

To Councillors: J Aldridge, A Baker, S Compton, M Gemmell Smith, A Layland, N Martindale, M McArthur, S McGregor (Chairman), V Parker, A Read, J Streets, S Sumner, B Todd.

Notice is hereby given of a Forward Planning Steering Group to be held in Rickards Hall on 23 October 2023 at 7:30 pm, which Councillors are summonsed to attend.

Town Clerk
18 October 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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Meeting Papers & Report


1 **To appoint the Chair/Chairman for the meeting and ensuing year for the Forward Planning Steering Group**

2 **Apologies for Absence**

3 **Declarations of interests or predetermination**

The disclosure must include the nature of the interest. If an interest becomes apparent to a member during the course of a meeting that has not been disclosed under this item, the member must immediately disclose it.

4 **To receive the minutes of the Forward Planning Steering Group meeting held on 31 October 2022, pages 9797-9802**

 Forward Planning | 31 October 2022 v.1 - Minutes (Pages PRE-098/-)

5 **Matter arising from the previous minutes for report, and not elsewhere in the agenda.**

5.1 **To receive an update previously proposed projects**

5.1.1 **Band Stand for Stangrove Park**

Last year, Members supported the aspiration for a Band Stand and included on its Forward Plan. There has been no progress with this currently, though it sits as a short-to-medium goal.

5.1.2 **Concrete Skate Park for Edenbridge**

Discussion for the potential of a concrete skate park started back in 2021, last year FSPG supported investigating the viability of fundraising and project management outsourcing for leisure and sports facilities and how to best use this methodology. At January Council, Members appointed a 'Task and Finish' Group (T&FG) to explore the viability for externally funded projects, initially looking at a new concrete skate park including location, is there community appetite, compliance with Council procurement procedures, best way to proceed and viability. T&FG Group members: Cllrs Aldridge, Baker, Gemmell Smith, Layland, McArthur, and Sumner (added at AMTC).

The T&FG have met and have also received a presentation from a company called Maverick who built Swanley's Skate Park, to discuss how they manage projects, work with and can advise councils. However, before all this, Council has to decide to potentially commit to a skate park project, planning permission (if required), have the funding in place, preparing a specification and then going to public tender (as per the procurement procedures).

The T&FG will provide an update at the meeting, Members will be asked to consider if to include the potential concrete skate park project on its Forward Plan. As part of the Plan review they will then consider the potential time frame – short, medium or long term.

5.1.3 **Neighbourhood Plan**

At the July Council, Members resolved to investigate costs and funding resources to develop an Edenbridge Neighbourhood Plan, and make recommendation to the Visioning/Forward Planning in September to consider as part of the Council's future projects, time scales and budgets.

5.1.4 **Cyber security and compliance service improvements and upgrade**

At the September Council meeting, Members considered upgrading its IT managed service to include complete support with cyber security and compliance service. The monthly cost £957.10 (annual expenditure of £11,485.20 incs MS Business Premium 365 x 10 licenses). Council currently pays £6,881.58 (inc MS 365), so the additional annual expenditure would be £4,603.62.

There are several steps the Council would need to do to be compliant, it is not just a case of handing over to PS Tech. Whilst the move to Microsoft 365 Sharepoint was a positive step in the right direction, hackers and scammers are becoming more and more sophisticated hence the need for better cyber and compliance service e.g. 24/7 eye on screen monitoring, rapid detection for response to cyber-attacks, managed risk and compliance with wide range of global standards and early detection reduces time to response and reputational losses. The .gov website also encourages organisations to sign up to the cyber essentials scheme, which would provide an appraisal and actions.

The Council's insurance had advised the Council to consider taking out cyber insurance, but without the above being completed, the Council would not meet the insurance criteria requirements, so compliance and improved processes are necessary before meeting any insurance criteria.

Members at full September Council unanimously supported carrying out an appraisal, and for this to form part of the Forward Plan, but not to proceed with the insurance currently. The budget would need to consider factoring the potential additional costs to a full managed service (£4,603) in addition to staff time.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cyber-essentials-scheme-process-evaluation/cyber-essentials-scheme-process-evaluation#introduction>

5.1.5 **Land outside the old Police Station**

Council has supported taking on this area where the flagpole sits and to create a garden area/feature at this part of the town. £5k has been allocated in the current budget (code 1011). There has been a delay with the legalities of this, should this not happen in the current budget year, the funds can be moved the earmarked reserves.

6 **Visioning Training - To receive the summary report and consider recommendations**

The Visioning event was provided by James Corrigan of Council HR & Governance and took place on 2 September. The session looked at the role of parish/town councils, the council's current Forward Plan and how to revise and make this a Plan which also has community support. The day was attended by seven councillors and two officers. A summary report is attached.

Comments on the report:

Recommendation 3: Refuse bag sales solutions - although a number of residents visit the offices to purchase waste bags, this does allow an opportunity for residents to engage with the

Council. The group did discuss this at length during the session, which is why it is included in the report. However, the Council does purchase garden refuse bags, and sale of all the waste bags does generate a small income for the Council, last year this was £2,281.

Recommendation 4: to review Council office hours - staff hours, time management was already being reviewed by Personnel Committee, following Personnel and Council September meetings, new office hours are currently being piloted.

I refer Members to section 4 - Summary (page 14) and section 5 - list of full recommendations (page 15) and the following appendices:

Appendix 1 - Pages 17 to 23 includes the Council's current Forward Plan (2022) *also published on the website (link below); and an updated one for review is with agenda item 7.*

Appendix 2 - Pages 24 to 26 article on Developing and Delivering the Council's Strategic Plan

Appendix 2 - Pages 29 to 31 shows an example for a revised Strategic Plan layout which members may like to consider adopting.


Do Members have any comments?

Do Members support the recommendations 1 to 12 (as listed page 15)?

Do Members support an adaption of the example Strategic Forward Plan incorporating its own Forward Plan but with information to include:

- **project costs and financial implications**
- **reason/objectives of the project**
- **dates for starting and completion**
- **how to measure its success**
- **officers running project**
- **to categorise projects into Community Enhancement, Council Operations, and External Influence**
- **to size the projects - small, medium, large**

<https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/221031-FPSG-minutes-FPlan.pdf>

 Confidential Annex 1 (omitted from public documents):

7 **To review the 2022 Forward Plan and update the Council's projects and aspirations for the Council term 2023-27, and the longer view**

A copy of the current Plan with updates is attached.

Members are asked to consider the projects, its priorities and aspirations for the future.

 Annex 2: 231017 updated FP 221031 - Forward Plan.pdf

7.1 **To receive an update on the Forward Plan** **Do members have any comments?**

7.2 **To review the projects, include any additional projects and aspirations, and to prioritise projects**

Members are asked to consider and agree on the projects and targets, which should all be SMART - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time constrained.

These will be presented to full Council to support.

Consideration should also be given to budgeting implications including the 2024-25 budget,

and longer term.

Other projects raised previously for consideration and including on the Strategic Forward Plan:

- To allocate a budget for a sound system for Rickards Hall. **Do Members support this?**
- To allocate a budget to allow for cyber security increases (see agenda item 5.1.4). **Do Members support the additional budget to enable better compliance and cyber security?**
- For Council to provide for an annual event for the community, annually, and to allocate an annual budget for an annual community event. **Do Members support this?**
- The bridge was deemed not safe and had to be removed earlier this year, the costs for replacement Bridge were in excess of £16k, Open Spaces Committee agreed that this was not a project that could be funded currently. **Do Members want to add this to the Plan for future consideration?**

Are there any changes to the current Forward Plan, any additions, removal or time scale changes?

7.3

To consider public consultation on Council Plan and its projects?

Members are asked to consider the need to consult on its Plan, to consult on the full Plan or just the larger/significant projects to help prioritise projects?

8

To make recommendation to the Finance Committee any additional increases to the budget and Precept to cover any proposals from the Forward/Strategic Plan

How do Members want to proceed with its recommendation to Finance Committee?

9

Date of next meeting

The annual meeting to review the Plan and consider impact on budget and Precept, is usually around October, next year's is **14 October**. However, in view that there are potentially going to be changes to the format of the Strategic Forward Plan, consultation to gauge support for the Plan or certain projects helping to prioritise and set realistic targets, an interim meeting to confirm the Council's Strategic Forward Plan would be a good idea.

There are limited Mondays available next year so it may need to be a different week evening. Monday availability: 22 January BUT can only accommodate in Doggetts Barn; 19 February after CIL Board; 18 March after Planning; 08 or 29 April after Planning; 17 or 24 June.

Do Members support an interim meeting?

October 2023 – updated with current status (blue)

Edenbridge Town Council - Forward Plan 2022

Key: **S** – short term (approx. 1-year); **M** (approx. 4-year term); **L** (4 years plus / or in long-term maintenance plan)

Report includes projects achieved, or about to be achieved in current Council term.

Last reviewed at the Forward Planning Steering Group (FPSG) meeting 4 October 2021.

	Council projects	Time Frame	Comments/updates	Completion / due date – comments from FPSG
1	Street Lighting replacement programme	S/M	Ongoing. As of Oct 22: 64, of 249, remaining to be replaced under currently programme. CIL/Council agreed 2 extra Westways	Ongoing 2023-24 budget £25k incs 7 upgrades & 30 new LEDs. 2024-25 programme has £45k budget. 4 lights to be decommissioned following Medical Centre lighting upgrades. Stock will be 245 plus 2 SDC
1.a	Street Lighting replacement programme	S/M	To investigate Solar lighting options for Replacement Programme inclusion	
2	Tourist Information Website ✓ and updated walks leaflets and App	S	CIL funding approved 02/19. Website completed and launched May 2021. Walks App project 2022	Walks App 2022/23 project NOW 2023-24 project Little progress; is next project for Tourism Officer. Needs doing to maintain CIL funding
3	Computer systems – file storage (server needs replacing / or move to cloud base storage) ✓ To amend this to Cyber Compliance improvements	S	Council approved January 2022. Budgeted 2022/23. Project commencing Oct 22. Aim March 2023 live	Review Maintenance Plans & consider CIL applications to assist with funding. June 2023 transition to Sharepoint completed. To now review Cyber Compliance

4	<p>Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points (MYCP)</p> <p>✓</p> <p>Do members want to keep on list for other future site?</p>	S	<p>Council 11/19 asked parking Group to investigate. Application has been made to KCC (August 2021) for ETC car parks to be considered. CIL contribution confirmed. IN PROGRESS</p>	<p>KSTS/ ETC sites supported (MYCP). Nov 22 conf to KSTS given.</p> <p>Work has started with the installation of 4 new EVCs for MYCP – should complete 2023</p>
5	<p>Edenbridge Dementia Friendly ✓</p> <p>This is slow build, so keep as ongoing</p>	S	<p>Partnership working</p>	<p>ETC to facilitate Early investigations</p> <p>October 22, Council Oct 22 supported a collaborative initiative to help Edenbridge in becoming a dementia friendly</p> <p>Launched Spring 2023, there has been two training awareness sessions, attended by 6 organisations. Kent Dementia Alliance issuing logo and accreditation. ETC to keep promoting and facilitating</p>
6	<p>Council Website – Accessibility & design review</p>	S/M	<p>Content reviewed 2021/22. To reconsider design and layout (possible 2023 project)</p>	<p>Budget approved, Communications Officer managing project – work will be late 2023 and in 2024</p>
7	<p>Investigate and consider reopening Market Yard car park entrance</p>	S/M	<p>Council agreed to consult resident 07/19. Council 09/20 asked for clearer costs to amend deeds. Details for changing access to be investigated further. FPSG 22 requested investigation to costs so could consider viability</p>	<p>This is a hangover from 2017/18. Resources and cost of a Highways Engineer/Planner report needed. Due to office resources pushed to max – this has not been a priority. Not clear who actually wants this.</p> <p>Current issue is residents use it as their residential parking.</p>

8	Waste Management/Environmental Policy – review	S/M	Council 03/20 agreed to investigate possibility of enrolling to achieve the ISO4001 accreditation 2022/23 investigate costs	
9	Band Stand for Stangrove Park	S/M	Band Stand – FPSG 22	
10	Defence Improvements	S/M	Defences improved around OS sites. Recreation Ground some defences increase consider. Anti-social Behaviour – investigate CCTV viability.	
11	Neighbourhood Plan	M	Draft consultation document published 10/17. Currently on hold awaiting draft local plan outcome. New Rg 18 cons LP Nov 22.	Council Oct 2022 agreed to remain on hold until new council. Council July 2023 supported investigating costs and for FPSG to consider timescales and budgets
12	Friends of Edenbridge Parks ?? Recommend remove from list	M	To consider the viability of establishing a charity trust and volunteer group (FPSG 22 leave on Plan)	Not sure how viable this is anymore, research doesn't support those that where formed are still operating – not sure if pandemic affected this?
13	Playground Refurbishment programme (30-year maintenance plans)	M/L	ETC playgrounds: Marsh Green 2026 Stangrove 2033 <u>Last done:</u> Spitals 2019; Stangrove outdoor gym & MUGA wall 2020; Blossoms Skate additions 2022; Recreation Ground 2022.	
14	Recreation Ground – to create a walkway around the recreation ground/ running path around perimeter	M/L	Hardcore track (not for vehicles for walking). <i>To investigate costs and viability. Consider CIL. To present to OS Committee to consider viability/interest</i>	
15	Bus Shelter on Swan Lane X remove	S/M?	Resident request for a bus shelter is currently being investigated with other agencies. Estimated cost £10k. CIL March 21. Landownership issues and Accessibility. Reported through OS Committee. KCC issues with location and viability re space.	In view of KCC response viability issues hence change in listing Opens Spaces has confirmed that this is not currently viable and Committee agreed to remove from projects

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	Projects supported by ETC and action by external bodies		Responsible Body	ETC support	
16	War Memorial – Relocation/Improvements	M/L	NHS Trust	Early stages - Liaising with other vested groups	Can't consider relocation until hospital closes
	From previous Forward Plan – aspirations for the town (supported by ETC and for action by external bodies)		Responsible Authority/Body	ETC Support	
17	Edenbridge Medical Facility ✓ Recommend remove from list	M/L	KCC / NHS	ETC – support. CIL Board (02/19) & Oct 21 awarded £100k x 2. ETC continue support. Delivery expected 2023	Building works started May 2022. Expect handover Oct 2023 Due to open late 2023
18	Leather Market Improvements Preliminary confidential discussions with interested parties has/are taking place as part of a feasibility study	L	Landowner	ETC keen to continue pursuing viability 2022 ETC submitted to SDC under call for sites	
19	Spitals Cross Parking ✓ Recommend remove from list	L	KCC / WKHA / SDC	Noted ETC has investigated, but land is managed by WKH (and SDC) Need to liaise with KCC/WKH. improvements/compromise may be possible with redevelopment	SDC been looking and have been consulting with new planning application (Dec 2022) SDC has an approved planning application which will be including additional parking spaces. Recommend remove from list
20	Disabled access – Edenbridge Town Station	M/L	GTR	ETC would like to see GTR deliver on this	Possible funding 4Elms application
21	Disable access – Edenbridge Station	M/L	GTR	ETC would like to see GTR deliver on this	Possible funding 4Elms application
22	Leisure Centre Redevelopment/Improvements Explore possible development opportunities to improve the Leisure Centre. Proposals for All Weather Pitch and internal improvements. Preliminary confidential discussions with	L	Sencio / SDC	To continue campaigning with SDC & look for potential ways of All Weather Pitch viability	

	interested parties are taking place as part of a feasibility study				
23	Secondary School / Free School	L	KCC	ETC – supported (draft Local Plan)	Four Elms Planning Application – school included in approved outline planning application
24	Individual Flood Defences		Environment Agency		
25	Riverside Improvements	M/L	Great Stonebridge Trust		
26	Understand and improve streetlighting ✓	M/L	KCC Highways/ETC/Network Rail	ETC improved Westways Done, completed	Not sure what else can be done here. ETC already has its replacement programme and is upgrading others to LED. Perhaps as an when requests come in for additional lighting they can be received and considered by Open Spaces.
27	New footpath – Care Home – MSAW recommend remove from list	M/L	KCC Highways	HIP?	With the Care Home now open is evident a need for crossing – include on HIP A crossing at the care home across MSA Way would be a good idea, but there is no support from Kent Highways and ETC has campaigned and discussed with Kent Highways. At the last HIP review it was removed from the list as there was no likelihood that this could be delivered

Other projects raised over the year for including in the Plan:

High Street Regeneration Fund – working with SDC, there are some enhancements for the Market and the high street being investigated

Concrete Skate Park

Land by Old Police Station

Rickards Hall Sound System

Annual Community events

Cyber security and compliance appraisal and service improvements and upgrade – *has been incorporated to IT improvements above*

Replacement Bridge at Town Field/Church Street