

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

Notice is hereby given of an Open Spaces Meeting to be held in Rickards Hall on 6 November 2023 at 7:30 pm, which Councillors are summonsed to attend.

Town Clerk  
1 November 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

## Agenda

<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Declarations of Interests, or Predeterminations</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Public Questions</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>To Receive and Sign Minutes of The Open Spaces Committee 18 September 2023-018/1-xx</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>To Receive the Financial Budget Comparison for Open Spaces (codes 300s/3000s) up to 31 October 2023</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>To receive a report and ratify recent Operational Decisions for Open Spaces Activity</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>Operational decisions for ratification</b>	
<b>7</b>	<b>To receive the Head Groundsman's Report</b>	<b>4</b>
	7.1 To consider improvement to the existing soil storage area in the cemetery creating a concrete base area, expenditure to achieve this of up to £1,000	5
	7.2 To approve the expenditure for a new brush cutter machine up to £600	5
<b>8</b>	<b>Open Spaces Business</b>	<b>5</b>
	8.1 To receive the Burial Report	5
	8.2 To receive an update on Memorials in cemeteries which are not compliant with the Cemetery Regulations and Rules	5
	8.2.1 To receive a resident's request to permit the extended memorial area to allow for kerb stone area with decorative stone shingle at a grave plot	6
	8.3 To confirm wording amendments to the Cemetery Regulations & Rule Book Memorials section (21) to provide clarity to the current rules	6
	8.4 Allotment matters	6
	8.5 To receive an update on the Annual Works programme and other approved works	7
	8.6 Kent FA Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund - To receive an update on funding application	7
	8.6.1 Training: To approve the expenditure of £230 for the groundstaff members to complete the online Level 1 Football Grounds Maintenance qualification	8
	8.7 Winter Maintenance plan	8
	8.8 To review annual subscriptions to Open Spaces organisations	8
	8.8.1 Open Spaces Society Membership renewal £45	8
	8.8.2 Kent County Playing Fields Association £40	9

8.9	For information only: To receive an update on other open spaces matters	9
9	<b>Byelaws update: To note the revised and updated byelaws for the Council's open spaces and car parks are to be submitted to the DLUHC for confirmation and approval</b>	9
10	<b>Dogs on leads consultation: To receive feedback from the recent consultation and consider how Committee wants to proceed</b>	9
11	<b>To confirm the proposed replacement columns for 2024-25 and to advise the budget for 2024-25</b>	10
12	<b>To confirm budget recommendations for 2024-25</b>	11
13	<b>Date of next meeting - 12 February 2024 (EOY review)</b>	11

# Meeting Papers & Report

## 1 Apologies for Absence

## 2 Declarations of Interests, or Predeterminations

*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

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

## 4 To Receive and Sign Minutes of The Open Spaces Committee 18 September 2023-018/1-xx

*At the time of preparing the agenda the minutes from the last meeting had not been completed. They may have to be presented to the next meeting.*

## 5 To Receive the Financial Budget Comparison for Open Spaces (codes 300s/3000s) up to 31 October 2023

*Copy of the I&E budget comparison is attached. Some codes are only up to end of September but have been noted on report.*

To note:

Code 3145 30-year Maintenance Plan. Budget allocation £31,500 (£25k streetlight replacement programmes; playground repairs/replacement contingency £5k; Mowshurst Pitches £1,500 contingency).

Streetlights expenditure includes £7,050 from 2022/23 programme of works not paid last year. However, £5,661.60 refund has since been received against traffic light management not used (this it yet to be recorded under 325 Sundry receipts).

Update on 2023-24 programme:

Colum no planned works	Road	UKPN Original cost	UKPN Revised cost	Difference	Streetlights cost
81 pole box	Hilders Lane	£0	n/a	n/a	£740
82 pole box	Hilders Lane	£0	n/a		£740
241	Swan Lane	£2197	£2734		£1350
244	Victoria Road	£1206	£1707		£1350
137	Mill Hill	£1790.66	£2384.66		£1350
138	Mill Hill	£1790.66	£2384.66		£1350
139	Mill Hill	£1790.68	£2384.68		£1350
		<b>£8,775</b>	<b>£11,959</b>	<b>£2820</b>	<b>£8230</b>

Total was £17,005 now £19,825.

In additional, Committee agreed at its September meeting to continue with the LED replacements previously supported, 30 LED replacement (£350each) total £10,500, and supported a budget overspend, noting that £2,832 had been moved to the earmarked reserves towards these costs.

Total Streetlight spend for code 3145:

2023-24 replacement programme UKPN	£11,595
2023-24 replacement programme Streetlights	£8230
sub total	£19,825
LED upgrades x 30	£10,500
sub total	£30,325
C/O expenditure form 2022-23 programme	£7,050
TOTAL SPEND in code 3145 for streetlights	<b>£37,375</b>
	-£5,661.60
CREDIT from UKPN for 2022-23 works unused traffic management (will go in income code 325)	
Total on SL 2023-24 budget spend	<b>£31,713.40</b>

With the reserves movement of £2,832 which will go back in to General Reserve, the actual net spend will be £28,881.40

📎 Annex 1: 231031 open space Financial Comparison 13.pdf

6 **To receive a report and ratify recent Operational Decisions for Open Spaces Activity**  
**Operational decisions for ratification**

None.

7 **To receive the Head Groundsman's Report**  
**Routine seasonal work**

- Tree and hedge pruning all sites
- Weed treatment
- Maintaining planters through town, including Doggetts Barn and beds in cemetery
- Topping up sunken graves
- Grass cutting all sites

**Other activities have included:**

- The team installed new Perspex in some of the councils notice boards
- The team have now begun our winter tree maintenance programme. This covers all sites and will incorporate some larger projects in the millennium wood and at Forge Croft allotments.
- The new Pump at the Mill Leat is expected to be installed in early November. This feature should then be fully functioning.
- We are expecting the pitch decompaction at the recreation ground and nomads to take place in the coming days.
- The team have now painted the majority of the councils benches. We hope to complete these asap weather permitting.
- Fertiliser was applied to the more worn areas on the sports pitches at the recreation ground. This should stand us in good stead for winter months and allow for a better playing surface.

## Items for the future

**Bins cemetery:** We have had an ongoing issue with people misusing the bins in the cemetery. Quite often they are used for food and dog waste which results in wild life spreading rubbish around the cemetery looking for an easy meal. Some time ago now we placed signs on all the bins reminding members of the public that they are for cemetery waste only i.e. old flowers etc. These signs seem to have had little or no impact and we still find ourselves clearing up rubbish from all over the cemetery and church yard. Something needs to be done going forward. How do the members wish to act?

7.1 **To consider improvement to the existing soil storage area in the cemetery creating a concrete base area, expenditure to achieve this of up to £1,000**

**Existing soil pile cemetery:** We currently have a top soil pile in the cemetery that we use for topping up graves and also at the recreation ground when carrying out or pitch maintenance programme. This pile over the years has grown and been added to by people who see it as a place to dump unwanted earth. I would like if possible to remove the earth that is there and put down a concrete base to stop weeds etc from growing up out of the ground. Also giving the impression that the soil is not for public use. Given the size of the pile we would need to hire in a digger for a couple of days to shift the unwanted earth (we will likely make use of this elsewhere), And then dig out a footing to put down the concrete base. The price for the above works is £1000 approximately and this includes a ready mix concrete lorry to pour our new base which will be 5m x 3m in size.

**Do members sanction these works to go ahead out of this years budget?**

7.2 **To approve the expenditure for a new brush cutter machine up to £600**

This could be funded from code 3040 replacement Equipment and Tools.

**Do Members support the groundstaff request for a brush cutter machine and the expenditure up to £600?**

8 **Open Spaces Business**

8.1 **To receive the Burial Report**

Update of September actual figures: 6 ashes and 6 burials.

October: one burial and no ashes.

8.2 **To receive an update on Memorials in cemeteries which are not compliant with the Cemetery Regulations and Rules**

Following a recent audit of the memorials in cemeteries three and four, it has come to our attention that there are 17 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. Each of these have (or are in the process of) been contacted to rectify and return back to what is permitted. Some of these have done so or are in the process of doing this.

Over the years, the regulations have been upheld with requests for grander memorials, photos, badges, artificial flowers/plant all declined. The Open Spaces Committee was asked at its September meeting if it would permit an additional memorial at a grave plot, Committee agreed to uphold the regulations for Memorials at the cemeteries, therefore maintaining the additional memorial needed to be removed. When considering if it would amended its cemeteries policy, Committee resolved that it would not amend its policy and regulations for

the cemeteries.

 Confidential Annex 2 (omitted from public documents):

### 8.2.1 **To receive a resident's request to permit the extended memorial area to allow for kerb stone area with decorative stone shingle at a grave plot**

The memorial being asked to consider covers an area at the burial plot currently 88 cm high, 90 cm wide and 80 cm depth (picture of memorial attached confidential papers). The rule book states:

(21) Memorials may only take the form of:


- a) a headstone, which shall not exceed 1.07 metres in height, 76 centimetres in width and 30 centimetres in thickness (depth), or in the case of a memorial on a child's grave not exceeding 76 centimetres in height, or
- b) a monument occupying a superficial area not exceeding 46 centimetres by 38 centimetres.
- c) an inscribed vase (not permitted at the Wall of Remembrance).
- d) a plaque on the Wall of Remembrance.
- e) planting of a tree, shrub, or rose within the Cemetery grounds or other location.
- f) kerbstones (only permitted in sections 1 and 2 of the Cemetery)


In order to maintain the quiet dignity and visual harmony of the Cemetery, no other memorials, memorabilia or decorations will be permitted, and may be removed.

Item 37 of the rule book does say: A 30cm strip of ground for small plants is permitted in front of the headstone, to the width of the headstone only. No edging is permitted.

Cllr Baker and I have met with the Grant of Right holder to discuss. They fully understand and appreciate the reason for the rules, but ask if Members would give consideration to the extenuating circumstances.

#### **How do Members want to proceed?**


 Confidential Annex 3 (omitted from public documents):

 Confidential Annex 4 (omitted from public documents):

### 8.3 **To confirm wording amendments to the Cemetery Regulations & Rule Book Memorials section (21) to provide clarity to the current rules**

In view of the current issues with a few on the memorials in the cemetery, it is proposed to make some changes for added clarity to section 21. (See attached extract, confidential document.) The full rule book is published on the website (link below).

#### **Do Members confirm the changes?**

 <https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/what-we-do-2/cemetery/>

 Confidential Annex 5 (omitted from public documents):

### 8.4 **Allotment matters**

The Town Clerk and a member of the groundstaff team met with the Edenbridge Allotment Gardens Association (EAGA) Plot Officer recently to view some of the overgrown, unattended plots, and other issues at the site. The Plot Officer has been in touch with some plot holders who are making efforts towards clearing the plots, but there are some where past plot holders have not been able to clear their plots sufficiently. As the groundstaff will be attending to other works such as pathway and hedge clearance, it has been agreed that some help will be given to clear some of the plots and and rubbish left around the site.

8.5

**To receive an update on the Annual Works programme and other approved works**

Last meeting reported works completed or commissioned works from annual plan. To update:

Scheduled work	budget	Comments
Line marking Rec East & West car park	£1,652	To review early 2024
Replace hanging baskets Doggetts courtyard	£777	To review early 2024
Stangrove Playground - surface repair budget	£240	

**Other works carried out includes:**

Tree work at Stangrove Park and pond; Mowshurst Stangrove Park replacement swing  
 Recreation Ground zipwire cable seat and chain replaced; swing safety chain repaired; sensory spinner wheel replacement  
 Pump replacement - Pavilion waste water pump; and Mill Leat water pump - booked for week 6 November  
 Grounds trolley Jack was replaced

**Outstanding:**

Doggetts Courtyard - Repointing courtyard slabs £890 (10 year maintenance plan) Repair work on 5 sqm of the paving in the vicinity of the flower cart well within the budget allowed in the 10 year Plan, approved in order to be programmed for early autumn.  
 Stangrove Park: Replacement seesaw and new litter bin  
 Annual hedge cutting for Blossoms Park, Recreation Ground, Mowshurst  
 Mowshurst car park resurfacing - agreed with Head Groundsman to review after Christmas  
 Market Yard car park - repaint bollards - groundstaff to carry out this work

8.6

**Kent FA Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund - To receive an update on funding application**

Confirmation of funding over a six-year period has now been received, the grant value is for £14,080:

- Period 1 October 2023 - £3,520
- Period 2 October 2024 - £3,520
- Period 3 October 2025 - £2,348
- Period 4 October 2026 - £2,348
- Period 5 October 2027 - £1,172
- Period 6 October 2028 - £1,172

The grant must be used for the following improvement works:

- Slitting – contractor works
- Scarification – contractor works
- Decompaction – contractor works
- Selective herbicide (weed treatment) – contractor works
- Fertiliser – contractor works and/or purchase of materials (fertiliser)
- Overseeding – contractor works and/or purchase of materials (seed)
- Top dressing – contractor works and/or purchase of materials (topsoil)
- Soil Sampler – purchase of a soil sampler
- The hiring of maintenance machinery for works that have been recommended in your PitchPower report - club volunteers operating the machinery must have completed their GMA Level 1 course.

8.6.1 **Training: To approve the expenditure of £230 for the groundstaff members to complete the online Level 1 Football Grounds Maintenance qualification**

The Grounds Management Association (GMA) have a range of training courses that are suitable for both the professional and grass roots volunteer. The new online Level 1 modules cover a range of sports and allow you to gain an awareness and general understanding of the tasks involved in maintaining playing surfaces. As part of the FA Grass Pitches grant, we do have to have two employees hold this qualification or equivalent. The cost is £46 pp.

**Do members support the training and expenditure of £230 to allow all five members of the team to take the online Level 1 Football Grounds Maintenance qualification?**

8.7 **Winter Maintenance plan**

Kent Highways has confirmed it will deliver its usual one-tonne salt grit supplies. We are awaiting our delivery, but do have some supply surplus from previous year.

Council office has supplies of flood sacks for sale to residents, £25 for 5 sacks.

8.8 **To review annual subscriptions to Open Spaces organisations**

8.8.1 **Open Spaces Society Membership renewal £45**

Extract of recent email:

Thank you so much for supporting the Open Spaces Society over the past twelve months.

The pandemic has highlighted the value of those local paths and open spaces which the society champions. Since the beginning of last year, we have taken up more than 900 cases on behalf of our members and the public, throughout England and Wales. We have:

- assisted with queries regarding 194 commons, 166 registered and potential village greens, 273 other open spaces, and 386 public paths;
- worked with our 42 local correspondents to prevent many anti-public path closures and diversions;
- won leave to intervene in the high-profile Dartmoor backpack-camping case in the court of appeal, in support of the Dartmoor National Park Authority;
- assessed applications for works on 61 commons and objected to 39 of them as being contrary to the public interest
- continued our important work to research and apply for the re-registration of 'lost' commons in Cumbria and North Yorkshire;
- celebrated the registration of eight lost commons, for which we applied, in Cornwall, Hertfordshire, and Kent;
- succeeded in reopening four blocked paths in Tetsworth Oxfordshire, after serving notice on the county council.

We rely on member subscriptions to fund our work and provide a mandate for action when the enjoyment of paths and open spaces is threatened. Please stay with us and ensure we can continue this essential work for the public good. Visit our website [www.oss.org.uk](http://www.oss.org.uk) for further information. Please note that if you pay your subscription via direct debit, standing order, Go Cardless or a recurring PayPal instruction you need do nothing to continue your subscription for another year.

**Do Members confirm continued membership of the Open Spaces Society and the annual subscription fee of £45?**

8.8.2 **Kent County Playing Fields Association £40**

A letter has been received advising the Council's annual subscription of £20 for 2022 is overdue for payment and 2023 is now due. Details of the organisation are on the link below.

**Do Members want to continue membership of KCPFA, and approve the subscription fees of £40?**

<https://www.kentpfa.org.uk/>

8.9 **For information only: To receive an update on other open spaces matters**

**Pavilion replacement windows and new electric shutters:** The project for new windows with shutters at the Pavilion went to public tender using Contracts Finder - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://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. At Council 30 October, a contractor was agreed. Details are will now on the offer, contract and works schedule

9 **Byelaws update: To note the revised and updated byelaws for the Council's open spaces and car parks are to be submitted to the DLUHC for confirmation and approval**

The Open Spaces Committee has been overseeing the review of the Council's byelaws. Following feedback from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities confirming without prejudicing the eventual decision of the Secretary of State, they have informally been reviewed and have not found any blocking issues which might lead to the Secretary of State declining your application. A notice of intention to apply for confirmation of the byelaws was published in over August and September 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. This was presented to full Council for Council approval on 30 October, Members noted the procedures for updating the byelaws had progressed and confirmed to make an application to the DLUHC for confirmation and approval, and to adopt the draft byelaws subject to DLUHC approval.

10 **Dogs on leads consultation: To receive feedback from the recent consultation and consider how Committee wants to proceed**

Dog consultation results – October 2023

The community consultation was launched on Thursday 5 October 2023 and closed on Sunday 22 October, allowing just over two weeks for people to take part.

The consultation was promoted via:

- Council website [www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/dog-consultation](http://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/dog-consultation)
- Council Facebook page (Three posts as well as "stories")
- "Edenbridge Dogs" Facebook page
- Posters in community noticeboards
- Local vets (Portland, Skylark and Medivet) – email and poster sent
- (Also shared by Facebook groups such as Edenbridge Gossip)

A hard copy of the survey was also available from the Council offices and promoted in the online communications.

We encouraged people to complete the survey rather than post on Facebook as we advised we

wouldn't be able to monitor social media comments.

The Communications Officer has collated the feedback:

**Results:** 255 people completed the online survey. One person returned a completed paper copy of the survey.

The majority of respondents had a TN8 postcode. There were some with RH and CR postcodes (less than 10). (Postcode was asked for so that we could establish whether the respondent was an Edenbridge taxpayer.)

(Attached as confidential paper summary of the results). Committee are asked to consider the consultation responses alongside other considerations and consider the next steps it wishes to take.

### How do Members want to proceed?

Confidential Annex 6 (omitted from public documents):

Confidential Annex 7 (omitted from public documents):

11

### **To confirm the proposed replacement columns for 2024-25 and to advise the budget for 2024-25**

The Planning and Administration Officer has been trying to obtain quotes from Streetlights since August. She has emailed five times and called twice requesting the figures from UKPN and Streetlights. It looks like the figures will not be available. We have since altered the proposal to include some more to meet the budget of £45k. We expect these costs by early December.

### **Remaining of the 249, less four now with KCC 245 responsible for**

Concrete 1965 - remaining - 10 (NB: these are on Cedar Drive & Park Avenue, awaiting SDC works to be completed)

Old Steel 1975/80 - remaining -16

Modern Steel 1985 - remaining - 24

Old pole boxes - remaining - 3

**Total on initial replacement programme - 53**

Proposal is to replace under the 2024-25 programme which has a larger budget allocation of £45k, 5 Old steel; 7 steel; 3 old pole boxes

Column No.	Road	year
25	Church Street	1975
109	Market Yard car park corner of Church Yard	1975
110	Market Yard car park between toilets and access to high street	1985
111	A (twin) Market Yard car park middle facing public toilets	1975
	B (twin) Market Yard car park middle facing entrance	1975
85	Lingfield Road	Old Pole Box
87	Lingfield Road	Old Pole Box
32	Croft Lane	1985
33	Croft Lane	1985
51	Four Elms Road between layby & car park	1975
117	Marsh Green Road opp Secret	1985

	Garden	
118	Marsh Green Road opp Gabriels Manor	1985
120	Marsh Green Road before playground	1985
122	Marsh Green Road on Old Road	1985
126	Marsh Green Road opp junction with Greybury	Old Pole Box

It is not known if these will be come in under or over £45k but propose Committee keeps to the 30-year Plan and budget £45k.

**Do Members support the proposed replacement programme for 2024-25 and est. expenditure of £45k?**

12

**To confirm budget recommendations for 2024-25**

Please see the attached (confidential) initial draft budget for 2024-25.

**How do Members want to proceed with its recommendation to the Finance Committee for its draft budget preparations?**

Confidential Annex 8 (omitted from public documents):

Confidential Annex 9 (omitted from public documents):

13

**Date of next meeting - 12 February 2024 (EOY review)**