

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

Notice is hereby given of a Council Meeting of Edenbridge Town Council to be held in Rickards Hall on 30 October 2023 at 7:30 pm, which Councillors are summonsed to attend.

Town Clerk  
25 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 Receive Apologies for Absence**

## 2 **Declaration 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.

## 3 **Public Questions and Statements**

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 members of the public to make a contribution during the meeting.)

Both public and members are limited to three minutes per person to speak and the total time designated for public questions shall not exceed fifteen minutes unless directed by the Chairman of the meeting.

## 4 **To receive, adopt and sign the minutes of the Council meeting held on 11 September 2023 (2023-017/01-06)**

 Full Council | 11 September 2023 v.1 - Minutes (Pages 2023-017/1-7)

## 5 **To receive County and District Councillor Reports**

### 5.1 **County Councillor**


### 5.2 **District Councillors**

## 6 **To adopt the following reports/minutes of meetings**


Due to staffing resources some minutes are yet to be published but have been included to note the meetings.

### 6.1 **Planning Committee meetings 25 September 2023-019/01-02; 16 October 2023-021/01-03**

 Planning and Transport | 25 September 2023 v.1 - Minutes (Pages 2023-019/1-2)

 Planning and Transport | 16 October 2023 v.1 - Minutes (Pages 2023-021/1-3)

### 6.2 **Finance Committee 24 July 2023-xx/01-02; Finance & Governance Committee 09 October (minutes to be published)**

 [https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/mc-events/finance-committee-meeting-4/?mc\\_id=791](https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/mc-events/finance-committee-meeting-4/?mc_id=791)

6.3 **Personnel Committee meetings 05 September 2023-016/01; 19 October 2023-XXX (tbc)**

📄 Personnel | 05 September 2023 v.1 - Minutes (Pages 2023-016/1-3)

📄 Personnel | 19 October 2023 v.1 - Minutes (Pages 2023-022/1-2)

6.4 **Open Spaces Committee 18 September 2023-18/01-tbc**

This meeting is for noting; the minutes will be presented to the next full Open Spaces Committee (6 November) and Council.

🔗 [https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/mc-events/open-spaces-committee-7/?mc\\_id=755](https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/mc-events/open-spaces-committee-7/?mc_id=755)

6.5 **Forward Planning Steering Group 23 October 2023-xx/01-xx (tbc)**

The meeting is for noting, recommendations are under agenda item 7.3. The full minutes are yet to be published.

🔗 <https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/meetings/>

7 **To receive recommendations from Committees**

7.1 **To receive recommendations from Finance & Governance Committee**

7.1.1 **To note: AGAR has received a clean audit by the external auditor and the note the Notice of Conclusion of Audit was published 27 September**

The receipt of the external Auditor's report and clean audit has been reported to Finance and Governance Committee meeting, 09 October.

🔗 <https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Completion-Notice-1.pdf>

🔗 [https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Edenbridge-Town-Council-Audited-AGAR-2022\\_23-redacted\\_redacted.pdf](https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Edenbridge-Town-Council-Audited-AGAR-2022_23-redacted_redacted.pdf)

7.1.2 **To note: Governance Risk Assessment Annual Review**

Cllrs Sumner, Compton and the Town Clerk have reviewed the Governance Risk Assessments (October). See attached. These were approved by Committee and are now published on the website, under Polices page/Risk Assessments.

**Do Members have any comments?**

🔗 <https://www.councilpapers.com/counciladmin/agenda-url/add/4616>

7.1.3 **To approve the updates to the Terms Of Reference**

Committee received some procedural updates to the Terms of Reference, and recommend to full Council to conform and adopt the updates. (*These have been sent as separate confidential attachments.*)

**Do Members confirm the updates and amendments to the Terms of Reference?**

7.1.4 **Adult Safeguarding Policy: To receive and approve draft policy**

Committee received a draft safeguarding policy which it recommends to full Council to adopt. The policy was prepared following a recent review of the Games Club, funded by a grant from Involve Kent, it came to light that the Council does not have a specific safeguarding policy. Not only is a policy advisable, it would be good practice for the Council to have a policy given the contact officers, staff and councillors have with the public. Attached (confidential paper) is a draft policy to approve. Last month, the Town Clerk, RFO and the volunteers of the Games Club all had DBS checks carried out. (*This*

*has been sent as separate confidential attachments.)*

Involve Kent have also reviewed the draft policy. They have asked for it to include in the procedure for staff/volunteers when considering safeguarding, including the name of your designated safeguarding lead. To meet this, added to page 3/4 commitments - *ETC will include the name of the designated safeguarding lead, and display contact details in the Council's office.*

**Do Members confirm and adopt the safeguarding policy?**

7.2 **To receive recommendations from Personnel Committee 19 October**

7.2.1 **To ratify the appointment of the Grounds Apprenticeship - Kai Day**  
**Do Members ratify the appointment of the Grounds Apprentice, Kai Day?**

7.2.2 **To ratify the appointment of the Community Warden - Kevin McGovern**  
**Do members ratify the appointment of the Community Warden - Kevin McGovern?**

7.2.3 **To ratify the appointment of the Open Spaces Officer**  
At the time of publishing the agenda, details of the appointment are in negotiation, hence the name has been held back for confidentiality.

**Do Members confirm the appointment of the new Open Spaces Officer?**

7.2.4 **To ratify the appointment of a temporary meeting minutes Clerk**  
**Do Members ratify the appointment of a temporary meeting minutes Clerk?**

7.3 **To receive recommendations from the Forward Planning Steering Group**

The FPSG met on Monday 23 October to receive a report and recommendations from the recent (September) Visioning/Strategic Forward Planning session. Members noted the report and recommendations, and to use this to help shape its Strategic Forward Plan going forward. The current Forward Plan was reviewed in detail with some projects removed, as either completed or required external authorities' lead, and others had moved to operational activities. The updated Plan will be presented to an interim meeting of the FPSG (date tbc), to confirm and to consider moving projects forward.

The FPSG also considered funding for projects and made a recommendation to the Finance Committee to consider as it prepares the draft budget.

7.3.1 **Annual events - to include a budget of £10k for an annual community event**  
The FPSG supported Council facilitating/or organising community events, starting with commemorations for D-Day 2024, and VE-Day 2025. The proposal was to include £10k budget, but for the Finance Committee to review the affordability along with other expenditure.

**Do Members support an annual events budget in the budget?**

7.3.2 **To support a budget of £5k to improved 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. Members unanimously supported carrying out an appraisal, and for this to form part of the Forward Plan, but not to proceed with the insurance currently. FPSG supported this, and requested Finance Committee to include a budget of £5k to facilitate this.

**Do members supported a budget of £5k to enable a cyber essentials appraisals working to improved cyber security and compliance service improvements and upgrade?**

## 8 **To receive reports and any recommendations from working groups; delegated reports; clerk's and officers' reports**

### 8.1 **Clerk's Report**

**Bonfire Society's annual parade & litter clean-up:** This year's event is Saturday 4 November. We have booked the high street clean up with SDC for the Sunday morning after the event

**Building Bridges for Dementia Friendly Edenbridge:** A second awareness training session took place for businesses and local groups to attend on Thursday 12 October. It is a shame only three organisations attended. We will continue to promote, hopefully once the logo and window stickers have been issued by Kent Dementia Alliance we will get a few more local businesses signing-up.

**Car parking issues in Council car parks:** There continues to be issues at Blossoms Park with residents using the area for residential parking preventing users of the park being able to park. Market Yard car park currently has an abandoned vehicle which we are currently working to resolve. This vehicle is parked such that Streetlights are unable to carry out necessary repair to the lighting.

**Cemeteries:** It has come to our attention that there about 15 burial plots in cemeteries three and four, which have not maintained compliance with the cemetery regulations, and have expanded the space permitted for Memorials as well as putting their own additions. Over the years, the regulations have been upheld with requests for grander memorials, photos, badges, artificial flowers/plant all declined. Officers are currently working through these contacting the grant of right holders or families to request they remove the authorised tributes. The Open Spaces Committee was asked at its September meeting if it wanted to amend its policy, and resolved that it would not amend its policy and regulations for the cemeteries. The Open Spaces Committee will receive an update on the current issues at its next meeting.

**Edenbridge Community Christmas Association:** Just as a reminder, this year the ECCA will only be organising the Town's Christmas Lights. Father Christmas will be in his grotto at the Crown on Saturday 25 November.

**Electric Vehicle Chargers (EVCs):** Kent Smarter Travel Scheme (KSTS) has started with the installation of the four EVCs at Market Yard car park. The ground works and part of the charging equipment is in place, hopefully the contractors will finish the equipment installations and connection over the next couple of weeks.

**Forge Singers:** We continue to work with the Council's solicitor on a new Lease Agreement, and are awaiting feedback from the Forge Singers. (Resolution Council May 2023.)

**Grants:** The Council's grants invitation for applications closed 20 October. We have received almost 20 applications which are in the process of being viewed ready for the papers for the Grants meeting 13 November.

**Health and Safety Audit:** Worknest will be visiting to review Council H&S and RAs on 15 November. They will look at actions from the last audit, review how we manage our systems and visit some sites. A report will be presented to next Council meeting.

**In Bloom:** Edenbridge received two Silver Gilt Awards (just a few points of Gold) award at this year's South and South East In Bloom competition for the Cemeteries and Stangrove Park. Details are on our Facebook and website under latest news.

**Local Plan:** SDC has published its agenda for its Development and Conservation Advisory Committee meeting 31 October to ask Committee to approve a report that seeks approval to launch the next stage of the Reg 18 consultation on the Local Plan.

**Office Hours:** The new office hours have been in operation now since mid-September (following Personnel and Council's resolutions to support measures to allow some uninterrupted work time for other office operations/tasks). Reminder new hours are: office hours 'open to the public' to Monday to Thursday 9.00 am to 3.30 pm; closed Fridays to the public. There has been no complaints, and it has been a positive step to help towards managing work loads.

**Policing and PACT meeting:** The October PACT meeting organised by SDC, was attended by a number of local partners and some residents. The new Beat Officer, PC Harry Kemp attended, and has also visited the offices since. He is keen to develop community relationships and help address local anti social behaviour and other issues.

**Post Office:** It is hugely disappointing the Post Office at Paydens is closing on 2 November. The Post Office has advised that they are still investigating potential new sites in Edenbridge and in the meantime, are looking for an interim temporary solution to provide some continued service while they arrange the full provision.

**Recreation Ground unauthorised access gates:** The matter remains to be managed by the Council's solicitor. There are two cases the solicitor is still following up. One we have reinstated the chain-link fence and planting, as well as other measures; the other the resident has yet to remove the gate and reinstate the fence. Advice being taken, and the solicitors instructed accordingly.

**Rickards Hall:** the new cooker is now installed. We changed from a gas cooker to electric. Although there were some costs to enable this, we will save on the annual gas inspection and shared utility bill with the museum.

**SDC Annual Liaison Meeting:** Reminder to Members of the Council's meeting Thursday 02 November 10.00 am.

## 9 **Matters arising from the minutes for report and not elsewhere on the agenda**

### 9.1 **Thursday Market: To receive an update on Christmas activities**

Following last Council meeting, £300 for Christmas activities was approved and £300 for general market advertising and banners. Plans for Christmas include a 'write your letter and post to Santa' table at market days 30 November, 7 and 14 December. The letter box for Santa's letters will be placed at the Council offices on other days. Santa stickers will be available for anyone posting a letter. Market day 21 December, Santa's elves (and Santa may appear if he is not too busy) will be in the market giving out a small gift to anyone who wrote to Santa (with a few spare gifts).

### 9.2 **To receive an update on maintenance work for Rickards Hall**

The surveyor attended Rickards Hall in September. At the time of preparing the papers we

are still awaiting his final report and 10-year maintenance plan. Once we have this report, the Town Clerk, Buildings Manager and Cllr Baker will review and prioritise any immediate works towards securing and addressing the damp issues. The 10-year plan will then help to plan for the repointing works and internal repairs.

9.3 **Edenbridge Remembrance Sunday 12th November 2023**

The Council has facilitated a couple of meetings with community groups with a vested interest in the Remembrance Sunday, this included the Royal British Legion, the Church, Town Band, Scouts and others. Plans are in place to have a morning parade this year up to the War Memorial for the 11.00am wreath laying service (need to arrive by 10.45 am); and then back down to Leathermarket car park.

Cllr Layland offered to submit the necessary paperwork for the road closure which has now been confirmed, and the Bonfire Society has volunteered to provide the marshals and signage.

Details for Remembrance Sunday parade will be published early November, following a meeting on 31 October to finalise the arrangements for the parade, wreath laying service. The Church is providing someone for prayers in the morning, and has decided to hold a Church service in the afternoon.

9.4 **Council vacancies**

The Council has two vacancies which can now be filled by co-option, as a by-election was not called for either. At the September Council it was agreed to advertise for interested candidates. This will be done over the next few weeks and presented to the December Council.

10 **Considerations for budget 2024/25**

As part of the draft budget preparations, the following are proposed for inclusion.

10.1 **Summer Play Days: To approve a budget of £3,300 for four summer play days**

Each year Council considers supporting the summer play days run by Play Space and in partnership with SDC. The previous two years budget has allowed £2,000, however the expenditure for the four sessions this summer was £3,062. This included an additional activity provided by the Council (£170).

**Do Members support continuing to provide the four summer play days for 2024 and set a budget of £3,300?**

10.2 **Review of 10-year maintenance Plans for Church House and Doggetts Barn, budget of £2,400 for two building surveys with new 10-year plans**

Following the recent need to have considerable building repairs/maintenance work on Rickards Hall, and then potential issues with the Pavilion (reported separately in papers), this highlighted the need to revisit the maintenance plans and engage a surveyor to review both buildings, and prepare updated 10-year maintenance plans. Unfortunately, over recent years, general maintenance schedules to the four main buildings fell behind due to staff sickness, the pandemic, and increases in work costs. We have already had new reports with 10-year maintenance plans for the two aforementioned buildings. Church House and Doggetts Barn, both would benefit from similar reports and plans which would help manage workloads and budgets, as well as ensuring the necessary maintenance work is managed and planned for accordingly. Cost for each building report with maintenance plan, is £1,200 each.

**Do Members support a budget of £2,400 for two building surveys with new 10-year maintenance plans?**

11 **Draft Local Plan second phase, Reg 18: To consider engaging a consultant to assist the Council its response and to set a budget for the current year and the next year, 2024-25**

Earlier this year, Council worked with a planning consultant to respond to the initial draft Local Plan Reg 18 consultation. (Council's response can be viewed on our website [www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/have-your-say-on-local-plan-that-will-shape-edenbridges-future-2](http://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/have-your-say-on-local-plan-that-will-shape-edenbridges-future-2)). SDC's Development and Conservation Advisory Committee meeting 31 October is considering approving a report that seeks approval to launch the second stage of the Reg 18 consultation on the draft Local Plan development numbers and locations.

Costs for preparing responses to the previous draft Local Plan 2019 Hearing and attending part of the Hearings, cost £7,877; the budget set was £11k. The consultant we used to help form the Council's response to the first phase of the new draft plan December/January 2023 (as above) was considerably less. It is likely we can obtain some advice and guidance from him again, but would expect part of that advice would be engage a Specialist Planning Consultants company. Quotes are yet to be formally obtained, but we are currently drafting the new budget and SDC's timetable indicates:

- Reg.18 (Draft Local Plan consultation – Part 2) – autumn/winter 2023
- Reg.19 (Plan publication) – spring 2024
- Reg.22 (Submission) – summer 2024
- Reg.22 (Submission) – summer 2024

In view of this, I would propose an allocation from the contingency budget 2023-24 (code 1010) of £3,000, and a new budget to be included in the 2024-25 budget to allow professional consultants advice of £10,000.

**Do Members want to allocate a budget to engage planning consultants to help prepare its responses, and support the proposal above?**

12 **Pavilion: To receive a report on recent mould issue at Football Changing room area**

Attached is a confidential report with background information. The insurance company has investigated the potential problems, and we have also engaged a surveyor who will also provide a 10-year maintenance plan. Both of these will help to confirm the Council's position and ensure the building is correctly maintained. We are awaiting both reports before any decisions can be made.

Moving forward, the main issue is to now look at ventilation system for the Pavilion. What's not clear is the type of ventilation measures and if it is the landlord, tenant of shared responsibility.

**How do Members want to proceed?**

Confidential Annex 1 (omitted from public documents):

Confidential Annex 2 (omitted from public documents):

12.1 **To ratify the expenditure for the surveyor to review the Pavilion and 10-years maintenance plan, £1,200.**

Following the Lease Negotiation Group meeting, it was agreed to appoint a surveyor and the expenditure using the Town Clerk's and Vice-Chair (in the absence of the Chairman)/Committee delegated procurement powers.

**Do Members ratify the expenditure of £1,200 for the surveyor to review the Pavilion and 10-years maintenance plan?**

13 **Pavilion replacement windows and new electric shutters: To receive the tenders and confirm contractor**

The project for new windows with shutters at the Pavilion went to public tender using [Contracts Finder - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk), and the Council's website was published 21 August closed 22 September. We received 10 expressions of interest to tender, with only 3 tenders received.

Following receipt of the tenders, each was contacted to request shutters included on both sets of doors.

The tenders received and including external shutters to windows and doors, excluding VAT:

Company A £66,120

Company B £57,176

Company C £38,958

The Town Clerk and Buildings Manager have looked at the tenders, and recommends Company B. CIL allocation is £85k. Any unspent allocation will be returned to the CIL fund.

**How do Members want to proceed.**

14 **To confirm the revised and update byelaws for the Council's open spaces and car parks are now ready for an application to the DLUHC for confirmation and approval**

The Open Spaces Committee has been overseeing the review of the Council's byelaws. At its November 2022 meeting it supported the draft amended byelaws adapted from the Government's Model Byelaws. These were then sent to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities at the beginning of December for comments/approval. In February, the DLUHC confirmed without prejudicing the eventual decision of the Secretary of State, *I have informally reviewed the draft byelaws submitted and have not found any blocking issues which might lead to the Secretary of State declining your application. They're closely based on the Department's model set with minor alteration.* The next step of the process was to consult publicly on the proposed Byelaws. With the pre-election period this could not take place until after the elections and new council. The procedure to advertise a notice of intention to apply for confirmation of the byelaws in one or more newspaper; to be kept for at least one month after the date of publication. Notices went in the Edenbridge Chronicle August edition, and the Edenbridge Magazine September/October edition, as well as the Council's own website and Facebook page.

The next step is to make an application to the DLUHC for confirmation and approval can be made.

**Do Members confirm to make an application to the DLUHC for confirmation and approval, and to adopt the draft byelaws subject to DLUHC approval?**

15 **OTHER BUSINESS including items referred from Committees for decision**

15.1 **To approve the contract renewal with Worknest for Employment Law & HR Support, Health and Safety Audits for a further 5-years, and the annual expenditure of £2,533, plus Legal Expenses Admin fee cover £55 pa and Legal Expenses Insurance (employment claims) £227.50 for 14 employees**

The Council's renewal with Worknest is up for up for review and renewal 20/11/2023. Having worked with Worknest over the past 4-5 years, they have provided a lot of help, advise and support with staffing issues, recruitment and policies. In addition we have the H&S audits, and use its Safetynest H&S record keeping application, policies and advice. *(Attached as*


confidential is the renewal details.)


Currently:

Pay: £2,412.79 per year - increase for new 5-year £120.21 pa  
Legal expenses £55 pa - no change  
Legal expenses insurance £259 -potential saving to £227.50 pa

In addition we pay £657 pa for e-learning portal (not part of this renewal agreement).

**Do Members support the 5-year renewal with Worknest and the annual expenditure of £2,533 plus £55 for legal admin fee, and £227.50 for legal expenses against employee employment claims?**

 Confidential Annex 3 (omitted from public documents):

 Confidential Annex 4 (omitted from public documents):

## 15.2 **To receive a request to permit a refreshment trader to trade from the Recreation Ground Pavilion Car Park at weekends**

The Rugby Club recently allowed a trader to sell coffee and refreshments from the Coomb Field car park. However, the car park is not part of the Club's Lease. As the Club was unable to open its facilities to football teams, a temporary agreement was granted by the Town Clerk and Open Spaces Chair, until the end of October, on the proviso the Club managed, ensured there was a risk assessment for this activity, and took full responsibility for any potential issues.


Sevenoaks District Council does not issue traders licences, unlike other district councils where many of them require traders to have a license through them. Here, a trader requires the landowner's permission. As a Town Council, we need to ensure that we undertake necessary due diligence, before allow any trader. All of the Thursday Market traders receive an agreement which they have to sign and provide the necessary certification and public liability insurance, as well as a risk assessment.

The Council has shied-away from having traders at parks before for several reasons, one being conflict with the Rugby Club and concerns that traders would use car parking spaces much needed on match days, and the additional litter and food debris this could potentially create. Appropriate signage to say something like 'no traders unless licensed by the Town Council', may be advisable to put up, to prevent others from just turning up.

**How do Members want to proceed? Do they support traders at the Coomb Field car park? If so, who would be responsible for managing and collect fee/s?**

## 16 **Consultations**

### 16.1 **The draft High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-2029 - closes 5 November 2023**

 <https://highweald.org/aonb-management-plan/management-plan-public-consultation-2023/>

## 17 **To receive reports from councillors who have attended meetings of outside bodies**

## 18 **To consider any press releases**

19        **Matters for future agendas**  
            Neighbourhood Plan  
            To approve the draft 2024-25 budget

20        **Date of next meeting - 04 December**