

Edenbridge Town Council

Town Clerk: Christine Lane CertHE Local Policy



Notice is hereby given of a Council Meeting of Edenbridge Town Council to be held in Rickards Hall on Monday 11 January 2016 at 8pm, which Councillors are summonsed to attend.

Town Clerk
06/01/2016

To assist in the speedy and efficient dispatch of business, members wishing to obtain factual information on items included on the Agenda are asked to enquire of the Town Clerk prior to the day of the meeting.

Anyone wishing to film or use social media is requested, as a courtesy, to advise the Clerk prior to the start of the meeting.

AGENDA

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS OR PREDETERMINATION
3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS
The Council will receive questions and statements from the public (this is the only opportunity for members of the public to make a contribution during the meeting) and for members with pecuniary interests to speak on items on the Agenda. Both members and public are limited to 3 minutes per person.
4. TO RECEIVE, ADOPT AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 14 DECEMBER 2016
5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES FOR REPORT AND NOT ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA - none
6. TO CONSIDER THE CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS
Planning Applications to be considered at this meeting - none
7. TO ADOPT THE FOLLOWING REPORTS
 - 7.1 Planning and Transportation, 21 December
 - 7.2 Finance Committee, 21 December
 - 7.3 County Councillor's - none
 - 7.4 Working Groups / Delegate Reports / Clerk's and Officers' Reports
 - 7.4.1 KALC AGM, 21 November 2015
 - 7.4.2 Clerk's Reports - none

Council offices: Doggetts Barn, 72A High Street, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 5AR

Office hours: Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm Tel: (01732) 865368 Fax: (01732) 866749

Email: townclerk@edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk Web: www.edenbridgetc.kentparishes.gov.uk

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8. OTHER BUSINESS

- 8.1 Items referred from Committees for decision
- 8.2 Budget and Precept 2016/17
- 8.3 Health & Safety Performance Review 2015
- 8.4 Internal Audit Review,
- 8.5 Review of Hirers' Agreement and Insurance Check
- 8.6 Councillor Training, 15 February
- 8.7 Kent Police Council Tax consultation
- 8.8 Changes to Kent Pensions
- 8.9 Proposed changes to National Planning Policy Consultation
- 8.10 Modernization of Post Office
- 8.11 Graffiti Removal
- 8.12 Water Meadows Progress Report
- 8.13 Chairmanship Conference
- 8.14 Emergency Planning, Flood sacks
- 8.15 Council Representative to Great Stonebridge Trust
- 8.16 Neighbourhood Plan Update

9. FOR INFORMATION

- 9.1 Thank you letter Mrs Terri Scanes
- 9.2 Tandridge District Council – Local Plan
- 9.3 Revised release date for Tender for Youth Services
- 9.4 River Medway Flood Storage Areas
- 9.5 Equipment Audit Emergency Planning
- 9.6 MBE Awarded to Cllr Peter Fleming
- 9.7 CBE Awarded to John Sutrees

10. PRESS RELEASE

In view of the confidential nature of the following items to be discussed, the chairman will move that the press and public be excluded from the Chamber. Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960.

11. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

- 11.1 Doctors Surgery
- 11.2 Staffing Issues

Copies of the agenda and background papers, except any exempt items, are available from Doggetts Barn before the meeting and plans can be examined there (Monday – Fridays 9am – 5pm)

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8. OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Items referred from Committees for decision – none

8.2 Budget and Precept 2016/17

The Finance Committee has considered the budget for 2016/17 and a briefing session for members is being held on Thursday 7 January. The budget is now presented for ratification to Council. It is in line with the recommendation of the Forward Planning Committee, and results in an increase of 2%. A copy of the draft budget and the revised Matrix is attached. Details of the content are included in the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 21 December. The calculations are based on a tax base 3,463. This results in an annual figure for the parish portion of the Council Tax, per Band D property, of £133.49 an increase of £2.62 for the year.

Do members wish to propose any changes or to agree the budget as proposed, which would result in a precept request of £462,278 being submitted to the District Council for 2016/17?

8.3 Health & Safety Performance Review 2015

	2015		
Employee Claims	0		
RIDDOR reportable incidents	0		
Other accidents/incidents across the Council	3	3 Staff/ 0 others	
Near misses	0		
Enforcement notices issued against the council	0		
Any accident trends identified	0		
Are there any outstanding enforcement issues	0		

2015 RIDDOR reportable 0 Accidents and Incidents 3

Annual Accident statistics (no of incidents/working days (252)/no of staff 10)) Total 0.0001

Members of Public (no of incidents/days in the year (365)/no of residents (8000)) Total 0.0001

Noted: Three minor accidents : Two heads banged on beams and a clock falling off wall

No near misses were identified

Historic Data

2014 RIDDOR reportable 0 Accidents and Incidents 4

Annual Accident statistics (no of incidents/working days (252)/no of staff 10)) Total 0.00079

Members of Public (no of incidents/days in the year (365)/no of residents (8000)) Total 0.00079

Noted: Increase in the number of accidents reported by users of facilities both of a minor nature.
: Both staff injuries to office based staff and involved squashed fingers

2013 RIDDOR reportable 1 Accidents and Incidents 2

Annual Accident statistics (no of incidents/working days (252)/no of staff 10)) Total 0.001

Members of Public (no of incidents/days in the year (365)/no of residents (8000)) Total 0.000000

RIDDOR report incident – no further action case closed
Employee Claim same incident ongoing

Other incidents : Two minor incidents no further action needed.

No near misses were identified

8.4 Internal Audit Review

The Internal Audit Review was carried out on 18 December a copy of the report is attached for approval. If approved the following recommendations will be implemented

- to add support for Councillor and staff training to the internal auditor's checklist
- potential devolution of services to be added as a standard item on Forward Planning Agenda
- Council to review its strategy and vision so it has a coherent plan to respond to the evolving situation.

Do members accept the report?

The Internal Audit Review Group will be proposing the Internal Audit Plan for 2016/17 shortly, for approval in May.

8.5 Review of Hirers Agreement and Insurance Check

There have been no significant changes in legislation that affect the hiring agreement so no changes are proposed at this time. All regular hirers have been asked to provide copies of their Insurance.

8.6 Councillor Training, 15 February

A Councillor Training Session is programmed for 15 February. The current training schedule is attached and shows that the majority of the training requested has been provided, with the exception of the areas of Roles and Responsibilities and Community Involvement. Further training sessions are planned for 4 July and 3 October. It is probably a bit late to organize outside training for 15 February **would members prefer to use that evening to take forward the work of the Task and Finish Groups? Or are there new training requirements?**

8.7 Kent Police Council Tax consultation

The Police Crime Commissioner wishes to consult Town and Parish Councils on the proposed increase to the Council Tax of £5 per household, to enable the number of Firearms Officers on the payroll to be increased. This would meet the Government target of a 50% increase, providing 37 more Officers in Kent. The consultation ends on Friday 15 January.

Do members have any comments they wish the Clerk to submit?

8.8 Changes to Kent Pensions

End of Contracting Out

With effect from 6 April 2016 there will be a single rate of National Insurance Contribution. This means that for all employees who are members of the LGPS, the amount of National Insurance Contributions they pay will increase from 6 April 2016. The employer will also notice an increase in the employer's rate as well. Action is needed by the employer to inform employees who are affected that this is going to happen.

The pension section will notify all members, who were in the scheme at 31 March 2016, within 3 months of the change. However, it is also proposed that the factsheet produced by the Work and Pension Section be circulated to all staff.

Do members agree to this course of action?

8.9 Proposed changes to National Planning Policy Consultation

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has issued a consultation on proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework. The deadline for responses is Monday 25 January.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/national-planning-policy-consultation-on-proposed-changes> DCLG advise that the consultation is proposing changes in the following areas:

- broadening the definition of affordable housing, to expand the range of low cost housing opportunities for those aspiring to own their new home
- increasing residential density around commuter hubs, to make more efficient use of land in suitable locations
- supporting sustainable new settlements, development on brownfield land and small sites, and delivery of housing allocated in plans
- supporting delivery of starter homes

Which members would like to assist the Clerk with the response?

8.10 Modernization of Post Office

Notification of the temporary closure of the Post Office at 36 High Street for modernization has been received. The branch will be closed from 5.30pm on Wednesday 3 February until 1pm on Wednesday 17 February, reopening as a main style branch with three low level serving positions, one screened and two open plan. They will be providing the same services and introducing longer opening hours. They will be open until 5pm on Saturdays.

The Clerk has had a lengthy conversation with the development team to see what, if any, provisions have been put in place for the two week closure. She has been advised that notices are/will be put up in the branch and a press release issued. Advance notification has been sent to the MP, KCC, SDC, Invicta Chamber, KALC and Age UK.

The information provided indicates that the nearest branches are at Westerham and Dormansland. If the closure had been for a longer period and the nearest branch over 6 miles away, they would consider a bus service, but this is not something that would be considered for a two week closure.

The Post Office has successfully managed a number of other refurbishments and has found, given enough notice, customers have been able to make alternative arrangements and the long term benefits of the new branch outweigh the temporary inconvenience.

Some of the good practice employed by Barclays was shared, and the Council asked if it could advertise the closure via its social media and ensure that other providers are aware of the closure.

Are there any other actions members wish to take?

8.11 Graffiti Removal

Recently Edenbridge has been targeted by graffiti 'artists'. Wherever possible I as the Community Warden, working with the groundstaff, try to remove it but this is problematic especially with fences, as a total covering with wood preservative of the whole fence is usually required to cover up rather than erase the marks. This is the responsibility of the owner of the fence. Some owners are unable or reluctant to carry out this work and the graffiti can remain in place for some weeks.

Whenever possible efforts are made to reduce the impact and in cases where further work is needed, the land owner is advised. I have a good relationship with SDC but they only deal with graffiti that is racist, obscene, homophobic or hate crime, and have done this swiftly on occasions for Edenbridge when requested.

People who are victims of graffiti are sometimes reluctant to report the criminal damage on 101 and therefore it is not treated as a priority by police, when there are scarce resources available for catching the culprits.

Are there any resources available for when an owner does not carry out this task and the graffiti is left for other people to see over an extensive or prominent area? The cost of using a graffiti removal company is generally in the region of £300 per visit.

Community Warden 5/1/2015

8.12 Water Meadows – progress report – attached

It is hoped that the Council's groundstaff will be able to assist the volunteers on one or two of the days.

8.13 Chairmanship Conference

KALC are hosting its Chairmanship Conference at the Orchards Conference Centre, East Malling ME19 6BJ. The Agenda for the day is below.

- John Rivers, KALC President - Moderator and Speaker
- The Right Hon. Greg Clark MP - Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
- A senior Clerk
- A legal specialist to detail current legal updates
- A senior Executive Officer from a Public Body
- An HR Specialist

They will also be running two afternoon training sessions

- Introductory Chairmanship Skills
- Human Resources issues for Local Councils

Which members would like to attend?

8.14 Emergency Planning, Flood sacks

Part of the town was put on Flood Alert on Sunday 3 January, fortunately the river receded and the Emergency Planning Team did not need to take any direct action.

The Group has for some time been hoping to source FloodSax's to be made available for sale to residents who wish to keep a supply to hand. Sevenoaks District Council has provided 100, packed in batches of five on a sale or return basis to the Emergency Planning Committee. Twenty five have been retained for issue by the committee in an Emergency and the rest put on sale through the Information Point.

A pack of five bags protects a doorway and are to be sold at a competitive price of £25. This price is tbc.

8.15 Council Representative to Great Stonebridge Trust

Cllr Richard Davison's term of representation on the Great Stone Bridge Trust has expired, **do members wish to propose that he stands for another four years?**

8.16 Neighbourhood Plan Update

The first meeting with the consultant employed to assist with writing the policies has taken place. The group are on target to start consultation in early spring.

9. FOR INFORMATION

9.1 Thank you letter Mrs Terri Scanes

Mrs Terri Scanes has written thanking all involved in the award to her of the Civic Medallion and feels VERY honoured to have been given this Decoration.

9.2 Tandridge District Council – Local Plan

Tandridge are embarking on the early stages of the development of their Neighbourhood Plan. They are currently consulting on an Issues and Approaches document; comments are being **accepted via their website.**

9.3 Revised release date for Tender for Youth Services

KCC has announced that the tenders for youth services will now be available week commencing 8 February and will be discussed at the Youth Consortium meeting on Wednesday 13 January.

9.4 River Medway Flood Storage Areas Newsletter, attached

9.5 Equipment Audit Emergency Planning

The Emergency Planning Team has carried out a full audit of their equipment. Items that were stored in the loft space have been relocated so they can be easily accessed. They are now stored in

the cupboard at the top of the stairs at Doggetts Barn. The Community Leader Cllr Margot McArthur wished to thank the volunteers who helped with the audit.

9.6 MBE Awarded to Cllr Peter Fleming

Cllr Peter Fleming, Leader of Sevenoaks District Council has been awarded an MBE for services To Sevenoaks District Council and for work as the former chairman of the Local Government Association Improvement and Innovation Board.

9.7 CBE Awarded to John Sutrees

John Surtees, the only person to win world championships on both four and two wheels, has been awarded a CBE in Britain's New Year's Honours list. The Order of the British Empire "recognises distinguished service to the arts and sciences, public services outside the Civil Service and work with charitable and welfare organisations of all kinds".

After being made an Officer of the British Empire (OBE) in 2008, the 81-year-old has now been honoured with the more senior rank of Commander of the British Empire.

He was previously made a Member of the British Empire (MBE) in 1959.

The award recognises not only achievements as a competitor, but also his ongoing involvement in motorsport and charity work through the Henry Surtees Foundation, named in honour of his son, who lost his life in a Formula 2 crash at Brands Hatch in 2009.

10. PRESS RELEASE

Are there any items on which the Council wishes to publish a press release?

In view of the confidential nature of the following items to be discussed, the chairman will move that the press and public be excluded from the Chamber. Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960.

11. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Minutes of the Council Meeting of EDENBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL held in Rickards Hall at 8pm on Monday 14 December 2015

Present: Cllrs J Barnett, Mrs J Davison, R Davison (Vice Chairman), A Layland, V Maynard, M Robson, S McGregor (Chairman) B Orridge, C Pearman, J Scholey and J Woollorton.

In attendance: Christine Lane (Town Clerk), no members of the public and no press.

AGENDA

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received, noted and accepted from Cllrs T Bryant (work commitment), J Chappell (work commitment), M McArthur (unwell) and B Todd, (personal engagement).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS OR PREDETERMINATION

Cllr J Scholey declared an interest in planning application SE/15/03069/FUL being a near neighbour.

The District Council members stated that although they would be considering planning applications at this meeting they would be reconsidering them at the district level, taking into account all relevant evidence and representations there.

The meeting was closed

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

Cllr J Scholey spoke as a resident and outlined the continuing issues he has with the retrospective plan now before the council for consideration.

The meeting was reopened

4. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9 November 2015

Resolved: that the minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 9 November 2015 be duly signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES FOR REPORT AND NOT ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

5.1 Staff Training

It was noted that following discussions between the Clerk and Cllrs A Layland and C Pearman, four one-to-one training sessions had been offered to a member of the groundstaff to help him improve his skills and develop his career.

5.2 Edenbridge Community Infrastructure Levy Board

Resolved: that Cllr A Layland be added to the members of the Edenbridge Community Infrastructure Board.

6. TO CONSIDER THE CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS
Planning Applications for consideration

Erection of a single storey rear extension. **Pilrig Main Road Edenbridge KENT TN8 6JA**
Ref. No: 15/03752/HOUSE

Members support this application

Demolition of existing extensions and erection of two storey side and single storey rear extensions with rear projecting canopy. New front porch canopy. Removal of chimney. **Moonrakers Station Road Edenbridge Kent TN8 5NB Ref. No: 15/03736/HOUSE**

Members support this application

Conversion of roof space into habitable rooms with front and rear dormers. Conversion of garage into habitable rooms. Erection of porch and internal alterations. Alteration of external facing material from brickwork to render. **2A Ridge Way Edenbridge Kent TN8 6AR Ref. No: 5/03663/HOUSE**

Members support this application

Erection of a single storey rear extension. **Stangrove House Crouch House Road Edenbridge Kent TN8 5EH Ref. No: 15/03590/HOUSE**

Members support this application

Refurbishment of existing Showroom (Harwoods), erection of extension to the existing Workshop, site-wide enhancements and improved landscaping through the removal of the Fuel Depot facility. **Shell Gas Depot And Harwoods Hartfield Road Edenbridge Kent TN8 5NG Ref. No: 15/03478/FUL**

Members support this application

Minor material amendment to application SE/14/01153/FUL (Erection of six No three bedroom dwellinghouses comprises four properties of two storey design and two properties of part single, part chalet style design with parking and associated landscaping) to omit single storey extensions, increase number of parking spaces and make fenestration alterations. **Site Of Edenbridge Bowling Club Grange Close Edenbridge Kent TN8 5LT Ref. No: 15/03410/MMA**

Members support this application

Cllr J Scholey left the meeting

Erection of a detached chalet style house and detached car port with creation of access/driveway and area of decking to rear (dwelling already built) **Land South Of Amberwood And Edelweiss Swan Lane Edenbridge Kent TN8 6AT Ref. No: 15/03069/FUL**

Cllr J Scholey rejoined the meeting

Members object to the height of the proposed development

Erection of a single storey rear extension with flat roof with rooflights. Installation of dormer to the rear **76 Hever Road Edenbridge Kent TN8 5DJ SE/15/03419/HOUSE**

Members support this application

For information

Details pursuant to condition 3 (window details) of planning permission SE/15/01490/LBCALT. **Edenbridge Bookshop 79 High Street Edenbridge KENT TN8 5AU Ref. No: 15/03857/DETAIL** - noted |

Details pursuant to condition 4 (materials) of planning permission SE/15/01490/LBCALT. **Edenbridge Bookshop 79 High Street Edenbridge KENT TN8 5AU Ref. No: 15/03870/DETAIL** – noted

7. TO ADOPT THE FOLLOWING REPORTS

7.1 Emergency Planning, 2 November

Resolved: that the minutes presented by Cllr R Davison be adopted.

7.2 Open Spaces, 16 November

Resolved: that the minutes presented by Cllr R Davison be adopted.

7.3 Planning and Transportation, 23 November

Resolved: that the minutes presented by Cllr R Davison be adopted.

7.4 Finance Committee, 23 November

Following the inclusion of Cllrs Mrs J Davison, R Davison and B Todd to those giving apologies for absence,

Resolved: that the minutes presented by Cllr R Davison be adopted.

7.5 County Councillor's Update November - noted

7.6 Working Group / Delegate Reports / Clerk's and Officers' Reports

7.6.1 NALC Communities Can - Larger Local Councils Conference & Exhibition

Cllr A Layland encouraged all members to look for opportunities in line with the document Modelling Devolution, which he had been impressed with at the conference.

7.6.2 Clerk's Reports - noted

8. OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Items referred from Committees for decision

8.1.1 Replacement Flashing Speed Sign or speed camera/Unsuitable for vehicles – November Planning and Transportation 9.1.1

Members considered the case put forward by Cllr B Todd for a replacement flashing speed sign at the northern entrance to the town and were advised that the grant application to the Community Safety Partnership had been successful and £2,000 had been offered.

Resolved: that the sign should be purchased, with the balance of the funding be taken from the Council's Depreciation Fund. The sign to be added to the Assets Register so that funding for its future replacement would be available when needed.

Following the suggestion raised at Planning and Transportation, members considered the costs obtained for signs stating 'unsuitable for HGV' for the High Street. Signs would be needed at both ends of the High Street at an approximate cost of £926.

Resolved: that interested members should record incidents of HGV vehicles seen entering the High Street and where possible their purpose, e.g. if they are delivering or passing straight through. The data to be provided to the Clerk in time for the Planning and Transportation meeting in February, when members would revisit the suggestion again.

8.2 Environmental Assessment 2015

Following advice from the Council's Health & Safety Advisor, the final statement on the Council's Environmental Policy had been removed.

'Where risks cannot be eliminated they will be minimized by substitution, use of physical controls or, as a last resort, through systems of work'

The Council will continue to carry out mitigation measures but this particular statement cannot be upheld legally.

Environmental Assessment Report 2015

Members noted the amendment to the policy. The continued success of the solar power generation system installed at the cemetery depot was noted, along with the rain water harvesting.

Future projects are to be considered as lighting technology improves, to increase energy savings by the use of new technologies like LED (Light Emitting Diode) lamps, as they become more affordable.

Upon completion of the most recent STEM environmental award training, the Council now has Silver Stem accreditation.

8.3 Annual Town Meeting 18 April 2016

Members noted that the Annual Town Meeting is to take place at 8pm in the W.I. Hall on Monday 18 April and

Resolved: that the usual representatives from District and County Council and the Police should be invited to make short presentations and to take questions, in addition to the Chairman. The Neighbourhood Plan Group to be invited to make a presentation and have a display.

Resolved: Members proposed that different groups and local organisations should be asked to host displays, and to try to attract a wider attendance by sending personal 'invitations' to a small number of randomly selected residents to try to raise awareness of the Council activities.

8.4 Edenbridge Priority Matrix

Members considered the draft of the Edenbridge Priority Matrix prepared by Cllrs Mrs J Davison, A Layland and B Todd to assist in the budget setting process. They were thanked for their efforts and a few more activities were added to the list. Members

Resolved: to adopt the matrix, subject to the addition of the suggested items.

8.5 Business development meeting

The email explaining what Tom Tugendhat MP was hoping to achieve out of the meeting planned for 15 January had been circulated. Guests had been invited and Cllr S McGregor would put together the Agenda nearer the time.

8.6 Resurfacing of pathway Crouch House Road

Concerns of the residents living in Crouch House Road, who had been contacted by West Kent Housing regarding resurfacing works to be carried out to the shared alleyway at the rear of the properties, were outlined. On their behalf, Cllrs Margot McArthur and Alan Layland took up their case and objected to the manner of the approach and the costs involved.

Resolved: that the Clerk should respond expressing Council's concern and supporting the actions already taken by the district members and the MP.

8.7 SLCC Regional Road Show – Chatham 3 February 2016

Resolved: the Clerk, Deputy Clerk and the Chairman should attend the SLCC Regional Roadshow taking place at the Bridgewater Manor Hotel in Chatham on Wednesday 3 February and, if possible, take advantage of the early bird fee of £69 + VAT, three for two offer or deals for first timers.

8.8 Local Plan Placemaker Workshop, Tuesday 26 January, Rickards Hall

Sevenoaks District Council is preparing a new Local Plan to cover the period up to 2035. This policy document will be used to guide where and when development will happen. It will allocate land for open space, housing, employment and other types of development.

Resolved: that Cllrs R Davison, A Layland and the Clerk should attend the Local Plan Placemaking Workshop at Rickards Hall on Tuesday 26 January at 7.30pm

8.9 Edenbridge Defibrillator

Members noted the good news that the First Responders had found a location for the Edenbridge Defibrillator and were intending to get it installed. There is currently a question over the suitability of the casing for outdoor use and they were seeking funding. It is possible that a more substantial/waterproof casing will be needed at an approximate cost of £400.

Resolved: to advise the group that if they are unable to fund the project themselves, they should consider an application to the Great Stone Bridge Trust, or failing that through the Council's Grant Application Fund.

8.10 Sainsbury Update

Sainsbury's had confirmed that progress was being made but they are not yet in a position to make any announcements. They hope to be able to do so early in 2016.

8.11 Volunteer Support Warden

Members noted the documentation on the scheme but did not wish to apply at this point.

8.12 Neighbourhood Plan Update

Members considered the latest report from the group, which included the receipt of a grant of 8K toward the further development of the policies and for consultation with local households. The results of the work of the task groups was reported, along with the developing policies from the housing, environment, economy and infrastructure and health/learning/well-being groups.

The consultants working with the local GPs and health trusts on possible new medical facilities for the town had updated the Steering Group, and offered a briefing for the Town Council members.

Resolved: to invite the Doctors and the developers to brief the Council at 7pm on Monday 21 December.

8.13 Planning Appeal, Skinners Lane Solar Farm SE/14/03361/FUL

Resolved: that Cllr Mrs J Davison or the Clerk should represent the Town Council at the hearing which was expected to last two days. Cllrs S McGregor or J Scholey would speak on behalf of the District. The Council had objected to the proposal.

8.14 Kent Fire and Rescue, Safety and Wellbeing plan 2016-2018

Kent Fire and Rescue Service had issued a consultation on its Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2016-18.

Resolved: that members should advise the Clerk of any comment they wished to submit.

9. FOR INFORMATION

9.1 Fly tippers jailed

Members welcomed the news that two fly tippers had been imprisoned for a total of 8 years.

9.2 Councillor and Staff Training

It was noted that staff have recently completed a number of training courses run by Ellis Whittam. Unfortunately the toilet cleaner was unable to attend the sessions.

Health & Safety Fire Warden

Health & Safety Grounds Maintenance Refresher

Health & Safety Working at Height

Health & Safety Display Screen Equipment

Health & Safety Lone Working

Manual Handling

9.3 New Year Honours 2017

Members noted the deadline for nominations of 4 February 2016, details available at the Town Council.

9.4 Health Trainer/ Sexual Health Nurse

Members were encouraged to support the Health Trainer, provided by Kent Community NHS Trust, to support and empower people to improve their health. She is based at the Eden Centre and can offer free and confidential one hour sessions to assist with weight loss, healthy eating, stress, alcohol and drugs issues. Appointments can be booked on 03001231220 (Option 3). They also welcomed Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust initiative to provide a Sexual Health Nurse, who to work from the Eden Centre.

9.5 Edenbridge Partnership - Survey

The Council's response to the Edenbridge Partnership survey, to gauge the amount of support for community activities, was circulated.

9.6 Fire Station thanks

Lee Able, Kent Fire and Rescue, had emailed his thanks for the hard work the Council had put into helping with the recruitment process and for those taking the time to attend the celebration.

10. PRESS RELEASE

Members wished Cllr B Todd to issue a press release once the process and timescale for the reinstatement of the flashing speed sign was known.

The meeting ended at 9.50pm

Minutes of a meeting of the PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE held in Rickards Hall on Monday 21 December 2015 at 8pm

Present: Cllrs Mrs J Davison, R Davison (Vice Chariman), A Layland, S McGregor (Chairman), B Orridge, M Robson, J Scholey, Bob Todd.

In attendance: Cllr C Pearman, D Slater (Finance Officer), L Eaton (Admin Officer); no members of the press or public.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received, noted and accepted from Cllrs J Barnett (personal), T Bryant (work commitment), V Maynard (unwell) and M McArthur(unwell).

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS OR PREDETERMINATION

Cllr S McGregor declared a non-prejudicial interest in item 8.1. being a near neighbour.

The District Councillors wish to state that although they would be considering planning applications at this meeting they would be reconsidering them at the district level, taking into account all relevant evidence and representations there.

The meeting was closed

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – none

The meeting was reopened

4. TO RECEIVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE HELD ON Monday 23 November 2015

Resolved: that the minutes be signed by the Committee Chairman as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE, FOR REPORT ONLY

5.1 Town and Parish Council Planning Forum

It was noted that Local Plan Placemaking Workshops were planned for January and February, providing an opportunity to discuss the new Local Plan and receive updates on recent planning issues, including the Community Infrastructure Levy.

5.2 Replacement flashing speed sign

It was noted that at December Council members resolved to replace the flashing speed sign at the north entry to the town.

5.3 Unsuitable for HGV signs

It was noted that at December Council members were requested to provide the Clerk with information they'd gathered about HGVs using the High Street, including registration numbers, names of companies and destinations, in time for February Planning & Transportation.

6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

Planning applications can be accessed electronically via the District Council website on the following link <http://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications>

Erection of a two storey side extension, infilling of existing covered veranda to front elevation with formation of new porch and extension over and infilling of existing covered veranda to rear elevation. Internal alterations. **Little Browns Cottage Honeypt Lane Edenbridge Kent TN8 6QJ** Ref. No: 15/03807/HOUSE

Members wish the Officer to carefully validate the calculations for the 50% rule. Was the open porch part of the original building? Will the bulk have an adverse effect on the green belt? If it is over 50%, members object to the application.

Alteration and extension including first floor side extension, infill rear extension and associated works. Alterations to fenestration and internal alterations. **60 Ridge Way Edenbridge Kent TN8 6AP** Ref. No: 15/03804/HOUSE

Members support this application.

Erection of a two storey side extension. **55 Ridge Way Edenbridge KENT TN8 6AP** Ref. No: 15/03689/HOUSE

Members support this application.

Re-locate external door (as previously granted under reference 15/00594/LBCALT) in the extension of the house. Remodel the ensuite in the master bedroom which involves removing a stud wall and putting up a new stud wall. **Eden Cottage Mill Hill Edenbridge KENT TN8 5BU** Ref. No: 15/03632/LBCALT

Members are happy to accept the view of the Conservation Officer on this application.

7. **SDC PLANNING DECISIONS – noted**

8. **PLANNING BUSINESS**

8.1 Planning Appeal APP/G2245/W/15/3130787 – Land north of railway line and west of St Johns Way Edenbridge TN8 6HF

Outline application for mixed use development comprising up to 300 new homes, up to 2.6 hectares of public open space and vehicular access with some matters reserved. **Land North of Railway Line and West of St Johns Way St Johns Way Edenbridge TN8 6HF** Ref. No: 14/03783/OUT

The appeal is to be dealt with by means of a Public Inquiry, heard at SDC offices, on 16 February 2016, starting at 10am. Members

Resolved: that Cllrs J Scholey and A Layland would represent SDC, and Cllr T Bryant would represent the Town Council.

8.2 Planning Appeal APP/G2245/W/15/313644

Demolition of existing house on the site of Barn Cottage, clearance of site and erection of two 3 bedroom detached houses. **Barn Cottage Crouch House Road Edenbridge Kent TN8 5ED** 15/02314/FUL

An appeal had been made to the Planning Inspectorate against SDC's refusal of planning permission for the development described above. After noting what they had said previously, members

Resolved: they had no further comments to make.

9. **TRANSPORT BUSINESS**

9.1 Road issues

9.1.1 Drainage works

Members noted the works carried out by the Environment Agency, which included removing the water level boards in the weir structure downstream of Edenbridge, and removing the timber planters and repairing the joints in the reinforced concrete wall on the Baptist Church river frontage. They had also advised that the Mill Pond flap system was now working properly.

9.1.2 East Facing Slips at an appropriate location in the vicinity of Junction 5 M25

A letter dated 10 December from KALC, providing an update on the development of an economic benefits study, was noted. They were inviting Parish and Town Councils to provide them with any information about local, regional and national economic benefits and the potential impacts, including social and environmental. Members

Resolved: they still did not wish to get involved but were wholly in support of a facility to ensure the M25 remains functional.

9.1.3 Highways England – M20 Lorry Area

A letter dated 10 December from Highways England, regarding a consultation on a proposed permanent M20 Lorry Area, was noted. Highways England wished to obtain a broad range of feedback on general options. Members

Resolved: that this early stage they did not wish to respond.

9.1.4 Request by Cllr Robson regarding Kent Highways' refusal to review height signs

Members discussed Cllr M Robson's request to consider Kent Highways refusal to review the incorrect height signs displayed at the bridge at Edenbridge Station. It was

Resolved: that County Cllr C Pearman would take the matter forward for the final time.

9.1.5 Road closure – noted

9.2 Rail issues

9.2.1 Councillor reports

Cllr M Robson's reports on the Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee meeting on 11 November and the Wealden Line Campaign AGM on 14 November were noted.

9.2.2 Sussex Community Rail Partnership – December newsletter noted

9.2.3 Edenbridge & District Rail Travellers' Assoc – December newsletter noted

9.2.4 Southeastern December 2015 Timetable Changes – noted

9.3 Aviation issues

9.3.1 Gatwick Coordination Group of MPs Opposing a 2nd Gatwick Runway

An email dated 11 December from Gatwick One's Enough, castigating the Government's Heathrow indecision, was noted.

9.3.2 Gatwick Airport response to delay of expansion decision

Members noted the press release dated 10 December from Gatwick Airport, issued following the Government's announcement that it will delay a decision on airport expansion.

9.3.3 HWCAAG letter to CAA

A draft letter dated 8 December from HWCAAG to Andrew Haines of the Civil Aviation Authority, regarding airspace issues concerning Gatwick Airport, was noted.

9.3.4 Night flights petition

Members noted that a petition regarding night flights could be found at <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/106462>

9.3.5 Gatwick Airmail – airport newsletter noted

9.4 Highways report – noted

10. PRESS RELEASE

There were no items on the agenda for which members wished to issue a press release.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Minutes of the meeting of the FINANCE COMMITTEE held in Rickards Hall on Monday 21 December 2015 at 8.31pm

Present: Cllrs Mrs J Davison, R Davison (Vice Chairman), A Layland, S McGregor (Chairman), B Orridge, M Robson, J Scholey, B Todd.

In attendance: C Lane (Town Clerk), D Slater (Finance Officer). No members of the press or public were present.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received, noted and accepted from Cllr T Bryant (work commitment).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. TO RECEIVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 23 NOVEMBER 2015

Resolved: that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 23 November 2015 be signed by the Committee Chairman as a true and accurate record of the meeting having been amended to include the apologies for absence received, noted and accepted at the meeting.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES FOR REPORT AND NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

None.

5. FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND ANALYSIS OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

Members noted in detail the income and expenditure transactions for the month and

Resolved: that Cllrs S McGregor and R Davison should sign the Financial Statement for the end of November confirming the analysis of receipts and payments, paid expenditure transactions, and authorising the payments of unpaid expenditure transactions. To approve the financial comparisons and to accept the transfers into and out of reserve accounts.

5.6 Fund Transfer

Capital Reserves

Transfer In: Nil

Transfer Out: £91.00 Neighbourhood Plan Admin

Revenue Reserves

Transfer In: Nil

Transfer Out: £70,000.00

5.7 Paragraphs 5.1 to 5.6 approved by resolution of the Council:

5.8 Invoices outstanding for more than 3months

None

6. FINANCE BUSINESS

6.1 Draft Budget 2016/17

A dispensation had been granted for all members to discuss the Budget

The Budget had been prepared carefully, estimating realistic figures for the forthcoming year and in line with the recommendations of the Forward Planning Committee, aiming for a standstill budget where possible. The outcome had resulted in a 2% increase to the precept. Small savings were made throughout the Budget headings where possible, and these were then used where increases were required. There had been an increase to Staff Costs on Open Spaces and Central Services to cover National Insurance increases and possible salary increases.

Council

Included provision of 1% allocated to the Property Fund, and the Depreciation Fund, being calculated in line with the Council's adopted Capital and Reserves Fund Policy. £17,500 had been transferred from Depreciation and £7,000 from the Property Fund towards funding the Open Spaces 10 year Maintenance Plan, as agreed at Forward Planning. A further £15,000 was transferred to the Open Spaces 10 Year Maintenance Plan from the Depreciation Fund, for this year only, to make up the shortfall. No further monies will be required out of the Capital Reserves for the Maintenance Plan this year.

A new budget heading, Planned Buildings Maintenance, was set up in Central Services with £12,000, plus a 10% contingency transferred from Council Property Fund.

New windows at the Sports Pavilion (£10,000), internal works at Doggetts Barn (£5,000) and gutter clearing (£300) were not budgeted for but could be covered by the surplus in the Revenue Property Fund.

Funding for the Service Level Agreements for the Eden Valley Museum Trust (£5,500) and Edenbridge Twinning Association (£500), agreed at the October Grants meeting, were included and £7,500 earmarked for the House Project at the Eden Centre.

Summer Play Scheme for 2016 shows a slight increase, with £25 extra to cover the cost of strips for changing the dates on the banner. Budget Headings for CIL had been set up on the Income and Expenditure sides.

The Grants Budget was proposed at £7,500.

Members

Agreed: to the additional £15,000 being taken from the Depreciation to be returned in a few years time when the 10 Year Maintenance Plan spending is less than the estimated average figure, and to the proposed amendments.

Open Spaces

New headings previously identified under the new 10 Year Maintenance Plan Heading had been set up, with several sub headings within these.

There had been an increase of £230 for hedge cutting since the figures were produced.

£3,000 of the Open Spaces Contingency Fund (previously £6,000) had been transferred as a contingency fund within this Budget Heading to cover items like this.

A further heading (Additional Planned Works) had been set up for works identified that may be required earlier than planned but were not included in budgeted figures.

These will then be easily identified. There is a list of contingency works but none are scheduled to take place in year 1 or year 2.

The Pond Maintenance survey is included in year 1 of the 10 Year Maintenance Plan.

The flail and spray line marker have both passed their planned replacement dates on the Asset Register. The cost for replacing the spray line marker is approximately £1,000 and the flail is in the region of £5,000. Both these items could be funded from Depreciation Fund and be ordered this year.

Costs for uniform for the ground staff was included and the figure for protective clothing has increased too.

The Tree Plan will not incur any cost and will be carried out by 'Men of the Trees'.

Rickards Hall cleaning costs are due to increase in January 2016 by £1 per day and this had been built into the budget. Members

Agreed: to the proposed amendments.

Central Services

£12,000 had been transferred from the Council's Property Fund to Central Services, under a new heading for the planned maintenance for the coming year, along with £1,200 being 10% contingency to cover all scheduled maintenance work. Members

Agreed: to the proposed amendments.

Emergency Planning

Agreed: that the Emergency Planning budget remained at £200.

Community Warden

The Edenbridge Community Warden Steering Group had written asking for the Council to continue supporting the post in 2016/17. Members

Agreed: to the Council contributing £6,000 for 2016/17, with the management fee of £2,625 to be repaid to the Council.

Items for consideration

Members were advised that the cost of providing a rail at the Recreation Ground had been obtained and would be in the region of £5,000. This item has not been budgeted for. Members

Agreed: that this was a matter for the Open spaces Committee to decide and had not been included.

Members noted that the refurbishment of Spitals Cross playground was on hold at present.

Members were advised that if all the existing concrete Streetlight columns were to be replaced with steel columns in the future, the approximate cost would be £108,000. No columns have currently been identified as dangerous and no funding had been allocated.

Members noted that if Solar Panels were to be installed at the Sports Pavilion, funding for this would need to be found if it was not forthcoming from the Solar Farm in Skinners Lane.

Members noted they may have to consider where funds would be found if the Council wanted to seek professional advice on best use of the Council's Assets.

Members were made aware there were over £41,655 worth of items on the Open Spaces 10 Year Maintenance Plan Contingencies list. None of these are scheduled to take place until year 3 (£3,250), but members will need to consider where these funds will come from in the future.

Members discussed that if incidental tree works were required, funding would have to come from the £3,000 in Open Spaces Contingencies.

The prepared Draft Budget had resulted in an increase of 2%. The precept would be £462,278, an increase of £2.62 (2%) to £133.49 per Band D household. The Tax Base had increased to 3463 for 2016/17. Members were made aware that this was an extremely tight Budget and there was no scope for items not included. Members did not suggest any further amendments to the Draft Budget. It was

Agreed: to propose this Budget to Council and that a date for members to attend a Budget Briefing would be set prior to January Council meeting.

6.2 Printer Quotation

The laser jet printer in the upstairs office had finally ceased working. Members considered the quotation received from the Council's IT supplier and

Agreed: to purchase for an HP colour all-in-one printer, copier, scanner and fax, at a cost of £411.50, without the additional 3 year warranty.

6.3 Grant Application

Following the October Grants meeting, information had been received from Hi Kent (Local Registered Deaf Charity) regarding their Grant Application. Members recalled they had requested a budget to include how the monies would be spent to benefit the residents of Edenbridge. Members

Agreed: to release the £500 earmarked for this organisation, and noted the £500 held for Nomads Football Club had been released, following a successful meeting recently with Council and representatives from the club.

7. FINANCE CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 Thank You letters for Grants

Members noted thank you letters had been received from Edenbridge & District Rail Travellers Association and West Kent Extra (House Project). Members suggested noting on the Grant history chart which organisations sent thank you letters.

8. PRESS RELEASE

There were no items on the agenda for which members wished to issue a press release.

The meeting closed at 9.08pm

Paid Expenditure over £500

Nov

Start of year 01/04/15

Cheque	Paid date	Tn no	Net Cttee	Details	Heading
DD151123	23/11/15	36393	£678.41 OS	E-On UK Plc	313
IB151125	25/11/15	36296	£3,000.00 CNCL	Streetlights	110
IB151125	25/11/15	36331	£14,178.00 CNCL	Advanced Roofing Services Ltd	108
IB151125	25/11/15	36338	£608.40 CS	The Colvin Cleaning Group	222/2/3
IB151125	25/11/15	36340	£2,350.00 CS	Ellis Whittam Ltd	200/10
IB151125	25/11/15	36342	£1,356.00 CNCL	Edenbridge Rugby Football Club	110
IB151125	25/11/15	36343	£515.15 OS	Fleet (Line Markers) Limited	305/2/1/1
IB151125	25/11/15	36357	£1,635.00 CNCL	Kidmans	104
				Streetlighting	
				Maintenance contract	
				Pavilion roof	
				Rickards Hall Cleaning Oct	
				Annual Contract Renewal	
				Maintenance & testing water boilers at Pavilion	
				Pitchmarker	
				Stihl combi engine, hedge cutter & mower	

Received Income over £500

November 2015

Start of year 01/04/15

Paying Ref	Paid date	Tn no	Net Cttee	Details	Heading
10032	12/11/15	31789	2,005.20	Cemetery Fees	32
10032	12/11//15	31795	1,229.00	Church House Pre-School - Hire of Rickards Hall	32
DC1511104	04/11/15	31808	8,850.33	HMRC VAT Refund	26

SAT 21~11 K.A.L.C. A.G.M.

The buzz of conversation which usually accompanies this meeting was rather ~~more~~ muted, due, no doubt, to the almost complete absence of heating in the very large & draughty hall. However, we were regaled by lengthy peroration on the doings of the South East Coast Ambulance Service N.H.S. Foundation Trust, which, had we not been fully aware of all the pertaining problems, would have been of great interest. Following which, Dr Jonathan Owen, Chief Executive of N.A.L.C., promised the challenges & opportunities facing the sector would

be dealt with in a more energetic manner than heretofore, a statement welcomed by most K.A.L.C. members.

A.W.M.R.

Draft Financial Budget 2016/17

Comparison between 01/04/15 and 16/12/15 inclusive.

Excludes transactions with an invoice date prior to 01/04/15

		2015/16	Actual Net	Balance	2016/17
Council Income					
10	Precept	£124,466.00	£124,466.00	£0.00	£78,310.00
11	Working Balance	£30,000.00	£0.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00
12	Contingencies	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
13	Grants/Capital	£0.00	£3,205.00	£3,205.00	£0.00
15	C Depreciation Fund	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
18	Property Fund	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
19	C Election Expenses	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
21	Neighbourhood Planning	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
22	CIL	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total Income					
		£154,466.00	£127,671.00	£26,795.00	£108,310.00
Expenditure					
100	C Working Balance	£30,000.00	£0.00	£30,000.00	£30,000.00
101	C Contingencies	£5,000.00	£1,969.00	£3,031.00	£5,000.00
103	Grants (April 15)	£7,500.00	£5,500.00	£2,000.00	£7,500.00
104	C Depreciation	£69,173.00	£17,689.86	£51,483.14	£35,265.00
105	Edenbridge Twinning Association	£500.00	£500.00	£0.00	£500.00
106	Eden Valley Museum Trust	£5,500.00	£5,500.00	£0.00	£5,500.00
107	House Project	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£7,500.00
108	C Earmarked Funds	£1,500.00	£106,351.62	£104,851.62	£1,500.00
110	C Property Fund	£32,893.00	£20,625.97	£12,267.03	£13,120.00
112	Summer Playscheme	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	£0.00	£1,525.00
113	Bonfire Clean Up	£900.00	£0.00	£900.00	£900.00
114	CIL	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total Expenditure					
		£154,466.00	£159,636.45	£5,170.45	£108,310.00

Draft Financial Budget 2016/17

Comparison between 01/04/15 and 16/12/15 inclusive.

Excludes transactions with an invoice date prior to 01/04/15

	2015/16	Actual Net	Balance	2016/17
Open Spaces				
Income				
30 OS Allocation from Precept	£153,571.00	£153,571.00	£0.00	£198,228.00
32 OS Cemetery Fees	£14,000.00	£9,476.35	-£4,523.65	£12,000.00
33 OS Rents	£14,214.00	£9,819.25	-£4,394.75	£11,336.00
34 OS Maintenance Services	£4,800.00	£2,890.70	-£1,909.30	£4,840.00
35 OS Hire Charges	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
36 OS Solar Panels	£800.00	£730.20	-£69.80	£820.00
37 OS Sundry Receipts	£9,800.00	£6,549.25	-£3,250.75	£9,250.00
380 10 Year Maintenance Plan	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Revenue TR				
385 10 Year Maintenance Plan-Capital TR	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total Income				
Expenditure				
300 Staff Costs	£105,065.00	£66,692.29	£38,372.71	£108,400.00
301 OS Utilities	£8,370.00	£6,127.84	£2,242.16	£10,930.00
302 OS Playground Repairs/Painting	£5,000.00	£1,847.00	£3,153.00	£0.00
303 OS Services	£16,020.00	£11,818.60	£4,201.40	£8,020.00
304 OS Equipment/Tools	£6,000.00	£948.95	£5,051.05	£6,000.00
305 OS Materials	£18,480.00	£9,809.03	£8,670.97	£15,330.00
306 OS Buildings	£3,000.00	£1,356.20	£1,643.80	£2,300.00
307 OS Vehicles	£11,150.00	£4,533.01	£6,616.99	£10,050.00
308 OS Contingencies	£6,000.00	£1,601.00	£4,399.00	£3,000.00
309 OS Others	£1,400.00	£555.61	£844.39	£1,000.00
310 OS Small Projects ZZ	£3,000.00	£906.00	£2,094.00	£0.00
311 Vandalism	£3,500.00	£690.75	£2,809.25	£3,500.00
312 Footpaths Equipment	£200.00	£40.00	£160.00	£200.00
313 Public Street Lighting	£10,000.00	£4,643.19	£5,356.81	£10,000.00
3200 10 Year Maintenance Plan	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£57,744.00
Total Expenditure				
	£197,185.00	£111,569.47	£85,615.53	£236,474.00

Draft Financial Budget 2016/17

Comparison between 01/04/15 and 16/12/15 inclusive.

Excludes transactions with an invoice date prior to 01/04/15

		2015/16	Actual Net	Balance	2016/17
Central Services					
Income					
20	CS Allocation from Precept	£166,770.00	£166,770.00	£0.00	£179,540.00
23	CS Interest (Barclays Base Rate Reward)	£150.00	£176.69	£26.69	£200.00
24	CS Interest Precept	£150.00	£0.00	£-150.00	£150.00
25	CS Lettings (DB) ZZ	£50.00	£0.00	£-50.00	£0.00
26	CS VAT Reclaimed	£30,000.00	£15,207.60	£-14,792.40	£30,000.00
27	CS Sundry Receipts	£3,115.00	£1,316.90	£-1,798.10	£3,115.00
28	CS Interest (Lloyds Investments)	£3,200.00	£1,611.78	£-1,588.22	£2,000.00
29	Charity Account Transfers	£12,000.00	£0.00	£-12,000.00	£12,000.00
31	Church House	£5,750.00	£2,045.00	£-3,705.00	£6,050.00
32	Rickards Hall Lettings	£10,500.00	£8,099.70	£-2,400.30	£12,000.00
33	WI Hall Admin	£1,815.00	£0.00	£-1,815.00	£1,860.00
	Total Income	£233,500.00	£195,227.67	£-38,272.33	£246,915.00
Expenditure					
200	CS Staff Costs	£153,250.00	£98,456.72	£54,793.28	£157,430.00
201	CS Utilities	£9,525.00	£5,255.69	£4,269.31	£9,345.00
202	CS Services	£7,730.00	£4,666.95	£3,063.05	£7,975.00
203	CS Equipment/Tools	£4,000.00	£2,648.79	£1,351.21	£4,300.00
204	CS Materials	£1,600.00	£404.13	£1,195.87	£1,240.00
205	CS Buildings/ Planned Maintenance	£7,200.00	£4,068.30	£3,131.70	£20,230.00
207	CS Grants	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
208	CS Other	£8,170.00	£3,397.32	£4,772.68	£7,970.00
210	CS Charity Account Transfer	£12,000.00	£0.00	£12,000.00	£12,000.00
220	Church House	£4,600.00	£1,672.70	£2,927.30	£4,000.00
221	Public Toilets	£11,095.00	£6,778.57	£4,316.43	£8,745.00
222	Rickards Hall	£14,330.00	£7,725.22	£6,604.78	£13,680.00
	Total Expenditure	£233,500.00	£135,074.39	£98,425.61	£246,915.00

Draft Financial Budget 2016/17

Comparison between 01/04/15 and 16/12/15 inclusive.

Excludes transactions with an invoice date prior to 01/04/15

	2015/16	Actual Net	Balance	2016/17
Emergency Planning Committee				
Income				
85 EP Allocation from Precept	£200.00	£200.00	£0.00	£200.00
86 EP Balance B/F	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
87 EP Sundry Receipts	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total Income	£200.00	£200.00	£0.00	£200.00
Expenditure				
854 EP Equipment/Tools	£100.00	£0.00	£100.00	£100.00
855 EP Others	£100.00	£75.00	£25.00	£100.00
Total Expenditure	£200.00	£75.00	£125.00	£200.00

Draft Financial Budget 2016/17

Comparison between 01/04/15 and 16/12/15 inclusive.

Excludes transactions with an invoice date prior to 01/04/15

	2015/16	Actual Net	Balance	2016/17
Community Warden				
Income				
120 Precept (ETC Cont)	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£0.00	£6,000.00
121 Moat Housing	£0.00	£3,100.00	£3,100.00	£0.00
122 West Kent Housing	£0.00	£3,500.00	£3,500.00	£0.00
123 Westerham	£0.00	£1,920.00	£1,920.00	£0.00
124 John Goldman Trust	£5,000.00	£500.00	£4,500.00	£5,000.00
125 Police	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
126 Great Stonebridge Trust	£0.00	£2,000.00	£2,000.00	£0.00
127 KCC	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
128 Contribution for Vehicle	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
129 Reserve	£9,000.00	£0.00	£9,000.00	£9,000.00
Total Income	£20,000.00	£17,020.00	£2,980.00	£20,000.00
Expenditure				
1120 Salary	£13,000.00	£8,655.62	£4,344.38	£13,000.00
1121 Management Costs	£2,625.00	£0.00	£2,625.00	£2,625.00
1122 Phone	£240.00	£118.20	£121.80	£240.00
1123 CRB Check	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
1124 Sundries	£300.00	£141.30	£158.70	£300.00
1125 Clothing & Supplies	£300.00	£77.77	£222.23	£300.00
1126 Vehicle Running Costs	£2,000.00	£477.87	£1,522.13	£2,000.00
1127 Vehicle Purchase	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
1128 Contingency	£1,535.00	£0.00	£1,535.00	£1,535.00
1129 Reserve	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total Expenditure	£20,000.00	£9,470.76	£10,529.24	£20,000.00
	2015/16	Actual Net	Balance	2016/17
Total Income	£605,351.00	£523,155.42		£611,899.00
Total Expenditure	£605,351.00	£415,826.07		£611,899.00
Total Net Balance	£0.00	£107,329.35		£0.00

Edenbridge Priority Matrix

Priority	Services	Council Vision						Total Comm. Plan Score	Additional Criteria						TOTAL SCORE	
		Community Spirit	Green Environment	Social Inclusion	Economic Development	Sustainable Community			Obligatory or Discretionary	Ability to earn income	Service to whole town	Shared Service	Time not money	Neighbourhood Plan		X Factor
		Maximum Score	3	3	3	3	3	0	15	5	5	5	5	5	5	50
	Community Development	3	3	3	3	3			15	5	0	5	5	2	5	37
	Neighbourhood Plan	3	3	3	3	3			15	0	0	4	5	5	5	34
	Emergency Planning	3	2	3	2	2			12	0	0	5	4	5	2	33
	Planning Consultation	3	3	2	3	3			14	0	0	5	5	3	5	32
	Environmental Issues	2	2	2	1	3			10	5	0	5	5	2	5	32
	Tourism Forum	3	2	2	3	3			13	0	1	4	4	4	3	31
	Information Centre	3	2	3	2	2			12	0	5	4	0	3	2	30
	Community Warden	3	2	2		2			9	2	0	5	4	0	5	27
	Consultations	3	1	3	1	1			9	5	0	4	2	3	4	27
	Transport Issues	3	1	1	3	3			11	0	0	5	5	1	3	27
	Cemetery	3	1	3	0	1			8	5	5	5	0	0	1	27
	Sports Pitches	2	3	2	0	2			9	5	5	3	2	0	3	27
	Litter Picking	3	3	3	1	3			13	0	0	3	2	3	3	27
	Car Parking (free)	3	2	2	3	3			13	0	5	4	0	0	3	27
	Sale of Garden and Waste bags	3	3	2	1	2			11	0	5	4	3	0	2	26
	Research/Projects	3	2	2	2	2			11	0	3	3	1	4	2	26
	Market	3	0	2	3	2			10	0	5	4	0	0	2	25
	Footpaths Forum	3	3	1	1	1			9	0	1	4	3	5	1	25
	Parks	3	3	3	0	3			12	0	1	5	0	0	3	24
	Maintenance of Misc Open Spaces	3	3	3	0	3			12	0	1	5	0	0	3	24
	Snow Clearance	3	3	2	1	1			10	0	2	4	2	0	1	23
	Public Toilets	3	3	3	2	2			13	0	1	5	0	0	1	23
	Allotments	2	3	2	0	2			9	5	2	2	2	0	3	23
	Grants	3	0	2	1	3			9	0	0	4	0	0	4	22
	Training - Staff	0	2	1	1	3			7	0	2	5	0	5	0	22
	SLA Museum	2	0	2	0	2			6	2	3	4	1	0	2	21
	Summer Play Scheme	3	0	3	0	3			9	0	0	4	3	0	1	21
	Grass Cutting SDC	3	3	0	0	0			6	2	4	4	3	0	2	21
	Estate Management	2	0	1	2	2			7	5	4	4	0	0	1	21
	Church yard	3	2	2	0	1			8	5	0	3	1	0	1	21
	Street Lights	2	3	2	0	2			9	4	0	3	4	0	1	21
	Hanging Baskets	3	2	1	3	1			10	0	0	4	0	0	3	20
	Youth Consortium	3	0	3	1	2			9	0	0	2	4	0	1	20
	Training Councillors	0	2	1	1	3			7	0	0	5	0	5	0	20
	Sound Financial Management	3	2	2	2	3			12	0	0	5	0	3	0	20

Edenbridge Priority Matrix

[illegible]

Annual Review of Internal Audits: 18th December 2015

Assessors: Cllrs A Layland, J Scholey, R Todd

1. Recommendations from February 2015 Review

- Financial training for new councillors was provided in July 2015
- Formal appointment of Internal Auditor and confirmation that he did not have conflict of interest with newly elected councillors were obtained by exchange of letters and emails.
- Terms of reference for internal audit were agreed by Town Council at its May 2015 meeting.
-

2. Review of 2015 External Audit

- The external audit was satisfactory.

3. Internal Audit Review

- Carried out to follow Part 2 – The annual return and corporate governance – Internal Audit Checklist

Expected Standard	Evidence of Achievement	Yes or No	Areas for Development
Scope of Internal Audit	The terms of reference for internal audit in the form of the internal auditor's checklist were agreed by full council on 11 th May 2015.	Yes	Council could add support for councillor and staff training to the internal auditor's checklist.
	The internal auditor reviewed the council's risk assessment, and internal controls including adequacy of insurance cover.	Yes	
	By checking the council's books of accounts and sample payments against procedures in the Financial Regulations, the auditor examined the council's anti-fraud and corruption arrangements	Yes	

Independence	<p>The internal auditor has direct access to all officers and members at his discretion.</p> <p>The internal auditor's reports are delivered directly to the chairman of council at his home address.</p> <p>The internal auditor does not have any other role within the council and he has confirmed that he does not have any relationships with any officers or members.</p> <p>There is no evidence of a failure to carry out internal audit work ethically, with integrity and objectively.</p>	Yes	
Competence	<p>Officers and members agree the internal audit plan which was formally approved by council at its meeting on May 11th 2015.</p> <p>Respective responsibilities of officers and internal auditor are defined in their job descriptions.</p> <p>The responsibilities of members are generally understood and the council supports councillors and staff receiving appropriate training</p>	Yes	
Audit Planning and Reporting	<p>The annual internal audit plan properly takes account of all of the recognised risks facing the council and was approved by council on 11th May 2015.</p> <p>Internal audit has reported in accordance with the plan on 5th February, 14th May, 29th May, 8th August 2015</p>	Yes	
Internal Audit Work is Planned	Planned internal audit work is based on risk assessment and designed to meet the council's needs	Yes	
Understanding the whole organisation, and its objectives	The audit plan provides evidence to support the council's Annual Governance Statement	Yes	

Be seen as a catalyst for change	The internal audit work plan includes the short, medium and long term plans considered by Forward Planning Meetings; and the impact of changes of legislation.	Yes	Forward Planning Committee ought to have potential devolution of services from upper authorities as a standard item on its agendas.
Add value and assist the organisation in achieving objectives	Reports from the internal auditor are debated at council meetings and recommendations are carefully considered.	Yes	
Be forward looking	The internal audit work plan includes the short, medium and long term plans considered by Forward Planning Committee.	Yes	
Be challenging	The Town Council's responses to changes brought about by the Localism Act and reductions of services by upper tier councils have been piecemeal.	Yes	Council could review its strategy and vision so it has a coherent plan to respond to the evolving situation
Ensure the right resources are available	There is no evidence that internal audit has been unable to complete its work programme for any reason.	Yes	

Councillor learning/training requirements 2015/16

Name	New Councillor	Code of Conduct	Roles & Responsibilities	Governance and Finance	Planning	Community Involvement	Other specify	Emergency Planning	Flood Warden
Cllr J Barnett	June 15	Sept 15	Yes	July 15	Oct 2014	Yes			
Cllr T Bryant	June 15	Yes	Yes	July 15	Yes	Yes		2014	2015
Cllr J Chappell	Yes	Sept 15	No	No	Oct 2014	N/R			2015
Cllr Mrs J Davison	N/R	Sept 15	N/R	Yes	Oct 2014	N/R			2015
Cllr R Davison	N/R	Sept 15	N/R	July 15	Oct 2014	Yes			2015
Cllr A Layland	N/R	Sept 15	Yes	July 15	Yes	Yes	Environmental 2014	2015	2015
Cllr V Maynard	N/R	N/R	N/R	July 15	Yes	N/R	Environmental 2014	2014	
Cllr M McArthur	N/R	Sept 15	N/R	July 15	Oct 2014	Yes	Radio licence 2013	2015	2015
Cllr S McGregor	N/R	Sept 15	N/R	No	Oct 2014	N/R			
Cllr B Orridge	N/R	N/R	N/R	July 15	Oct 2014	N/R			
Cllr C Pearman	N/R	Yes	Yes	July 15	Yes	N/R			2014
Cllr M Robson	N/R	Sept 15	N/R	July 15	Oct 2014	N/R			
Cllr J Scholey	N/R	Sept 15	N/R	July 15	Oct 2014	N/R		2014	
Cllr B Todd	June 15	Sept 15	Yes	July 15	Yes	Yes		2015	2015
Cllr J Woollorton	June 15	Sept 15	Yes	July 15	Oct 2014	Yes			2015

Requested, Offered, attended Not Required or up to date

1. **Group Learning** - In Edenbridge by a visiting speaker, training video etc.
2. **Training Events** - Attendance at organised training events or conferences organised, for example, by the District or County Council, KALC or SLCC
3. **Formal Qualifications** - Certificate of Local Government policy (2 Years) or Working with your Council (approx 6 months)
4. **Paper Based Learning** - Self-taught, for example through information provided in the council agenda, study of consultation documents, study of local and government aims and objectives
5. **Web Based Learning** - Self-taught through use of internet to study any aspect of local or government activity. **File/Staff/training/2015/training requirements 2015**

Christine Lane

From: Office of the Kent Police & Crime Commissioner <office@annbarneskentpcc.co.uk>
Sent: 21 December 2015 14:28
To: Christine Lane
Subject: Consultation: Council Tax precept 2016/17



Kent Police & Crime
Commissioner

'Devoted to Kent'

21 December 2015

Ref: OPCC/OG/090/15

Please quote reference on all replies

Council Tax precept 2016/17

The individual grant allocations for each force were announced last week and in keeping with the Chancellor's statement last month the overall position for force funding is much better than we thought, for which I am thankful.

However, in the detail the government has cut the cash grant by 0.6% for each force but it is a much better funding situation than we were expecting.

However, when inflation, such things as salary increases, increases to National Insurance, plus new and urgent operational priorities are added that leaves Kent Police with a funding gap of around £13.5 million next year. That's on top of the £61million of cuts we've endured since 2010.

I will use £3.5million of reserves to help bridge the gap and, thanks to prudent planning, more efficiency savings are already in the pipeline.

But we face emerging challenges such as child sexual exploitation and cyber-crime and there is the ongoing threat to public safety on our streets – we live in dangerous times and a terrorist attack in the UK remains highly likely. The Home Secretary has, quite rightly, requested that all police forces increase their firearms officer numbers by 50% and we cannot compromise on something as important as public safety.

We have to put 37 more firearms officers on the books, so that is why today I'm **formally launching a consultation** about raising an average family's council tax precept by £5 for the year to pay for them. Only the 10 forces in the country with the lowest council tax precepts have been given this option and even then people in Kent would still be paying much less for their policing service than most people.

The Government has made it clear that it is expecting Police and Crime Commissioners to increase their council tax precept as far as they are being allowed to do, but as far as I am concerned it is a matter for the people of Kent to make their views known before any decision is made here in the county.

That said; if Kent families support a £5 a year rise in their council tax precept for policing, I will use the money raised to boost the number of firearms officers on the payroll. Kent is the border to Europe and I have a duty to make sure that the Chief Constable has the resources he needs to keep us as safe as possible in these difficult times.

I ask you for your thoughts on the revised proposal. The consultation closes on **Friday 15 January 2016**.

Yours sincerely,

Ann Barnes.

Ann Barnes

Kent Police and Crime Commissioner

Changes to the State Pension from April 2016

Public Service Employees



- This factsheet is about the ending of contracting-out of the Additional State Pension for Defined Benefit Pension Schemes.
- From 6 April 2016, there will be a new State Pension for people reaching State Pension age on or after this date. If you reach State Pension age before 6 April 2016 you will receive the current State Pension and you don't need to read any further.

What is changing?

You will be able to claim the new State Pension if you are a man born on or after 6 April 1951 or a woman born on or after 6 April 1953.

The current State Pension is made up of two parts:

- the basic State Pension; and
- the additional State Pension (known as State Second Pension or SERPS).

If you pay into a salary-related workplace pension, such as a 'final salary' or 'career average' scheme, you are likely to be 'contracted-out' of the additional State Pension.

If so, you and your employer pay National Insurance at a lower rate because you get a National Insurance rebate. This means you may have little or no additional State Pension and you are building up a workplace pension instead.

From 6 April 2016 the new State Pension is introduced. It will replace the existing basic and additional State Pensions and contracting-out of the Additional State Pension (giving up entitlement to the Additional State Pension by paying lower National Insurance contributions and building up a workplace pension instead) will come to an end.

All employees will pay the same rate of National Insurance.

Am I contracted-out?

Three-quarters of people reaching State Pension age in the first two decades of the new State Pension will have been contracted-out at some point.

As a member of a public service defined benefit pension scheme you are likely to have been contracted-out of the additional state pension by your employer. Look at your last payslip. If you're contracted out the letter 'D' will be next to your National Insurance payments. It could also show letter E, L, N or O.

How will the changes affect me?

If you have been contracted-out, both you and your employer pay a lower rate of National Insurance contributions, and in return your pension scheme is required to provide a pension that meets a minimum standard. The reduction to National Insurance is known as the "National Insurance rebate".

From 6 April 2016, you'll no longer be able to contract-out. This means you'll pay the standard rate of National Insurance instead of the lower rate that you currently pay. This will be an increase of 1.4% of earnings between the HM Treasury thresholds¹.

¹ £5,824 (the Lower Earnings Limit) and £40,040 - 2016/17 rates



Changes to the State Pension from April 2016

Public Service Employees (continued)



Will I be worse off?

The vast majority of people who have been Contracted Out will end up better off over their lifetime as a result of the changes. We estimate that around 90% of those people who reach State Pension age in the two decades following the introduction of the new State Pension will receive enough extra State Pension over their retirement (compared against what they would have received under the current system) to offset their increased National Insurance contributions.

Do I have to do anything?

No. Your employer and pension scheme administrator will make the necessary changes.

How will my State Pension be affected?

Under both the current and the new systems, the amount of State Pension you will receive will take account of any periods when you have been contracted-out of the additional State Pension. This reflects the fact that you have paid a lower amount of National Insurance during those periods.

How will the new State Pension be calculated?

On 6 April 2016, DWP will calculate:

- the amount you would have received under the existing State Pension rules (including basic State Pension, any additional State Pension, and any Graduated Retirement Benefit); and
- the amount you would receive if the new State Pension had been in place at the start of your working life (this is calculated as 1/35th of the full new State Pension amount for each qualifying year) minus a deduction for the years you were contracted-out.

The higher of these two amounts will become your starting amount for the new State Pension.

The starting amount calculation ensures that people who qualify receive at least as much new State Pension as they would have done based on their own National Insurance account under the old scheme.

Both calculations will take into account any period when you were contracted-out of the additional State Pension, which means you may have little or no additional State Pension. This is because whilst you were contracted-out, you will have paid lower National Insurance contributions than people on the same salary as you who were not part of a contracted out pension scheme.

However, in most cases, the pension you get from your contracted out pension scheme(s) should include an amount at least the equivalent of the additional State Pension you would have received if you had not been contracted out. This amount is referred to as the Contracted Out Pension Equivalent (COPE) and is shown on your State Pension statement. Your total pension from your private pension scheme could be higher than this amount.



Changes to the State Pension from April 2016

Public Service Employees (continued)



The COPE amount is a Government estimate based on your National Insurance record. It is paid as part of your overall scheme pension benefits and is not normally identified separately by the scheme. The amount that you will get from your workplace pension will depend on the scheme rules and is not affected by the amount you will get from the new State Pension.

How much will I get in the new State Pension?

If you have contracted-out at any time, although your starting amount may be lower than the full rate of the new State Pension, you may be able to increase your new State Pension amount by adding further qualifying years to your National Insurance record after 6 April 2016 by paying National Insurance contributions, or getting National Insurance contribution credits.

Your starting amount will then increase by **1/35th of the full new State Pension amount for each qualifying year added to your record from 6 April 2016 until you reach State Pension age or you reach the full weekly amount – based on a full new State Pension amount of £155.65, this will be around £4.45 per week for each additional qualifying year.**

What happens if my scheme's normal pension age is earlier than my state pension age or I decide to take early retirement or take part in a voluntary exit scheme?

Your work pension will be paid at your scheme's normal pension age, according to your scheme's rules and the law.

If you take early retirement or leave work through a voluntary exit scheme before April 2016, you'll have to wait until your State Pension age before you can apply for the new State Pension.

Where can I go to find out more?

If you are over 55 years old you can apply for a State Pension statement:

<https://www.gov.uk/state-pension-statement>

If you reach state pension age on or after 6 April 2016, you will be able to claim the new state pension. You can visit the DWP website to find out more about it:

www.gov.uk/new-state-pension

You can read more about transition to the new State Pension and contracting-out here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/210299/single-tier-valuation-contracting-out.pdf

www.hmrc.gov.uk

www.gov.uk



GREAT STONE BRIDGE TRUST (GSBT)

Water Meadows Management Project – progress report

1. Introduction:

1.1 The weather having been as damp and dreary as it possibly could be during the autumn and early part of the winter has precluded any real management progress of the meadows. Whilst human activity has been virtually nil, nature, however, has been growing unrestrained which, in turn, has had implications for beginning that management process in the New Year as accounted for below; indeed, even before the end of this year – 2015 – the blackthorn is already starting to leaf for the forthcoming growing season.

2. The western half of the meadows:

2.1 Four diary dates in January have been agreed with the North West Kent Countryside Partnership (NWKCP) with whom we have been working in the meadows over the past three years for the Partnership's volunteers to visit the meadows and continue the work which they had started this last spring. The dates in January are the 7th, the 14th, the 20th and the 27th. I will be liaising with the lead volunteer a couple of days before each of these dates to make sure that the weather and overall conditions will be appropriate for the work to go ahead. This is, in effect, a 'dynamic risk assessment' which will then be repeated on the morning of each visit so as to make sure that the work can safely proceed. If the weather and / or the risk are deemed to be too bad, then that date will be cancelled and re-arranged for later in the winter.

2.2 The schedule of work will entail the continued cutting back of the mature blackthorn scrub alongside the old Mill Leat, and of the cutting back of all unnecessary vegetation along the eastern bank of the Mill Leat. The work will be by way of hand-held saws and the larger pruning shears. If any Trustees or friends / relatives would like to participate in this work, you and they would be most welcome to work alongside the NWKCP volunteers, but would you / they please be so good as to call me beforehand on my mobile – 07802-707-606 – so that I can brief them appropriately. The work will require old clothing, thick gardening gloves, something waterproof to kneel on, waterproof footwear and a general disposition to enjoy themselves nomatter what the weather is on the day! We usually start work at around 10 am and continue until roughly 4 pm, or until exhaustion takes over! A snack lunch and flask or drink will therefore be necessary, although nobody will mind if volunteers 'come and go' as the spirit of the work and of the day takes them. Rendezvous is in the Recreation Ground car park on the east side of the club house nearest the meadows at 10 am.

3. The eastern half of the meadows:

3.1 This is the new section of the meadows which the Trust purchased this last year and where urgent and essential management work is required and, in particular, where the clumps of blackthorn have achieved exceptional growth over this last and the previous four years in particular. During any 'normal' year, however one cares to define this, the lateral growth of each blackthorn 'runner' would be in the region of 18 inches outwards from the grow spur from the previous year;

the root system is analogous to an inverted spider's web, with the roots roughly 6 to 9 inches beneath the surface of the land. These past few years have seen two spurs grown on each runner each year, instead of the usual one, with the result that, instead of an 18 inch growth each year, we have witnessed somewhere in the region of 36 inches and more of this growth spurt.

3.2 Such has been the rapid and dense growth of these areas of blackthorn that it is now too demanding, extensive and risky for this work to be undertaken by volunteers. Attempts to find a 'friendly farmer' who would be prepared to undertake the old 'tried and tested' methods of the removal of this species have not proven successful; the 'old ways' are no longer practised this far south. That being the case, we are having to resort to 'plan B' – cutting the growth out at ground level using a chain saw, and then burning the resultant debris in situ so that the heat from the fires will 'cook' the main root system, thereby killing off any further growth.

3.3 I have therefore secured the services of Karl Kleinschmidt of Hever Landscapes to assist me in this work. Skilled in the use of the appropriate equipment and fully insured, this option will deliver the necessary result in the quickest time so that the work is completed well before the spring subject, of course, to favourable weather. We look forward to starting this work around the 14th of January, and it should take somewhere in the region of 9 days to complete. This work will be undertaken without the need for any volunteer assistance, and there will not be any damage to the surface of the meadows as no vehicles will be required 'on site' when the work is in progress.

4. Final comments:

4.1 This progress report will be forwarded for information to the Town Clerk at Edenbridge Town Council, and to Tim Norton of the Environment Agency, and to a handful of 'interested members of the public' who have expressed their support for the work which we are undertaking in order to conserve this very important area of water meadows.

Clive Pearman
GSBT Trustee
1st January, 2016.

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River Medway Flood Storage Areas

Newsletter 2 - December 2015

Welcome to the River Medway Flood Storage Area newsletter. We are keen to keep the local community updated on the progress of our work to reduce flood risk from the Rivers Medway, Beult and Teise and will be issuing regular newsletters throughout the development of the project to help do this. This newsletter will update you on our activities since June 2015.

Background

Over 3,000 homes and businesses in Tonbridge, Hildenborough, Yalding and Collier Street are at risk of flooding from the River Medway, the River Beult, and the River Teise. 2,060 of these properties are at significant risk of flooding. Communities in these areas have been affected by flooding in 1960, 1963, 1968, 1974, 1979, 2000/01 and Winter 2013/14.

The Environment Agency is working with Kent County Council (KCC), Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council (TMBC) and Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) to develop options to reduce the risk of flooding to communities. The scheme is known as the River Medway Flood Storage Areas (FSAs) project.

What are we doing?

In the last newsletter we explained that the Environment Agency is using the information gathered during the Christmas 2013 flood to update their flood model of the catchment.

The complexity of the catchment makes modelling challenging. For example the number and orientation of the tributaries means that the timing of arrival of river flows is convoluted. These challenges have meant there have been some delays to the modelling.

As the model is used to test various options and how they may interact, any errors at an early stage will result in poor design or misallocation of funding, so it is essential that the model is accurate.

We completed the model in August and since then have been using it to test options to reduce risk. These options include:

- flood storage using embankments to store water to reduce water levels to downstream areas.
- walls to keep water away from communities.
- channel improvements which may help carry water safely past or around communities.

The delays to the modelling mean that we won't know whether there are viable options to reduce risk across the catchment until February 2016. We had thought that we would know in early November. This delay has not affected our design and construction completion dates of 2019 and 2022.

The delay in the modelling is regrettable, however, we always allow extra time in our programmes for these type of delays. Given the importance of this scheme, our modelling consultants are putting in extra resource to make up the lost time, at their own expense. We are doing our utmost to complete the project by 2022 as planned, or sooner if possible, and we keep you updated on our progress.

Future work

By the end of December we will understand which of these options are technically feasible and to what degree. We will then assess the economic benefits of the options. The findings of the analysis will be compiled into an initial assessment. A project board consisting of executives from the partner organisations will decide the next steps based on the work completed to date. This will then be shared with Defra and their approval sought.

Approval to progress flood risk management schemes is sought to at three stages through their life. We are currently building the case for the first stage of approval. At each stage the following questions are asked:

1. What is the case for change?
2. Does the preferred option represent value for money?
3. Is the solution feasible and deliverable?
4. Is the project affordable?
5. How will the project be managed and delivered?

As each stage is completed the level of detail required becomes greater. The timeframes for the project are set out below:

December 2015	Outline modelling of options complete. Economic analysis starts
February 2016	Initial assessment complete and presented to project board.
April 2016	Defra approval to spend money on detailed analysis (stage 1 complete)
July 2016	Start Outline Business Case (Stage 2)
October 2017	Present the Outline Business Case to the project board to decide next steps
November 2017	Approval to spend money on the Full Business Case and start Full Business Case (stage 3)
March 2018	Submit Full Business Case to Defra to obtain approval to spend money on the scheme
November 2018	Start detailed design process
2020 - 2022	Construction

We will be carrying out engagement with communities at various stages of the project, this newsletter is intended as a high level guide to our activities. Newsletters will be issued every six months or when there is a significant announcement to make.

Find out more

If you want any more information on the project or have any questions, please call Neil Gunn on 03708 506 506 or email us at: MedwayFSA@environment-agency.gov.uk