



Edenbridge Town Council



Town Clerk: Caroline Leet

Open Spaces | 08 Nov 2021 | Short Agenda (Excludes Confidential Items) | v:1

To Councillors: J Aldridge, A Baker (*Chair*), A Damodaran, V Jennings, A Layland, N Lloyd, S McGregor (*Vice-Chair*), B Todd.

An Open Spaces Committee meeting will be held at 7:30 pm on 8 November 2021 at Rickards Hall. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

3 November 2021

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1 **Apologies for Absence**


2 **Declarations of Interests, or Predeterminations**

Including any interests not already registered

3 **Public Questions**

Members of the public, and Members with prejudicial interests on items on the Agenda, may make representations, answer, ask questions and give evidence at this meeting in respect of items on the Agenda. (This is the only opportunity for the public to make a contribution during the meeting.) Both public and Members are limited to three minutes each to speak, and the total time allocated for public questions shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the Chairman of the meeting.

4 **To Receive and Sign Minutes of Open Spaces Committee 20 September 2021**

 [Open Spaces | 20 Sep 2021 v.1 | Minutes \(Pages to\)](#)

5 **To Receive Analysis of Receipts and Payments to 31 October 2021**

The comparisons report for the end of last month is attached, giving the position just over halfway through the year.

 [Annex 1: Financial Budget Comparison.pdf](#)

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

Following the decision last meeting on new litter bins for the Recreation Ground, placing the order revealed a 12 week wait for the dual-capacity metal bin (into the new year). The two GRC bins with chutes were available sooner, for the end of this month - but splitting the order would result in the loss of the "free delivery" qualification. It was suggested to change the dual bin material to GRC, while keeping the same design, would reduce the cost, and maintain the free delivery. In consultation with the committee chairman and vice-chairman, the order was amended as suggested.

The contractor who carries out the annual hedge-cutting work within the 10-year Maintenance Plan has confirmed his price this year at £1,628 plus VAT - an increase of £116 on last year. This is within the scope of the Plan budget, so in consultation with the committee chairman, the costing was accepted. The contractor who provides the decompaction work for pitches at Mowshurst and at the Recreation Ground has confirmed the price will be the same as last year at £2,200 plus VAT. This was the sum included in the Plan budget, and was therefore accepted in order progress to the work.

This has been programmed for w/c 15th Nov, weather and ground conditions permitting.

7 **Correspondence**

7.1 **Rotary Club re: offer of a tree for the Queen's Jubilee**

Edenbridge and Westerham Rotary Club have advised that their wish to plant a tree for the Jubilee is on “hold” until autumn next year.

8 Head Groundsman’s Report

8.1 Routine and seasonal work

- Grass cutting all sites
- Leaf clearance
- Weed spraying
- Maintaining planters through town and beds in Cemetery
- Hedge cutting and pruning shrubs
- Painting benches
- Planting winter plants
- Pitch over-marking and maintenance

8.2 Groundstaff activity

I have recently reviewed the grounds team’s task based Risk Assessments and made amendments where necessary. The team members have been made aware of these changes and have signed to say they have read and understood them.

The autumn pond checks have been completed, and the team has carried out some work clearing foliage around the lifebuoy and safety signage at Mowshurst. The second application of duck weed treatment will be applied to Stangrove Park in due course.

The Team has made and installed a new planter next to the Wall of Remembrance in the Cemetery.


We have also carried out a significant clearance of vegetation in the small memorial garden on the corner of Hever Road and the High Street. It is proposed to refresh the planting in the Spring.

Recently some repair work has been carried out on the railings of the Retention Dam bridge that crosses over the river into the Town Field from Church Street. This has highlighted that work to the timbers is becoming necessary (see item 9.7) The team installed a new user advice sign at the skate park in Blossoms Park. This was to replace the damaged frame and lost signage that was previously there.

The team has recently painted two pairs of gates in the Cemetery, and the ambulance gate in the car park off Coomb Field at the Recreation Ground.

We have now started our winter tree maintenance programme. This will include the pruning of branches that impede the tractor. We will also be removing dead wood and ivy from trees across all sites. Self-set saplings will also be removed.

A costing has been calculated for the proposed additional groundstaff maintenance work at the Watermeadows, and is being presented to the Great Stone Bridge Trust for consideration.

 Annex 2: blossoms park skate ramps.pdf

8.3 Items for the future

I have recently sourced a price for a new tripod ladder with 10ft over all height and 7ft platform, at £329.25 + VAT. Members approved the purchase of a large ladder some time ago now, and it has proved a great success. If this new smaller ladder is also approved it would aid the grounds team with the ongoing maintenance programme for trees, large shrubs and hedges.

Members in November last year considered adding a scarifier to the Greentek slitter, which was not pursued. A 6ft rake attachment is now priced at £1060.00 (inc carriage from manufacturer) and would improve the quality of the pitch surfaces.

There is sufficient funding remaining in the equipment budget this year - **do members approve the proposed purchases?**

I have met with the Deputy Clerk to discuss items on the Asset Register that are due for renewal as of 01/04/2022 please see below a list of costings for five items:

1. Stihl 18" Chainsaw £406.67
2. Stihl hedgecutter Combi engine £276.67
3. Stihl hedgecutter attachment £240.66
4. Stihl pole pruner attachment £171.66
5. The larger rotary mower is due for replacement, and four possible options are:
Honda 21" 4 wheel Rotary mower £1356.67 Honda hydro 21" Rotary mower £1026.67 Honda 21" rear roller Rotary mower £1356.67 Hayter 22" Pro Rotary mower £1090.12

(All prices exclude VAT)

There is £6,630 proposed in the equipment replacement/purchase budget next year - **do members approve the purchase of the above items for next financial year at £2,452 plus VAT?**

The current tractor is scheduled for replacement now, but continues to work well. For Members' information, an indicative price has been sourced for a possible new machine of similar spec to the existing model in the region of **£40,500.00 + VAT**

Head Groundsman
02/11/2021

9 Open Spaces Business

9.1 To receive the Burial Report and review memorial benches policy


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

September 2021: One burial, Two interments of ashes
October 2021 None

The new extension section Cemetery Four has just come in to use this month, and the groundstaff have installed its signage. Update of the text within the abridged edition of the Cemetery Rules booklet provided for families has been completed. It remains to produce an updated electronic version of the Cemetery layout plan for inclusion in the booklets, to complete this project.

Members in the spring agreed to review their policy on memorial benches. A request to include a bench by the children's graves section has subsequently been received, adding to the two families who had already made inquiries for benches on the last row in Cemetery Three section. The attached diagram shows the existing 17 benches in Cemetery Two and Three. The two requests for the latter section are only a couple of grave spaces apart, and close to one of the two existing benches, at the southern end of the path. There is also the issue of passing-access for buggies or wheelchairs to consider, on a path width of only 1.35m.

It was and is still possible to donate a bench for some other location in the town, and the opening of Cemetery Four could give future scope for a few benches in that section. **Do members wish to resume accepting any more benches at this time?**


 Annex 3: cemetery 4.pdf

 Annex 4: cemetery drawing.pdf

9.2 **To receive update on works scheduled for 2021/22 in the 10 and 30 year Open Spaces maintenance plans**

The report from the periodic **external inspection of Council's trees** every two years has been delayed and is still awaited. The agreed crown reduction work to a large oak in the south-west corner of Stangrove Park has been commissioned, and specific inspection of two other trees in the park and one at Mowshurst has been requested.

The **annual pumps service** at the Mill Leat and Sports Pavilion was scheduled for 5th November, and the **decompaction** work to the sports pitches has also been scheduled (see item 6 above).

 Annex 5: Open Spaces 2022-23 maintenance 10yr plan.pdf

9.3 **To receive an update on projects awarded CIL funding**

9.3.1 **Recreation Ground playground refurbishment**

After the October closing date for submissions, the eight tenders received were opened by the working group (Cllrs Baker, Lloyd and Todd with the Community Warden, Deputy and Town Clerk) on 28 October. The Clerk will now prepare a spreadsheet with the detail and comparisons. The working group will review this, and the tenders again, before making its shortlist. It may be necessary to go back to the shortlisted tenderers with questions. Once the Working Group is happy with its shortlist, a proposal will be put to the Committee - likely to be an extra meeting. The potential project start date (weather and ground conditions permitting) is spring next year.

9.3.2 **Addition to skate ramps facility, Blossoms Park**

The project Members approved for the skate ramps has been commissioned, and confirmation of the expected completion date is awaited.

9.3.3 **Bus shelter, Swan Lane**

Following the Kent Highways officer's response received in September, information has been requested on the potential cost of constructing the pavement and crossing area required under the Equalities Act 2010. The location Highways indicated for the crossing to avoid the Swan Ridge junction (between the first two properties to the east) would involve excavating and laying approximately 25m of new pavement on the north side "likely to be cost prohibitive". Information on the potential cost is still awaited.

Investigation into the ownership of the field to the rear of the proposed bus shelter site was successful through the Land Registry. The land owner was contacted to see if they would be willing to provide additional land to accommodate the shelter. They have replied that they would not seek financial compensation, but would ask for a quid per quo in the form of installation and maintenance of a dog waste bin on Swan Lane farm access drive (which is part of the route of a Public Right of Way footpath). The owner understands that it is not policy to put a bin on private land, but feels that the council could waive the policy on this occasion.

Further information will be provided verbally at the meeting.

9.4 **To consider Quarterly Monitoring visits**

The quarterly sites monitoring visits were introduced some years ago, so that Members were familiar with the nature, extent, and maintenance issues of the various locations maintained by the Town Council. These are open to any councillor to attend, whether or not a member of the Open Spaces committee. Traditionally these have been held on a week day, enabling the Head Groundsman and Deputy Clerk to accompany Members, to answer any questions, and note any observations or issues raised for action. The last two proposed visits, summer (July) and autumn (October) did not take place due to unavailability. **Do members wish to review the arrangements for the visits?**

9.5 **To note resumption of Bulky Waste collections**

The first of the free Bulky Waste Collection dates took place on Saturday 30th October, with the collection vehicle scheduled to call at four locations, beginning with Church Street, then moving to Skeynes Road, followed by Park View Close, and finally Fircroft Way. It was publicised through posters, social media, and website, from the beginning of October. There have been no reports of any difficulties. The subsequent bookings next year are for 22nd January, 7th May, and 30th July.

9.6 **To receive update on response to anti-social behaviour at Lingfield Rd Recreation ground**

Following Members' decision made at last meeting to write to the Police, and provision of subsequent examples of activity affecting residents in other parts of town, a letter has been sent to the Police and also the Police and Crime commissioner.

Access down to the GSBT watermeadows from Mont St Aignan Way appears to sit with Kent Highways, and it has been suggested that restriction installed at the top of this slope would reduce access for horse and trap at this point. This possibility is being investigated, and it is understood the local police would support a request for this.

9.7 **To consider committee budget items for 2022/21**

Members have received a draft of the 10-year Plan maintenance schedule as it currently stands, and the budget for the works is £23,849. Some works which are not urgent and can be deferred to the following year have been removed (one project also has already been funded this year through CIL) a total saving of £14,600.

The 30-year Plan schedule contains the next phase of the rolling programme of replacing old street light columns, approved by members last meeting at £24,277, and £10,000 towards possible repairs to the stone wall around the Churchyard. The likely cost is as yet unknown.

At last meeting a replacement see-saw for Stangrove Park playground was considered - this could be funded from within the Small Projects budget heading. Potential timber repairs to the Retention Dam bridge over the River Eden, south of Church Street, could also be funded under that heading - the extent of works and possible costs are being investigated.

Funding for continuing the Bulky Waste Collections is currently in the draft budget at £1,200, and funding for equipment replacement is included at £6,630.

Do members have any other items they wish to be considered for Council's budget setting?

 Confidential Annex 6 (omitted from public documents): Budget Comparison (confidential).pdf

9.8 **To receive an update on projects for the Queen's Jubilee**

Inquiries about costings for planned replacement of feature trees, to be included as part of the Queen's Green Canopy project, have revealed that supplies have become reduced thanks to the national demand for trees. Indicative costs, depending on the species of tree, are around £40-70 for 6-7ft height, and up to £200-£300 for 10ft-13ft height. **Are there a couple of members who would like to join the Deputy Clerk in visiting a local nursery to look at stock?**

9.9 **To consider an allotments request**

Another plot holder at Forge Croft allotments has requested permission to install a small poly-tunnel on their plot. At 3m long by 2m wide, and 2m high, in heavy duty plastic over a tubular frame, it is within dimensions previously permitted. **Are members content to permit this temporary structure on the proviso that it is removed at the end of the tenancy?**

10 **News Release**

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