1 April 2023.

2.0 Full review and recommendations

- 2.1 The working group are recommending maintaining the current structure for the fees and charges as both tenants and staff understand the methodology used. This currently involves setting a rental fee per square metre and separate water charge based on the calculation of the water bills the Town Council receives for each site, in the autumn/winter.
- 2.2 To help contribute to the additional costs incurred by the Town Council to administer and maintain the allotments, the working group proposed that a standard yearly administration/maintenance charge of £15 per plot (per annum) be applied to each plot. The average administrative cost per plot had been calculated at £15.82. Without this additional administration fee, the council would be managing the allotments at a significant loss. And it should be noted that one third of the Senior Administrative Officer's time is spent looking after the Town Council's allotment sites throughout the year. These costs have never been accounted for.

- 2.3 The working group also reviewed concessionary rates and would retain concessions on rental fees only, and retain deposits at a fee of £52.00.
- 2.4 The working group also recognised that the water costs had risen sharply over the last few years and that it would be better to show those water costs separately to the plot charges, as the water charges were not within our control. During the checks carried out recently, it was noted that quite a few tenants already had a means of collecting water such as water butts and it would be good to encourage more of this across the sites. Members asked if this could be put in the new rules and regulations when they are sent out with the new contracts in 2023. Local nurseries and garden centres may also be able to offer discounts going forward on allotment equipment for allotment association tenants.
- 2.5 At present, working group members explained that:

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021 not including the WATER CHARGE

- **COST OF ALLOTMENTS TO UTC = £21,040**
(£88.40 PER ALLOTMENT)
(without provision for taps, pipes and fencing)
- **CURRENT INCOME RECEIVED = £4,378**
(£18.39 PER ALLOTMENT)
- **UTC IS THEREFORE SUBSIDISING
ALLOTMENTS
AT APPROX. £70.01 PER ALLOTMENT**

- 2.6 Proposed recommendation for fees and charges from 1 April 2023:

ALLOTMENT WORKING GROUP ROUND 2 - OUTCOMES OF REVIEW

- Maintain original pricing structure;
- Keep concessions;
- Retain deposits at fee of £52;
- Continue to keep water a separate charge from rental fees and charges. Plus these are a recharge based on the bills received from utility company;
- Introduce a £15 admin fee for all allotment plots regardless of size;

COSTS TO UCKFIELD TC

- Not including actual cost of materials for fencing/pipes/taps, annual costs in region of = **£21,040 (£88.40) per allotment**
- Income received now (not water) = £4,378
- £15 admin fee per allotment = total of £3,570
- Uckfield TC will still be subsidising = **£13,092 (£55.00 per allotment)**

2.7 This would mean that the interim charging period between October 222 and 1 April 2023 there would be no administrative charge, and the new charging structure would come into effect on 1 April 2023 and run for that financial year, with invoices then being sent out every April. All tenants will be given 12-months notice of these proposals.

3.0 Statutory Provision under the Allotment Act 1922

3.1 The working group were reminded that the allotments were 'not for profit' but were a statutory provision and that staff and councillors were keen to work together with all allotment stakeholders to find ways in which to improve and engage better.

3.2 It was ascertained that any extras such as deer fencing would simply cost too much – at least £10k had been quoted for one section of the Framfield Road allotments. A decision therefore has been taken to replace old fencing with hedgerows made up of British species in due course.

4.0 Better communication

4.1 The Allotment Working Group agreed that this would always have been a difficult conversation to have with tenants since they had not been notified of any future changes such as this since 2013 and these changes would come as a shock. Members agreed that better communication was needed going forward.

4.2 Whilst seeking to engage better with our allotment holders, the Town Council had also held a meeting with the Allotment Association and feedback was received well whilst trying to improve relations with them. It was noted by all that it would be best practice for individual groups to come together to help each other to improve communication between those involved in the allotment sites - UTC staff, councillors, tenants and the Allotment Association. The Town Clerk felt that it was important for the Allotment Association to increase membership, and the Town Council would support the association in doing this, to improve communication between allotment tenants, the association and Town Council.

4.3 The Allotment Association had also suggested that it would be helpful to see more checks of the allotment sites carried out by council officials, not just the ground staff, to ensure tenants felt more engaged with the local council and that allotment plots were kept cultivated. Working group members advised that they would be happy to join up with fellow councillors and visit the allotments regularly to speak to the local tenants, and meet with the Allotment Association twice a year to filter their views to

tenants who join. Also, the Assistant Town Clerk and Finance Officer had volunteered to help out at the allotment trading hut once a month.

- 4.4 It was suggested that allotment working group meetings continue and be used as a platform for any future issues to be raised by tenants for discussion. Members also agreed that a representative from each allotment site could be nominated and that a plan be put in place for setting up this structure for communication.

5.0 Renewing Contracts

- 5.1 As part of the review of the tenancy agreement, members decided that with a very large waiting list, the Town Council would need to be stricter on plots that were not being maintained or cultivated, and on plots where tenants were in arrears.

- 5.2 An example in previous years has seen an individual pay an invoice in February which had been received in October for example. Payment terms in line with most invoices of 28 days is more than sufficient, and the Town Council cannot afford to carry these debts, particularly during the time of the pandemic.

6.0 Recommendations

- 6.1 Members are asked to review the contents of the report and accompanying copy of the powerpoint presentation from the Allotment Conference on 10 November and agree to the proposed change in fees and charges for allotments from 1 April 2023.

Appendices: Copy of the powerpoint presentation, presented to the Allotment Conference on 10 November 2021

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton



WELCOME

ALLOTMENT CONFERENCE

Wednesday 10 November 2021

ROLE OF UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

- **Section 23 of the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908.**

If the council believes that there is a demand for allotments; they have a statutory duty to provide a sufficient number of plots.

UCKFIELD ALLOTMENTS

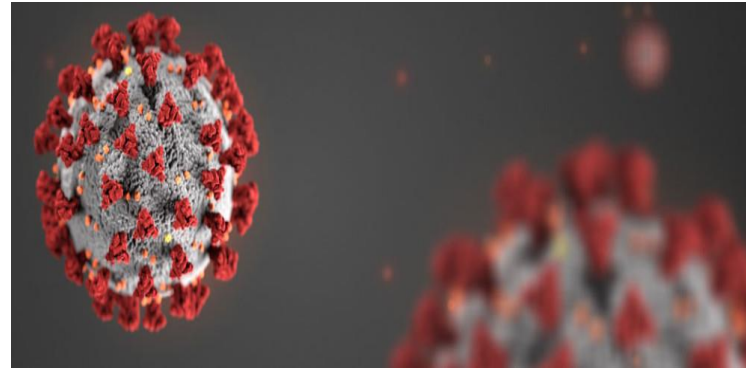
- **THERE ARE 238 ALLOTMENTS IN UCKFIELD**
- Bell Lane
- Bird in Eye
- Framfield Road East
- Framfield Road West
- Ridgewood
- West Park

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2021
not including the WATER CHARGE

- **COST OF ALLOTMENTS TO UTC = £21,040**
(£88.40 PER ALLOTMENT)
(without provision for taps, pipes and fencing)
- **CURRENT INCOME RECEIVED = £4,378**
(£18.39 PER ALLOTMENT)
- **UTC IS THEREFORE SUBSIDISING**
ALLOTMENTS
AT APPROX. £70.01 PER ALLOTMENT

**Unfortunately the difference in costs
versus income is not sustainable...**

INCREASED COSTS FACING LOCAL AUTHORITIES...



ALLOTMENT WORKING GROUP

ORIGINALLY SET UP IN JAN/FEB 2021 TO LOOK AT:

- **Costs vs fees and charges**
- **Rules and regulations**
- **Relationship between UTC and Allotment holders**



Reviews would also be undertaken of the cemetery, sports grounds and buildings over the next two years.

FEE STRUCTURE

- Detailed research undertaken into comparisons between fees and charges on sites across East and West Sussex;
- Review of allotment sizing, along with fees for water, deposits and concessions;
- It was agreed by the working group that a basic admin fee was needed to offset some of the Town Council's costs;

ALLOTMENT WORKING GROUP INITIAL PROPOSAL

- 12 months notice would be required to change the fees and charging structure;
- Original proposal was therefore intended to start on 1 April 2022, with 12 months notice from 1 April 2021;
- The intention was to simplify the administration of the annual invoicing to one annual payment by incorporating a standard charge for water on top of calculated fees.

ALLOTMENT WORKING GROUP INITIAL PROPOSAL

- Proposals were presented to E&L Committee on 22 March 2021;
- No objections were received;
- Staff circulated correspondence to Allotment Holders for 1 April 2021;

FEEDBACK



FEEDBACK RECEIVED

Allotment holders felt:

- Uckfield TC had not engaged or consulted prior to the changes;
- It was a shock, no substantial changes had been made to the fees and charges since 2012 and this would be a steep increase for some;
- The new proposed fees and charges did not assist with providing fairness;
- Uckfield TC were not strict enough in enforcing the rules and regulations;
- Didn't feel it was value for money;
- Concessions had not previously been promoted widely enough – some people receiving some who were eligible were not;

WE LISTENED...



Environment & Leisure Committee agreed in May 2021 that the working group should reconvene to fully discuss the feedback received, the proposed changes, ways to engage the association and with tenants, the to discuss the future of allotment provision.

ALLOTMENT WORKING GROUP REVIEW

- A review was undertaken of the tenant correspondence received;
- A full review was undertaken of income vs expenditure;
- We met with the tenants who were leading the petition;
- We have met with the Allotment Association;

ALLOTMENT WORKING GROUP

ROUND 2 - OUTCOMES OF REVIEW

- Maintain original pricing structure;
- Keep concessions;
- Retain deposits at fee of £52;
- Continue to keep water a separate charge from rental fees and charges. Plus these are a recharge based on the bills received from utility company;
- Introduce a £15 admin fee for all allotment plots regardless of size;

COSTS TO UCKFIELD TC

- Not including actual cost of materials for fencing/pipes/taps, annual costs in region of = **£21,040 (£88.40) per allotment**
- Income received now (not water) = £4,378
- £15 admin fee per allotment = total of £3,570
- Uckfield TC will still be subsidising = **£13,092 (£55.00 per allotment)**

ALLOTMENT WORKING GROUP ROUND 2 – NEW PROPOSAL

**Due to the need to give allotment tenants
12 months notice.**

**Notice will be given on 1 April 2022, for
the new pricing structure to start from:**

APRIL 2023

MOVING FORWARD

- All allotment holders will be encouraged to join the Allotment Association;
- The Town Council will continue to work closely with the Allotment Association with six monthly meetings;
- We would also recommend that a site rep is identified for each site, who can liaise with the Allotment Association and Town Council about issues arising on their allotment, and under-utilised plots

RULES AND REGULATIONS (TENANCY AGREEMENT)

- Uckfield TC will be undertaking a full review of the rules and regulations ready for the new pricing structure and tenancy agreements to be issued in April 2023;
- This will include looking at late payments or non-working of allotments to ensure good utilisation of allotment plots;
- Method established to improve communication between Uckfield TC and the Allotment Association;
- Uckfield TC will work with the Allotment Association to find grants/offers which will benefit allotment holders;

RULES AND REGULATIONS (TENANCY AGREEMENT)

- Uckfield TC will also be setting out in the tenancy agreement the frequency of certain grounds works and the months in which these works will be undertaken i.e. grass cutting/hedge cutting;
- This is to ensure that the tenancy agreement becomes a clear contract presenting what you should expect of us, and what we should expect of you as landlord/tenant

FENCING HEDGES AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- Deer fencing at the Framfield site alone would cost more than £14,000;
- Fencing and timber is in short and expensive supply;
- Climate change needs us to look at other ways to protect boundary lines;
- Uckfield TC will be looking at creating hedgerows using British/Native species;
- Allotment holders will also be encouraged to fence off their own areas to provide additional protection;

WATER

- We are in a water stressed climate – too much and too little;
- Household demand for water is a high proportion of effective rainfall;
- Water costs have increased year on year;
- Allotment holders will be encouraged to have water butts and tanks on allotments to cut down water usage;

FUTURE PROVISION OF ALLOTMENTS

- Currently over 100 people are on waiting list for allotments;
- New builds could mean demand will increase further;
- Uckfield TC are looking at providing allotments on UTC available green space;
- Uckfield TC will also be asking developers to provide allotments under section 106 provision;

FUTURE PROVISION OF ALLOTMENTS

**ALLOTMENTS AND GREEN SPACE ARE
MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER**

**We need to work together to ensure that the
residents of Uckfield can have the best we
can provide**

**THANK YOU
FOR LISTENING !**



Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Monday 10 January 2022

Agenda Item 8.2

TO CONSIDER IF UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL WISHES TO HOLD AN EVENT WHICH CAN BE INCORPORATED WITHIN UCKFIELD FESTIVAL WEEK 2022

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The Town Clerk was approached before the end of 2021, with an enquiry from the Uckfield Festival Association.
- 1.2 They have set their dates for the year ahead, for the period of 2 to 10 July 2022 inclusive.
- 1.3 The Chair and Vice-Chair have been appointed for the association for preparations for the 2022 festival and the individuals appointed, are:
Chair: Ian Smith
Vice-Chair: Mike Skinner
- 1.4 Uckfield Festival Association have asked if there is a possibility that the Town Council would support and organise a particular event under the umbrella of the Festival week of activities.
- 1.5 Uckfield Town Council is therefore being asked if the organisation would like to arrange a special event during that period.
- 1.6 Currently, the Town Council funds and organises Weald on the Field and Uckfield Revival.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to advise the Clerk of how they wish to proceed.

Contact Officer: Holly Goring

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 10 January 2022

Agenda Item 10.2

AGE CONCERN UPDATE

1.0 Summary report

- 1.1 Whilst the committee have not met in person or via zoom over the past months the provision of support for the elderly continues in providing the community car services.

The volunteer drivers have continued to transport service users to both the local surgeries and a variety of hospitals in Sussex, Kent and Surrey.

The groups finances have held up over the covid period thanks to grants and donations from service users.

Councillor C. Macve

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 10 January 2022

Agenda Item 10.6

LUXFORD CENTRE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1.0 Summary report

1.1 The Executive Committee met via zoom on 26 November 2021.

Reports by the House Committee advised that many of the activities had reconvened and that membership numbers were continuing to grow. A vote of thanks was recorded to the members for their hard work and perseverance.

The Treasurer explained both gas and electric supplies were on fixed term contracts so they are protected at present from the current high prices. However, there are problems with Castle Water on the supply and waste removal following the issue of a huge invoice which is still subject to discussion.

Following lengthy tries there is now a good chance that a new bookings secretary will be in position soon.

There was extensive discussion on the possibility of creating storage facilities for the tables and chairs to free up space in the halls either by an extension of lock up. This will involve huge expenditure and fundraising is to be investigated.

Councillor Chris Macve.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 Members are asked to note the above reports.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Monday 10 January 2022

Agenda Item 10.10

REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES: UCKFIELD RAILWAY LINE PARISHES COMMITTEE

1.0 Summary report

- 1.1 At the meeting of the committee on 10 January 2021, much of the discussions centred around the disappointing news of the failure of the bid to secure funding for the reopening and improvements to the line and infrastructure under the Government's 'Restoring Your Railways' Scheme. Out of eighty-nine applications, thirteen were successful and these were mainly from areas with no rail services at all. Uckfield and Lewes both have existing provisions.

The new December timetable will provide for the restoration of the off-peak hourly services although there is no mention of the 08-03 ex Uckfield and the 16:37 and 22:07 ex London Bridge being included.

Members felt the level of the service overall was reasonable but still with the occasional cancellation. However, a reconfiguration of the units would help with overcrowding at the front of the trains if the four car units were at the front and the two car units at the rear so that, once on board, passengers could move more freely throughout the train.

Councillor C. Macve

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton