



# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

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**Town Clerk – Holly Goring**

## **YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED TO A MEETING OF UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL**

**on**

**Wednesday 26 June 2024 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 20 May 2024 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

5.2 Action list – For information only

#### **6.0 COMMITTEE MINUTES**

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

- |     |                                   |                          |
|-----|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| (a) | Plans Committees                  | 3 June and 24 June 2024. |
| (b) | Environment and Leisure Committee | Meeting cancelled.       |
| (c) | General Purposes Committee        | 10 June 2024.            |

#### **7.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

- (i) The Uckfield Town Centre Regeneration Joint Committee
- (ii) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

- (iii) Gatwick Airport Consultation Group
- 8.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS**
- (i) Civic Centre Working Group
  - (ii) Events Working Group
  - (iii) Ageing Well Forum
- 9.0 TO RECEIVE, CONSIDER AND NOTE THE INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2024**
- 10.0 TO RECEIVE, CONSIDER AND APPROVE SECTION 1 - THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2024**
- 11.0 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 2024**
- 12.0 TO CONSIDER A REQUEST TO REVIEW THE OPENING TIMES OF THE TOILET(S) AT VICTORIA PLEASURE GROUND**
- 13.0 TO CONSIDER OPTIONS TO SUPPORT RESIDENTS WITH THE DISTRIBUTION OF SANDBAGS**
- 14.0 TO CONFIRM THE LIST OF TOWN COUNCIL SUPPLIER PAYMENTS BY DIRECT DEBIT FOR 2024-25**
- 15.0 TO REVIEW THE UPDATED TOWN MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR POLICIES**
- 16.0 TO CONSIDER A DRAFT SCHEME OF DELEGATION**
- 17.0 TO SIGN AND SEAL THE LEASE AGREEMENT FOR THE SMALL HALL, ADJACENT TO FORESTERS CHAPEL**
- 18.0 TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS**
- 19.0 SIGNING OF GRAVE CERTIFICATES AND TO NOTE TRANSFERS OF DEEDS OF GRANT**
- 20.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED**
- 21.0 TOWN CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- 22.0 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- 23.0 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: -
- 23.1 To consider an update on Osborn Hall



**Town Clerk**  
20 June 2024

# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the Annual Statutory Meeting of **UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber of the Civic Centre on Monday 20 May 2024 at 7.00 pm

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

## **IN ATTENDANCE:**

District Councillor K. Williams  
3 members of the public including one former councillor.

Sarah D'Alessio Assistant Town Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer  
Holly Goring Town Clerk  
Minutes taken by Holly Goring

## **1.0 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR**

Seven nominations were received in advance of the meeting for the position of Town Mayor. The councillor(s) nominated for Town Mayor were:

Councillor K. Bedwell  
Councillor D. French  
Councillor C. Macve

Councillors D. French and C. Macve wished to step down due to other commitments.

**FC.01.05.24** With no further nominations, members **RESOLVED** for Councillor Karen Bedwell to be elected as Town Mayor.

### **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 from the former Mayor Councillor J. Love.  
Councillor K. Bedwell then signed the declaration of acceptance of office in the presence of the Proper Officer (Town Clerk).

## **2.0 ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR**

The Town Clerk advised that three nominations had been put forward for the role of Deputy Mayor. The names put forward for Deputy Mayor, were:

Councillor C. Macve  
Councillor S. Mayhew

The Town Clerk asked if either member wished to step down from the nominations. Neither wished to. The Town Clerk then asked members whether

they wished to vote by a show of hands or signed ballot. Two councillors requested a signed ballot.

The first signed ballot resulted in six votes in favour of Councillor C. Macve and six votes in favour of Councillor S. Mayhew, with two votes removed due to these being unsigned. Analysis of the unsigned votes, would have also resulted in a tie. This left the newly elected Mayor in a difficult position.

After much consideration, Councillor C. Macve offer to rescind his nomination.

**FC.02.05.24** With ten votes in favour, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor S. Mayhew be appointed as Deputy Town Mayor for 2024-25.

### **3.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from Councillor B. Cox, and County Councillors Chris and Claire Dowling.

### **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**

None.

### **6.0 MINUTES**

6.1 To resolve that the minutes of the Full Council meeting of the 8 April 2024 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

**FC.03.05.24** It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Full Council on the 8 April 2024 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

### 6.2 Action List

Members noted the contents of the action list, and agreed to remove:  
FC77.12.23 – Aboricultural report for a Lime Tree in Snatts Road Cemetery (as the work had now been completed)

### **7.0 COMMITTEE MINUTES**

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

(a) Environment & Leisure Committee of the 15 April 2024

**FC.04.05.24** It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Environment & Leisure Committee of the 15 April 2024.

(b) Plans Committee of the 22 April and 13 May 2024

**FC.05.05.24** It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the Plans Committee of the 22 April and 13 May 2024.

(c) General Purposes Committee of the 29 April 2024

**FC.06.05.24** It was **RESOLVED** to note the acts and proceedings of the General Purposes Committee of the 29 April 2024.

## **8.0 TO CONSIDER THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

Members were presented with a report which highlighted the benefits of having a scheme of delegation in addition to the detail included within the Town Council's standing orders, and financial regulations.

One member confirmed that they felt this would be right and proper, and marginally preferred the style of the Gillingham Scheme of Delegation as a framework to work with, as the contents were presented clearly. A second member also supported their layout.

**FC.07.05.24** It was **RESOLVED** for a draft scheme of delegation to be prepared for senior officers and considered by members of General Purposes Committee, prior to Full Council on 26 June 2024. It was suggested that the layout of the Gillingham TC scheme, be followed.

## **9.0 TO REVIEW THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE TOWN COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES**

The terms of reference were shared for each of the Town Council's committees, to enable members to review the contents and assess whether any updates would be required since the last annual review in May 2023.

**FC.08.05.24** It was **RESOLVED** to accept the modifications (proposed changes set out by tracked changes), and adopt the Terms of Reference for Uckfield Town Council's committees.

## **10.0 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE UNDER MENTIONED STANDING COMMITTEES**

General Purposes - 9 members

**FC.09.05.24** It was **RESOLVED** that the nine members of the General Purposes Committee be as follows:-

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

Environment and Leisure - 9 members

**FC.10.05.24** It was **RESOLVED** that the nine members of the Environment and Leisure Committee be as follows:-

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

Plans - 7 members

**FC.11.05.24** It was **RESOLVED** that six members of the Plans Committee be as follows:-

Cllrs. K. Bedwell, D. Bennett, J. Love, C. Macve, S. Mayhew and P. Ullmann.

This left one seat vacant.

Prior to adjourning to consider the appointment of Chairmen and Vice-chairmen for the various committees, Members were reminded of the Council's Standing Orders relating to voting on appointments which stated:-

*"15.3 - Nor should any Member of the Council be Chairman of more than one committee or sub-committee at any one time."*

and

*"15.4 - "Neither shall the Mayor or Deputy Mayor be Chairman of a full committee."*

**GP.01.05.24** In considering the appointment of Chair of the General Purposes Committee, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor. D. Ward be re-appointed as Chair.

**GP.02.05.24** In considering the appointment of Vice-Chair of the General Purposes Committee, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor. C. Macve be re-appointed as Vice-Chair.

**EL.01.05.24** In considering the appointment of Chair of the Environment and Leisure Committee, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor. A. Smith be appointed as Chair.

**EL.02.05.24** In considering the appointment of Vice-Chair of the Environment and Leisure Committee, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor. B. Reed be appointed as Vice-Chair.

**P.01.05.24** In considering the appointment of Chair of the Plans Committee, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor. J. Love be appointed as Chair.

**P.02.05.24** In considering the appointment of Vice-Chair of the Plans Committee, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor. C. Macve be re-appointed as Vice-Chair.

#### **11.0 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 Clerk 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 Town Clerk asked the Chair of General Purposes Committee, Councillor D. Ward, if they wished to sit on Personnel Sub-Committee. Councillor D. Ward confirmed that she did wish to have a seat on Personnel Sub-Committee.

##### **Personnel - 5 members**

Four of the seats were filled, with a further three members selecting the sub-committee as their third choice (Councillors K. Bedwell, V. Frost and J. Love). These members had an opportunity to take the fifth seat.

The Town Clerk then asked members whether they wished to vote by a show of hands or signed ballot. Two councillors requested a signed ballot. This resulted in a tie between two councillors and the third councillor receiving less votes.

A second signed ballot was undertaken.

**FC.12.05.24** It was **RESOLVED** that the members of the Personnel Sub-committee be as follows:-  
Councillors. D. French, J. Love, M. McClafferty, A. Smith and D. Ward.

The Chair of General Purposes Committee, Councillor D. Ward had already expressed an interest in Finance Sub-Committee.

Finance – 5 members

Four seats were automatically filled, with a further two members interested. Councillor P. Selby wished to rescind his interest in the sub-committee.

**FC.13.05.24** It was **RESOLVED** that the members of the Finance Sub-committee be as follows:-  
Councillors B. Cox, D. Manvell, S. Mayhew, D. Ward and P. Ullmann.

The meeting then adjourned to allow the sub-committees to meet and elect a Chair and Vice-chair.

**PS.01.05.24** In considering the appointment of Chair of the Personnel Sub-committee it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor D. French be appointed as Chair.

**PS.02.05.24** In considering the appointment of Vice-Chair of the Personnel Sub-committee it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor A. Smith be appointed as Vice-Chair.

The position of Chair and Vice-Chair would need to be appointed at the first meeting of Finance Sub-Committee, once all members were available to nominate and vote.

The Voice Editorial Panel

The Clerk advised that two Members had expressed an interest in the Editorial Panel. One member wished to withdraw if other interest was put forward. Further interest was expressed by members around the table:

**FC.14.05.24** It was subsequently **RESOLVED** that the four members of the Voice Editorial Panel would be as follows:-  
Councillors. K. Bedwell, D. French, S. Mayhew and P. Selby.

**12.0 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

**FC.15.05.24** 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	<b>2</b>	Cllr Donna French Cllr Peter Selby
Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group	<b>Up to 4</b>	Cllr Val Frost Cllr Chris Macve
Gatwick Airport Consultation Group	<b>3</b>	Cllr Chris Macve Cllr Peter Selby Cllr Peter Ullmann

### GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Wealden Citizens Advice	<b>1</b>	Cllr Angie Smith
Emergency Planning Co-ordinators	<b>4</b> (two south of river/two north of river)	Cllr Karen Bedwell Cllr Duncan Bennett Cllr Donna French Cllr Val Frost
Wealden Volunteering (formerly UVC)	<b>1</b>	Cllr Peter Selby
Wealden District Association of Local Councils	<b>(2)</b> 1 member and 1 substitute	Cllr Val Frost Cllr Diane Ward
Wealden District Association of Local Councils Parish Planning Panel/Local Plan Engagement Cluster	<b>(2)</b> 1 member and 1 substitute	Cllr Karen Bedwell Cllr Jackie Love

### AGM meetings only:

East Sussex Association of Local Councils	<b>1</b>	Cllr Diane Ward
Ridgewood Village Hall Management Committee	<b>1</b>	Cllr Spike Mayhew

### ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

All Weather Pitch Operational Advisory Group	<b>(2)</b> (1 member and 1 substitute)	Cllr Chris Macve Cllr Peter Selby
Conservators of Ashdown Forest	<b>(2)</b> (1 member and 1 substitute)	Cllr Donna French Cllr Bernadette Reed
Local Nature Reserve Supporters Group	<b>(2)</b> (1 member and 1 substitute)	<i>To be appointed at first E&amp;L Committee after Annual Stat meeting</i>
Luxford Centre Management Committee	<b>1</b>	Cllr Val Frost
Stakeholder Group exploring provision of Tennis facilities in Uckfield with Uckfield College	<b>(2)</b> (1 member and 1 substitute)	Town Clerk



Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee	1	Cllr Chris Macve
Uckfield Youth Club Board	(2) (1 member and 1 substitute)	Cllr Donna French Cllr Dan Manvell
Wealden Bus Alliance/Weald Link Forum	1	Cllr Angie Smith
Wealden Food Partnership Advisory Group	1	Cllr Ben Cox

**AGM meetings only:**

Uckfield & District Twinning Association	1	Cllr Spike Mayhew
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**13.0 TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO FULL COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS**

Members considered a report which provided information on four working groups which currently fell under the remit of Full Council. This included the Civic Centre Working Group, Uckfield Dementia Forum (to be renamed Ageing Well Forum), Events Working Group and Infrastructure Working Group.

It was suggested that the Events Working Group continue in its current form, due to two events coming up very shortly – D-Day Beacon Lighting and Weald on the Field. The Ageing Well Forum needed to appoint a new Town Council representative, and it was suggested that as infrastructure was such an important matter in the town’s growth that this be managed through organisation-wide member workshops.

Members were reminded to appoint no less than three and no more than five members to each working group.

**FC.16.05.24 Members RESOLVED to:**

(i) confirm appointments for the Civic Centre Working Group as:

Civic Centre Working Group –  
*Councillors Bennett, French, Mayhew and Ward*

Events Working Group -  
*Councillors Bedwell, French, Frost, Love, Mayhew.*

(ii) appoint Councillor K. Bedwell and P. Selby as Town Council representatives on the Ageing Well Forum, with the intention that one of these members will take on the role of Chair or Vice-Chair in 2024;

(iii) confirm that the Infrastructure Working Group cease, and that this becomes an organisation-wide initiative, through member workshops.

**14.0 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE TOWN COUNCIL’S STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

Town Councillors were provided with revised versions of the Town Council Standing Orders, and Financial Regulations. The Standing Orders had only minor changes, whereas the Financial Regulations had needed a substantial update in line with the recent release of the revised model financial regulations (April

2024). Although much of the content was similar, the Town Clerk had moved the Town Council's existing regulations around to ensure that the two documents aligned more closely. The model regulations also included more detail on online banking, security, and changes to procurement guidance once again.

Councillor J. Love wished to query para. 34.5, and why the Estates & Facilities Manager hadn't been listed as opening the tender documents. The Town Clerk clarified that this had not been referenced in the model financial regulations but both the Town Clerk and Estates & Facilities Manager were listed as being present during the opening of the tenders, so would continue to include this. The standing orders would be updated accordingly.

Councillor D. French noted that in the standing orders it still requested that members stood when speaking, and questioned whether this should still be a requirement. The Town Clerk confirmed that this could be removed now, as the members used the microphones so could be clearly heard by members of the public and press (para. 3.12).

**FC.17.05.24** Subject to two minor changes on paragraphs 3.12 and 34.5, it was **RESOLVED** to adopt the Town Council's standing orders.

Councillor D. Manvell noted a point in relation to bad debts, 13.4 and noted that this had already been delegated to General Purposes Committee, but there had been discussions elsewhere that this might be a Council matter. The Town Clerk confirmed that the annual write off of under and over payments was taken to General Purposes Committee, unless time didn't allow, and a bad debts report was frequently taken to General Purposes Committee under confidential business. The Town Clerk would therefore ensure that the wording aligned within other documentation.

Councillor Smith referred to paragraph 6.10 and 12.2, and questioned the definition of 'value for money' as this didn't always mean the cheapest product. It was recommended that we provided clarification of the wording; incorporating the public sector definition, within the financial regulations.

Councillor Manvell, also referred to the new procurement guidelines, and mentioned discussed that had taken place at Wealden DC, whereby, there was the opportunity to select suppliers with a local connection. It was suggested that we consider adding this at a later point.

Councillor Smith, questioned whether we needed to reference the newly created scheme of delegation. The Town Clerk confirmed that this could be done, once the scheme had been finalised.

**FC.18.05.24** Subject to the above amendments, it was **RESOLVED** to adopt the revised Financial Regulations for Uckfield Town Council.

## **15.0 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 which the Town Council signed up to in September 2022.

**FC.19.05.24** It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the Town Council's Code of Conduct Policy.

**16.0 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S ASSET REGISTER**

This item would be deferred to the next Full Council meeting on 26 June 2024.

**17.0 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 other.

Members noted the contents of the report, and the annual subscriptions and memberships in place for 2024-25.

**18.0 TO RECEIVE THE TOWN COUNCIL'S CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2024-25**

Members were provided with a calendar of meetings up until May 2025, 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 the content, and received the calendar for 2024-25.

**19.0 TO NOTE THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO COMPLETE AUDITS UNTIL THE ANNUAL STATUTORY MEETING IN MAY 2025**

Members were presented with a report which confirmed audits were on track for completion for 2023-24. A new schedule had been drawn up for 2024-25 which members were asked to approve.

**FC.20.05.24** Members **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) complete the last audit for 2023/24 and;
- (ii) approve the proposed schedule for member audits for the financial year 2024/25.

**20.0 TO RECEIVE UPDATES FROM REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

(i) The Uckfield Town Centre Regeneration Joint Committee

Nothing to report at present.

(ii) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Nothing to report at present.

(iii) Gatwick Airport Consultation Panel

Nothing to report at present.

**21.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM FULL COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS**

(i) Uckfield – Events Working Group

Members were asked to support the forthcoming D-Day Beacon lighting event which was taking place on Thursday 6 June, and subsequently noted the report.

(ii) Ageing Well Forum

Nothing to report at present.

(iii) Civic Centre Working Group

Nothing to report at present.

(iv) Infrastructure Working Group

Nothing to report at present.

## **22.0 TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS**

Councillor Macve wished to acknowledge the work of former Mayor, Councillor Love, who had been an absolute star. He felt Councillor Love had been a shining example, and wished to record his thanks to both Councillor Love in her former role as Town Mayor, and Councillor French in her role as Deputy Mayor.

Members wholeheartedly agreed, supported this statement and noted the report.

## **23.0 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS PREVIOUSLY NOTIFIED**

No questions were received by the deadline.

## **24.0 TO CONSIDER A MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR B. REED**

Councillor B. Reed had put forward a motion to request that Uckfield Town Council work with the 'Weald to Waves' initiative and support the mapping of key wildlife corridors, through pledging and mapping local nature reserves, local wildlife sites, and woodland areas. The initiative sought to map 100 miles of nature recovery across Sussex, from the West Sussex coastline to the Ashdown Forest and High Weald.

Councillor Reed also added that local geological sites should be incorporated into the mapping. Councillor Reed referred to the work of the late CEO of the Conservators of Ashdown Forest who was involved in setting up Knepp and this initiative, and the importance of nominating environmental assets around the Uckfield area.

### **FC21.05.24**

Members voted to support the motion put forward by Councillor B. Reed and **RESOLVE** for Uckfield Town Council to sign up to the 'Weald to Waves' initiative and pledge to mapping key environmental assets in the Uckfield area – such as mapping the location of local nature reserves, local wildlife sites, local geological sites and woodland areas.

## **25.0 TO CONSIDER A RESPONSE TO STABLE GREEN ENERGY'S NEW GRID STABILITY PROJECT IN SAND HILL LANE, FRAMFIELD**

Stable Green Energy had sent out correspondence to local District Councillors, relating to a large scheme in the Framfield parish.

One member advised that the principle was welcomed, but the reality was somewhat different as it would see 480 units, the size of shipping containers in a field. Their screening would be ok in time, but the design is shown at maturity, so there would be a period of time, whereby residents would be impacted.

A similar matter had recently been discussed at Wealden District Council for another area. One member wished to see an environmental impact assessment undertaken for this application, and would consult with a District Councillor who had undertaken substantial research in a possible scheme in the Pevensy area.

It was suggested that it would be useful to consult with Framfield Parish Council, and it was also suggested, that members discuss this subject at the next Plans Committee on 3 June 2024, in order to report back to members at Full Council on 26 June.

For the purpose of noting only, Councillor D. Manvell advised that he was about

to be appointed as a member of Wealden DC's Planning Committee North and therefore wished it to be minuted, that he had not participated in the discussion on this agenda item. Members supported this proposal.

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

No grave certificates had been received.

#### **27.0 TOWN MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The newly elected Town Mayor, Councillor K. Bedwell thanked councillors for putting their confidence in her. She wished to thank Cllr Macve who stepped aside for Cllr Mayhew and her. It was a privilege and honour to represent Uckfield as Mayor. Councillor Love had been an amazing Mayor for the last three years and represented the town and residents with enthusiasm and passion. She could only hope to continue building on the work of former Mayors.

The Mayor had lived in Uckfield for 30 years. Her children were born and had grown up in Uckfield and she had been involved in many areas of the town from primary schools, secondary schools to volunteering with Ridgewood Village Hall. Uckfield Town Council had an amazingly important role to play as the town grew and developed with the local plan. Councillor Bedwell did not believe in politics at the Town Council level, and instead believed that as a group the council could work together to make resident and business voices heard and shape the plans for the town. It was very important that the council represented the old and the new, and built an inclusive town which benefited all and made all feel a part of. Councillor Bedwell promised to put her heart and soul into representing all the voices and representing all at UTC to the best that she could over the next 12 months.

And to finish the meeting on some positive, news, the Town Mayor asked for members to join her in congratulating Councillor Ben Cox and his partner, on the arrival of a beautiful baby boy. Samuel Austin Matthew Cox was born on 8 May at 10.53pm weighing 8lb 10 ounces. Members wished them well and welcomed Samuel to the world.

#### **28.0 TOWN CLERKS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Town Clerk advised that Wealden DC were running Code of Conduct Training for Chairs, and new Chairs of committees would be invited to attend.

The Town Clerk advised how wonderful it had been to see photographs of Mr Smith and Mr Isaacson of Brighter Uckfield enjoying an afternoon at Buckingham Palace for His Majesty The King's Garden Party. They had been invited to the event following the King's Award for Voluntary Service in February, this year.

Councillor J. Love had arranged a meeting with Southern Water and a representative of Rother & Wealden's Environmental Health Service, and this would hopefully be taking place later in June to review the fly issue from the Uckfield sewage treatment works.

The meeting closed at 8.34pm.

# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

## ACTION LIST – FOR INFORMATION ONLY

### FULL COUNCIL

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<p><b><u>FC.105.02.17</u></b></p> <p><b><u>FC.95.01.20</u></b></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 <b>RESOLVED</b> 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; (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>The Council will be advertising its intention to apply for confirmation once covid restrictions have eased. The byelaws must then be held for at least one month at the offices for inspection by the public, before any representations are reported back as part of the package of information, to DEFRA.</p>
<p><b><u>FC115.04.19</u></b></p>	<p><u>9.0 To consider a motion submitted by Councillor Donna French</u> It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to support the motion put forward, and; “reinvestigate the possibility of part funding a traffic warden; entering into a discussion with Hailsham, Crowborough and Polegate, with a view to joint funding a shared traffic warden, employed via Sussex Police.”</p>	<p>08.04.19</p>	<p>HG</p>	<p>It was hoped that Wealden District Council and Sussex Police would re-investigate the options available in the next 12-24months.</p>
<p><b><u>FC.30.09.20</u></b></p>	<p><u>12.0 To review a report by Councillor A. Smith on the need for affordable homes in Uckfield</u> After a detailed discussion, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to request that the Town Clerk write to the Housing Minister Rt Hon Robert Jenrick with a copy of this report and advise Wealden DC’s planning department of these discussions along with neighbouring parish councils.</p>	<p>14.09.20</p>	<p>HG</p>	<p>In progress.</p>

<u>Resolution No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Date Raised</u>	<u>Action By</u>	<u>Date Complete</u>
<b><u>FC.55.10.21</u></b>	Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the motion put forward by Councillor D. French and for staff to make contact with the County Council: <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) have submitted an expression of interest to central government to draw down funding to the county of East Sussex, and: (ii) if ESCC have expressed an interest, that Uckfield Town Council lobby for such facilities to be introduced in Uckfield.”</i>	25.10.21	HG	Having understood the requirements from the recent funding round we now have time to prepare for the next funding round and have the necessary evidence and associated costs available.
<b><u>FC.94.02.22</u></b>	<u>11.0 To consider a further motion by Councillor B. Cox, relating to food poverty</u> Members unanimously <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the motion put forward by Councillor B. Cox to:  <i>What the council still needs to do</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on the results of the schools' questionnaire and review the recommendations;</li> <li>• Be open to any new ways to offer 'out of term' food for young people and where needed, push the higher tiers of local government to back schemes;</li> <li>• Review and offer a final report on food poverty in March 2023 before the end of the term of this Town Council;</li> </ul> <i>Summary.</i> Food poverty in Uckfield is an issue that is growing still. However, Uckfield Town Council have done a number of things to help ease the issue. The next year will see some very challenging times and it is important that the Council keep up the work in highlighting and where possible, easing food poverty. A review is needed in 2023 and a final report offered to the Town Council. The attached report within appendix A contains statistics for Uckfield in terms of earnings and age by ward should be offered to our local authorities (District and County) to highlight some local needs.	28.02.22	All	In progress.
<b><u>FC.63.10.23</u></b>	<u>13.0 To receive a response from East Sussex County Council to a previous motion submitted requesting the installation of a pedestrian crossing</u> Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to accept the proposed amendment to Councillor Bennett's original motion and set out to: “maintain this as the ideal site and the path that students were taking to reach school, in order to emphasise the views of the young people. Uckfield Town Council would be very happy to explore the option of community match funding and fund a feasibility study, as the Town Council felt it was important to concentrate on this area,	30.10.23	HG	The Town Clerk met with a representative of ESCC and the local County Councillor at 8.30am on Fri 1 December 2023 and monitored pedestrian movements across London Road from North Row.  In response to the resolution of Council – the Town Clerk will now

	and not further north of the town. It was also suggested that any data or feedback from the feasibility study and associated speed surveys, should reflected in any future updates to the Sustrans report.”			make contact with ESCC and request a feasibility study for this section of road, and associated speed surveys.
<b><u>Resolution No.</u></b>	<b><u>Details</u></b>	<b><u>Date Raised</u></b>	<b><u>Action By</u></b>	<b><u>Date Complete</u></b>
<b><u>FC.68.10.23</u></b>	<u>22.0 Chairman’s Announcements</u> Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to support postal workers and write to Royal Mail to ask how they were going to address the current shortfall in staffing levels and support residents and households of Uckfield.	30.10.23	DB/HG	In progress.
<b><u>FC.76.12.23</u></b>	<u>11.0 To consider a motion from Councillor D. French</u> After some discussion, members <b>RESOLVED</b> to put forward nominations for the Uckfield Rugby Club, the Family Hub (as Childrens Centres were at risk of closure) and the Highlands Inn (as the last remaining pub in the south of Uckfield and their support to community lunches) as Assets of Community Value.	11.12.23	HG	In progress.
<b><u>FC.98.01.24</u></b>	<u>23.2 To consider the recommendations of the Finance Sub-Committee</u> Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the addition of Cyber Cover to the Town Council’s Buildings Insurance policy.	15.01.24	HG	Application in progress.
<b><u>FC.93.01.24</u></b>	<u>16.0 To consider the response from the Lloyds Banking Group to the letter sent by Uckfield Town Council</u> Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to: (i) approve the submission of a formal complaint to the Financial Ombudsman; (ii) to send a response to the Lloyds Banking Group; (iii) to send a letter to LINK in relation to banking hubs, and; (iv) to send a letter to the MP expressing our concerns of both the loss of face to face banking services, and ATMs.	15.01.24	HG/PU	A letter has been sent to Lloyds Banking Group, and the complaint to the Ombudsman is in process. The letter to the MP will need to wait until after the election.



<u>Resolution No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Date Raised</u>	<u>Action By</u>	<u>Date Complete</u>
<b><u>FC.105.02.24</u></b>	<u>14.0 To consider the issues being experienced with parking at Victoria Pleasure Ground</u> Members <b>RESOLVED</b> 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.	26.02.24	HG	In progress.
<b><u>FC.115.04.24</u></b>	<u>10.0 To consider current issues with pavement parking and proposals for undertaking a campaign</u> With unanimous support, members <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve for the Town Clerk and Marketing & Community Engagement Officer to proceed with a communications campaign around poor parking behaviour.	08.04.24	HG/ WH	In progress.
<b><u>FC21.05.24</u></b>	<u>24.0 To consider a motion from Councillor B. Reed</u> Members voted to support the motion put forward by Councillor B. Reed and <b>RESOLVE</b> for Uckfield Town Council to sign up to the 'Weald to Waves' initiative and pledge to mapping key environmental assets in the Uckfield area – such as mapping the location of local nature reserves, local wildlife sites, local geological sites and woodland areas.	20.05.24	HG	In progress.

# Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

## UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

<https://www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk/your-council/council-finance/> LINK TO COUNCIL WEBSITE AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2024, 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 2023/24 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. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty 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 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. <i>(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 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 2023-24 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2022-23 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 2022/23 AGAR <i>(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes)</i> .	✓		
<b>O. (For local councils only)</b> 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).

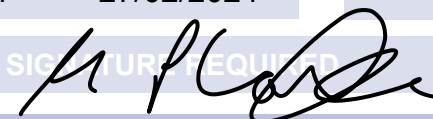
Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

09/11/2023 19/06/2024 27/02/2024

M PLATTEN CPFA INTERNAL AUDITOR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit



Date 19/06/2024

**\*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

19 June 2024

Dear Holly

**Uckfield Town Council**

**Final Audit Report**

The internal audit for the 23-24 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.

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 23-24. Recommendations are set out at Appendix A-C. I set out a schedule of tests not completed at this audit at Appendix D, these tests are not relevant to this Council.

The audit was carried out during three visits to the Council. The interim audits were completed on 9 November and 27 February, these concentrated on in year financial transactions and governance controls. The final audit was carried out on 16 June and concentrated on the statement of accounts and balance sheet.

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### **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. In the course of my testing I confirmed there is a clear audit trail from the accounts to supporting documentation such as invoices. The Council received a clear audit opinion for 22-23, so there is nothing that needs to be taken into account for the current financial year.

I checked the brought forward balance sheet on the Sage Accounting System. The opening cash balance on the trial balance at 1.4.23 was agreed to the audited accounts for 22-23.

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 note that the Members' Audit Policy has recently been reviewed. At the time of my audit, (November 2023), no member audit had been completed since July. I remind members that checks of this nature are only meaningful if they are completed on a timely basis, and I therefore recommend that member audits should be completed within 4-6 weeks of the month end under review.

The Council is registered for VAT, and submits VAT returns to HMRC on a quarterly basis. I reviewed the VAT return for quarter 2. The return was completed on 4 November 2023 and VAT of £5,446 was reclaimed from HMRC. I checked the VAT return and test checked that entries in the return could be agreed to VAT reports extracted from the Sage system.

I discussed VAT accounting with the RFO. There has been no review of VAT arrangements for some time. It may be beneficial to commission a VAT review from a sector expert to :

- Review VAT accounting arrangements, to ensure Council is accounting for VAT efficiently
- Review any partial exemption and option to tax arrangements in place for Council assets to ensure these are properly documented and understood by Council officers.

I recommend the Parkinson Partnership. [Home \(parkinsonpartnership.uk\)](http://parkinsonpartnership.uk)

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The RFO should consider developing a Finance Improvement Plan, with realistic targets for implementation of recommendations identified in my audit reports, together with other opportunities identified by the RFO and Town Clerk.

## **Final Audit**

The accounting statements have been agreed back to year end reports produced by the Council's external accountant. These have been checked back to the year-end trial balance. I was not able to agree one nominal code from the AGAR back to the trial balance

<b>Nominal code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>£ per trial balance</b>	<b>£ per accounts working paper</b>	<b>Difference</b>
1100	Debtors Control	35,082	26,487	8,595

The RFO identified reasons for this imbalance – it is a small number of sales invoices posted to sage but not picked up when the accounts were compiled. The accounts will need to be adjusted. This should have been picked up prior to the compilation of the statement of accounts.

All comparatives reported in the financial statements have been agreed back to the audited 22-23 accounts, as published on the Council website.

Whilst I was able to agree the accounting statement back to the trial balance, the exercise was complex and time consuming. This is for the following reasons:

- draft accounts were produced prior to year end journals being posted to the Sage accounting system. These journals should be posted before the accounts are produced, so a clear link to the accounting system can be checked.
- The trial balance includes fixed assets. This is not required in the Town Council sector, and makes the general ledger less user friendly

I recommend that the Council ensures that all journals are posted to Sage before the accounts are produced in 24-25. I also recommend that consideration is given to :

- Removing fixed assets and capital accounts from the trial balance
- Ceasing production of company style accounts, which are currently produced each year but not really used.

The Council may need to use an accountant with sector knowledge to assist with this.

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

## **Final Audit**

Non pay expenditure per box 6 to the accounts amounted to £ 826,502, up from £741,374 in 22-23 .

Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are based on NALC templates. Both documents were reviewed at the Full Council meeting in May 2023. I will check the May 24 review at next audit.

The Council has a clear process for making payment to suppliers, compliant with financial regulations. 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 for the first 7 months of the financial year. I was able to confirm the following for all transactions:

- Payment agreed to invoice
- 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
- Bank payment instruction signed by 2 councillors
- Expenditure appropriate for this Council

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

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

**First Interim Audit**

The Council is insured with Zurich Municipal on a standard local council package for employer liability and public liability plus some smaller assets. The policy was in date at time of audit, with an expiry date of 19 June 2024. I reviewed this policy at my June audit, so no further work has been completed at the first interim audit. This will be next checked at my 24-25 interim audit.

The Council has raised the level of fidelity insurance with Zurich, following a recommendation I raised at last audit. This has not yet been resolved, but I am satisfied that the Council is reviewing cover in this area. The Council does not have any cyber insurance in place at present. I recommend that cyber risk is added to the Council's risk assessment. The Council should work with the Council's ICT provider to assess whether cyber insurance should be purchased.

**Second Interim Audit**

The Council completed the review of its Risk Management Policy at the Full Council meeting on 11 December 2023 (resolution FC 75.12.23). This followed on from a detailed review at the meeting of the General Purposes Committee on 4 December (resolution GP33.12.33). The Risk Management Policy identifies risks and controls put in place to counter these risks. I am satisfied that the Council has met obligations in this area for 23-24.

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

**First Interim Audit**

The precept and budget setting process for the 2024-25 financial year is under way. An initial review of fees and charges and new initiatives has been commenced by officers and councillors, with a budget planning meeting held with councillors in October. The draft budget will be reviewed by Full Council in December, with Finance and Full Council meetings in January to finalise the precept and budget. I am satisfied that plans are in place to meet precepting authority deadlines.

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I confirmed regular budget monitoring reports, as required by financial regulations, continue to be produced for Council meetings, by reviewing minutes. I confirmed the following:

- General Purposes and Luxfords – quarter one reports delivered to the September committee meeting
- Environment and Leisure – position at end of August delivered to the October committee meeting
- Quarter 1 position for whole Council was reported in July, with quarter 2 due to be reported in December.

I will review the Council's reserve balances at my year end audit.

### **Second Interim Audit**

The Council has completed the budget and precept setting process for 2024-25. The budget and precept for 24-25 were approved at the Full Council meeting on 15 January 2024. A precept of £1,127,348 was approved ( minute FC 91.01.24) The budget is supported by a strategic plan for 24-29, and an annual plan for 24-25. I have confirmed that the budget process included a detailed review of individual budget areas by individual committees and consideration of the draft budget in December 23.

### **Final Audit**

Reserves at 31 March 2024 were £1,242,380 (22-23 £1,291,130).

Earmarked reserves at 31.3.24 were £854,271.

There is £259K held in a building maintenance reserve , £60K for the Weald Hall floor , 75K for Town Centre consultancy and £45K for West Park Pavilion. The Council has too many earmarked reserves, many of which holding balances below £5k. The Council should review earmarked reserves in 24-25, and consolidate reserves wherever possible . I would suggest the number of reserves could be reduced by two thirds.

General reserves at year end were £372K. This represents 35% of precept, which is at the lower mid-point of recommended levels set out in the NALC Practitioners' Guide. This is an appropriate level of reserve for a larger town council with well-developed earmarked reserves.

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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 for**

**First Interim Audit**

I reviewed controls in place at Luxfords restaurant and bar at my first interim audit. Controls over income were generally satisfactory, with income properly recorded on the sage system, and agreed back to z readings produced from the till. Stock was reasonably secure, I was pleased to note that the Council employs an external stocktaker to undertake quarterly stocktakes, reconciling stock to sales and purchase records. I have however, identified a number of recommendation for improvement:

- There is no documented till procedure. Whilst simple instructions are in place, a properly documented till process setting out what staff need to do at the start of the shift, during shift and at cashing up should be drawn up and used to train staff;
- All staff log into the till using a single fob. This means there is no audit trail as to who is accessing the till. All staff should use individual key fobs when accessing the till;
- There is no sign off by restaurant and bar staff that the float is correct at the start of the shift. Whilst it appears that the float is counted, evidence should be provided of who counted the float and when;
- The end of shift count is completed by a member of bar/restaurant staff, then reperformed by the Clerk or RFO at a later date, before banking. It is best practice to ensure that all cash counts are completed with 2 people present, and that this is evidenced. For efficiency, it is recommended that the shift end cash count should be carried out in the main council office, the count can then be completed by a Luxfords officer and counter signed by the RFO or Clerk. Cash should then be held in the safe until banked;
- The RFO banks cash at the post office once a week. This is time consuming, and it is not sensible for a council officer to be carrying cash across town. I recommend that the Council should employ a cash collection company to bank cash.

**Second Interim Audit.**

I reviewed cemetery allotment and room booking income at my second interim audit.

**Cemetery Income**

I confirmed that fees for 23-24 were approved at the Environment and Leisure Committee meeting in March 23. I selected a sample of credits from the nominal ledger for cemetery

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income. For all transactions selected I was able to agree entry in the sage sales ledger back to burial records. Correct fees were charged in all cases.

### **Allotment Income**

The Council has 245 allotments 245 in total. I confirmed that a satisfactory invoicing process is in place. I have one recommendation, the Council may wish to considering issuing direct debit forms to allotment holders at next renewal, this would reduce the administration workload in collecting relatively small items of income.

### **Room bookings**

I confirmed that room hire charges for 23-24 were agreed at the General Purposes Committee meeting on 21 November 2022. The Council has installed the Hallmaster booking system for hall and room booking. All bookings are entered on to the system after booking forms have been sent to the Council by hirers. Invoices are then produced from the Sage accounting system, which collects data from Hallmaster. I carried out the following testing:

- A sample of bookings were selected from the Hallmaster booking system for the 23-24 financial year. In all cases I was able to confirm these bookings resulted in generation of an invoice, showing correct booking and fee information.
- Product data for room hire on the Sage sales ledger system was checked and agreed to approved fees and charges for 23-24.

I have one recommendation. Standing information on fees is updated annually following approval of fees and charges by Council. This information is input by the RFO – it should have a second check from the Town Clerk before the revised fees go live, evidence of this check should be retained.

### **Sales Ledger**

I reviewed the sales ledger at 27.2.24. Debts outstanding at this date were £29,460, 65% of this current. There is £6,190 worth of debt more than 90 days old. I reviewed the 3 largest debts with the RFO, all debts appear to be managed. Aged debtor reports are reported quarterly to councillors with information on problematic debts.

### **Final Audit**

Precept per box 2 to the accounts was £1,051,151 (22-23 £983,076). This has been agreed to third party documentation provided by external audit.

Income per box 3 to the accounts was £561,731 (22-23 £490,071). No further testing carried out at year end, sufficient assurance obtained at previous audits.

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

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## **Second Interim Audit.**

Petty cash is checked as part of regular member audits. I checked the February audit record. The petty cash recorded in the member audit agreed to petty cash records.

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

### **Second Interim and Final Audits**

Staff costs per box 4 to the accounts were £795,577 ( 22-23 £674,686).

The RFO logged into the HMRC account on 27 February. This showed that the Council is up to date with HMRC submissions and no payments are outstanding.

Payroll is processed monthly, 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.

I checked the January 2024 payroll. The cashbook payment was agreed to the payroll summary and the to the bankline report. I confirmed the bankline report had been reviewed and signed off by the RFO / Town Clerk and a councillor.

I selected 5 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 a pay award letter. Correct scale point was applied and all scale points were checked to staff pay award letters.

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 to the accounts only included costs relating to the employment of staff, as required by regulations.

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

**Final Audit**

Fixed assets per box 9 to the accounts were £ 6,621,504 ( 22-23 £6,621,504).

The first draft AGAR did not reflect any changes to the asset register in 23-24. The Town Clerk has produced a schedule of amendments to the asset register as follows:

<b>DISPOSALS IN 2023/24</b>	
We demolished the Hub (Sept 23). The Source still stands, which forms approx. one third of the existing building. The land value remains the same. For this reason we propose to reduce the building valuation by £50k, and maintain land value whilst we await revaluation.	-50000
<b>ADDITIONS IN 2023/24</b>	
Land known as the Dene (purchased amenity land from Buxted PC in Oct 23)	5,001.00
21" Rotary Mower (Sept 23)	1072
RM4RTP Mulch Mower (Sept 23)	1158.34
Upgrade to server (July 23)	2526
Upgrade to Wi-Fi (Aug 23)	5417
Upgrade to 7 x computers (Aug 23 and Mar 24)	4500
	-
<b>Net Change to Asset Register</b>	<b>30325.66</b>

The initial draft accounts will need to be amended, as they did not account for disposals and additions of fixed assets in 23-24. This will need to be actioned before the accounts are approved by Council and sent to external audit.

The fixed asset register requires validation, to ensure all assets owned by the Council are listed and that all assets listed still exist. This should be actioned in 24-25.

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

#### **First Interim Audit**

I reviewed the bank reconciliation file. All September bank reconciliations had been completed, and October bank reconciliations were being worked on at the time of my November audit.

I reperformed the September bank reconciliations. I was able agree the sage bank reconciliation back to bank statements for the general and business reserve accounts. The £300K fixed rate deposit was checked to the original deposit at my last audit - no further documentation has been issued by the bank since then. The Council has not received a bank statement for the Lloyds bank account, which holds £21,067, since March 23. It is recommended that a statement is obtained each quarter for this bank account whilst it is open, but it would appear sensible to close this account, as it serves no specific purpose. The September bank reconciliations are due to be checked as part of the next member audit, but had not been signed off as correct at the time of my interim audit.

The Council has an investment strategy in place, as required by regulations. The annual review of the investment strategy is due be reviewed by General Purposes Committee in January 2024 before ratification by Full Council. I note that the general reserve account is only paying 1.7% at present, and the Council has £1million+ in this account . I recommend that the Council explores other options as part of the review of the investment strategy, and seeks to maximise returns within the limited savings and investment options open to Town Councils.

#### **Final Audit**

Cash per box 8 to the accounts was £1,230,875 (22-23 £1,249,562)

I reperformed the year end bank reconciliation. I checked to agree the balance on the bank reconciliation back to bank statements and cashbook balances recorded on the accounting system . The bank reconciliation pack has been reviewed by a councillor, this has been evidenced on the face of the reconciliation and on the bank statements.

My testing identified the following:

- General account – the bank reconciliation did not agree to the Council’s trial balance. The difference was £ 4.8k. The RFO has identified reasons for the imbalance, and the bank reconciliation was reproduced. There is no impact on the AGAR.

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- Lloyds bank account £21,067 – no statement on file since July 2022, so I cannot confirm the current balance on the account. The RFO should obtain a statement so it can be checked by external audit. The Council should also look to close this account, in generates no interest and has no clear purpose.
- Fixed Rate Bond Account - £307,050 – This should be added to the reconciliation pack checked by councillors.

Loans per box 10 to the accounts were £441,600 ( 22-23 £460,800)

This has been agreed to a year end statement available on the Debt Management Office website.

**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. Box 7 to 8 reconciliation prepared alongside variance analysis – these are to be checked by external audit.

**K: If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 23-24 , it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt.**

Not applicable

**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 Interim Audit**

Uckfield categorised as a large Council, with income and expenditure in excess of £200K and is required to follow the 2015 Transparency Code.

The Council publishes extensive financial information on the Finance and Audit page of the Council website. I tested the following at my final audit:

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- Payments to suppliers. Bills paid are published each month. I checked that the website was up to date to the end of March 2024, so I am satisfied that the Council is publishing the information required in this area

Grants – a schedule of all grants paid in year is listed under the “Town Council Grants” page on the website. This has been updated since my last visit and 24-25 and 23-24 grants awarded can be viewed.

The Council needs to update information in areas such as land held and procurement data to ensure full compliance with the Transparency Code. The Town Clerk confirmed that this is being worked on at present and will be actioned over the next few weeks.

### **M - Arrangements for Inspection of Accounts**

Inspection periods for 22-23 accounts were set as follows

Inspection - Key date	22-23 Actual
<b>Accounts approved at Full Council</b>	28 June
<b>Inspection period begins</b>	3 July
<b>Inspection period ends</b>	11 August
<b>Correct length</b>	Yes

The Council met the requirements of this control objective.

### **N: Publication requirements 22-23 AGAR**

The Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and the external audit certificate for 22-23 are published in document archive section of the Council website. The external audit certificate was clear. There are no matters to take into consideration in the 23-24 accounts. The Conclusion of Audit certificate was published on 19 September, after the date of the audit certificate ( 18 September), and before the regulatory deadline of 30 September . The external audit certificate was reported to the meeting of Full Council on 17 October (minute 10.0).

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.

The Council met the requirements of this control objective.

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

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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 for your consideration together with the internal audit report from the AGAR. I look forward to working with you again next year, in the meantime please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance.

Yours sincerely



Mike Platten CPFA

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## Appendix A

### **MATTERS ARISING 23-24 – FIRST INTERIM AUDIT**

Matter Arising	Recommendation	Council Response
At the time of my audit, (November 2023), no member audit had been completed since July. I remind members that checks of this nature are only meaningful if they are completed on a timely basis.	I therefore recommend that member audits should be completed within 4-6 weeks of the month end under review.	The audits were booked in. We are now up to speed with this process.
There has been no review of VAT arrangements for some time.	It may be beneficial to commission a VAT review from a sector expert to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review VAT accounting arrangements, to ensure Council is accounting for VAT efficiently</li> <li>- Review any partial exemption and option to tax arrangements in place for Council assets to ensure these are properly documented and understood by Council officers</li> </ul>	VAT specialist appointed
Finance Improvement Plan	The RFO should consider developing a Finance Improvement Plan, with realistic targets for implementation of recommendations identified in my audit reports, together with other opportunities identified by the RFO and Town Clerk	To be produced shortly.
The Council does not have any cyber insurance in place at present.	I recommend that cyber risk is added to the Council's risk assessment. The Council should work with the Council's ICT	Members have agreed to take this out. Currently liaising with IT

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# April Skies

## Accounting

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	provider to assess whether cyber insurance should be purchased.	security and facilities providers
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# April Skies

## Accounting

<p><b>Luxfords</b> There is no documented till procedure.</p>	<p>Whilst simple instructions are in place, a properly documented till process setting out what staff need to do at the start of the shift, during shift and at cashing up should be drawn up and used to train staff.</p>	<p>The instructions are currently in two places. We will therefore collate these into one booklet/document by the time you attend your next visit.</p>
<p><b>Luxfords</b> All staff log into the till using a single fob. This means there is no audit trail as to who is accessing the till.</p>	<p>All staff should use individual key fobs when accessing the till.</p>	<p>This action has been completed. Named fobs now in place</p>
<p><b>Luxfords</b> The end of shift count is completed by a member of bar/restaurant staff, then reperformed by the Clerk or RFO at a later date, before banking. It is best practice to ensure that all cash counts are completed with 2 people present, and that this is evidenced.</p>	<p>For efficiency, it is recommended that the shift end cash count should be carried out in the main council office, the count can then be completed by a Luxfords officer and counter signed by the RFO or Clerk. Cash should then be held in the safe until banked</p>	<p>This used to be completed in this way prior to the pandemic, and the division of the office and restaurant teams to reduce contact. We will refer back to original procedures as of Jan 2024</p>
<p><b>Luxfords</b> The RFO banks cash at the post office once a week. This is time consuming, and it is not sensible for a council officer to be carrying cash across town.</p>	<p>I recommend that the Council should employ a cash collection company to bank cash.</p>	<p>The RFO will explore the costs associated with this option.</p>
<p>I note that the general reserve account is only paying 1.7% at present, and the Council has £1million+ in this account .</p>	<p>I recommend that the Council explores other options as part of the review of the investment strategy,</p>	<p>This has been considered at Finance Sub Committee (9 Jan 24), General Purposes</p>

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# April Skies

## Accounting

		Committee (5 Feb) and their recommendations are being taken to Full Council on 26 Feb 24 for ratification
The Council has not received a bank statement for the Lloyds bank account, which holds £21,067, since March 23	It is recommended that a statement is obtained each quarter for this bank account whilst it is open, but it would appear sensible to close this account, as it serves no specific purpose.	The RFO attended an appt with a Councillor at the bank on 4 Jan 2024 to obtain easier access to the bank statements. These funds are due to be removed at financial year end

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**APPENDIX B**

**MATTERS ARISING 23-24 – SECOND INTERIM AUDIT**

Matter Arising	Recommendation	Council Response
Allotment income	Council may wish to considering issuing direct debit forms to allotment holders at next renewal, this would reduce the administration workload in collecting relatively small items of income.	
Standing information on fees is updated annually following approval of fees and charges by Council.	This information is input by the RFO – it should have a second check from the Town Clerk before the revised fees go live, evidence of this check should be retained.	
The Council prepares an annual Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) report for consideration by the Council and the District Council.	For clarity, this should be published on the Council website, as it is a requirement of the CIL Regulations 2010 (121B)	Now published on website

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## APPENDIX C

### MATTERS ARISING 23-24 – YEAR END AUDIT

Matter Arising	Recommendation	Council Response
I was not able to agree one nominal code from the AGAR back to the trial balance	The RFO identified reasons for this imbalance – it is a small number of sales invoices posted to sage but not picked up when the accounts were compiled. The accounts will need to be adjusted. This should have been picked up prior to the compilation of the statement of accounts.	
Whilst I was able to agree the accounting statement required for the AGAR back to the trial balance, the exercise was complex and time consuming. This is for the following reasons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- draft accounts were produced prior to year end journals being posted to the Sage accounting system. These journals should be posted before the accounts are produced, so a clear link to the accounting system can be checked.</li> <li>- The trial balance includes fixed assets. This is not required in the Town Council sector, and makes the general ledger less user friendly</li> </ul>	I recommend that the council ensures that all journals are posted to Sage before the accounts are produced in 24-25. I also recommend that consideration is given to : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Removing fixed assets and capital accounts from the trial balance</li> <li>- Ceasing production of company style accounts, which are currently produced each year but not really used.</li> </ul> The Council may need to use an accountant with sector knowledge to assist with this.	
The Council has too many earmarked reserves, many of which holding balances below £5k.	The Council should review earmarked reserves in 24-25, and consolidate reserves wherever possible . I would suggest the number of reserves could be reduced by two thirds.	
Lloyds bank account £21,067 – no statement on file since July 2022, so I	The RFO should obtain a statement so it can be checked by external audit. The Council should also	

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# April Skies

## Accounting

cannot confirm the current balance on the account.	look to close this account, in generates no interest and has no clear purpose.	
Fixed Rate Bond Account - £307,050 –	This should be added to the reconciliation pack checked by councillors.	
The first draft AGAR did not reflect any changes to the asset register in 23-24. The Town Clerk has produced a schedule of amendments to the asset register.	The initial draft accounts will need to be amended, as they did not account for disposals and additions of fixed assets in 23-24. This will need to be actioned before the accounts are approved by Council and sent to external audit.	
The fixed asset register requires validation, to ensure all assets owned by the Council are listed and that all assets listed still exist.	This should be actioned in 24-25.	

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## APPENDIX D

### Internal Audit Control Objectives – Marked as not covered

Control Objective	Area for Audit	Why this has not been audited
K	Exemption from Audit	UTC has external audit
O	Trust Funds	No trusts at this council

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# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND ACCOMPANYING INFORMATION FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

### INDEX

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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 2024**

**Comparison of income and expenditure in year with original budget**

The following shows a comparison of the budget and outturn figures in 2023/24 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	-	133	133
Furlough Grant - Civic Centre	-	-	-
Furlough Grant - Luxfords	-	-	-
Rental income, interest and investment income	210,940	229,326	18,386
Charges made for services	232,800	276,145	43,345
Other income or contributions	46,095	64,116	18,021
	<u>489,835</u>	<u>569,720</u>	<u>79,885</u>
Expenditure			
Direct service costs:			
Salaries and wages	377,025	459,202	82,177
Grant aid expenditure	41,400	52,301	10,901
Other direct service costs	463,237	642,931	179,694
Democratic, Management and Civic costs:			
Salaries and wages	293,307	336,375	43,068
Other democratic, management and civic costs	155,575	132,421	(23,154)
	<u>1,330,544</u>	<u>1,623,230</u>	<u>292,686</u>
Net expenditure	<u>840,709</u>	<u>1,053,509</u>	<u>212,800</u>
General Reserves	101,110	(81,854)	(182,964)
Earmarked Reserves*	69,050	39,214	(29,836)
Net charge to Precept	<u>1,010,869</u>	<u>1,010,869</u>	<u>(0.00)</u>

\*Earmarked Reserves is represented by £236,860 of income and £197,646 of costs. The net surplus is therefore £39,214.

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL  
INCOME STATEMENT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	31.03.24 £	31.03.23 £
<b>Income</b>		
Precept	1,051,151	983,076
Grants received	133	5,000
Furlough Grant - Civic Centre	-	-
Furlough Grant - Luxfords	-	-
Rental income, interest and investment income	229,326	204,948
Charges made for services	276,145	228,191
Other income or contributions	64,116	51,932
	<u>1,620,871</u>	<u>1,473,147</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Direct service costs:		
Salaries and wages	459,202	365,979
Grant aid expenditure	52,301	41,333
Other direct service costs	642,931	595,023
	<u>1,154,434</u>	<u>1,002,335</u>
Democratic, Management and Civic costs:		
Salaries and wages	336,375	308,707
Other democratic, management and civic costs	132,421	126,246
Depreciation	89,116	88,043
Net pension costs	(2,000)	125,000
	<u>555,912</u>	<u>647,997</u>
<b>Net operating surplus/(deficit) for year</b>	<u><b>(89,474)</b></u>	<u><b>(177,183)</b></u>
Statutory charge for capital	(19,200)	(37,200)
Reversal of annual depreciation charge	89,116	88,043
Capital expenditure from the General Fund	-	-
Pension fund adjustment	(2,000)	125,000
Net transfer from/(to) Earmarked Reserves	(39,214)	(43,939)
<b>Net surplus/(deficit) for year</b>	<u><b>(60,773)</b></u>	<u><b>(45,279)</b></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 2024**

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Trade operations

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

	<b>31.03.24</b>	31.03.23
	£	£
Income	<b>238,997</b>	191,974
Expenditure	<b>306,325</b>	242,690
Net surplus/(deficit)	<b>(67,328)</b>	(50,716)

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**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL  
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

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	<b>31.03.24</b>	31.03.23
	<b>£</b>	£
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	<b>(89,474)</b>	(177,183)
Re-measurements related to pensions	<b>(25,000)</b>	820,000
	<b><u>(114,474)</u></b>	<u>642,817</u>

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	31.03.24 £	31.03.23 £
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Land and buildings	4,269,372	4,378,269
Vehicles and plant	89,311	99,856
	<u>4,358,683</u>	<u>4,478,125</u>
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Stocks	4,267	3,925
Debtors	67,223	70,991
Cash at bank and in hand	1,230,875	1,249,562
	<u>1,302,365</u>	<u>1,324,478</u>
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>		
Creditors	52,470	33,351
Current portion of long term debt	19,200	19,200
	<u>71,670</u>	<u>52,551.00</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>	<u>1,230,695</u>	<u>1,271,927</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	<u>5,589,378</u>	<u>5,750,052</u>
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year</b>		
Long term borrowing	422,400	441,600
	<u>422,400</u>	<u>441,600</u>
Pension Liability/(Asset)	(0)	(23,000)
<b>Total assets less liabilities</b>	<u>5,166,978</u>	<u>5,331,453</u>
<b>Reserves</b>		
Capital Receipts Reserve	15,795	15,795
Revaluations Reserve	519,173	569,173
Pensions Reserve	-	23,000
Capital Financing Account	3,378,236	3,448,152
Earmarked Revenue Reserves	854,271	815,056
General Fund	399,505	460,278
	<u>5,166,978</u>	<u>5,331,453</u>

These financial statements were approved on \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cllr. K. Bedwell  
Town Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sarah D'Alessio  
Responsible Financial Officer

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL  
EARMARKED RESERVES NOTE TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
AS AT 31 MARCH 2024**

Earmarked Revenue Reserves				
	1 April 2023	Contribution to reserves	Contribution from reserves	31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£
Allotment Fencing	126			126
Boothland Wood	500			500
Browns Lane Rockery Plants	-			-
Building Maintenance Fund	259,372	79,300	(107,619)	231,053
CCTV Replacement Programme	-			-
Cemetery Enhancemnet	8,300			8,300
Chapels Maintenance Programme	-			-
Civic Centre Booking System	8,000		(4,809)	3,192
Community Infrastructure Levy	26,950	11,794		38,744
Consultants - Town Centre	75,300			75,300
Data Protection	1,625			1,625
Dementia Training	697			697
Elections	27,351		(5,992)	21,359
HMLNR Donation	665	500		1,165
HMLNR & WPLNR Supporters group donation	-			-
Hughes Way Play Area Donation	-			-
Joint Committee Master Plan Work	50,000			50,000
Library Way Re-imbursement	-			-
Litter Bins	1,708	1,500		3,208
Luxfords Refurbishment	-			-
LuxfordsNew Microwave	-			-
Notice boards	-			-
New equipment/New cricket Mower	-			-
Old Timber Lane Maintenance	16,750			16,750
Picnic Tables	-			-
Play area enhancements	11,525			11,525
Play ground fencing	-			-
Professional Fees	3,497		(1,990)	1,507
Public Conveniences	30,000			30,000
Playing fields & Pitches	5,259		(5,001)	258
Ranger equipment budget	-			-
Renewal/Upgrading Notice Boards	1,138	2,000	(230)	2,908
Re-surface Osborn Hall Car Park	3,658			3,658
Ridgewood Car Park Re-surface	27,885			27,885
Carried forward totals	560,306	95,094	(125,640)	529,760

Continued

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL**  
**EARMARKED RESERVES NOTE TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**AS AT 31 MARCH 2024**

	1 April 2023	Contribution to reserves	Contribution from reserves	31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£
Brought forward totals	560,306	95,094	(125,640)	529,760
Ridgewood Recreation Ground levelling	2,493			2,493
Seats, Signage for Tennis Courts	595			595
Section 106 Agreements	17,909			17,909
Signal Box Ext/Internal Maintenance	5,222			5,222
Skatepark Peripheral Area	2,542			2,542
Speed Reduction	3,200	2,000		5,200
Street Furniture Donation	1,200			1,200
Street Furniture repair/replace	436			436
Street Light Repairs	-			-
Street Light Timers/column inspections	1,856			1,856
Street Light Replacemnr SOX Lanterns	10,500			10,500
Telephone boxes	-			-
Training	724			724
Trees	4,701			4,701
Tree planting	718			718
Twinning Hospitality	133			133
Upgrading of IT Systems & Equipment	-			-
Vehicle replacement	15,000	5,000		20,000
Weald Hall Floor	60,500			60,500
Weald Hall Replacement Backdrops	1,741			1,741
Weald on field	-			-
White Rails Improvements	1,200			1,200
West Park Pavilion Scheme	45,000			45,000
Climate Change Initiatives	5,700			5,700
ESCC Verge Cutting Contribution	9			9
Covid Memorial Bench	300			300
General Power of Competence	250	13,167	(13,417)	-
Green Projects	18,000		(16,266)	1,734
262 Saturday Bus Service	3			3
Ash Dieback	6,141	25,000	(21,917)	9,224
Streetlighting repairs	15,678	20,000	(5,031)	30,647
Upgrading Victoria Pleasure Ground facilities	10,000	40,000		50,000
Future land expansion - Snatts Rd & HMLNR	2,000			2,000
Foresters New Front Doors	500	500		1,000
Luxfords New Dishwasher	500			500
Civic Centre Lift Upgrade	5,000	10,000	(6,848)	8,152
New Major Contoura Mower	-			-
Climate Change Carbon emission projects	10,000	10,000		20,000
Ridgewood Water Course Maintenance	5,000			5,000
Air con units for Civic Centre		2,000	(304)	1,696
Improve internal decoration of Victoria Pavilion		5,000	-	5,000
Security upgrade for Civic Centre		1,000	-	1,000
Geophysical survey of Cemetery for future space planning		4,000	(4,155)	(155)
Coffee machines in Luxfords bar		4,100	(4,069)	31
	815,057	236,860	(197,646)	854,271



## **Meeting of the Full Council**

**Wednesday 26 June 2024**

### **Agenda item 12.0**

#### **TO CONSIDER A REQUEST TO REVIEW THE OPENING TIMES OF THE TOILET(S) AT VICTORIA PLEASURE GROUND**

##### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 On 2 June 2024, the Town Council office received correspondence from a local resident, which questioned why the toilet facilities at Victoria Pleasure Ground were not open on the weekend, when people were more likely to utilise these facilities.
- 1.2 The Town Clerk explained that the toilets had been closed outside of the Grounds team's working hours, as a result of repeat vandalism, but did recognise that this should be reviewed, in particular for the summer months.
- 1.3 A copy of the full correspondence can be viewed in appendix A of this report.
- 1.4 The resident wished to formally ask members if the current opening hours of these facilities could be reviewed to enable greater access.

##### **2.0 Request from local resident**

- 2.1 A local resident has requested that Town Councillors review the current opening hours of the public toilet(s) at Victoria Pleasure Ground, to enable more access to those using the facilities at the weekend.

- 2.2 The request was as follows:

*"The purpose of a public toilet is to provide an amenity to the public.*

*Currently the public toilets at Victoria Pavilion do not do this because they are only open during business hours on a weekday.*

*Previously, being 24/7 they were also primarily open during hours not used by taxpayers; early hours and business hours, aside from the obvious Anti-Social Behaviour risk to the amenity.*

*Please can we adopt common sense and open them throughout the year between 9-5 on weekends when council tax payers and their families primarily use the park?*

*No-one would object if we moved staffing off a weekday to fit this reasonable proposition.*

*Families at weekends have small children with more urgent needs than the few adults using the park on a weekday. Those on the weekend are also there for longer as well, having picnics and so forth."*

##### **3.0 Toilets at Victoria Pleasure Ground**

- 3.1 There is one toilet and adjoining wash basin accessible to all, when open, alongside a disabled toilet, which is only accessible via radar key.
- 3.2 The toilets were badly vandalised a couple of years ago now, and we saw repeat activity which not only restricted access for residents/customers, but also resulted in a great deal of expenditure to undertake repairs. As a result the 24/7 opening mechanism which was introduced to provide easier access, was disengaged and from then, the Grounds staff open the toilets on their arrival in the weekday mornings and when departing, in the weekday afternoons.

3.3 We have a cleaner (an employee of the council) who is required to maintain our outside facilities. This includes Victoria Pavilion, Foresters Hall, and we also recharge one hour of their time per week to Uckfield Baptist Church, for cleaning the Source from their time. They are currently contracted to work 10 hours per week. They used to clean West Park Pavilion, but the current leaseholders have made their own arrangements.

#### **4.0 Recommendations**

4.1 Members are asked to consider the resident's request and to advise the Clerk, as to whether the current arrangements should be reviewed, if not just temporarily over the summer season.

Appendices: Appendix A: Copy of correspondence with resident  
Contact Officer: Holly Goring

**Copy of correspondence between Town Clerk and resident**

**From:**

**Sent:** 04 June 2024 12:19

**To:** Admin - UTC <[admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Re: Victoria Pavilion

Thanks Holly,

Please could this be raised to Full Council on 26 June with the following statement from me:

"The purpose of a public toilet is to provide an amenity to the public.

Currently the public toilets at Victoria Pavilion do not do this because they are only open during business hours on a weekday.

Previously, being 24/7 they were also primarily open during hours not used by taxpayers; early hours and business hours, aside from the obvious Anti-Social Behaviour risk to the amenity.

Please can we adopt common sense and open them throughout the year between 9-5 on weekends when council tax payers and their families primarily use the park?

No-one would object if we moved staffing off a weekday to fit this reasonable proposition.

Families at weekends have small children with more urgent needs than the few adults using the park on a weekday. Those on the weekend are also there for longer as well, having picnics and so forth."

Kind regards,

(Resident)

---

**From:** Admin - UTC <[admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** Monday, June 3, 2024 9:54 PM

**To:**

**Subject:** RE: Victoria Pavilion

Hi (Resident name),

Thank you for getting back in touch.

It was not intended to come across as insincere in the slightest, and I'm sorry if it appeared that way. I was typing fairly quickly and in my short response, wished to explain that members had previously sought to offer a more flexible arrangement for residents which would not place the burden of opening and unlocking these facilities on staff or volunteers outside of their working hours.

Here in Uckfield, and in many of our neighbouring parish and town councils we have seen increased levels of vandalism. Access was therefore restricted as a result. These facilities are often seen as a shelter from bad weather rather than for their purpose which is a public facility for all, and we have had whole units ripped off the wall, the toilets pulled apart, hand dryers ripped off the wall, and the toilets basically used as a den in the autumn/winter

months and left in quite a state. When the sports clubs aren't at Victoria, the site can be quite vulnerable. We don't currently have the resource to clean these facilities to the extent that we do the Civic Centre (*which has caretakers onsite and forms part of Wealden District Council's Community Toilet scheme*) and from my personal experience of cleaning the Civic Centre toilets on even a quiet day, we are very aware of how much upkeep public facilities take.

As I advised in my first email, I completely understand and we do need to review access at the weekend. In our haste to reduce the cost to taxpayers from the difficulties we have previously experienced, the decision taken to reduce opening times was taken rather quickly at that time.

I would be more than happy to raise this matter at one of our upcoming committee meetings for members to discuss in more detail and to review current arrangements. Even if it were to trial something over the summer months.

The appropriate committee would be Environment & Leisure Committee, but that doesn't take place until 8 July. I can therefore report the matter to Full Council on 26 June, with the agenda papers being despatched on 20 June. Would you like me to take your email correspondence as your approach to the Town Council on this matter, or do you wish to submit a more formal letter?

Very best wishes

Holly

**From:**

**Sent:** 03 June 2024 21:13

**To:** Admin - UTC <[admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Re: Victoria Pavilion

Dear Holly,

This response feels slightly disingenuous. No one is proposing 24/7 open hours on public toilets. It would be patently obvious that this would lead to ASB.

I am suggesting you leave them open 9-5 on the weekend as well as weekdays. Or even close them on a weekday to make up for it. ASB would be no more likely then than after schools close on a weekday.

Is this not more reasonable for council tax payers, and if you need to slightly change staffing hours so be it?

I'd be happy to raise this more formally at the Council, because I have yet to meet a single voter who does not agree with my position.

Kind regards,

(Resident)

---

**From:** Admin - UTC <[admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** June 2, 2024 6:52 PM

**To:**

**Subject:** RE: Victoria Pavilion

Dear (Resident name),

Thank you for your enquiry. I perfectly understand your request. We would really like to have the toilets open 24/7 and did introduce a mechanism a few years ago to enable us to do this.

But unfortunately, due to the severity of vandalism experienced, and the money we were losing to keep re-instating the toilet areas and rectifying the damage, we had no option but to close the toilets when staff left the area.

This obviously wasn't what we intended, but due to the spate of ASB in the past 12-18 months, we have been unable to move back to that way of working at the present time.

In the meantime, the disabled toilet is accessible using a radar key, should anyone require access.

Best wishes

Holly

**From:**

**Sent:** 02 June 2024 14:13

**To:** [admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk)

**Subject:** Victoria Pavilion

Dear Town Council,

Why do you only operate the Victoria Pavilion public toilets during weekday business hours, the one time when no one is using them, but not at the weekend when council tax payers actually come out to use Victoria Park?

Kind regards,

(Resident)

## **Meeting of the Full Council**

**Wednesday 26 June 2024**

### **Agenda item 13.0**

#### **TO CONSIDER OPTIONS TO SUPPORT RESIDENTS WITH THE DISTRIBUTION OF SANDBAGS**

##### **1.0 Summary**

1.1 On 19 June 2024, the Town Clerk received correspondence from Wealden District Council, to advise that they were reviewing their policy for the distribution of sandbags, to those households most affected by flooding. In particular households most of risk of fluvial flooding.

1.2 A copy of the correspondence is below:

*The Council is currently reviewing its sandbag policy, prompted by the gathering speed of the impacts of climate change and the increased risk of flooding in the district.*

*As we are already beginning to see increased instances of flooding with increased impacts, there is a chance that the number of properties at risk will increase.*

*For those that remember, in the past the Council kept its own stock of sandbags in our depots and our depot staff would distribute sandbags according to need. When the depots closed, work was done to support those properties most at risk of fluvial flooding. However, the surface water we are seeing from the more frequent and torrential downpours makes it harder to predict and ensure that all properties are well-prepared generally. Whilst there is no statutory obligation to supply sandbags, and whilst we no longer have the means to easily store and distribute sandbags, we would like to consider what might be made possible for the benefit of our residents in those areas of highest risk. Your parishes are those identified with properties that meet this criteria.*

*We are now looking at what space is available across the district and whether local councils would be prepared to consider accommodating the storage of sandbags and support the distribution should it be needed. One of the reasons for considering this approach is that the increasingly common occurrence of flash flooding means it could be difficult for our officers to mobilise quickly enough to protect properties at immediate risk, given our geography and related travel distances. We would be looking to procure the market alternative to sandbags which are gel-filled, lighter, easier to manage and transport and take up less space. They can also be re-used and the contents are recyclable.*

*Before going any further, we'd very much like to canvas your views on what might be possible. We are proposing that -*

- *Gel filled sandbags are provided by us to deliver to a pre-agreed location in your parish/ town area at our cost;*
- *Sandbags are distributed to the properties most identified as being at risk of flooding as needed in an incident to be arranged by your local council/ community;*
- *Routine maintenance and replenishment of stores is provided by the Council who will also arrange for the recycling of sandbags as necessary;*
- *Distribution is arranged according to local need by parish/ town council;*

*Please could I ask you let me have your initial thoughts on this suggestion by end July.*

##### **2.0 Recommendations**

2.1 Members and officers are asked to consider the advantages and disadvantages of each option and advise the Clerk of their preferred option(s).

Contact Officer: Holly Goring

## **Meeting of the Full Council**

**Wednesday 26 June 2024**

### **Agenda Item No 14.0**

#### **TO NOTE THE TOWN COUNCIL'S LIST OF STANDING ORDERS AND DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENTS**

##### **1.0 Summary**

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

##### **2.0 Details**

2.1 Since the table was presented to Full Council on 26 February 2024, there has been an additional Direct Debit set up.

We have one new supplier that has been set up as a Direct Debit: CNH Industrial Capital which are the finance company used to purchase the New Holland Tractor for the Grounds team.

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

<b>Supplier Name</b>	<b>Description</b>
Adams Catering	Luxfords food supplier
Acuity Professional Partnership LLP	Accountants
British Telecom	Utilities – Broadband
Scottish Water/Business Stream	Utilities – Water
CF Corporate Finance Ltd	Lease rental – Photocopier
CNH Industrial Capital	Grounds Tractor
Elite Fine Foods	Luxfords Supplier
Focus Group	Utilities – Telephone
Harvey's Brewery	Luxfords Supplier
Investec Asset Finance PLC	Telephone Lease Rental
Long Man Brewery	Luxfords Supplier
NatWest Bank	Credit Card Payments
Public Work Loan Board	Loan Repayments
SAGE Software Ltd	Software Subscription
Shell Fuelcard Services	Grounds Maintenance Vehicles
Wealden District Council	Rates
WorldPay	Credit Card
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.

##### **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

# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



## TOWN MAYOR POLICY

Policy Number 36		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	25.03.08	GP.065.03.08
<u>2</u>	<u>26.06.24</u>	<u>Review of policy at Full Council.</u>



## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This policy sets out the role and responsibilities of the Town Mayor.

1.2 This post holder represents the Town and they shall reflect the organisation rather than their own personal convictions.

## **2.0 THE ANNUAL MEETING LEGAL PROCEDURES**

2.1 The Mayor shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 Section 4(1) and 23 (1) and is available from the Council Offices.

2.2 The Mayor will assume the role of Chair~~man~~ of the Town Council.

2.3 Additional useful information

- The procedures for conducting the Annual Meeting are set out in [the Town Council's Standing Orders, No. 40](#)
- Potential Mayors are advised to prepare a short acceptance speech and will be required to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office during the Annual Meeting.
- They should note that the press ~~would~~[are likely to](#) be in attendance at this meeting and quotations will be taken from the acceptance speech. It is common practice that the local press meet with the Mayor following the Annual [Statutory Meeting of the Council](#) to ask questions about their background and hopes for the year ahead.
- It would be useful if the Mayor could prepare a short biography for the Mayor's Secretary [and Marketing & Community Engagement Officer](#), to be used where appropriate on the Town Council website and ~~newsletter~~[Voice section in the residents' magazine](#).

## **3.0 LEGAL ROLE AND DUTY OF THE TOWN MAYOR**

3.1 The main duty of the Mayor is to preside at meetings of the Town Council and if the Town Mayor is present they must preside.

3.2 Meetings of the Town Council should take precedence over outside invitations received in order to ensure that meetings remain legally quorate.

3.3 The Town Mayor must not:

- Make decisions or act alone without prior resolution from the Council.
- Speak out on private or confidential issues.
- Conduct a press conference or press release without consulting the Media Policy No. 26.

3.4 The Town Mayor, as are all Councillors, is bound by the Code of Conduct Act 2001 Policy 43 and copies of this are available from the office of the Town Clerk.

### 3.5 Responsibilities:

- (i) To convene Extraordinary meetings of the Town Council, if required;
- (ii) To manage meetings of Full Council, along with public participation;

- (iii) To ensure any guest speaker(s) feel welcome and facilitate their statements/questions;
- (iv) To use the casting vote, in the event of a tied vote;
- (v) To agree the draft minutes of Full Council meetings, prior to them being published;
- (vi) To communicate regularly with the Town Clerk, to discuss the Full Council meeting agendas to support meeting preparation;
- (vii) To sign the Town Council's Annual Governance Statement and Annual Governance and Accountability Return in June each year, at the meeting of Full Council, to sign off the accounts;

#### **4.0 MAYOR'S ALLOWANCE**

- 4.1 The Town Mayor will be granted an allowance of £1,954.73280 per annum in addition to the basic member allowance. This is paid in quarterly instalments at the end of each quarter.
- 4.2 The Mayor is advised to keep records of how they spend the granted allowance.
- 4.3 What can the allowance be used for?
- Clothing
  - Partner's clothing
  - Donations to charities
  - Collections
  - Purchase of raffle tickets, poppies etc
  - Sending flowers
  - Personal hospitality (including lunches and dinners)
  - Attending other events
  - Raffle Prizes.

#### **5.0 TRAVEL ALLOWANCE**

- 5.1 The Town Mayor, as any other Councillor, is entitled to claim travel expenses for any event attended. Travelling expenses cannot be claimed for journeys inside the town boundaries and therefore precludes any meeting of the Town Council.
- 5.2 An accurate record must be kept for journeys undertaken and all expenses will be paid by cheque. It is recommended that expense claims be submitted on a monthly basis.
- 5.3 Travelling expense forms can be obtained from the Town Council offices.

#### **6.0 TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS**

- 6.1 If the Town Mayor is unable to make their own way to functions, travel by taxi is permitted and arrangements can be made by the Mayor's Secretary. In this instance, the Mayor is asked to request a receipt for the journey and expenses will be paid by cheque.

#### **7.0 HOSPITALITY AND 'GIFTS'**

- 7.1 The Town Mayor is required to declare to the Town Clerk any Civic hospitality or 'gifts' they have been given above the value of £25.

## **8.0 TAXATION AND INSURANCE**

- 8.1 Any duties payable to ~~the HMRC Inland Revenue~~ will depend on the individual status of the Mayor. Therefore the responsibility rests with the individuals concerned to check any potential tax liability.
- 8.2 The Town Council will not be held responsible for any liabilities arising from payment of the Mayor's Allowance or travelling expenses.
- 8.3 Accordingly, it is the responsibility of the Mayor to inform their car insurance companies of their elected positions where applicable to account for any additional mileage incurred.

## **9.0 THE CHAIN OF OFFICE**

- 9.1 The Chain of Office consists of a gold chain, with a detachable centrepiece. The Chain of Office is supplied in a presentation case.
- 9.2 For historic purposes a link on the chain has been engraved with the initials and year of each serving Town Mayor, since 1978, when the first Mayor was elected.
- 9.3 The Mayor's Chain shall only be worn on official occasions.
- 9.4 If the Mayor and Deputy Mayor have been invited to attend the same event, only the Mayor will be permitted to wear the Chain of Office. The Town Clerk will be able to advise on the situations when the Chain of Office may be worn.
- 9.5 When attending events, it is preferable for the Chain of Office to be worn in preparation for the arrival at an event, especially if members of the public will be in attendance. However reasonable care must be taken and is not advisable for the Town Mayor to wear the Chain of Office, whilst walking alone especially at night or in a visible location whilst in the street.
- 9.6 Where possible a consort for the Mayor is encouraged. The Mayor can decide if this is their spouse or if they wish to invite a fellow Town Councillor as a consort for specific occasions.
- 9.7 The Mayor's Chain is insured for use at events and travelling on an 'all risks policy' but it is advised that for periods when the Mayor is away from home that the Chains of Office are returned to the Mayor's Secretary for safe keeping.
- 9.8 When the Mayor is travelling in their vehicle, the Chains of Office must be stored out of sight and if possible locked away in the boot compartment.

## **10.0 MAYORAL PHOTOGRAPH**

- 10.1 An appointed photographer will take a photograph of the Town Mayor, with Chain, at the beginning of their term. This picture will be used in The Uckfield Voice and on the Council's website from time to time.

## **11.0 THE MAYOR'S SECRETARY**

- 11.1 The Mayor's Secretary's contact details are:

The Mayor's Secretary  
Uckfield Town Council  
Civic Centre  
Uckfield  
East Sussex  
TN22 1AE

01825 762774

mayor~~ssecretary~~@uckfieldtc.gov.uk

- 11.2 The Mayor's Secretary can be contacted from Monday – Thursday 9am to 5pm and Friday 9am to 4pm.

## 12.0 THE MAYOR'S DIARY

- 12.1 All invitations for the Mayor to attend events and functions will be passed to the Mayor to decide whether or not they will be attending. The Mayor's Secretary will then respond accordingly. The Mayor's Secretary will require a contact telephone or mobile number and email address in order to maintain regular contact.

~~12.2 The Council has purchased a pay-as-you-go mobile phone for use by the Mayor, who may not wish to use their personal mobile phone for "business purposes" while in Office.~~

- ~~12.23~~ There are situations where the Town Mayor is invited to attend events by members of the public or when attending other functions. The acceptance of these invitations is not advised without consulting the Mayor's Secretary in order to ensure that clashes do not occur.

- ~~12.34~~ The Deputy Mayor, where appropriate, will be asked to attend those duties that the Mayor is unable to fulfil.

## 13.0 CORRESPONDENCE

- 13.1 The Mayor's Secretary is responsible for all administration regarding the Mayor's correspondence.
- 13.2 The Mayor's Secretary will write all letters from the Town Mayor regarding the acceptance or otherwise of invitations. The Mayor's Secretary will also deal with the issuing of invitations to fundraising or civic events.
- 13.3 The Town Mayor may dictate any other letters where necessary.

## 14.0 STATUTORY EVENTS

- 14.1 There will be a number of events which the Town Mayor will be required to attend as part of their Civic duties. These are:

- ~~• Road Safety Week (June)~~
- St. George's Day Service
- East Sussex County Council's Chairman's Reception
- Uckfield Carnival (first Saturday in September)
- Armistice day (11<sup>th</sup> November)
- Remembrance Sunday (second 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in November)
- Holy Cross Christmas Service

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14.2. Other events that the ~~Deputy-Town~~ Mayor may attend are:

- Weald on the Field;
- Beacon lightings to mark key or royal anniversaries;~~The Festival (July)~~
- The Uckfield Carnival (September)
- Remembrance Sunday (second Sunday in November)

#### **15.0 OTHER INFORMATION**

15.1 Christmas cards will be sent each year from the Town Mayor to other councils and local organisations. This will be organised by the Town ~~Mayor's Secretary~~Marketing & Community Engagement Officer and now take the format of e-cards/messages to key stakeholders.

#### **A final note.....**

The Town Mayor's year in office should be memorable! There will be many exciting challenges and the year should reflect that of personal achievements as well as that of the Town Council.

The Town Mayor's Secretary is available to assist the Town Mayor with the year in office and any questions regarding the statutory or Civic position are welcomed and encouraged.

# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



## DEPUTY MAYOR POLICY

Policy Number 37		
Issue No.	Date completed	Details of amendments
1	25.03.08	GP.065.03.08
<u>2</u>	<u>20.06.24</u>	<u>Review at Full Council</u>

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This policy sets out the role and responsibilities of the Deputy Town Mayor.
- 1.2 This post holder represents the Town and they shall reflect the organisation rather than their own personal convictions.

## **2 THE ANNUAL MEETING LEGAL PROCEDURES**

- 2.1 The Deputy Mayor shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 Section 4(1) and 23 (1) and this is available from the office of the Town Clerk and will be forwarded on request.
- 2.2 The Deputy Mayor must be appointed by law in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 Section 5 (1) and 5(2).
- 2.3 The Deputy Mayor does not automatically assume the role of Mayor the following year but will be elected in accordance with the statutes of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 2.4 The Deputy Mayor will assume the role of Vice-Chairman of the Town Council.
- 2.5 Additional useful information:
  - The procedures for conducting the Annual Meeting are set out in [the Town Council's Standing Orders](#).
  - The potential Deputy Mayor is advised to prepare a short acceptance speech and will be required to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office during the Annual Meeting.
  - They should note that the press ~~would be~~ [likely to be](#) in attendance at this meeting and quotations will be taken from the acceptance speech. It is common practice that the local press meet with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor following the ~~informal reception after~~ [Annual Statutory Meeting of the Council](#) to ask questions about their background and hopes for the year ahead.
  - It would be useful if the Deputy Mayor could prepare a short biography for the Mayor's Secretary [and Marketing & Community Engagement Officer](#), to be used where appropriate on the Town Council website and ~~newsletter~~ [Voice section in the residents' magazine](#).

## **3.0 LEGAL ROLE AND DUTY OF THE DEPUTY MAYOR**

- 3.1 The main duty of the Deputy Mayor is to preside at meetings of the Town Council if the Mayor is unable to attend.
- 3.2 Meetings of the Town Council should take precedence over outside invitations received in order to ensure that meetings remain legally quorate.

3.3 If during the Municipal Year, the office of Town Mayor becomes vacant, then the Deputy Mayor will automatically become Mayor for the remainder of that year in accordance with Standing Order 17 (e).

3.4 The Deputy Mayor must not:

- Make decisions or act alone without prior resolution from the Council.
- Speak out on private or confidential issues.
- Conduct a press conference / press release without prior permission from the Council.

3.5 The Deputy Mayor is bound by the Code of Conduct Act 2001 Policy No. 43 and copies of this are available from the office of the Town Clerk.

#### 3.6 Responsibilities:

(i) To manage meetings of Full Council, along with public participation, in the absence of the Town Mayor;

(iii) To familiarise themselves with the Town Mayor's portfolio, in order to deputise when required at civic engagements and Town Council events, as and when required;

(iv) To work closely with the Town Mayor, and to ensure continuity should it be necessary for the Deputy Mayor to deputise in the Town Mayor's absence.

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#### **4.0 ALLOWANCES**

4.1 There is no allowance paid to the Deputy Mayor and any monies paid in respect of duties undertaken is solely at the discretion of the Town Mayor. They receive their basic member allowance only, which is paid in quarterly instalments.

#### **5.0 TRAVEL ALLOWANCE**

5.1 The Deputy Mayor, as any other Councillor, is entitled to claim travel expenses for any event attended. Travelling expenses cannot be claimed for journeys inside the town boundaries and therefore precludes any meeting of the Town Council.

5.2 An accurate record must be kept for journeys undertaken and all expenses will be paid by cheque. It is recommended that expense claims be submitted on a monthly basis.

5.3 Travelling expense forms can be obtained from the Town Council offices.

#### **6.0 TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS**

6.1 If the Deputy Mayor is unable to make their own way to functions, travel by taxi is permitted and arrangements can be made by the Mayor's Secretary. In this instance, the Deputy Mayor is asked to request a receipt for the journey and expenses will be paid by cheque.

#### **7.0 HOSPITALITY AND 'GIFTS'**

7.1 The Deputy Mayor is required to declare to the Town Clerk any Civic hospitality or 'gifts' they have been given above the value of £25.



## **8.0 TAXATION AND INSURANCE**

- 8.1 Any duties payable to ~~the Inland Revenue~~HMRC will depend on the individual status of the Deputy Mayor. Therefore the responsibility rests with the individuals concerned to check any potential tax liability.
- 8.2 The Town Council will not be held responsible for any liabilities arising from payment of the Deputy Mayor's travelling expenses.
- 8.3 Accordingly, it is the responsibility of the Deputy Mayor to inform their car insurance companies of their elected positions where applicable to account for any additional mileage incurred.

## **9.0 INSIGNIA**

- 9.1 The Deputy Mayor's insignia is a necklace style ribbon, with a centre pendant and is supplied in a small presentation case.
- 9.2 The Deputy Mayor's insignia should only be worn on official occasions.
- 9.3 Where possible a consort for the Deputy Mayor is encouraged. The Deputy Mayor can decide if this is their spouse/close relative or if they wish to invite a fellow Town Councillor as a consort for specific occasions.
- 9.4 The Deputy Mayor's insignia is insured for use at events and travelling on an 'all risks policy' but it is advised that for periods when the Deputy Mayor is away from home that the insignia is returned to the Mayor's Secretary for safe keeping.
- 9.5 When the Deputy Mayor is travelling in their vehicle, the insignia must be stored out of sight and if possible locked away in the boot compartment.

## **10.0 THE MAYOR'S SECRETARY**

- 10.1 The Mayor's Secretary's contact details are:

The Mayor's Secretary  
Uckfield Town Council  
Civic Centre  
Uckfield  
East Sussex TN22 1AE

01825 762774

[mayorsecretary@uckfieldtc.gov.uk](mailto:mayorsecretary@uckfieldtc.gov.uk)

- 10.2 The Mayor's Secretary can be contacted from Monday –Thursday 9am to 5pm and Friday 9am to 4pm.

## **11.0 THE MAYOR'S DIARY**

- 11.1 If the Mayor is unable to attend an event, the invitation will be passed to the Deputy Mayor to decide whether or not they will be able to attend. The Mayor's Secretary will then respond to the invitation accordingly. The Mayor's Secretary will require a contact telephone or mobile number and email address in order to maintain regular contact.

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11.2 There are situations where the Deputy Mayor is invited to attend events by members of the public or when attending other functions. The acceptance of these invitations is not advised without consulting the Mayor's Secretary in order to ensure that clashes do not occur.

## **12.0 CORRESPONDENCE**

12.1 The Mayor's Secretary is responsible for all administration regarding the Deputy Mayor's correspondence.

12.2 The Mayor's Secretary will write all letters from the Deputy Mayor regarding the acceptance or otherwise of invitations.

## **13.0 STATUTORY EVENTS**

13.1 The Deputy Mayor is encouraged to attend statutory events to lend support to the Town Mayor and to assist where necessary as part of their duties. These are:

- ~~Road Safety Week (June)~~
- St. George's Day Service
- ~~East Sussex County Council's Chairman's Reception~~
- Uckfield Carnival (first Saturday of September)
- Armistice day (11<sup>th</sup> November)
- Remembrance Sunday (~~second~~<sup>2<sup>nd</sup></sup> Sunday in November)
- Holy Cross Christmas Service

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13.2. Other events that the Deputy Mayor may attend are:

- ~~The Festival (July)~~ Weald on the Field:
- ~~The Carnival (September)~~ Beacon Lighting events to mark specific anniversaries

### **A final note.....**

The Deputy Mayor's year in office should be memorable! There will be many exciting challenges and the year should reflect that of personal achievements as well as that of the Town Council.

The Town Mayor's Secretary is available to assist the Deputy Mayor with the year in office and any questions regarding the statutory or Civic position are welcomed and encouraged.

**DATED**

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**RENEWAL LEASE BY REFERENCE TO AN EXISTING LEASE**

between

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL**

and

**TRUSTEES OF THE GOSPEL STANDARD STRICT BAPTIST CHURCH**

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This lease is dated \_\_\_\_\_ 2024

**LR1. Date of lease**

**LR2. Title number(s)**

**LR2.1 Landlord's title number(s)**

ESX122457

**LR2.2 Other title numbers**

None

**LR3. Parties to this lease**

**Landlord**

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL** of Council Offices, Uckfield Civic Centre, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 1AE.

**Tenant**

**GORDON DADSWELL** of Scotswood, vines Cross Road, Horam, Heathfield East Sussex, TN21 0HF and **JOHN BENJAMIN HART** of 4 Combe End, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1NH and **KEVIN JOHN DADSWELL** of 26 Harcourt Road, Uckfield East Sussex TN22 5 DU and **TIMOTHY JAMES COTTINGHAM** of 15 Mill Close, Heathfield East Sussex TN21 0XB being the present **TRUSTEES OF THE GOSPEL STANDARD STRICT BAPTIST CHURCH**

**LR4. Property**

**In the case of a conflict between this clause and the remainder of this lease then, for the purposes of registration, this clause shall prevail.**

See the definition of "Property" in clause 1.1 of this lease and the First Schedule of the Existing Lease.

**LR5. Prescribed statements etc.**

**LR5.1 Statements prescribed under rules 179 (dispositions in favour of a charity), 180 (dispositions by a charity) or 196 (leases under the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993) of the Land Registration Rules 2003.**

None.

**LR5.2 This lease is made under, or by reference to, provisions of:**

None.

**LR6. Term for which the Property is leased**

The term as specified in this lease at clause 1.1 in the definition of "Contractual Term".

**LR7. Premium**

None.

**LR8. Prohibitions or restrictions on disposing of this lease**

This lease contains a provision that prohibits or restricts dispositions.

**LR9. Rights of acquisition etc.**

**LR9.1 Tenant's contractual rights to renew this lease, to acquire the reversion or another lease of the Property, or to acquire an interest in other land**

None.

**LR9.2 Tenant's covenant to (or offer to) surrender this lease**

None.

**LR9.3 Landlord's contractual rights to acquire this lease**

None.

**LR10. Restrictive covenants given in this lease by the Landlord in respect of land other than the Property**

None.

**LR11. Easements**

**LR11.1 Easements granted by this lease for the benefit of the Property**

The easements included in clause 1.1 of this lease in the definition of "Incorporated Terms" and specified in Part 2 of Schedule 1 of the Existing Lease.

**LR11.2 Easements granted or reserved by this lease over the Property for the benefit of other property**

The easements included in clause 1.1 of this lease in the definition of "Incorporated Terms" and specified in Part 3 of Schedule 1 of the Existing Lease.

**LR12. Estate rentcharge burdening the Property**

None.

**LR13. Application for standard form of restriction**

None.

**LR14. Declaration of trust where there is more than one person comprising the Tenant**

Not Applicable.

## Parties

- (1) **UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL** of Council Offices, Uckfield Civic Centre, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 1AE (**Landlord**)
- (2) **GORDON DADSWELL** of Scotswood, vines Cross Road, Horam, Heathfield East Sussex, TN21 0HF and **JOHN BENJAMIN HART** of 4 Combe End, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1NH and **KEVIN JOHN DADSWELL** of 26 Harcourt Road, Uckfield East Sussex TN22 5 DU and **TIMOTHY JAMES COTTINGHAM** of 15 Mill Close, Heathfield East Sussex TN21 0XB being the present **TRUSTEES OF THE GOSPEL STANDARD STRICT BAPTIST CHURCH** (**Tenant**)

## BACKGROUND

- (A) The Landlord is the freehold owner of the Property.
- (B) The residue of the term of the Existing Lease is vested in the Tenant.
- (C) The Landlord has agreed to grant a new lease of the Property to the Tenant on the terms set out in this lease.

## Agreed Terms

### 1. Interpretation

The following definitions and rules of interpretation apply in this lease.

#### 1.1 Definitions:

**Annual Rent:** rent at a rate of £1,150.00 per annum.

**Contractual Term:** a term of 5 years beginning on and including \_\_\_\_\_ 2024 and ending on and including \_\_\_\_\_ 2029.

**Excluded Terms:** any terms, requirements, covenants or conditions contained in the Existing Lease to the extent that they are inconsistent with, specifically excluded or substituted by the terms of this lease.

**Existing Lease:** the lease by virtue of which the Tenant holds the Property, which is dated 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024 and made between UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL ("the Landlord") and John Henry Cottington of 6 Lansdowne Crescent, Hailsham, East Sussex BN27 1LN; Gordon Dadswell of 26 Harcourt Road, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 5DU; Timothy James Cottingham of 15 Mill Close, Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 0XB and John Benjamin Hart of 4 Combe End, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1NH as the then TRUSTEES OF THE GOSPEL STANDARD STRICT BAPTIST CHURCH ("the Tenant") (a certified copy of which is annexed to this lease)

and the documents made supplemental to it (certified copies of which are also annexed to this lease).

**Incorporated Terms:** with the exception of the Excluded Terms, all of the terms, requirements, covenants and conditions contained in the Existing Lease with such modifications as are necessary to make them applicable to this lease and the parties to this lease and as specifically varied by clause 3 including:

- a) the definitions and rules of interpretation in the Existing Lease;
- b) the agreements and declarations contained in the Existing Lease;
- c) the rights granted and reserved by the Existing Lease (including the right of re-entry and forfeiture); and
- d) the third-party rights, restrictions and covenants affecting the Property; and

**Insurance Rent:** the amount calculated in accordance with Clause 5.2 of the Existing Lease with such modifications as are necessary to make the provisions applicable to this lease and as specifically varied by clause 3.

**Landlord's Covenants:** the obligations in this lease, which include the obligations contained in the Incorporated Terms, to be observed by the Landlord.

**LTA 1954:** Landlord and Tenant Act 1954.

**Plan:** the plan attached to the Existing Lease marked "Plan".

**Property:** the property known as Small Hall, Harcourt Road, Uckfield East Sussex as shown edged red on the Plan and as described in the Existing Lease.

**Rent Payment Dates:** 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1<sup>st</sup> July, 1<sup>st</sup> October and 1<sup>st</sup> January of each year.

**Tenant's Covenants:** the obligations in this lease, which include the obligations contained in the Incorporated Terms, to be observed by the Tenant.

**VAT:** value added tax or any equivalent tax chargeable in the UK or elsewhere.

1.2 References to the landlord and tenant in the Existing Lease shall be read as references to the Landlord and Tenant in this lease.

## **2. Grant**

2.1 The Landlord lets with full title guarantee the Property to the Tenant for the Contractual Term at the rents reserved.

2.2 This grant is made on the terms of this lease which include the Incorporated Terms as if they were set out in full in this lease.

2.3 The Tenant covenants with the Landlord that it will comply with the Tenant's Covenants.



- 2.4 The Landlord covenants with the Tenant that it will comply with the Landlord's Covenants.
- 2.5 The grant is made with the Tenant paying the following as rent to the Landlord:
- (a) the Annual Rent and all VAT in respect of it;
  - (b) any other sums due under this lease.

### **3. The Existing Lease**

For the purposes of this lease only, the terms of the Existing Lease shall be varied as set out in the Schedule 1 and this lease shall be read and construed accordingly.

### **4. The Annual Rent**

- 4.1 The Tenant shall pay the Annual Rent and any VAT in respect of it by four equal instalments in advance on or before the Rent Payment Dates.
- 4.2 The first instalment of the Annual Rent shall be made on the date of this lease and shall be the proportion, calculated on a daily basis, in respect of the period beginning on the first day of the Contractual Term and ending on the day before the next Rent Payment Date.

### **5. Section 62 of the Law of Property Act 1925**

Except as mentioned in clause 2.2, the grant of this lease nor anything in it confers any right over neighbouring property nor is to be taken to show that the Tenant may have any right over neighbouring property, and section 62 of the Law of Property Act 1925 does not apply to this lease.

### **6. Exclusion of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954**

- 6.1 The Landlord and the Tenant agree that the provisions of Sections 24 to 28 (inclusive) of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 shall not apply to this tenancy.
- 6.2 The Tenant confirms that before the date of this lease:
- (a) the Landlord served on the Tenant a notice in a form complying with Schedule 1 of the Regulatory Reform (Business Tenancies) (England and Wales) Order 2003 (the Regulations) in relation to the tenancy created by this lease; and
  - (b) the Tenant made a Declaration in reply notice in a form complying with Schedule 2 of the Regulations in relation to the tenancy created by this Lease.

## **7. Entire agreement**

- 7.1 This lease and the documents annexed to it constitute the whole agreement between the parties and supersede all previous discussions, correspondence, negotiations, arrangements, understandings and agreements between them relating to their subject matter.
- 7.2 Each party acknowledges that in entering into this lease and any documents annexed to it it does not rely on, and shall have no remedies in respect of, any representation or warranty (whether made innocently or negligently).
- 7.3 Nothing in this lease constitutes or shall constitute a representation or warranty that the Property or any common parts over which the Tenant has rights under this lease may lawfully be used for any purpose allowed by this lease.
- 7.4 Nothing in this clause shall limit or exclude any liability for fraud.

## **8. Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999**

A person who is not a party to this lease shall not have any rights under the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 to enforce any term of this lease. This does not affect any right or remedy of a third party which exists, or is available, apart from that Act.

## **9. Governing law**

This lease and any dispute or claim arising out of or in connection with it or its subject matter or formation (including non-contractual disputes or claims) shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the law of England and Wales.

## **10. Jurisdiction**

Each party irrevocably agrees that the courts of England and Wales shall have exclusive jurisdiction to settle any dispute or claim arising out of or in connection with this lease or its subject matter or formation (including non-contractual disputes or claims).

This document has been executed as a **deed** and is delivered and takes effect on the date stated at the beginning of it.

## **Schedule 1**

### **Variations to the Existing Lease**

#### **1. Replacement of Trustees**

The definition of “the Tenant” in the Existing Lease is varied so as to be replaced by the new Trustees in the names of:

GORDON DADSWELL of Scotswood, vines Cross Road, Horam, Heathfield East Sussex, TN21 0HF and JOHN BENJAMIN HART of 4 Combe End, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1NH and KEVIN JOHN DADSWELL of 26 Harcourt Road, Uckfield East Sussex TN22 5 DU and TIMOTHY JAMES COTTINGHAM of 15 Mill Close, Heathfield East Sussex TN21 0XB being the present TRUSTEES OF THE GOSPEL STANDARD STRICT BAPTIST CHURCH.

**Executed as a Deed by** )  
**UCKFIELD PARISH COUNCIL** )  
**acting by two Councillors** )  
in the presence of the Clerk:-

\_\_\_\_\_  
Councillor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Councillor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk Signature

**Executed as a Deed by** )  
**GORDON DADSWELL** as Trustee for the )  
said **TRUSTEES OF THE GOSPEL** )  
**STANDARD STRICT BAPTIST CHURCH**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Trustee Signature

in the presence of:-

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Address

**Executed as a Deed by** )  
**JOHN BENJAMIN HART** as Trustee for the )  
said **TRUSTEES OF THE GOSPEL** )  
**STANDARD STRICT BAPTIST CHURCH**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Trustee Signature

in the presence of:-

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Address

**Executed as a Deed** by )  
**KEVIN JOHN DADSWELL** as Trustee for )  
the said **TRUSTEES OF THE GOSPEL** )  
**STANDARD STRICT BAPTIST CHURCH**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Trustee Signature

in the presence of:-

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Address

**Executed as a Deed** by )  
**TIMOTHY JAMES COTTINGHAM** as )  
Trustee for the said **TRUSTEES OF THE** )  
**GOSPEL STANDARD STRICT BAPTIST**  
**CHURCH**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Trustee Signature

in the presence of:-

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Address

**Certified copy of Existing Lease**

## **Meeting of the Full Council**

**Wednesday 26 June 2024**

### **Agenda Item 18.0**

#### **TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS**

##### **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 The report sets out the engagements of the new Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor between 21 May and 26 June 2024.
- 1.2 Please note that the Mayor, Councillor K. Bedwell and Deputy Mayor, Councillor S. Mayhew were elected on 20 May 2024.

#### **TO NOTE THE MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS**

- 02.06.24 Uckfield Lions Day. Luxford Field, Uckfield
- 03.06.24 Attend New Mayors and Chairs Reception, County Hall. Lewes
- 04.06.24 Interview with Ashdown Radio. Bird in Eye Farm, Framfield.
- 06.06.24 Lighting of the Beacon, D-Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Victoria Pleasure Ground.
- 07.06.24 Breakfast meeting of Uckfield Chamber of Commerce, Horsted Place.
- 25.06.24 Guest at Medi Tech Trust Presentation Evening. Civic Centre, Uckfield.

#### **TO NOTE THE DEPUTY MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS**

- 06.06.24 Lighting of the Beacon, D-Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Victoria Pleasure Ground.
- 15.06.24 To officially 'Open' Caring Beyond Belief Event. Victoria Pavilion, Uckfield.

#### **TOWN CRIER ENGAGEMENTS**

- 25.05.24 Cry to promote Streets of Wealden, Uckfield High Street at 11.30am
- 02.06.24 Attended the Uckfield Lions Event, Luxford Field.
- 06.06.24 Proclamation to mark D-Day Anniversary at 8.00am  
(filmed by BBC South East)  
Proclamation to mark D-Day Anniversary at Beacon Lighting at 9.05pm