

**Minutes of the ANNUAL MEETING of EDENBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL held in Rickards Hall on 15 May 2023 at 7:30 pm**

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Present: Cllrs. Jon Aldridge, Angela Baker (*Vice-Chairwoman*), Michael Gemmell Smith, Alan Layland, Margot McArthur, Stuart McGregor, Angela Read, Stephen Sumner, Steve Taylor, Bob Todd (*Chairman*)

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

**1 Elections**

**1.1 Election of Chairman for the ensuing year**

*New Council and Annual Meeting business*

Cllr Baker proposed Cllr Todd to continue as Chairman; Cllr Gemmell Smith seconded. Members unanimously,

**Resolved:** Cllr Bob Todd as Chairman of the Town Council.

**1.2 To receive the Chairman's declaration of office**

Received; Cllr Todd signed the Declaration of Office book.

**1.3 Election of the Vice-Chairman**

Cllr Todd proposed Cllr Baker to continue as Vice-Chairman; Cllr Taylor seconded. Members unanimously,

**Resolved:** Cllr Angela Baker as Vice-Chair of the Town Council.

**1.4 To receive the Vice-Chairman's declaration of office**

Received; Cllr Baker signed the Declaration of Office book.

**2 Declaration of Acceptance of Office of All Councillors**

Received; Cllrs Aldridge, Gemmell Smith, Layland, McArthur, McGregor, Read Sumner and Taylor signed the Declaration of Office book.

**3 Declaration of Interests or Predetermination**

Cllr Layland declared a non-pecuniary interest as Member of Citizens Advice Bureau (item 13.1); Cllrs McArthur and Todd declared a non-pecuniary interest as trustees of the Great Stone Bridge Trust (item 13.3).

**4 To Receive Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received, noted and accepted from Cllr Compton.

**5 To Receive, Adopt and Sign the Minutes of The Extraordinary Council Meeting Held on 06 March 2023 (9883-9891)**

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 06 March 2023 be duly signed by the Chairman of the meeting as a true and accurate record of the meeting; pages 9883-9891.

**6 To Adopt the Following Reports/Minutes of Meetings**

**6.1 To Adopt the Minutes of The Planning and Transport Meetings**

**Resolved:** the minutes of the meetings and numbered – 13 March (9892-9895); 3 April (9900-9904); 24 April (9911-9912) be adopted.

**6.2 Finance Committee**

**Resolved:** the minutes of the meeting and numbered – 27 March (9896-9899) to be adopted

**6.3 Open Spaces Committee**

**Resolved:** the minutes of the meeting and numbered – 17 April (9905-9910) to be adopted.

**7 To Receive Recommendations from Finance Committee Meeting on 27 March:**

**7.1 To note: the review of the predicted year-end for 2022/23 and recommended ear-marked reserves movement**

Noted; and that the actual year-end budget comparisons resulted in a better position than forecasted, with £22.2k savings against budget and back into General Reserves and £68.4k moved in to Earmarked reserves for outstanding project works.

**7.2 To note: the renewal of Street Lighting Energy contract to remain with Npower on an ongoing basis (this can be reviewed when the fuel prices change). Based on current annual usage the estimate cost is £14,918.32**

Noted

**8 To Review the Delegated Arrangements to Committees, Sub-Committees, Staff (as Detailed in The Terms of Reference) and Appointment of Any New Committees**

**8.1 Finance and Governance Committee (10)**

**Resolved:** To continue with and the delegated arrangements (as detailed in the Terms of Reference).

**8.2 Planning and Transportation Committee (12)**

**Resolved:** To continue with and the delegated arrangements (as detailed in the Terms of Reference).

**8.3 Open Spaces Committee (10)**

**Resolved:** To continue with and the delegated arrangements (as detailed in the Terms of Reference).

**8.4 Emergency Planning Committee (8)**

**Resolved:** To continue with and the delegated arrangements (as detailed in the Terms of Reference).

**8.5 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Board (15)**

**Resolved:** to continue with full Council/all councillors membership and the delegated arrangements (as detailed in the Terms of Reference).

**8.6 Personnel Committee (7)**

**Resolved:** To continue with and the delegated arrangements (as detailed in the Terms of Reference).

**8.7 Charities and Grants (15)**

**Resolved:** To continue with and the delegated arrangements (as detailed in the Terms of Reference).

**8.8 Forward Planning Steering Group**

**Resolved:** To continue with all Councillors and the delegated arrangements (as detailed in the Terms of Reference).

**8.9 Internal Audit / Council Risk Group**

**Resolved:** To continue with the current Working Groups as itemised under 8.9-8.14 and the arrangements (as detailed in the Terms of Reference).

**8.10 Lease /SLA negotiation Group**

**Resolved:** To continue with the current Working Groups as itemised under 8.9-8.14 and the arrangements (as detailed in the Terms of Reference).

**8.11 Open Spaces Task and Finish group to explore viability for new concrete skate park**

**Resolved:** To continue with the current Working Groups as itemised under 8.9-8.14 and the arrangements (as detailed in the Terms of Reference).

**8.12 Open Spaces - Market Yard car park / Parking Group**

**Resolved:** To continue with the current Working Groups as itemised under 8.9-8.14 and the arrangements (as detailed in the Terms of Reference).

**8.13 Planting Trees and Wildflower areas Group**

**Resolved:** To continue with the current Working Groups as itemised under 8.9-8.14 and the arrangements (as detailed in the Terms of Reference).

**8.14 Aviation Consultation Group**

**Resolved:** To continue with the current Working Groups as itemised under 8.9-8.14 and the arrangements (as detailed in the Terms of Reference).

**8.15 Delegated powers to Town Clerk and Officers**

**Resolved:** To continue with the delegated powers and arrangements to the Town Clerk and Officers (as detailed in the Terms of Reference).

**8.16 Delegation for procurement procedures**

**Resolved:** To continue with procurement arrangements (as detailed in the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders).

**8.17 To consider any additional committees**

Members **agreed** there were sufficient committees.

**9 To Confirm Terms of Reference**

**Resolved:** To continue with and adopt the current Terms of Reference

**10 To Appoint/confirm Members for Each Committee**

**10.1 To Appoint/confirm Members for the Finance and Governance Committee (10)**

Membership was **agreed:** Cllrs Baker, Compton, Gemmell Smith, Layland, McGregor, Read, Sumner. There were three vacancies remaining.

- 10.2 To Appoint/confirm Members for the Planning and Transportation Committee (12)**  
Membership was agreed: Cllrs Aldridge (SW), Baker (NE), Gemmell Smith (SW), Layland (NE), McArthur (SW), McGregor (NE), Read (NE), Todd (NE). Four vacancies remaining, minimum of for south west Ward.
- 10.3 To Appoint/confirm Members for the Open Spaces Committee (10)**  
Membership was **agreed**: Cllrs Aldridge, Baker, Compton, Gemmell Smith, Layland, McGregor, Read, Sumner, Taylor. There was one vacancy remaining.
- 10.4 To Appoint/confirm Members for the Personnel Committee (7)**  
Membership was **agreed**: Cllrs Baker, Gemmell Smith, Layland, McArthur, McGregor, Todd. There was one vacancy remaining.
- 10.5 To Appoint/confirm Members for the Emergency Planning Committee (8)**  
Membership was **agreed**: Cllrs Aldridge, Baker, Compton, Gemmell Smith, McArthur, McGregor, Taylor. There was one vacancy remaining.
- 10.6 Re 8.17 if there are any new committees to appoint members**  
There were no new committees.
- 11 To Appoint/confirm the Members of The Working Groups**
- 11.1 To Appoint/confirm Members for the Internal Audit / Council Risk Group**  
Membership was **agreed** and to reduce the membership from six to four; appointed: Cllrs Gemmell Smith, Layland, Sumner, Todd.
- 11.2 To Appoint/confirm Members for the Lease / SLA negotiation Group**  
Membership was **agreed** and to reduce the membership from six to four; appointed: Cllrs Baker, Gemmell Smith, McGregor. One Vacancy remaining.
- 11.3 To Appoint/confirm Members for the Open Spaces Task and Finish group to explore viability for new concrete skate park**  
Membership was **agreed** and appointed: Cllrs Aldridge, Baker, Gemmell Smith, Layland, McArthur, Sumner.
- 11.4 To Appoint/confirm Members for the Open Spaces - Market Yard car park / Parking Group**  
Membership was **agreed** and appointed: Cllrs Aldridge, Baker, Compton, Layland, McGregor. One Vacancy.
- 11.5 To Appoint/confirm Members for the Planting Trees and Wildflower areas Group**  
Noted, this had been dispersed at the May 2022 meeting.
- 11.6 To Appoint/confirm Members for the Aviation Consultation Group**  
Membership was **agreed** and to reduce the membership from six to four; appointed: Cllrs Aldridge, Baker, Compton, McArthur.
- 12 To Confirm and Adopt the Following**

**12.1 Standing Orders (last reviewed & amended 14 July 2022)**

**Resolved:** to continue with and adopt the current Standing Orders.

**12.2 Financial Regulations**

**Resolved:** to continue with and adopt the current Financial Regulations.

**13 To Review Arrangements with Other Local Authorities, Not-For-Profit and Business**

**13.1 Citizens Advice Bureau: Payroll (£243\*)**

**Resolved:** to continue with arrangements for CAB payroll.

**13.2 Freshwater Properties Group: some maintenance and waste clearance for Leather Market (£3,325.08\*)**

**Resolved:** to continue with arrangements for Freshwater Properties Group.

**13.3 Great Stonebridge Trust: Grass cutting and Water Meadow management services**

(varies to cuts and management works)

**Resolved:** to continue with arrangements for Great Stone Bridge Trust

**13.4 Sevenoaks District Council: Ground maintenance services**

**Resolved:** to continue with arrangements for Sevenoaks District Council.

**13.5 War Graves Commission: Maintenance of War Graves (£300\*)**

**Resolved:** to continue with arrangements for War Graves Commission.

**13.6 Involve Kent (£1,500 -£3,000)**

**Resolved:** to continue with arrangements for Involve Kent

**13.7 EDGE IT - software packages: Finance (£818\*), Assets register (£238\*), Epitaph (263.70\*) and Rickards Hall hire (231.30\*)**

**Resolved:** to continue with arrangements and services provided by EDGE IT

**13.8 PS Technology (IT support and Licences) (£11,351.40\*)**

**Resolved:** to continue with arrangements and services provided by PS Technology.

**13.9 Fusion4/Besure/Continental (facilities security management, key holding and fire alarms) (£1,646.80\*; plus £1,902 recharged to EVM)**

**Resolved:** to continue with arrangements and services provided by Fusion4/Besure/and Continental

**13.10 Gallaghers (Hiscox) Insurance (Council insurance) see item 16**

**Resolved:** to continue with broker services and insurance with Gallaghers and Hiscox.

**13.11 NFU Mutual Insurance (vehicles) (£2,043.64)**

**Resolved:** to continue with arrangements through NFU Mutual

**13.12 Keith Robertson (internal auditor) (£500\*)**

**Resolved:** to continue with the internal audit arrangements with Keith Robertson.

**13.13 Mazars (external auditor) (£2,100)****Resolved:** the external audit arrangements with Mazars.**13.14 Streetlight Maintenance – Streetlights (£7,103.92)****Resolved:** to continue with Streetlights for the street lights maintenance.**13.15 Npower – Street Lighting Energy (\*£14,918.32)****Resolved:** to continue with Npower for Street Light energy supply.**13.16 Total Gas (utilities energy all buildings - contracted 31 January 2025)****Resolved:** to continue with Total Gas arrangements for utilities**13.17 Wilkin Chapman Solicitors (legal advice of FOIs, contracts and agreements and other matters) (varies on use)****Resolved:** to continue with arrangements and legal services provide by Wilkin Chapman Solicitors.**13.18 Worknest (HR and H&S support) (£2683.62\*)****Resolved:** to continue with arrangements and services provided by Worknest**13.19 Canon UK (photocopier) (£605.40\* plus copying costs)****Resolved:** to continue with Canon copier arrangements**13.20 SAGE payroll & P11 software services (£813.80\* NB some cost recharged to CAB)****Resolved:** to continue with the licenses and arrangements with SAGE.**13.21 Summer Fun Days – Play Place (£2,292\*)****Resolved:** to continue with arrangements provided by Play Place.**13.22 Health Assured (employee assistance/wellbeing mental health programmes) year 2 of 3-year agreement (£600)****Resolved:** to continue with arrangements with Health Assured.**14 To Appoint Representatives on To/work with External Bodies and Arrangements for Reporting Back**

Members noted some organisations had not been meeting and agreed to move these to hold list until contacted. The following representatives for external bodies on which the Council has representatives were confirmed, with some vacancies to be filled with co-opted councillors:

EXTERNAL BODY AND CONTACT DETAILS	COUNCILLOR(S) NOMINATE REPRESENTATIVE
Edenbridge Town Village Hall (WI Hall) Management Committee	1. Angela Read 2.
Eden Valley Chamber of Commerce	1. Alan Layland
Eden Valley Museum Trust	1. Stuart McGregor 2. Alan Layland (also trustee & exec member)
Edenbridge & Westerham Citizens' Advice	1. Angela Baker 2. Bob Todd
Campaign to Protect Rural England	1.

Eden Valley Footpaths Forum	1. Jon Aldridge & Tourism Officer
Edenbridge Youth Forum/Consortium	1. Angela Baker 2. Bob Todd
Edenbridge Cares Group	1. Angela Baker 2. Margot McArthur
Friends of Edenbridge Parish Church	1. Stuart McGregor
Food Bank	1. Bob Todd 2. Angela Baker
KALC & Sevenoaks Area Committee	1. Jon Aldridge 2.
Partners and Community Together (PACT)	1. Angela Baker 2.
Sevenoaks District Arts Council	1. Angela Baker 2. Angela Read
Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee; Tonbridge and Redhill Steering Group (Sussex Community Rail Partnership); Uckfield & East Grinstead Lines Steering Group (Sussex Community Rail Partnership) (Buxted)	1. Debbie Bond (Planning & Transportation Officer)

**15 To Review the Inventory of Land and Other Assets Including Buildings and Office Equipment**

Members unanimously,

**Resolved:** to confirm the Council's assets with a current fixed asset value of £4,296.021.92.

**16 CONFIRMATION OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR INSURANCE COVER IN RESPECT OF ALL INSURABLE RISKS AND THE ANNUAL EXPENDITURE OF £16,621.54.**

Members unanimously,

**Resolved:** to confirm the Council's insurance arrangements and estimated annual expenditure of £16,621.54

**17 To review and confirm the council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies**

**17.1 Campaign to Protect Rural England £36**

**Resolved:** to continue with the subscription.

**17.2 Edenbridge Allotment Gardens – Affiliation fees from Swan Lane Members £108**

**Resolved:** to continue with the subscription.

**17.3 Edenbridge Magazine (6 editions) (£1,093.50)**

**Resolved:** to continue with the subscription.

**17.4 Grounds Management Association £157.50**

**Resolved:** to continue with the subscription.

**17.5 Information Commissioner Office £55**

**Resolved:** to continue with the subscription.

**17.6 Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management £95**

**Resolved:** to continue with the subscription.

**17.7 Kent Association of Local Council (KALC) £1,665 (23/24)**

**Resolved:** to continue with the subscription.

**17.8 Kent County Playing Fields Association £20**

**Resolved:** to continue with the subscription.

**17.9 National Association for British Markets Authorities (NABMA) £500**

**Resolved:** to continue with the subscription.

**17.10 Open Spaces Society £45**

**Resolved:** to continue with the subscription.

**17.11 Rural Market Town Group Membership £115 (23/24)**

**Resolved:** to continue with the subscription.

**17.12 Sevenoaks District Council – Premises Licence (TN8) £1,070**

**Resolved:** to continue with the subscription.

**17.13 Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) Town Clerk's membership £327 (May 2023)**

**Resolved:** to continue with the subscription.

**17.14 Stalls and Crafts £150**

**Resolved:** to continue with the subscription.

**18 To Confirm the Direct Debit and Standing Orders Arrangements**

Members unanimously,

**Resolved:** to the direct debit arrangements (provided with meeting papers) and noted there were currently no standing orders.

**19 To Confirm the Council's Banking Signatories\*\***

Members unanimously,

**Resolved:** Seven councillors were nominated as bank signatories for the Council's different bank account mandates: Barclays; CCLA; and the Charities Accounts with Scottish Widows, Natwest and CCLA. Councillors appointed to the bank accounts, details held with the Responsible Financial Officer and Town Clerk

**20 To Review the Council's Complaints Procedure (reviewed and Amended December 2021)**

Member unanimously,

**Resolved:** to continue with and adopt the current complaints procedure, last formally reviewed and updated December 2021.

**21 To Review of The Council's Policies, Procedures and Practices in Respect of Its Obligations Under Freedom of Information and Data Protection Legislation (reviewed November 2019)**

Members unanimously,

**Resolved:** to continue with and adopt the current Retention and Disposal Policy, the FOI publication scheme, Information and Data Protection Policy and the Privacy Policy.

**22 Communications Policy (and with Dealing with The Press/media)**

Members unanimously,

**Resolved:** to continue with and adopt the Communications Policy.

**23 General Power of Competence**

Members unanimously,

**Resolved:** Edenbridge Town Council continues to meet the eligibility criteria and to adopt the General Power of Competency for the current new Council term 2023-2027.

**24 To Receive the Calendar of Council and Committee Meetings for May to December 2023**

Noted; there were no changes proposed.

**25 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 31 March 2023\***

**25.1 To receive the internal auditor's report**

The Internal Auditor's Report had been carried out 11 May by Keith Robertson, and was received by Members. He was satisfied with the end of year financial statements and confirmed the accounts meet the necessary controls. He had completed the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023 statement with 'yeses' for each objective and 'k' was not applicable.

**25.2 To receive the end-of-year financial statements (EOY financial reports attached)**

Members received the end-of-year financial statements as presented with the meeting papers, which the Consolidate Balance Sheet and reserves, and the annual budget comparisons report:

**Summary of Budget Comparison 2022-23:**

	Budgeted	Actual year-end		
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	£719,365.00	£668,119.90		
<b>Total Income</b>	£729,582.00	£758,797.52		
<i>Surplus/Deficit</i>	<b>£10,217.00</b>	<b>£90,677.62</b>	<b>£68,435</b>	Movement to Earmarked Reserves
<b>Actual total movement</b>		£22,242.62	in to General Reserves	

Year-end I&E consolidated comparisons with reserves movements:

Edenbridge Town Council - Reserves View Sheet					
As of March 2023 Actual Year End					
BASED ON THE I&E ACCOUNTS					
	31/03/2022	Accrual	Planned	Year-End	31/03/2023
<b>ETC - Reserves Forecast</b>					
<b>Ear-Marked</b>					

<b>Reserves</b>					
<b>Neighbourhood Plan</b>	£15,000.00				£15,000.00
<b>Election</b>	£11,500.00		£4,000.00		£15,500.00
<b>Depreciation Equipment &amp; tools</b>	£1,000.00				£1,000.00
<b>10/30 Year Building Plan</b>	£80,117.00		£12,680.00		£92,797.00
<b>10/30 Open Spaces Plan</b>	£225,064.00		£30,102.00		£255,166.00
<b>Cemetery / Community Warden</b>	£4,771.00				£4,771.00
<b>Staff</b>	£12,000.00	£6,000.00			£6,000.00
<b>Grants (and deposits)</b>	£772.00	£772.00	£2,575.00		£2,575.00
<b>Projects Carried Over</b>	£7,957.00	£7,957.00	£19,078.00		£19,078.00
	£358,181.00	£14,729.00	£68,435.00		£411,887.00
<b>General Reserve</b>	£250,812.00	£1,543.00		£38,078.00	£287,347.00
	£608,993.00	£16,272.00	£68,435.00	£38,078.00	£699,234.00
<b>CIL allocated</b>	£472,795.00				£275,165.00
<b>Reserve Totals</b>	<b>£1,165,772.00</b>				<b>£982,018.00</b>

### 25.3 To approve the annual governance statement for 2022/23

Cllr Todd read aloud each statement under 'annual governance' in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). Members unanimously agreed each statement, and

**Resolved:** to approve the annual governance statements 1-9 for 2022/23.

### 25.4 To resolve the accounting statement for 2022/23

Members received the end-of-year accounting figures for the AGAR. The Balances carried forwarded (box 7) concur with item 25.2, £982,018; and the cash and investments balance of £968,434. Members unanimously

**Resolved:** to approve the end-of-year accounting figures as recorded in the AGAR boxes 1- 10 and boxes 11a&b for 2022/23.

### 26 Public Questions and Statements

None

### 27 To Receive County and District Councillor Reports

#### 27.1 County Councillors

County Councillor Margot McArthur congratulated Members on being re-elected for another term. She also referenced the new chairs funded from the Kent County Council (KCC) Members Grant and was delighted with recent positive feedback from hall hirers.

#### 27.2 District Councillors

District Councillor Alan Layland said he was delighted to have been re-elected to Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) and congratulated his fellow colleagues Cllrs Baker and McArthur. Jim Morgan was the fourth District Councillor (Liberal Democrats), representing the North and East

Ward. Cllr Layland announced SDC had a new Leader, Cllr Julia Thornton. He went on to say a huge thank you to Peter Fleming (ex-Leader) who had served as a District Councillor for 18 years, he would be greatly missed and had always been a proactive advocate for Edenbridge. The next SDC meeting was 23 May and would announce the new Cabinet and Committee members.

**28 To Receive Reports and Any Recommendations from Working Groups; Delegated Reports; Clerk's and Officers' Reports:**

**28.1 Clerk's report\***

Received

**29 Matters Arising from The Minutes for Report and Not Elsewhere on the Agenda**

**29.1 Edenbridge Dementia Friendly**

In April, training awareness was provided by Elaine Murray for staff of the Town Council and Smith Scientific. Both organisations were now eligible for Edenbridge Dementia Action Alliance accreditation. Other organisations that sign up to the 'Pledge' would be offered training over the coming months.

**29.2 Games Club update**

**29.2.1 to receive an update on funding from Involve Kent for 2023-24 (reduced from £5,000 pa to £1,500 on 6-monthly review)**

Members noted, Involve Kent had advised of funding cuts thus reducing its grant. The Town Clerk had accepted the new terms as there had been several positive outcomes for residents attending, everyone really enjoyed the weekly sessions and the weekly attendance averaged 12. The full grant would be directed to Rickards Hall hire.

**29.2.2 to note: a recent grant awarded from the Levelling Up Fund via SDC to provide a community cohesion event for the Games Club and to help attract new members**

The Community Warden and Deputy Clerk had been successful in a recent a grant bid for a community cohesion (grant criteria) event. The application was for an afternoon classical tea for the Games Club members and other invited residents who had become isolated during pandemic. Details of the event were being finalised for a date in July to take place in the courtyard.

**29.3 To receive an update on transition of the new IT Storage (SharePoint) System following recent office closure days to support this**

Members noted officers had done well to work through IT files ready for the IT storage transition to SharePoint. It was hope this would be carried out over the summer period.

**29.4 To note: Rickards Hall and Council Office closure dates to facilitate planned treatment works for 'wood boring insect infestation' at Rickards Hall, and Doggetts Barn including office redecoration.**

Members noted the arrangements, and efforts for minimal disruption to resident/customer service, during infestation works for the Rickards Hall and Doggetts Barn which would also include redecoration.

**29.5 To receive feedback from the Working Group on King Charles III Coronation event – 7 May**

Cllrs Gemmell Smith and Layland said they were delighted with the Coronation Big Lunch event on 7 May which had had a late venue change from Stangrove Park to the Recreation Ground. Heart of Sevenoaks (HofS) had delivered a fantastic event for the residents of Edenbridge. The event was well attended, and a lot of positive feedback had been received. There was a choice of children's activities and crafts, a selection of food vendors, bar and refreshments, and throughout the

afternoon a programme of musical entertainment including the Town Band.

Members also noted Marsh Green community had organised its own event which was well attended and included music, merriment and May Pole dancing which was enjoyed by all. The Town Band also performed.

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

Members received an update on the response and proposal to resolve the issues of the unauthorised gate at the Recreation Ground, this include having a Charge put on the Deeds of the property should the resident not pay a share of the costs until the sale of the property.

**29.6.1 To ratify total expenditure to date of £2,430 plus further estimate £1,500 for legal fees for investigation, letters and liaison with resident**

Members unanimously,

**Resolved:** to ratify the current expenditure of £2,430 plus a further estimated £1,500 for legal fees for investigation, letters, a Charge and liaison with resident.

**29.6.2 To ratify total expenditure to date of £2,115 for written correspondence to surrounding properties to clarify and confirm residents backing on to Council land do not have permission to create Page 9 of 12 or have their own private access on to Council land**

Members unanimously,

**Resolved:** to ratify the total expenditure to date of £2,115 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.

**29.7 To receive a report on the Twinning Association 50th Anniversary Celebrations – weekend 12-14 May**

Cllr Todd said that he had attended a superb event organised by the Twinning Association for guests from Mont St Aignan on Saturday morning (13 May) in the courtyard with A Capella singers, Marlings Morris Clog dancers and the Town Band. Tom Tugendhat MP also attended along with Town Councillors Angela Baker (Vice-Chair), Michael Gemmel Smith, Alan Layland representing SDC and Margot McArthur representing KCC. The Museum had an exhibition on the 50-years of the twinning until end of June, and noted that this was the final year as the two groups had agreed it was time to winddown. Cllr Todd congratulated and thanked Lindsey Eaton and Caroline Mercer for all their hard work for the 50th Anniversary Celebrations and the many years of their work making this relationship with Mont St Aignan so very special

**29.8 Training programme for the new Council: A visioning/forward planning business plan sessions has been organised for the new Council (resolution March 2023)**

Members noted the following training dates for the new council and all councillors:

- Saturday 2 September, 10 am – 2.30 pm - A visioning/forward planning business plan session to help the new Council consider its ambitions and vision for the coming 4-years, and longer-term view (external trainer).
- Thursday 29 June 7.00 pm (was 19 June) - Finance training on Council EDGE reports.
- Thursday 5 October - Finance Training on Councillors responsibilities, understanding the AGAR and general Q&A on finances (external trainer).

Other training webinars and workshops (NALC and KALC run) that arise will be circulated including bitesize session on civility and respect.

**29.9 Asset of Community Value (ACV) - To note: The nomination for The Swan Inn, Edenbridge to continue as an ACV has been approved (5-years)**

Noted

**30 Other Business Including Items Referred from Committees for Decision**

**30.1 To consider a review of the Forge Singers Agreement (dated September 1992) and the expenditure of £1,450 plus VAT for a new Lease Agreement to be prepared by the Council's solicitor**

Members unanimously,

**Resolved:** to review the Forge Singers Agreement (dated September 1992) and the expenditure of £1,450 plus VAT for a new Lease Agreement to be prepared by the Council's solicitor.

**30.2 To approve the expenditure of £1,500 for display monitor screen in Doggetts Barn for meeting presentations (budgeted code 1011, projects FPSG Oct 2022)**

Members voted 9:1 and,

**Resolved:** to approve the expenditure of £1,500 for display monitor screen and appropriate equipment in Doggetts Barn to enable meeting presentations.

**30.3 UK Shared Prosperity Fund (via SDC) funding of up to £15k over 3-years to support High Streets regeneration: To appoint a Working Group to consider viable proposals**

Members **appointed** on to a Working Group, Cllrs Aldridge, Baker and Gemmell Smith to work with the Town Clerk to consider potential schemes for High Street regeneration through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (via SDC).

**30.4 To consider and approve a budget (propose £650) to support activities for the Market over the summer**

Members unanimously,

**Resolved:** a budget of £650 to fund activities for the Market over the summer period.

**31 Annual Town Meeting – to Feedback from The Meeting 20 March**

Members noted the Town Clerk's report and agreed that the Annual Town Meeting had had been well received with 105 residents attending. The presentations were interesting and informative, and noted a copy of the slide presentations, with the questions and answer session was published on the website.

**32 COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES: to consider whether ETC Members should receive allowances and to investigate the costs of engaging a Parish Remuneration Panel**

Members debated whether to investigate the costs of an independent Parish Remuneration Panel (this would be carried by SDC) with a view to allow the choice of Members Allowances. It was noted that at town and parish council level councillors did not receive any allowances, although travel expenses could be claimed, and a policy should clearly set this out. One Member thought that considering allowances was valid as the recent election had been uncontested and perhaps this was one reason why the public were reluctant to stand as councillors. Another echoed this and said that a carers or childcare allowance may help attract residents to stand as a councillor. However, some Members said that at local council level, it was a privilege to serve the community and was why people stood to be councillors without expecting any remuneration (albeit it would be a small allowance). Concerns were also raised that some members of the public would misunderstand the intentions and procedures and could backfire. Members voted 7:3 and,

**Resolved:** not to consider costs for an independent Parish Remuneration Panel and to allow Members Allowances for Edenbridge Town Councillors. However, it was agreed to consider a policy for optional travel expenses based on the government standard.

**33 Council Vacancies**

11 nominations for the May elections were uncontested, leaving four vacancies. As the 'Notice of Election' provided the opportunity for councillor nominations, and the opportunity for an election was not called, and there had been no withdrawals, these vacancies could now be filled by co-option. Members voted and,

**Resolved:** the vacancies to be filled by co-option and to advertise the opportunity inviting interested candidates to apply.

The Town Clerk was asked to advertise the councillor vacancies as soon as possible and to schedule an extra Council meeting to receive candidates before the July meeting.

**34 Consultations**

**34.1 Kent County Council Kent Connect to Support New Website**

Noted

**34.2 Kent County Council Kent Connect to Support New Website**

**35 To Receive Reports from Councillors Who Have Attended Meetings of Outside Bodies**

None

**36 To Consider Any Press Release**

Councillor vacancies co-option.

**37 Matters for Future Agendas**

Cllr Baker requested the Council consider the viability of an annual community event run by an outside organisation.

**38 To Receive the Update on The New Council Logo and Rebranding with Colour Palette and Guidelines**

Members received the full visual identity and branding guidelines document which had been prepared by the Communications Officer and James Turner of Black Spiral Design, in liaison with the Town Clerk. The logo, as approved at the March meeting, was based on the heritage of the town with the bridge as the key feature and would provide clearer graphic reproduction and cleaner typography to present professional visual identity for the Town Council making it easier for residents to recognise the Council's work. The colour palette complimented the lead logo colour provide a more modern feel yet also a reflecting natural sense such as pale blue.

Members discussed, there was mixed opinion on the colour palette, but the overriding view was support for the new logo and branding. Members voted 7:2 with one abstaining, and,

**Resolved:** to adopt and proceed with the new Council logo and visual identity and branding guidelines.

The Town Clerk said a timetable and plan would be prepared and the would implement the new visual identity over the coming weeks

**39 Date of Next Meeting – 3 July 2023**

Meeting closed: 21:21