

**MINUTES of the Meeting of EDENBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL, held in Rickards Hall on Monday 06 March 2023, at 7.30 pm.**

Present: Cllrs J Aldridge, A Baker (Vice-Chair), S Compton, Michael Gemmell Smith, N Lloyd, M McArthur (arrived agenda item , V Jennings, A Layland, A Read, and B Todd (Chairman)

In attendance: Town Clerk; no members of the public and no members of the press.

**1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received, noted and accepted from Cllrs McGregor and Sumner. Cllr McArthur had advised she would be late to the meeting.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS OR PREDETERMINATION**

Cllr Gemmell Smith item 10.7 personal interest; Cllr Aldridge item 11.1 pecuniary interest. It was noted both would leave the meeting for those items discussion/debate.

*19:31 Meeting was adjourned for agenda item 3.*

**3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS**

None.

*19:31 Meeting was reconvened.*

**4. TO RECEIVE, ADOPT AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON [16 January 2023](#) (9844-9849)**

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 16 January 2023 be duly signed by the Chairman of the meeting as a true and accurate record of the meeting; pages 9844-9849.

**5. TO RECEIVE COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

**5.1 County Councillors**

None.

**5.2 District Councillors**

None.

**6. TO ADOPT THE FOLLOWING REPORTS/MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

**6.1 Planning Committee – [23 January](#) (9850-9852); Planning & Transportation Committee - [30 January](#) (9855-9860); Planning Committee – [20 February](#) (9877-9878)**

**Resolved:** to adopt the minutes of the meetings and numbered - Planning Committee – 23 January (9850-9852); Planning & Transportation Committee - 30 January (9855-9860); Planning Committee – 20 February (9877-9878).

**6.2 Finance and Governance Committee – [23 January](#) (9853-9854)**

**Resolved:** to adopt the minutes of the Finance and Governance Committee – 23 January (9853-9854).

**6.3 Emergency Planning Committee – [6 February](#) (9861-9863)**

**Resolved:** to adopt the minutes of the meeting and numbered - 6 February (9861-9863).

**6.4 Personnel Committee – [20 February](#) (9874-9876); [27 February](#) (9879)**

**Resolved:** to adopt the minutes of the meeting and numbered - 20 February (9874-9876); 27 February (9879).

**6.5 Open Spaces Committee – [13 February](#) (9864-9873)**  
**Resolved:** to adopt the minutes of the meeting - 13 February (9864-9873).

**6.6 CIL Board – [27 February](#) (9880-9882)**  
**Resolved:** to adopt the minutes of the meeting and numbered – 27 February (9880-9882).

**7. TO RECEIVE REPORTS AND ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM WORKING GROUPS; DELEGATED REPORTS; CLERK’S AND OFFICERS’ REPORTS:**

**7.1 Clerk’s report**

Received. The Chairman thanked County Cllr McArthur for her Members Grant to purchase new chairs for Rickards Hall as part of the improvements of this community facility. It was also noted the nomination for The Swan Inn to be relisted as an Asset of Community Value had been submitted.

**8. TO RECEIVE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING on 23 January:**

**8.1 to note: The Precept request for 2023/24 (as approved by Council 16 January) has been submitted to SDC and confirmed**

Noted. The new styled flyer explaining the Precept and Band D charge was now on the website.

**9. TO RECEIVE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING on 20 and 27 February:**

**9.1 to ratify the expenditure of £375 plus VAT for an Occupational Health Assessment**

**9.2 to confirm:**

- **Communications Officer be offered an ongoing continuous employment contract with the usual Council benefits**
- **Market Officer to extend the fixed term contract, on annual review, for up to a further 3-years. This is to reflect that the Council management for the Market remains under review**

**9.3 to allow up to three days leave to be carried-over to 2023-24, but not to be rolled-over to the following leave year (2024-25)**

**9.4 to investigate the potential of a grounds person apprenticeship**

**9.5 to provide a training budget of £750 for the new Buildings Manager**

**9.6 the annual expenditure of £657 plus VAT to LearningNest platform on a 3-year agreement; this would provide for up to 15 employees**

**9.7 Staff changes as outlined in the minutes items 5.3 and 5.7**

**9.8 To adopt the updated Council’s template Contract of Employment as reviewed by WorkNest**

Members received the minutes and recommendations from both Personnel Committee meetings, and unanimously,

**Resolved:** to support all recommendations as listed above in items 9.1 to 9.8. The staffing changes and the pay increments in recognition for item 9.7 were also supported:

- to award the current Deputy Clerk a pay increment moving into the next band LC2 band;
- Responsible Financial Officer to move to next LC2 band, starting on 29 in recognition of move to Deputy Clerk (shadowing initially);
- Head Groundsman to award a further 2 increments in recognition of taking on Buildings Manager duties;
- To create a new full-time position for an Open Spaces and Buildings Admin Officer; to be advertised once a retirement date was known for the Deputy Clerk;
- To recruit a grounds person on a 2-year apprenticeship scheme (SCP level 1).

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

**10.1 To note: the Main Road Marlpit Hill (Hilders Lane/Hillcrest Road junction) 40-mph buffer zone scheme was installed mid-February**

Noted.

**10.2 [Edenbridge Dementia Friendly](#): To receive an update on a new initiative in collaboration with other partners following its official launch**

Members noted from the Clerk's report: Manor Care Home hosted the launch on 9 February and Elaine Murray of the Kent Dementia Action Alliance, and Forget-me-not café for Sevenoaks District, gave a talk on dementia and the initiative. Businesses and organisations could sign-up via the link on the Council's website. Those that sign-up to take the 'Pledge' would be offered awareness training and a new 'Edenbridge Dementia Action Alliance' logo would be issued for those organisations to display in their premises window and used on emails and other literature. Further information was on the Council's website.

**10.3 To receive an update on transition of the new IT Storage (SharePoint) System following recent office closure days to support this; and to approve further closure days to facilitate this ready for live transition in April**

Members noted that the closure days across January and February to provide necessary time for the IT SharePoint transition project had been invaluable, but due to other pressing issues this time had not been fully utilised. PS Tech would start the actual transition in April. To aid this, it would be helpful to continue the arrangement of office closure through March and early April. Members unanimously,

**Resolved:** to support further office closure days to support the transition of the SharePoint IT project.

**10.4 To receive an update on planned treatment works for 'wood boring insect infestation' at Doggetts Barn and Church House (following resolutions December & January)**

Members noted, following a meeting with the contractor, work to the three buildings had been confirmed for three separate phases, thus minimising the impact on hall hirers and potential hall revenue losses and for the museum. The treatment works take longer if painted than sprayed, and sensitivity would be given to the different areas and an effort to minimise staining on paint work.

**10.4.1 To note: Rickards Hall and Council Office closure dates to facilitate the three treatment phases**

Members unanimously,

**Resolved:** the treatment work proposal schedule and closure dates for Rickards Hall and the Office:

**Phase 1 – Rickards treatments**

Wednesday 10 May for clearing. 11 and 12 May for infestation treatment.

**Phase 2 – Doggetts Barn**

Rickards Hall closed 1.00 pm Wednesday 23 May (for office to load in to) to 4 June. Thursday 25 and Friday 26 May office infestation treatment works.

27 May through to 4 June inclusive to allow also for office redecoration. This period coincided with school half-term so would not affect the regular dance classes.

(Office staff would work from home during this period, and from 2 June start to move items back into office).

**Phase 3 - Church House (Museum)**

Monday 22 to Thursday 25 January 2024 for treatment works.

Rickards Hall closed 19 January from 12.30 pm through to Sunday 28 January.

**10.5 Under the 10-year Maintenance Plan, to confirm the redecoration of the Council Office and the expenditure of up to £3,800 (budget allowance was moved in to reserves for 1 April 22)**

**Resolved:** Members unanimously, to accept quote B, and the expenditure of £3,120 for the redecoration works of Doggetts Barn. Expenditure budget of up to £3,800 noted. (This is under the previous budgeted amount).

**10.6 To note: the First Aid at Work training dates and office closure (limited access) on those dates: Wednesday 26, Thursday 27, and Friday 28 April**

Noted. Members asked if the Office could remain open.

**10.7 To receive an update from the Working Group on its preparations for King Charles III Coronation 2023**

Cllr Layland asked for Cllr Gemmell Smith to stay for the update, in case Members had any questions. Members agreed. Cllr Layland reminded Members that the Working Group were looking at organising an event for the coronation celebration on the Sunday as part of the Big Lunch. An initial budget of £5k had been set, but at that time, the Group did not have the knowledge of potential costs for an event with music, food vendors and activities. They had engaged with three companies to discuss a proposal and costs. These were detailed in the papers: £13,951; £10,486; and £950 (but despite conversations this does not match the brief). A grant from the Great Stone Bridge Trust (GSBT) had been confirmed of £3,000, and the Bonfire Society had agreed to loan its stage which would be a saving on the quotes.

*19:57 Cllr Gemmell Smith left the meeting (having said nothing and before any debate)*

**10.7.1 To consider approving the expenditure of up to £5,000 (as budgeted) plus an additional amount (est. up to £7.5k) taking from general reserves, for a Coronation celebration event/activity**

Members discussed the Coronation. It was noted that there did seem to be appetite nationwide with several events confirmed including locally some street parties. One Member noted that whilst there would be a cost for engaging an events consultant to host an event for the Council, there was almost 10,000 residents in the town, and the proposed cost of a Coronation event would be under £1 per person. The additional funds from general reserves would be £2.5k.

Cllr Todd asked Members if they wanted to do nothing for the Coronation? No-one voted.

Members debated the budgets, venue location considering potential wet weather (Stangrove Park or Market Yard car park), security, and questioned the detailed in two of the tenders. Eventually, Cllr Layland proposed Heart of Sevenoaks be awarded the opportunity to organise a Coronation event for Edenbridge. Cllr Compton seconded. Members voted, 7:1 and

**Resolved:** to award a contract to Heart of Sevenoaks to organise a Coronation event on Sunday 7 May 2023; and for the hiring agreement to be completed.

Members discussed the budget further. The Town Clerk explained that Members needed to confirm the budget spend. The total expenditure would be £10,486, but in view of the GSBT grant, the net budget cost to Council would be £7,486 (£5k already in the budget with £2.5k to come from general reserves). Cllr Layland propose to support the expenditure of £10,486, with the net cost from Council funds of £7,486. Cllr Aldridge seconded. Members voted, 6:2 in favour, and

**Resolved:** the total expenditure for a Coronation event at £10,486, with a £3k grant being received from GSBT grant, the net budget cost to Council would be £7,486 - £5k already budgeted and £2.5k from general reserves.

Members discussed further the ground suitability of Stangrove Park in view of wet weather and suggested the venue be confirmed nearer the date of the event. If Stangrove Park was likely to be wet, it would need to be held at Market Yard car park. A Working Group meeting with Heart of Sevenoaks and Council officers was to be arranged to confirm the finer details.

20:33 Cllr Gemmell Smith re-joined the meeting.

**10.7.2 To receive a request from Marsh Green Community Committee for permission to hold a ‘party on the green’ on Coronation Sunday 7 May 2.00 pm – 10.00 pm; and to grant permission for this to be held under the Council’s TN8 event licence covering music**

**Resolved:** Members unanimously, to grant permission to Marsh Green Community Committee to hold a ‘party on the green’ on Coronation Sunday 7 May; and to grant permission for this to be held under the Council’s TN8 event licence covering music; subject to the conditions of the usual hiring agreement being met.

**10.8 To receive an update on an unauthorised access gate at the Recreation Ground (pathway to Pavilion) from private rear garden**

Members noted that following the Council’s recent decision to decline a resident access from the rear of their property into the Recreation Ground, the resident had not complied with requests to disable the new gate. In addition, the property was now being marketed with direct access. Despite Council written requests, both the resident and estate agent were maintaining misleading photographs. Following advice for the Council’s solicitor, who had checked the covenant, it was confirmed that the resident is in breach of the conditions and if not addressed properly, eventually (20-years) the property could gain an easement. It also sets a precedent.

**10.8.1 To ratify £1,500 expenditure for legal fees for investigation and letter to the resident and other third parties**

**Ratified:** Members unanimously, the expenditure of £1,500 for legal fees for investigation and letter to the resident and other third parties.

**10.8.2 To approve up to £1,500 for written correspondence to surrounding properties to clarify and confirm residents backing on to Council land do not have permission to create or have their own private access on to Council land**

**Resolved:** Members unanimously, the expenditure of £1,500 for written correspondence to surrounding properties to clarify and confirm residents backing on to Council land do not have permission to create or have their own private access on to Council land.

**11. MATTERS OTHER BUSINESS including items referred from Committees for decision**

**11.1 To receive a proposal to pilot a new app for production of Council meeting agendas, papers and minutes which also ensures Accessibility compliance, commencing from May 2023**

Cllr Aldridge said that Council meeting papers were long documents which were difficult to search and to reference back. He had been working on developing an App which would set papers up which would be easier to read and navigate with improved presentation for the agendas, papers, and minutes. The Town Clerk was supportive as the App should improve the efficiency in producing meeting papers and searching resolutions and would be Accessibility compliant. Members asked Cllr Aldridge some

questions about the presentation style and PDF formats. Cllr Aldridge also confirmed that the Council would be piloting free of charge the App, and that he may consider selling it eventually to other councils.

20:41 Cllr Aldridge left the meeting.

**Resolved:** Members discussed, and unanimously, to proceed with the App for creating Council and Committee agendas, papers, and minutes from May (with the new Council).

20:42 Cllr Aldridge re-joined the meeting.

- 11.2 Twinning Association 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations – weekend 12-14 May: To approve the flying of the French flag on the town’s flagpole**  
Members unanimously,  
**Resolved:** to grant the Twinning Association for its 50th Anniversary Celebrations (weekend 12-14 May) to fly the French flag on the town’s flagpole.
- 11.3 Nomads Football Club**  
**11.3.1 To receive and ratify the drawings for the lean-to and additional window to Nomads Clubhouse (Lease 8.1 requires Landlord’s consent for alterations)**  
Members unanimously,  
**Ratified:** the drawings for the changes to Nomads Clubhouse for the lean-to and additional window.  
**11.3.2 To consider granting a temporary agreement for Nomads to use the back field to provide a dedicated youth team training area/pitch**  
Members unanimously,  
**Resolved:** to maintain the front field as wildflower area and not to permit the front field to be converted over to youth football.
- 11.4 To approve training programme for the new Council following the May elections and expenditure of up to £2,000 – this would allow for KALC new Councillor training; online Council meetings and Chairmanship; visioning exercise**  
Members unanimously,  
**Resolved:** the training budget for the new Council to allow for KALC new Councillor training; online Council meetings and Chairmanship; and visioning exercise and report.
- 11.5 PS Technology service agreement:**  
**11.5.1 Current (legacy) IT Support Service increase costs: To note the additional annual increased costs of £580.20**  
Noted.  
**11.5.2 New fully managed IT support complete with cyber security and compliance service: To consider upgrading the support service; monthly cost £957.10 (annual expenditure of £11,485.20 inc MS Business Premium 365 x 10 licenses). Currently pay £6,881.58 (inc MS 365), so the additional annual expenditure would be £4,603.62**

20:50 Cllr Baker left the meeting.

Members noted the current agreement which covered the Server, IT support services, Sophos security and Microsoft 365 licenses for officers and councillors. This did not provide enhanced cyber and compliance service: 24/7 eye on screen monitoring, rapid detection for response to cyber-attacks, managed risk and compliance with wide range of global standards and early

detection reduces time to response and reputational losses. Following a recent conversation with PS Tech, they confirmed that the current level of cover is adequate, but recommend that with rapid advancements in technology and cyber-attacks, Council should consider enhancing its cover to a fully all encompassed IT Managed service to meet full cyber protection and compliance. Members discussed and noted that the new SharePoint storage was a step in the right direction improving IT Security. However, as data held by Council had minimal personal data, Members **agreed** this was not urgent and to wait until the IT/SharePoint transition had been completed before fully considering.

20:52 Cllr Baker rejoined the meeting; Cllr Lloyd left the meeting.

20:54 Cllr Lloyd rejoined the meeting.

- 11.6 EDGE: To approve the initial expenditure of £339.50 for ‘Inspect EDGE’ (includes a one-off purchase of the tablet and set-up fee); and thereafter the annual subscription £82.50. This will enable quicker and improved recording of all council assets and cemeteries memorials working with the current software Assets Register and Epitaph**

Members unanimously,  
**Resolved:** the expenditure of £339.50 for ‘Inspect EDGE’ (includes a one-off purchase of the tablet and set-up fee); and thereafter the annual subscription £82.50.

- 11.7 To approve the expenditure of £299 for Fire Marshall training for 10 employees, and a half day office closed for the training; and £199 for (the annual) Fire Risk Assessment for Buildings for one person**

Members unanimously,  
**Resolved:** the expenditure of £498 for Fire Marshall training for 10 employees and Fire Risk Assessment for Buildings Manager; and half day office closure.

- 11.8 To receive a request from Wings Museum (Balcombe, Sussex) to consider gifting the bomb shelter in Doggetts Barn to the museum**

Members received a letter from the Wings Museum requesting the Bomb Shelter as part of its Second World War artifacts. Members considered, but felt that the shelter was of value to the residents of Edenbridge and the Museum visitors, therefore they unanimously,  
**Resolved:** the Bomb Shelter to remain in Doggetts Courtyard for visitors to the town and residents to appreciate.

- 12. OTHER ANNUAL TOWN MEETING – Monday 20 March - to receive an update on the agenda and guest speakers**

Arrangements for the meeting were confirmed: WI Hall, registration from 6.30 pm with presentations commencing at 7.00 pm, close at 9.00 pm. The guest speakers and local groups displays had been invited and confirmed. The agenda to be published no later than 10 March (7-clear days). Representatives from SDC had confirmed.

- 13. CONSULTATIONS**

**13.1 Kent County Council [Community Services Consultation](#) – closing date 26 March 2023**

**13.2 Kent County Council [Adult Social Care Charing Policy changes](#) – closing date 21 March 2023**

Items 13.1 and 13.2 were noted.

- 14. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS WHO HAVE ATTENDED MEETINGS OF OUTSIDE BODIES**

Four Members had attended a public presentation meeting on the new Memorial Health Centre on 4 March.

**15. TO CONSIDER ANY PRESS RELEASES**

Coronation event.

**16. MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

*In view of the confidential nature of the agenda item 17 & 18 to be discussed, the Chairman will move that the press and public be excluded from the Chamber. Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972 s100 and 102.*

There were no members of the public in attendance.

**17. TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER DRAFT PROPOSAL OF COUNCIL LOGO AND REBRANDING FOR PUTTING VISUAL IDENTITY INTO PRACTICE (Council resolution January 2023)**

Following the last meeting, a brief had been provided to the graphic designer to refresh the visual identity of the Town Council. In the briefing document it had been explained that the visual identity should express the character and purpose, we are a council proud of our heritage, but also forward thinking. It needed to be clean and uncluttered, complimenting and enhancing the Council's presence on social platforms. Three options were requested. The Town Clerk provided a presentation on three designs, two of which had been tweaked following feedback from the Clerk and Communications Officer. One of the designs used the existing shield but had needed to be redrawn for improved quality; the other two were new concepts. Members discussed at length the different designs debating sticking with the current image or changing to a more modern design which would have better reprographics.

*21:08 Cllr McArthur joined the meeting.*

There were concerns changing a logo could have additional costs with changing over. The Clerk said that most would be electronic and therefore uploaded, others would be replaced as required, such as signage, so costs should be small. She added with increased electronic and social media communications, and the new Communications Officer transforming the Council's presentation it would be good to have a higher definition logo and branding for the Council. After much debate two motions were voted on:

1 ) To proceed with the existing logo in the new drawing with the Council's name in text. Members voted 2:8. The motion was not carried.

2) To proceed with logo two – new design with the bridge and Council's name in text. Members voted 7:3 and,

**Resolved:** to proceed with logo two, version 2, as a new logo for the Town Council, with the Council's name in text. The colour branding would be presented to the new Council to finalise the branding detail.

Following the vote, one councillor asked if could be possible to consider waiting and present the proposals to the new Council for decision. Although the resolution to proceed had been made, Members were given the opportunity to vote. A vote of 2:8 meant the motion was not carried.

**Members confirmed** that logo 2 (V2) would be the new logo and the graphic designer would be asked to work with that logo to create suitable versions for different usage such as on



Facebook, Council reports, 'working with' and 'supported by', as well as overall branding. The new Council would finalise these details.

**18. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON LAND OUTSIDE THE POLICE STATION WHERE THE COUNCIL'S FLAGPOLE SITS**

The Town Clerk confirmed that the intention was still for this piece of land to be gifted to the Council but had been delayed due to unforeseen circumstances.

**19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 15 May – First and the Annual Meeting of the New Council**

Cllr Todd thanked the Councillors, as this was his last meeting as Chairman and the last for this Council, for their support during his term and for they had done for the Council and community. He also expressed his appreciation to Cllr Lloyd for his work as Chairman of the Finance Committee; he has confirmed he would not be standing for re-election.

Meeting closed at 21:22

NB: For the purpose of the minutes - Cllr McArthur arrived in the meeting to present her County Council and District Council reports but was not invited to speak.