

Open Spaces Committee Report – 12 June 2023

7. TO RECEIVE ANALYSIS OF THE COMMITTEE'S RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS TO 31 May 2023

The report is not available for the meeting owing to the recent office disruption, but will be presented up to 30 June at the Open Spaces committee meeting 10 July.

8. TO RATIFY OPERATIONAL DECISIONS FOR OPEN SPACES ACTIVITY

None.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

9.1 Resident re: Retention Dam works at the River Eden

Members have received a copy of the letter from the private landowner on whose property the north end of the Dam is resting. They would like to meet with members of the Council to consider future possibilities of the riverside area behind the eastern end of Church Street and further beyond the railway embankment. **Do members wish to arrange a meeting after the summer?**

9.2 Town Band re: free summer concerts in Stangrove Park

The Town Band has made its annual request to present a short series of free summer concerts in Stangrove Park: Wednesday evenings 21st June and 19th July, and Sunday afternoon 30th July. The Hiring Agreement has been completed and required documents submitted for the Standard Conditions of hiring. **Do members wish to permit this activity, at no charge for a community event?**

9.3 Resident re: Take The Jump family fun event 17th June Stangrove Park

A local resident has requested permission to hold a family fun event in the Park, highlighting community sustainability issues. They had publicised it without contacting the Council requesting permission.

The free to attend event is part of Great Big Green Week, and is being organised with some parents at Edenbridge Primary school, under the umbrella of Take The Jump. This is an organisation which aims to support communities to lower their carbon footprint and live with 'less stuff and more joy'. The resident says they believe it would be perfect for this area. The approach is based on six lifestyle shifts ([Travel Fresh](#), [Holiday Local](#), [Eat Green](#), [End Clutter](#), [Change the System](#), [Dress Retro](#)) which "science shows can achieve a 27% reduction in our emissions."

A Hiring Agreement has now been completed, with evidence that the organiser is a registered social worker, and has current DBS check. As part of the Standard Conditions of hire a basic risk assessment and evidence of insurance has been requested, but still awaited.

Do members wish to permit this activity, subject to receipt of risk assessment and insurance cover, at no charge for a community event?

Councillors are also asked if they wish to consider investigating more about the group and potential community sustainability. **Do members wish to nominate two councillors to explore viability of a project?**

9.4 Galliford Try re: bus shelter and street lighting for Edenbridge Medical Centre development

Bus shelter

The Town Council has been contacted by construction company Galliford Try (GT) concerning provision of street furniture related to the Edenbridge Medical Centre development. An SDC planning officer had contacted them regarding the requirement for a bus shelter that forms part of Section 278 works required by KCC for the new Health Centre.

The original e-mail to ETC arrived in May asking whether a proposed type of shelter met Council requirements for design and maintenance. It prompted several queries, as to the exact location and land ownership, any choice on shelter design, installation responsibility, and on-

going maintenance budget provision. GT's response was: the location is on Highways land to the west of the Medical Centre entrance. There is little option on design as limitations of space, due to the existing width of the pavement and visibility splay requirements, means the shelter will need to be 1m deep with a back but no sides. Similar to this: <https://www.trueformshelters.com/flight-shelter> The costs of supply and installation will be covered by GT.

The design indicated is not in keeping with the style of existing shelters already maintained by ETC, and is intended to "seamlessly blend into a city environment" – which Edenbridge is not. It is all-clear Polycarb material, designed to be shatter resistant. If ETC was to have a different style we would have to pay, if the cost was beyond that of the proposed. There is no budget for on-going maintenance. If ETC does not take on the bus shelter maintenance, no other authority will. It appears **two** shelters are now being proposed and the second is on the opposite side of Four Elms Road across from Bray Road.

Street lighting

An additional contact was made by GT concerning street lighting, because the road layout is being altered and designated uncontrolled crossings are being installed. To the east of the KCC column opposite the entrance to Bray Road and the Eden Centre, ETC owns/maintains the lights illuminating the footpath, in particular the one opposite Fircroft Way (those in Fircroft Way itself are maintained by KCC). ETC has been advised that two new columns need to be installed, on opposite corners, at the junction of Four Elms Road and Fircroft Way. To ensure the safety of road users, this needs to be at a Highways compliant lighting level, and Highways standard minimum P4 class lighting (8-10m height) is to be used. ETC street light stock is for footway illuminations, at a height of 5m, but the Council does not provide taller lights for road junction safety. When the Bray Road development was completed, Kent Highways set a precedent by installing the new column opposite the junction.

Do members want to take on ownership and future maintenance of the bus shelter(s) and seek a more compatible design, or refer this back to KCC and the developers?

Do members agree that the street lighting provision is the responsibility of KCC Highways?

10. HEAD GROUNDSMAN'S REPORT

10.1 Routine and seasonal activity

Tree and hedge pruning all sites

Weed treatments

Maintaining planters through town, including Doggetts Barn, and beds in the Cemetery

Watering

Grass cutting all sites

The team attended a day's ARC welding course in April. This was very informative. I am currently looking into the purchase of equipment which would allow us to carry out small welding repair works in house. The Team also attended a 3-day first aid course in April.

I spent a morning delivering the Ready Steady Grow "starter" kits to local schools and children's groups in preparation for this year's competition.

All football goals have been taken down at the Recreation Ground and stored for the off season. Any required maintenance has been reported to the Rugby Club.

We have now overseeded all goal mouths and worn areas at the Recreation Ground. With the current weather and regular watering said areas should be in good shape for the coming season.

With all football pitches at the Recreation Ground having been inspected and the outcomes submitted to the Pitch Power pitch maintenance programme, they were graded as "GOOD". I will shortly be starting the process of applying for the £17,000 grant (spread over six years) which we are entitled to claim. Said pitch inspections included taking several soil samples and pictures of all pitches and answering a number of questions on all aspects of our maintenance programme. A photo opportunity was provided by Kent FA for the Council Chairman and myself receiving the recognition plaque to be displayed at the Sports Pavilion. We are also in

the process of repeating the application procedure for recognition, and hopefully funding, for Mowshurst.

We have now filled up the Mill Leat four times in total. Thankfully we are able to use the tap in an adjacent property which speeds up proceedings.

The annual COSHH assessments have been carried out and forms updated where necessary.

The team will be marking out 10 Frisbee pitches this coming week, in preparation for the upcoming tournament being hosted at the Recreation Ground at the weekend.

Head Groundsman
7/06/2023

11. OPEN SPACES BUSINESS

11.1 To receive the Burial Report

The burial report is as follows and updates the record of Cemetery activity:

April 2023	May 2023
One ashes interment	None
One burial	
One Grant of Right	

11.2 To receive a report on allotment activity

Some resigning tenants were advised of action being taken under the site rules agreed last June, to charge for removing and disposing of materials left on site. This prompted them into removing most of the items left on their plots. One tenancy has been terminated in line with the clauses of the Tenancy Agreement (including not resident in the parish throughout the period of the tenancy).

Interest in entering the Ready Steady Grow gardening competition (*see item 11.7 below*) led to a school arranging a successful visit to Forge Croft allotments, hosted by members of Edenbridge Allotment Gardens Association. It is reported the children learned a lot about growing food, the importance of good soil, and the key role of pollinators – also enjoying meeting some chickens. It is hoped that the activity could be repeated next year. A nice post was included on Council's Facebook.

11.3 To receive a report on works to the Retention Dam

The removal of the bridge above the Retention Dam, expected to take place during the summer, was carried out at comparatively short notice in the week following the Coronation Bank Holiday. The contractor had availability in their work schedule, and the ground conditions were suitable to proceed. Both adjoining landowners were satisfied with the works. The metal barrier has been fixed, and stolen signage replaced.

11.4 To consider parking management

An exploratory meeting has been held with a representative of a parking management company. There is a wide range of possible management solutions (and likewise wide range of costs), which can be tailored to the varying use patterns of individual sites. The Parking Working Group will receive and consider the report from the meeting, and will make a recommendation for Open Spaces committee to consider in due course.

11.4.1 Update on parking issues at Blossoms Park

Members are advised that parking by residents has continued, on several occasions taking up all spaces. The following complaint is an example of the issues: three would-be early morning users of the park arrived to find there was nowhere to park due to overnight parking by residents. One of them had experienced this every morning of that week. Their request is for more stringent control measures to be put in place.

Members have received proposals from the Cricket Club regarding replacement surface of the clubs' additional parking area, and possible extension with extra spaces. It has been confirmed that car park extension does not fall into the scope of permitted development rights for local authorities, as it relates to engineering operations. Therefore a planning application will be required – for which there will be a fee related to the size of the application circa £300. Pre-planning advice if sought would also attract a fee c. £400.

Subject to the Club meeting any Planning requirements and project costs, **do members approve the proposals? Would members be prepared to share the fee costs 50/50 with the Cricket Club?**

The Club has also included a proposal to increase irrigation for the cricket square. Subject to the Club meeting any Planning requirements and project costs, **do members approve the proposal?**

11.5 To consider works scheduled for 2023/24 in the 10 and 30 year Open Spaces maintenance Plans

Members have previously received the schedule (prior to the April meeting) for small works included in the 10-year maintenance plan, and the annual service of the Jubilee Clock on Little Oaks nursery building has been carried out. Costings for repair to Mowshurst car park surface, path repairs in Cemetery One, and re-pointing a paving slabs section in Doggetts Courtyard will be presented to the July meeting.

11.6 Review of the Byelaws

11.6.1 To receive an update regarding a request to fly electric powered model aircraft

A meeting was scheduled with the Rugby Club 7th June – a verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

11.6.2 To receive an update regarding boundary issues at the Recreation Ground

The Council's contractor has reinstated the fencing, and with the groundstaff's assistance re-planting hedging, which had been removed without authorisation at the western side of the Recreation Ground (reported to Council 15 May).

11.7 To receive an update on Ready-Steady-Grow gardening competition

The seven children's groups interested in entering the competition were delighted to receive their "starter packs" of a variety of tools, gloves, pots and growing medium. In one case this led to a school visit to Forge Croft allotments hosted by Edenbridge Allotment Gardens Association (*see item 11.2 above*).

The competition is due to close on 30th June and banners are being displayed to support the on-going publicity on social media, Council's website, and notice boards. Purchasers of the garden waste bags have also been provided with flyers since the competition launched at Easter.

Members are asked to nominate of judges for the six entry categories.

11.8 To receive a report on the Coronation Big Lunch – Stangrove Park 7th May

The Big Lunch was fortunate with dry weather, and sunny skies in the afternoon. The event was well received by the community and people enjoyed the free activities provided. A report was received by Council (15 May).

12. NEWS RELEASE

Do members consider any items from this meeting should be the subject of a News Release?

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 10 July 2023