

**Minutes of the EDENBRIDGE EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE held via Zoom at 7.30 pm on Monday 26 October 2020**

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Present: Cllrs. M V McArthur (chairman), J Aldridge, A Baker, A Layland, S Mc Gregor, S Taylor and Cllr B Todd (Vice-chairman); also P Byrne, J Davison, R Rooth, and C Thurstan.

In attendance: Deputy Town Clerk

There were no members of the public present, and no press.

*Prior to the start of the meeting the chairman reported with sadness the death of Julia McKillop, a former member of the Committee, and offered members' condolences to her husband Robert.*

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received, noted and accepted from Cllr A Damodaran, and noted from R McKillop and M Ilsley.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

**3. TO RECEIVE AND SIGN MINUTES OF THE EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 10 FEBRUARY 2020**

Resolved: that the minutes, pages 9327 - 9329 be signed by the chairman as a true and accurate record of the meeting

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES FOR REPORT AND NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE, none**

**5. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

**5.1 Resignation of committee member**

It was noted that volunteer Sue Cash had resigned from the committee after years of membership, and had returned her radio equipment to the Council office. The chairman recorded thanks to Sue for her past contribution to Edenbridge emergency planning.

**5.2 To confirm co-opted members**

It was noted formal co-option provided non-councillor committee members with the opportunity to speak at meetings (though not to vote on decisions) and also insurance cover during activities. The current list of individual co-optees was reviewed as follows:

Rose Briggs	Jenny Brown	Linda Brown
Ben Brownless	Helen Burgess	Paul Byrne
Gwen Chappell	Mick Cross	Jill Davison
Helen Doyle	Mary Grieve	Nick Harris
Bob Hart	Jan Hart	Doreen Howe
Helen Jackman	Marjorie Johnson	Mark Ilsley
Jim Kimber	Steven Knightley	Gill Lambert
Charles Laver	John Martin	Lesley Martin
Robert McKillop	Steve Mercer	Gill New
Ronnie Pearman	Robert Peters	Vicki Raeburn-Ward
Malcolm Rogers	Richard Rooth	Wendy Sneyd
Colin Thurston	Margaret Watts	Richard Williams
Sara Young	Rev Stephen Mitchell	

Resolved: to approve the above list of co-optees to the committee

**6. FINANCIAL MATTERS**

**6.1 Current budget and expenditure update**

Members noted the position up to 31 August 2020, and that the annual radio licence fee was due in November (£112.50 last year). The annual storage charge £30 for equipment held at the W I Hall had been paid.

## **6.2 Committee budget for 2021/22**

Members noted the annual budget stood at £360, and had proved sufficient for the past year. It was

Resolved: to request that the budget would remain at £360 for the next financial year.

## **7. REVIEW OF ACTIVITY SINCE LAST MEETING**

### **7.1 Flooding events since February 2020**

The chairman recalled the committee's response to heavy rainfall over a long weekend which resulted in a lot of monitoring, and affected the "usual" problem locations in Hever Road, in Marsh Green, Haxted Road, Crouch House Road, and Penlee Close. No actual premises had been affected.

### **7.2 Drain maintenance and substantial clearance Crouch House Road and Lingfield Road**

Members noted that a lot of clearance had been carried out in this vicinity, and a gully marker added to the edge of Pound Green to help location if it became blocked and under flood water. This was one of the post-flood actions agreed at the February meeting; another action completed was repair to GSBT northern terrace wall beside the river Eden.

Due to the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, and focus on response, other actions remained outstanding, as follows:

- Convene a multi-agency meeting including Kent Highways, District Council, Environment Agency, and Police, with the Town Council
- Investigate function of the Southern Water pumping station
- Arrange a residents' information meeting, with Environment Agency
- Check the Environment Agency debris screens
- Include social media in giving local updates where possible
- Investigate super-fast phone chargers for emergency use
- Provide identity lanyards to ID committee members

Cllr Taylor currently isolating at home offered help, potentially with the latter point.

### **7.3 Covid-19 response**

Members received an update on the response by the Council and emergency planning committee through the "lockdown" period, and subsequently. It was a busy and intense period, and it was not planned to re-open the office to the public for the foreseeable future. Residents could still access services and the sale of waste and garden bags by maintaining social distancing outside the office. Things were quieter for the time being, but the response framework could be reactivated if needed.

It was noted the Town Council was fortunate to have elected members representing the town's interests at District Council level. This enabled a holistic and informed approach to the Coronavirus event and changing outcomes. It would continue to work within the guidance from SDC and the Government.

## **8. FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES**

### **8.1 Flood warden training October/November 2020 – verbal update**

It was noted that seven Edenbridge people had attended the first "virtual" on-line training for Flood Wardens on October 13, with over 70 taking up the opportunity across Kent. Attendees felt it was well organised, course content was informative, inclusion of Covid-19 considerations in a flood scenario was helpful, and the absence of need to travel to training was welcome. A further session for experienced Wardens was scheduled for November 10 and at least two from Edenbridge would be attending.

### **8.2 Radio foundation licence training**

There was no information currently about where/how a course could be accessed, but Cllr Taylor confirmed his continuing interest in this qualification.

### **8.3 Update of Edenbridge Emergency Plan**

Members were reminded the town's Emergency Plan was usually reviewed annually in November, though updates were added as necessary during the year. It was

Resolved: that Cllrs Taylor and Baker would undertake the Plan review.

### **8.4 Communication to residents in vulnerable properties regarding flood preparedness**

The chairman reminded members that the committee in 2016 had distributed "flood advice" packs to households at risk of flooding, including a leaflet and a Personal Flood Plan template, and a set of small booklets provided by the Environment Agency. It was proposed this activity should be repeated, and

Resolved: that Cllr Layland, with Paul Byrne, Richard Rooth, and Colin Thurstan, would organise this project.

## **9. INFORMATION EXCHANGE**

### **9.1 Kent Police Service**

No-one in attendance.

### **9.2 Kent Fire & Rescue Service**

No-one in attendance

### **9.3 Sevenoaks District Council Emergency Planning Officer**

No report

### **9.4 Edenbridge First Responders**

Members were advised First Responders were now back on-call, re-certified, and all had their kit and uniform. The question of a new external location for a defibrillator in the High Street, following closure of the current host premises, would possibly be resolved by Bridges community café.

### **9.5 Open round table comments from Members**

A couple of alternative locations for the defibrillator were suggested, but both had already been explored without success. The on-going problem with drainage in Waitrose car park was raised.

## **10. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

January 2021 ~ **to be confirmed.**

## **11. NEWS RELEASE**

There were no new items identified for a news release.

The meeting closed at 8.14pm.