

Minutes of the Meeting of Edenbridge Town Council Open Spaces Committee held in Rickards Hall on 10 July 2023 at 7:30 pm

Present: Cllrs. Jon Aldridge, Angela Baker (*Chairwoman*), Sarah Compton, Michael Gemmell Smith (*Vice-Chairman*), Alan Layland, Nicola Martindale, Stuart McGregor, Angela Read, Jeff Streets
In attendance: Town Clerk; Cllr Eyres; one member of the public.

1 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Todd, (non-committee members).

2 **Declarations of Interests, or Predeterminations**

None.

3 **Public Questions**

19:32 Member of the public arrived (after agenda item 4).

Cllr Baker proposed Public Questions, item 3, be considered again and before agenda item 5. Members unanimously,

Resolved: to re-agenda item 3, Public Questions before item 5.

19:33 meeting was adjourned for agenda item 3.

A resident said he had attend the meeting to raise concerns and complaints about parking along the High Street, and there were no restrictions in place.

19:35 meeting was reconvened.

4 **To Receive and Sign Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee 12 June 2023, 2023-006/1-5**

Resolved: that the minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 12 June 2023 be duly signed by the Chairman of the meeting as a true and accurate record of the meeting; pages 2023-006/1-5.

5 **To Receive Analysis of Receipts and Payments**

The Town Clerk said that due to a system hitch, the report could not be provided. A copy would be circulated separately.

6 **To Ratify Operational Decisions for Open Spaces Activity**

None.

7 **Correspondence**

7.1 **Landowner meeting re access path off Church Street to old Retention Dam Bridge and field**

Members noted officers would be meeting with the Landowner of the north end side of the Dam where the bridge had been, following a resident raising safety concerns and was requesting additional barrier to the new one installed when the bridge was removed.

8 **Head Groundsman's Report**

Members received and noted the Head Groundsman report. There were no issues. Members also noted the officers had entered the cemeteries and Stangrove Park into the South and South East In Bloom competition. A member of the grounds team and the Town Clerk had shown the judge around and were given some very positive feedback. We are hopeful of a good grading. Committee praised

the work of the groundstaff team and the high standards they maintain the town's open spaces.

8.1 **To approve the expenditure £640 (including pins and delivery) for a new replacement bin for Stangrove Park near the pond**

Members noted recent anti social behaviour resulting in a bin at Stangrove Park being damaged and thrown into the pound; later recovered by the groundstaff. Members unanimously,

Resolved: the expenditure of up to £700 for a new replacement bin with secure security pins for Stangrove Park near the pond.

9 **Open Spaces Business**

9.1 **To receive the Burial Report**

Members noted two burials booked for July.

9.2 **To receive a report on allotment activity**

Members noted the EAGA had advised of an investigation into an issue between a couple of plot holders at the Forge Croft site, resulting in unacceptable rude and aggressive behaviour. Subject to the EAGA recommendation, Members **supported** the Town Clerk to write to the plot holder(s) as this behaviour was not acceptable and could result in termination of the their allotment agreement.

9.3 **Ready Steady Grow gardening competition update**

Members noted the report in the meeting papers: The deadline for entries was extended to Friday 07 July. There were six categories. To date 20 entries had been received. It was disappointing that there were no school entries despite seven starter packs having been issued, but there was a great entry from the Beaver Scouts, again this year. The children's tallest sunflower has yet to receive any entries. The judging panel would meet later in the month, and all entries invited to the awards presentation evening on Tuesday 5 September. Neil Miller, Head Gardener at Hever Castle and a renowned professional in the horticultural world, would be presenting the awards and giving a talk on his career and some gardening tips.

9.4 **To receive an update on the Annual/10-year maintenance programme Open Spaces work schedule**

The schedule of current works was received as reported in the meeting papers; it was noted that some of the costs were still budget estimates, and that officers would only commission upon best value sort. The total annual budget for 10-year maintenance programme/code 3140 was £28,469. Members unanimously,

Resolved: to confirm the expenditure for the annual maintenance work as listed, and the expenditure of up to £5,750.40 for the works listed below, plus the material costs for the Market Yard car park bollard painting.

Cemeteries - slab repointing at the Wall of Remembrance area budgeted £648

Doggetts Courtyard - repointing of some slabs in the Courtyard as part of the ongoing repairs budgeted £1,026

Mowshurst pitch verti-drain and sandslit/decompaction - this work is usually carried out in the autumn; budgeted £1,501

Playground Inspections - 5 sites (15% discount applied) - cost £549.40

Seating - Recreation Ground, replacement of bench at Eastgate. Depending on style - recycled materials similar to the new style picnic benches £656; or with metal ends and slats from durable materials £631. Budgeted £801

Skate Ramps - up to 5 sheets need replacing. Per sheet £245. Total £1,225 (£6,393 allocated for skate park repairs in the 10-year maintenance plan)

Market Yard car park repainting bollards, budgeted £1,312. However, the Groundstaff can do this work saving on external contractor costs, only materials needed

9.5 **To note: the review of the Byelaws and public consultation**

Members received an update on the progress with Council's reviewed draft Byelaws, as approved by Committee at its November meeting. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) had confirmed *Without prejudicing the eventual decision of the Secretary of State, I have informally reviewed the draft byelaws submitted and have not found any blocking issues which might lead to the Secretary of State declining your application. They're closely based on the Department's model set with minor alteration.* The next step of the process was to consult on the proposed Byelaws. The procedure is to *advertise a notice of intention to apply for confirmation of the byelaws in one or more newspaper; to be kept for at least one month after the date of publication.* Once the month has passed the Notice, an application to the DLUHC for confirmation and approval can be made. The cost for a public notice in the County Chronicle (only local newspaper publication) was £50; submission deadline 24 July for publication 3 August edition. Kent and Sussex newspapers group has been approached for a second publication, but did not cover the Edenbridge area. It would also be published on the Council's website. Members unanimously,

Resolved: to publicise a Notice of Intention to apply for confirmation of the byelaws in the County Chronicle and expenditure of £50; and suggested that this also be published in the Edenbridge Magazine which went to every household in the town, and the expenditure for this (estimated a further £50).

9.6 **Model Aircraft flying group - update on flying at the Recreation Ground**

Members received an update as reported in the meeting papers, and that the matter had now been taken to the next level to agree terms by the Rugby Club who held the rights to manage the bookings of the facilities at the Recreation Ground under its Lease. The Rugby Club were liaising over suitable flying times, risk assessment and mitigating the risks, and the hiring agreement terms and cost. The Council had been advised further (10 July) that the newly formed Flying Club, were intending to start with its activities imminently.

Members **requested** the Clerk to recheck with the Council's insurers re vicarious liability.

9.7 **Work on behalf of the Rugby Club - football and rugby goal posts repaint**

Members noted the groundstaff would be carrying out some work for the Rugby Club repainting three sets of football goal posts, and possibly its rugby posts as well. The Club would be charged for materials and labour.

10 **News Release**

Byelaws Notice
Ready Steady Grow competition
South and South East In Bloom

11 **Items for future agenda**

None.

Meeting Closed 19:55