



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

Notice is hereby given of an Open Spaces Meeting to be held in Rickards Hall on 17 April 2023 at 7:30 pm, which Councillors are summonsed to attend.

Town Clerk  
12 April 2023

To assist in the speedy and efficient dispatch of business members wishing to obtain factual information on items included on the Agenda are asked to enquire of the Town Clerk prior to the day of the meeting.

Council Meetings may be recorded. Any person intending to make recordings is advised to notify the Clerk in advance so that appropriate arrangements can be made

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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 the Minutes of The Open Spaces Meeting held on 13 February 2023 (pages 9864 to 9873)**

 Open Spaces | 13 Feb 2023 v.1 | Minutes (Pages 9864 to 9873)

5 **To Receive Analysis of Receipts and Payments to 31 March 2023**

The comparisons report for the end of March is attached, giving the position at the close of the financial year.

NB: Finance Committee noted some projects budgeted for had not been delivered and agreed for the allocated funds to be transferred to Earmarked reserves so that the money remains for when delivered; this includes the underspend on streetlights which was approved to be directed to LED upgrades with the next tranche of streetlighting upgrade programme.

3145 Maintenance 30-yr OS	Streetlight Underspend - Res Nov to move	£2,832.00
Budget £55,000	Playground cont. (budget was £5K)	£1,000
Spent £19,304	MYCP Boundary Wall Repairs	£17,740.00
Back to GR £5,594	Churchyard walls x3	£8,530.00
		<b>£30,102.00</b>

The Marsh Green playground fencing replacement allocation in 2021/22 remains in the earmarked reserves.

 Annex 1: Financial Budget Comparison.pdf

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

6.1 **Branch reduction to oak at Forge Croft allotments**

One item from the visual winter tree inspection that could be completed in house was reported for investigation, and the advice was to remove the branch over the access track

back to source – at a cost of £195 plus VAT. After consultation with the committee chairman the work was approved, to be scheduled as soon as possible.

**Are members content to ratify the above expenditure?**

## 7 Correspondence

### 7.1 Kent Men of the Trees re: Kent Plan Tree

The attached message and information regarding the KCC project Plan Tree has been received. The Town Council planted the Millennium Wood as a new wood at Mowshurst, which 20+ years later is maturing well. More recently a dozen trees were installed across four sites as part of the Queen's Green Canopy project for the Platinum Jubilee, replacing some lost to age or disease.

The Council has no appropriate locations itself across its open spaces, but sites could be farmland or other private property within the parish. (There is no local Tree Warden for Edenbridge). **Do members wish to publicise this call to identify potential sites for planting, and if so how?**

### 7.2 Resident re: re-positioning of benches from outside Stangrove Park

From the Annual Town Meeting, a question was submitted asking whether the Council had thought about moving some of the "unused" benches on Station Road outside Stangrove Park. The suggestion was to place them outside playgrounds – at the Recreation Ground, and in Stangrove Park – to enable those with dogs to sit with them and still keep a watch on children inside the fenced play area.

Since the committee's decision last year to take over maintenance of these benches, their use not surprisingly has increased, and they are used by people glad of a seat en route to and from town. There would also need to be surface repairs to consider, asphalt and cobbles. Rather than relocate some of these benches, **do members wish to leave the benches in situ, and allocate a budget for adding a new bench outside each playground fence (cost range from £550 to £635?)**

### 7.3 Marsh Green Community re: Big Lunch on the Green

At March Council meeting members agreed to permit the event, to include use of the TN8 Licence and subject to meeting the standard conditions of the Open Spaces Hiring Agreement. The details of the event plan have been completed and submitted with the finalised Hiring Agreement, risk assessment, and proof of insurance. Mindful of the timing of sunset that day, the activity will occupy part of the green from 10am until 8pm on the day.

### 7.4 Kent FA re: grass pitch improvement funding

The officers have been looking at an opportunity with Kent FA which has opened up funding to town and parish councils for improving grass pitches used by grassroots football clubs. The Football Foundation has for some time offered revenue funding for this purpose, but

generally for leagues and clubs to apply. It is widening the scope this month for towns and parishes to apply directly, first-come-first-served.

Maintenance activity such as decompaction, slitting, re-seeding and fertilising, would be covered, and an application is being prepared. The head groundsman is making a Pitch Power Inspection for each football pitch, at Mowshurst and the Recreation Ground, which have to be registered on the Football Foundation website. The online application form can then be completed, with a rapid turnaround response of two to four weeks. Funding would be tapered over six years, and would require two Pitch Power Inspection reports per year for each to be recorded. The drainage issues at Mowshurst would only be considered after two years following this programme

#### 7.5 **Request from fair to visit Stangrove Park**

A fairground company has requested to operate in Stangrove Park for two weeks in the summer. The Family Fun Days activities will be in the Park on Thursday afternoons each week from July 27th to August 17th so these weeks would not be available. The company proposes to fence round the space occupied to enclose the fairground. They would need access arrangements altered at the gates from the car park, removing gate and post, which could affect the defence of the open space against unauthorised vehicles and encampment. They have not yet indicated how they would maintain security of the Park during the fair's visit. Neighbouring properties may be affected by noise. Should members be minded to allow this activity it would be subject to a Hiring Agreement, with its Standard Conditions to fulfil. **Do members support permitting a fairground at Stangrove Park?**

#### 7.6 **CPRE: spring-summer editions of Countryside Voices and Kent Countryside Voice magazines**

The latest seasonal editions of the above magazines have arrived at the office for members to peruse – topics include housing development in rural areas, wildlife friendly areas, and the future of water supplies.

### 8 **Head Groundsman's Report**

#### 8.1 **Routine and seasonal activity**

- Tree and hedge pruning all sites
- Weed and moss treatment
- Weeding and flower bed maintenance
- Maintaining planters through the town, including Doggetts Barn, and beds in the Cemetery
- Sports pitch over-marking and maintenance
- Grass cutting all sites

The grounds team has installed the new notice board at Blossoms Park, and spent some time clearing a tree that had fallen from the hospital grounds adjacent to the skate ramps. A new sign has also been installed.

The winter pitch decompaction took place in February during a short dry spell. At the Rec all football and rugby 1 were earthquaked, as well as both pitches at Mowshurst. I have begun inspecting all of the Council's football pitches in hope of applying for some funding for pitch improvements (see item 7.4 above).

Periodically the team has been bringing in benches from the Cemetery for renovations and painting.

I have begun to monitor water levels in the Mill Leat. We have put in only two bowser loads of water so far this year, but have more recently been aided by regular rainfall.

I have carried out the Spring pond checks and reported my findings to the DC. Also the annual driving licence checks have been carried out.

## 8.2 Items for the future

Two items of equipment due for replacement on the Asset Register as approved last meeting have been purchased - a back-pack blower and a dimple pitch marker.

The team members are all booked in on an ARC welding course to take place later this month. First Aid training is also booked.

Head Groundsman

12/04/2023

## 9 Open Spaces Business

### 9.1 To receive the Burial Report and note the Churchyard wall works

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

February 2023	March 2023
One ashes interment	One ashes interment

The 2022 Diocesan Quinquennial (five-yearly) report on the condition of the parish church and the Churchyard identified the need for repair to a short section of the stone wall between Cemetery 1 and the Churchyard, damaged by weathering. This has been completed in line with the decision at February committee meeting.

Churchyard/Market Yard car park wall

The Diocesan report also noted the north (Market Yard) boundary wall required patch pointing near the top, and has open joints to parts of the brick coping. These items have been completed in line with the decision at last committee meeting.

### 9.2 To receive a report on allotment activity

Edenbridge Allotment Garden Association (EAGA) at Forge Croft site has reported difficulties with a few tenants resigning their Tenancies and failing to clear old vegetation and assorted materials from their plots. **Do members wish to take action under the site rules agreed last June, to charge for removing and disposing of the materials?**

### 9.3 To receive the report on bulky waste collections

The next free Bulky Waste Collection date is scheduled for Saturday 29th April, with the collection vehicle calling at four locations, beginning with Church Street, then moving to Skeynes Road, followed by Park View Close, and finally Fircroft Way. Other dates booked this year are 29th July and 7th October. A further date for the fourth quarterly collection is to be booked for January 2024.

### 9.4 To consider works to the Retention Dam

Following the decision last meeting, the contractor has confirmed his costing for only removing the existing bridge over the Retention Dam on the River Eden, pending future repairs, at £5,950 plus VAT. Members have received a copy of the quote, and will note the need to obtain permission from the Environment Agency for the work, and from the District Council for access across Town Field and for the site compound, for the three day duration. This latter has been given in principle. **Do members accept the costing for this element of the works to the Retention Dam?**

 Confidential Annex 2 (omitted from public documents): Footbridge Removal Quote

### 9.5 To consider replacing a further broken tree at the Recreation ground

Following disappointing damage to a further Jubilee Tree at the Lingfield Road Recreation Ground, **do members wish to replace this Tulip Tree, at a cost of £50 from the vandalism budget?**

### 9.6 To consider parking management

#### 9.6.1 Update on parking issues at Blossoms Park

Members are advised that parking by residents has continued, and on a several occasions taking up all spaces. On one occasion a nearby resident parked among daytime Pavilion users in the Cricket Club extension area, and later in the day returned to find themselves shut in behind the gate. They called the Council office to complain, saying all the “allocated parking was full” (\*there is no allocated residential parking at Blossoms Park) and insisting someone come to let them out. Fortunately, the groundstaff had not left for the day, and were able to attend and open the gate.

The Town Clerk authorised a further sign for the field side of the access drive, opposite the spaces, to reiterate “no residential parking”. This was in place before Easter and the situation will be monitored with the new sign in situ while external parking management solutions are investigated. Information is awaited, but the Clerk has had a positive conversation about different options

#### 9.6.2 Market day inconsiderate drivers in Market Yard

Councillors have been circulated with information regarding issues arising from inconsiderate parking on Market days, despite signage clearly advising that the area should be kept clear. This will continue to be monitored

9.7 **To consider works scheduled for 2022/23 in the 10 and 30 year Open Spaces maintenance Plans**

The 10-year plan budget included funding for replacement water tank valves as necessary at Forge Croft site. A report of two tanks leaking was received from Forge Croft allotments at the end of February (the supply temporarily stopped) so the Clerk approved the order of two replacement tanks at £314.02 plus VAT, to be ready for the new growing season from remaining Small Projects budget. **Members are asked to ratify this expenditure.**

The notice board at the front of Blossoms Park has been replaced, in line with the decision at last meeting. The local Youth Workers were delighted to have the opportunity to display in half of the board information which is relevant to many of the users of the skate ramps.

9.8 **To consider works scheduled for 2023/24 in the 10 and 30 year Open Spaces maintenance plans**

Members have received the 10 year plan schedule, with the annual works items (marked “ann”) now budgeted within a separate new heading of annual and inspection costs.

Quotes have been received for the annual weed control Spring spraying of sports pitches with selective herbicide at Blossoms Park, the Recreation Ground, and Mowshurst, as follows:

Company A £1,326.46 using HYD Super  
Company B £1,610 using Mircam

Both costings are ex-VAT, and both companies will supply COSHH data sheets and current H&S documentation if appointed. They have both commented on the increase in product costs this year. **How do members wish to proceed?**

 Annex 3: 10yr Plan schedule for 2023-24.pdf

9.9 **Review of the Byelaws**

The draft Byelaws approved at the November meeting were sent to the Byelaws Team at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities at the beginning of December for comments/approval. The response received apologised for the delay in reply. No “blocking issues” were identified which might lead to the Secretary of state declining the application as the proposed byelaws were closely based on the Department’s model set with minor alteration. The next step of the process will be to consult on the proposed Byelaws. This will take place after the May elections.

9.9.1 **To receive an update regarding the Risk Assessment for a request to fly electric powered model aircraft**

Communication between a resident and the Clerk has been circulated to members, including information sent to the Council’s health and safety consultants regarding risk assessment. A response is still awaited, and from Council’s insurance company regarding the Public Liability element of cover. An update will be provided at the meeting if responses have been received.


9.9.2 **To receive an update regarding boundary issues at the Recreation Ground**

Council resolved at its 6 March meeting (Item 10.8) to approve legal fees to address the issue of unauthorized access. A letter has been sent to a resident, and to all other properties bordering the Recreation Ground, where there also appears to be some other potential access. Works to reinstate the boundary fence and hedge where necessary have been commissioned.

9.10 **To receive update on Ready-Steady-Grow gardening competition**

The gardening competition was launched on Council's social media, in May/June newsletter, and by poster (see attached) on its notice boards in the week before Easter. Six local schools and one youth group were contacted and wished to participate, and KCC approval was given to provide seven "starter packs" sourced from a local supplier and funded from the unspent grant remaining from last year for this element of the project. The "packs" including growing medium, and a range of children's equipment and a bug box, will be delivered to these young gardening groups this week.

The closing date for entries is 30th June and forms are available on-line and at the office front desk. Judging will take place during July, with photographs again as the first stage. The Presentation Evening is booked for 5th September. All allotment plot-holders are being encouraged to enter their plot or their garden, and the young gardener category includes a "tallest sunflower" sub-group to be judged later in August. The June committee meeting will nominate judges.

 Annex 4: Ready Steady Grow.pdf

9.11 **To receive update on Coronation Big Lunch – Stangrove Park 7th May**

The required documentation has been received in line with the original proposal submitted. The deputy clerk had a site meeting with the events management company on 3rd April, discussing practicalities such as ground conditions, timings, access, site layout, waste management, and staffing. The detail of site plan layout has also been provided.

9.12 **To note the response to an increase in anti-social behaviour in the vicinity of Stangrove Park and the Leisure Centre**

Public and councillor concerns regarding an increase in anti-social behaviour around the area of Stangrove Park and the Leisure Centre have been reported to the Sevenoaks Community Safety Unit Daily Tasking meeting. The Police have tasked more patrols to Edenbridge over the next few days because of the increase in reports. The SDC CCTV cameras have been useful to the Police in identifying young people causing problems in the past, and this resource would always be utilised if required.

Local people are urged to report incidents of anti-social activity so that a body of information can be gathered to help the police, regarding timings, days and dates, and descriptions of those involved.

10 **CIL BOARD: To receive and ratify a CIL Award amendment to the Friends of Hever Primary School for its 'outdoor play improvements longevity project' (award was for £24,659.72)**

Hever Primary School PA has emailed: After consultation with the new head and children in

the school, the proposal has changed, in that rather than a few smaller structures, the structure will be one long piece combining the challenge and strengthening opportunities. It has been designed with both KS1 and KS2 in mind and as it is not something specific (such as a train in the original outlined plan) it will allow the play to be undirected, even better creating those opportunities for children to use their imagination and providing better opportunity for shared experiences and building children's social. The flooring change - originally grass tiles, but it has since been advised that due to use every day the grass will not grow successfully and it will end up muddy, so will be either wood chip or shredded rubber (like at your new park at the Rec) to ensure it is useable in all weather.

The Clerk and Cllr McArthur, Chair of CIL Board have looked at the original application and award.

The Bid application brief was:

*Longevity project to transform the functionality and all weather usability of the outdoor areas by improving the ground and installing new play equipment and children's outdoor gym. We are looking to expand on the small, dangerous (now removed) structure having already improved much of the grounds ourselves.*

Why is the scheme needed:

- Old play structures had become rotten and unsafe for pupils.
- The remaining small climbing structure 'Trim Trail' is used by the children at every opportunity.  
Access is rotated by class to ensure everyone gets a short turn each week.
- Pupil numbers have doubled in recent years necessitating a larger area of climbing and creative play equipment.
- Outdoor play has been consistently shown to improve children's mental health, their well-being and focus.
- Exercise through play is essential for keeping children fit, healthy and preventing obesity.
- Children need opportunities to move and exercise in a variety of ways. Exciting climbing structures, combined with an outdoor gym, will enable them to build physical strength and improve cardiovascular health.
- Active play, building gross motor skills, is essential to children as a precursor to the development of the fine motor skills they need in the classroom.
- During the pandemic children missed out on opportunities for play due to lockdown and the closure of playgrounds/schools. This negatively impacted children's mental health, fitness and levels of obesity. Children now need the opportunity to make up for lost time.
- Creative play is essential for development. We have carefully chosen equipment which encourages this for KS1 and KS2 age groups.
- Engaging play facilities reduce challenging behaviour in children and encourages friendships and positive personal growth

**Whilst there isn't a change to the principle of the bid and award, the original application included an outdoor gym and wider range of equipment, and now looks like one multi play frame. In view that the School is keen to proceed and the brief was for 'improving the ground and installing new play equipment', and the next CIL Board is not scheduled until November, are Members happy to ratify that the project aims and details remain valid with the equipment amendment for the award (value £24,659.72)?**

- 11 **News Release**  
Do members consider any items from this meeting should be the subject of a News Release?
  
- 12 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 12 June 2023**