

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

Notice is hereby given of the **Annual Meeting of Edenbridge Town Council** to be held in Rickards Hall on 13 May 2024 at 7:30 pm, which Councillors are summonsed to attend.

Town Clerk
8 May 2024

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

In view of the confidential nature of Agenda Items 33, 33.1, 33.2, 33.3, 33.4, 34 to be discussed, the Chairman will move that the press and public be excluded from the Chamber. Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972 s100 and 102.

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1.4	To receive the Vice-Chairman's declaration of office	6
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5.2	Finance & Governance Committee 18 March 042/1-4	6
5.3	Open Spaces Committee 15 April 045/1-7	6
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6.1.2	To continue sick pay for one employee	7
6.1.3	To confirm the recommendation of an additional pay scale increment for one employee; additional annual budget cost £373	7
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12.1.2	Freshwater Properties Group: some maintenance and waste clearance for Leather Market (£3,503)	12
12.1.3	Great Stone Bridge Trust: Grass cutting and Water Meadow management services (various works includes cutting, vegetation clearance etc)	12
12.1.4	Sevenoaks District Council: Ground maintenance services, Town Field, playground inspection, weed spraying on residential estate (£1,701)	13
12.1.5	War Graves Commission: Maintenance of War Graves (£300)	13
12.1.6	Involve Kent (£3,000)	13
12.2	Professional services engaged (* last years charges, 2024 tbc):	13
12.2.1	Business Stream - water (£1011*)	13
12.2.2	Canon UK (photocopier) (£605.40* plus copying costs est. £380)	13
12.2.3	EDGE IT - software packages: Finance (£869), Assets register (£269), Epitaph (£307), Rickards Hall hire (£249), additional costs £16.35	13
12.2.4	Fusion4/Besure/Continental (facilities security management, key holding and fire alarms -£3,700*; with approx. £1,750 recharged to EVM; plus call out costs)	13
12.2.5	Gallaghers (Hiscox) Insurance (Council insurance item 15)	13
12.2.6	Health Assured (employee assistance/wellbeing mental health programmes) reviewed item 6.3 (£639.52)	13
12.2.7	Mazars (external auditor) (£2,100*)	13
12.2.8	PS Technology (IT support and Licences) (£12,011 variable)	13
12.2.9	NFU Mutual Insurance (vehicles) (£2,287.89)	13
12.2.10	Keith Robertson (internal auditor) (£600 est)	13
12.2.11	Npower – Street Lighting Energy (£18,412*)	13
12.2.12	SAGE payroll & P11 software services (£857; NB some cost recharged to CAB)	13
12.2.13	Streetlight Maintenance – Streetlights (£8524.70)	14
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12.2.17	Wilkin Chapman Solicitors (legal advice of FOIs, contracts and agreements and other matters) (varies on use)	14
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16	To review and confirm the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies	15
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16.2	Edenbridge Allotment Gardens – Affiliation fees from Swan Lane Members £105	15
16.3	Edenbridge Magazine (6 editions) (£1,093.50)	15
16.4	Grounds Management Association £157.50	15

16.5	Information Commissioner Office £55	15
16.6	Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management £100 (24/25)	15
16.7	Kent Association of Local Council (KALC) £1,765 (24/25)	15
16.8	Kent County Playing Fields Association £20	15
16.9	National Association for British Markets Authorities (NABMA) £500	15
16.10	Open Spaces Society £45	15
16.11	Rural Market Town Group Membership £115 (24/25)	15
16.12	Sevenoaks District Council – Premises Licence (TN8) £1,070*	15
16.13	Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) Town Clerk’s membership £416 (24/25)	15
17	To confirm the direct debits and standing orders arrangements	15
18	To confirm the Council's bank signatories	15
19	To review the Council's complaints procedures (reviewed and amended December 2021)	16
20	To review the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under Freedom of Information and Data Protection Legislation (reviewed November 2019): Retention and Disposal Policy, the FOI publication Scheme, Information and Data Policy, and the Privacy Policy	16
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28	Draft Local Plan - update	21
29	Matters arising from the minutes for report and not elsewhere on the agenda	22
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29.2	Pavilion replacement windows and new shutters update	22
29.2.1	To approve the amendment to the tender, and the additional expenditure for a single fire release bar on main door - additional £377	23
29.2.2	To confirm the expenditure of £1,110 for the electrical works for the shutters (installation of 5amp switched FCU (spur) to be mounted for each window)	23
29.2.3	To ratify the expenditure of £325 for electrical works, relocation of the power points above the main entrance to the Pavilion, to allow room for the shutter	23
29.2.4	To confirm the release of the initial payment (£29,816.50, 50% of tender) to the contractor for the windows and new shutters so the items can be ordered for installation end of May/early June	23
29.3	Annual Community Event - D-Day 80th Anniversary activities	23

	29.3.1	Commemorative community event Thursday 6 June, Stangrove Park	23
	29.3.1.1	To confirm expenditure from events budget to cover generator and security costs	24
	29.3.2	Commemorative afternoon tea Wednesday 5 June (funded by WKH and SDC Chairman)	24
29.4		Rickards Hall maintenance repairs update	24
	29.4.1	Surveyors report: To receive a summary report	25
	29.4.2	To approve the additional expenditure for the maintenance works to the exterior building. Reserves holds £9k, total cost in region of £17k, additional funding to approve up to £8k from the 10/30 year buildings reserves	25
	29.4.3	To approve additional exterior works to include joinery repairs and repainting of the dormer windows whilst scaffolding is up, expenditure of £750 (included in above total)	26
	29.4.4	To confirm the appointment of the Contractor to carry out the external repair works to Rickards Hall	26
	29.4.5	To approve the expenditure for replacement fire shutter to kitchen/main hall hatch, and expenditure of £3,071.20	26
	29.4.6	To approve the expenditure of £1,145 for a replacement automatic filled water boiler/urn	27
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30		OTHER BUSINESS including items referred from Committees for decision	27
	30.1	Pension Scheme Review: Recommendation from Personnel Committee to continue with the Kent Pension Scheme (re Council December 2019, to investigate alternative schemes on triennial basis)	27
	30.2	Doggetts Barn lift - to approve the expenditure of of £1,589 to replace defective gear unit	28
	30.3	Health and Safety review of Council policies (as checked and confirmed Worknest April 2024)	28
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31		To ratify the annual Service Level Agreement grants for 2024	29
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	31.2	HOUSE £9,000	30
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33		[CONFIDENTIAL] Legal matters updates:	30
	33.1	[CONFIDENTIAL] Pavilion Lease - to consider legal costs for an amendment in view of the proposed new heating system	30
	33.2	[CONFIDENTIAL] To ratify use of solicitor for cemetery matters	31
	33.3	[CONFIDENTIAL] Forge Singers Lease	31
	33.4	[CONFIDENTIAL] Update on unauthorised access/gates on to Council land	32
34		[CONFIDENTIAL] To give retrospective permission for Ashes which have been interred at Blossoms Park	32
35		Date of next meeting - 01 July	32

Meeting Papers & Report

1 **Elections**

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

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

1.3 **Election of the Vice-Chairman**


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

2 **To Receive Apologies for Absence**

3 **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.


4 **To receive, adopt and sign the minutes of the Council meeting held on 04 March 2024 (2023-041/1-7)**


 Full Council | 04 March 2024 v.1 - Minutes (Pages 2023-041/1-6)

5 **To adopt the following reports/minutes of meetings**


5.1 **Planning Committee 18 March 043/1-2; 08 April 044/1-3; and 29 April 048/1-7**

 Planning and Transport | 18 March 2024 v.1 - Minutes (Pages 2023-043/1-2)


 Planning and Transport | 08 April 2024 v.1 - Minutes (Pages 2023-044/1-3)

 Planning and Transport | 29 April 2024 v.1 - Minutes (Pages 2023-048/1-3)


5.2 **Finance & Governance Committee 18 March 042/1-4**

 Finance and Governance | 18 March 2024 v.1 - Minutes (Pages 2023-042/1-4)

5.3 **Open Spaces Committee 15 April 045/1-7**

 Open Spaces | 15 April 2024 v.1 - Minutes (Pages 2023-045/1-7)

5.4 **Emergency Planning Committee 22 April 046/1-3**

 Emergency Planning | 22 April 2024 v.1 - Minutes (Pages 2023-046/1-3)

5.5 **Personnel Committee 29 April 047/1-3**

6 **To receive recommendations from Committees**

6.1 **Personnel Committee Recommendations**

6.1.1 **To confirm the expenditure for following training:**

Personnel Committee considered training proposals for Town Clerk, Head Groundsman and RFO/Deputy Clerk. Subject to the dates and actual costs being within budget and not excessive, for the Institute of Leadership & Management (ILM), the Clerk was given approval to book. Below training for Council to receive and approve recommendations.

6.1.1.1 **ILM Level 3 Award for the Head Groundsman and Level 5 for the Town Clerk**
Do Members support the level 3 and level 5 ILM training/certificate for the the Head Groundsman and Town Clerk, respectively, with the Clerk approving reasonable costs (within the training budget allowance)?

6.1.1.2 **To approve the expenditure of £288 for the Town Clerk and RFO to do the SLCC Principles of Internal Auditing Local Councils (PIALC) qualification**
Do Members approve the expenditure of £288 for the Town Clerk and RFO to do the SLCC Principles of Internal Auditing Local Councils (PIALC) qualification?

6.1.2 **To continue sick pay for one employee**

Do Members support the continuation of full sick pay for one employee, to be reviewed in June if phased return not started?

6.1.3 **To confirm the recommendation of an additional pay scale increment for one employee; additional annual budget cost £373**

Do Members confirm the an additional pay scale increment for one employee; additional annual budget cost £373?

6.1.4 **Open Spaces Officer vacancy, to confirm:**

Personnel Committee considered recruitment options and pay scales for the replacement Open Spaces Officer. Last year the vacancy was advertised twice locally. Members agreed that the position should be placed with recruitment agency this time, aiming for a wider geographical recruitment area across the southeast. Members considered four agencies, selecting one based in Tunbridge Wells. They will also help with suitability matching, and ID and qualifications checks. It was also agreed the salary level at LC2 level (with recognition considered on experience/sector qualifications). Added to this is the outer London fringe allowance of £689 pa and other standard employment benefits.

6.1.4.1 **The engagement of a recruitment agency to assist with the Open Spaces Officer vacancy, and the expenditure as per terms of the agency paid on a commission basis for a positive outcome**

Do Members support the engagement of a recruitment agency to assist with the Open Spaces Officer vacancy, and the expenditure as per terms of the agency paid on a commission basis for a positive outcome?

6.1.4.2 **To confirm the scale and spinal point range for the Open Spaces Officer of LC2 (18-23), starting salary £29,269 plus benefits**
Do Members confirm the scale and spinal point range for the Open Spaces Officer of LC2 (18-23), starting salary £29,269 (subject to experience/qualifications), plus other standard benefits?

6.1.5 **To confirm the continuation of the medical insurance scheme**
The Council currently supports medical insurance for its employees following 2-years continuous service, as of 1 April. Medical insurance annual costs have been increasing each year, with this year seeing a 31% increase on premiums. This is partly due to staff claims, including work related. Committee considered the value of the scheme and benefit to the employer and agreed the scheme should remain supported with the same qualifying period. The broker had look at other providers but advised to stay with current provider. Medical insurance is employee contracts and budgeted in staff salary costs.

Do Members confirm the recommendation to continue supporting the medical insurance scheme?

6.2 **To confirm continuation of the Employee Assistance Programme/Health Assured App**
July 2021, Council supported Health Assured a 3-year agreement £600 per year for all Council employees and councillors as part of its Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). Health Assured are the largest provider of employee assistance programmes supporting over 70,000 businesses and 13 million employees across the UK and Ireland, providing a range of mental health and wellbeing support services 24/7 with its in-house confidential helpline supporting and includes an App providing other advice on lifestyle improvements, mindfulness and virtual wellbeing workshops, bereavement advice, stress management, and legal advice. The facility has been used by some over the past 3-years (due to a new App upgrade, we are not able to access any statistics to know by how many).

Renewal costs are expected to be similar, Personnel Committee agreed this was a valid facility for both employees and councillors and should continue supporting.

Do members confirm to continue with Health Assured and Wisdom App on a new 3-year agreement?

6.3 **Emergency Planning Committee: To support an amendment in the Terms of Reference for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to be voted in for four-year duration (Council term)**
The Chairman is usually appointed for a Council year (May to April). However, as the EPC meets once to twice yearly, proposal is to appoint a Chairman for the Council term (4-years) for continuity. Amendment to the Committee Terms of Reference (TOR) needs to be approved by Council.

TOR currently states: The Chairman and Vice-Chairman are to be elected annually by the Committee at the first meeting after the AMTC in accordance with Standing Orders.

Proposal: To amend the Emergency Planning Committee section of election the Chairman from 'annually' to four-yearly, thus amended to read - The Chairman and Vice-Chairman are to be elected by the Committee at the [first Committee meeting following the first meeting of the newly elected Council](#), in accordance with Standing Orders, and be in post for four-years (Council term). Should the Chairman/Vice-Chairman resign from post, their replacement will be elected at the next meeting of the Committee and will hold the post for the remainder of that Council term.

Do Members support the amendment to the Emergency Planning Committee TOR for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to be appointed 4-yearly in line with a Council term?

To review the delegated arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff (as detailed in the Terms of Reference) and appointment of any new committees

The Terms of Reference confirms committee membership and delegated responsibilities. This is a working document and from time to time, may be amended to reflect operational changes and procedures. Usually, reviewed by the Governance Committee with recommendations to Council. Below are the current committees, sub-committee and working groups to confirm 7.1 to 7.12:

Do members confirm the existing Committees as per 7.1-7.5?

Do members confirm the existing sub-committees and steering group as per 7.6-7.8?

Do members confirm the delegated arrangements and procurement procedures for 7.9-7.11?

Do Members propose any additional committee or sub-committee, item 7.12?

<https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/21-02-adopted-terms-of-reference-27.01.20-amended-16.02.21.pdf>

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

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

7.3 **Open Spaces Committee (10)**

7.4 **Emergency Planning Committee (8)**

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

7.6 **Personnel Committee (7)**

7.7 **Charities and Grants (15)**

7.8 **Forward Planning Steering Group (15)**

7.9 **Working Groups**

7.10 **Delegated powers to the Town Clerk and Officers**

7.11 **Delegation for procurement procedures**

<https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/PROCUREMENT-REFERENCE.pdf>

7.12 **To consider any additional committees/sub-committees**

To confirm the Terms of Reference (last reviewed by Finance Committee 15 February 2021)

One amendment was proposed by the Emergency Planning Committee (item 6.3). Delegated arrangements under the TOR for each committee/sub-committee/Town Clerk and Officers confirmed under item 7.

Do Members confirm and adopt the Terms of Reference?

9

To appoint/confirm members for each committee

At the new term of the Council (May 2023), Members were appointed to Committees, there have been some changes during the year. Members are asked to confirm membership to Committee (a member may step down) and appointment of new Members, up to the capacity of the committee. All councillors may attend any committee/sub-committee meeting, but if they are not a named member they are not expected to necessarily attend and do not have any voting rights (though they can speak and make representation).

<https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/240304-Committees-Membership.pdf>

9.1

Finance and Governance Committee (10)

Cllrs Baker, Compton, Gemmell Smith, Layland, McGregor, Read, Sumner. There were three vacancies remaining.

Do Members confirm continuation of current membership, and appointment to fill the three vacancies?

9.2

Planning and Transportation Committee (12)

Cllrs Aldridge (SW), Baker (NE), Gemmell Smith (SW), Layland (NE), McArthur (SW), McGregor (NE), Read (NE), Todd (NE). Four vacancies remaining, minimum of two needed for south west Ward.

Do Members confirm continuation of current membership, and appointment to fill the four vacancies (two to be from SW)?

9.3

Open Spaces Committee (10)

Cllrs Aldridge, Baker, Compton, Gemmell Smith, Layland, McGregor, Read, Streets, and Sumner. There is one vacancy remaining.

Do Members confirm continuation of current membership, and appointment to fill one vacancy?

9.4

Personnel Committee (7)

Cllrs Baker, Gemmell Smith, Layland, McArthur, McGregor, Todd. There was one vacancy remaining. TOR says members appointed by Finance Committee, and confirmed annually after the AMTC. However, as committees are being considered, should any member wish to be put forward for the vacancy, this can be presented to F&G Committee at its next meeting in July to consider and confirm.

Do Members want to make recommendation to F&G Committee for appointment to fill the one vacancy on Personnel Committee?

9.5

Emergency Planning Committee (8)

Cllrs Aldridge, Baker, Compton, Gemmell Smith, McArthur, McGregor, and Streets. There is one vacancy remaining.

Do Members confirm continuation of current membership, and appointment to fill one vacancy?

- 9.6 **If there are any new committees to appoint members (item 12)**
Subject to if a new committee/sub-committee was appointed, to confirm members.

10 **To appoint/confirm the members of the working groups**

- 10.1 **Internal Audit / Council Risk Group (4)**
Current Membership: Cllrs Gemmell Smith, Layland, Sumner, Todd.

Do Members confirm continuation of current membership, or appointment of different members?

- 10.2 **Lease / SLA negotiation Group (4)**
Current Membership: Cllrs Baker, Gemmell Smith, McGregor, Sumner.

Do Members confirm continuation of current membership, or appointment of different members?

- 10.3 **Open Spaces Task and Finish group to explore viability for new concrete skate park (6)**
Current Membership: Cllrs Aldridge, Baker, Gemmell Smith, Layland, McArthur, Sumner.

Do Members confirm continuation of current membership, or appointment of different members?

- 10.4 **Open Spaces - Market Yard car park / Parking Group (6)**
Current Membership: Cllrs Aldridge, Baker, Compton, Layland, McGregor. One Vacancy.

Do Members confirm continuation of current membership, or appointment of different members?

- 10.5 **Aviation Consultation Group (4)**
Current Membership: Cllrs Aldridge, Baker, Compton, McArthur.

Do Members confirm continuation of current membership, or appointment of different members?

- 10.6 **High Street/Market Project Group - funding through the SDC/UKSPF**
Current Membership (appointed May 2023): Cllrs Aldridge, Baker, and Gemmell Smith.

Do Members confirm continuation of current membership, or appointment of different members?

- 10.7 **Local Plan Group**
Current Membership (appointed December 2023): Cllrs Aldridge, Baker, Gemmell Smith, Layland, Parker, Read, Streets and Todd.

Do Members confirm continuation of current membership, or appointment of different members?

10.8 **Local Plan - Town Strategy Group**

Current Membership (appointed by Planning Committee February 2024): Cllrs Aldridge, Baker, Gemmell Smith, Layland, Streets and Todd.

Do Members confirm continuation of current membership, or appointment of different members?

10.9 **Annual Events Group**

Current Membership (appointed January 2024): Cllrs Baker, Gemmell Smith, Layland, Streets and Todd.

Do Members confirm continuation of current membership, or appointment of different members?

11 **To confirm and adopt the following:**

<https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/policies/council-policies/>

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

Do Members confirm and re-adopt the Standing Orders?

11.2 **Financial Regulations**

Do Members confirm and re-adopt the Financial Regulations?

To note: NALC are currently reviewing the model financial regulations, after which time the Council's will be reviewed and presented to Governance Committee.

12 **To review the arrangements with other local authorities, not-for-profit and businesses**

12.1 **Arrangements carried out by Edenbridge Town Council on behalf of:**

Referring to the list below, do Members:

12.1: Confirm the chargeable arrangements and services carried out by Edenbridge Town Council on behalf of organisations in 12.1.1 to 12.1.6?

12.1.1 **Citizens Advice Bureau: Payroll (£231)**

12.1.2 **Freshwater Properties Group: some maintenance and waste clearance for Leather Market (£3,503)**

12.1.3 **Great Stone Bridge Trust: Grass cutting and Water Meadow management services (various works includes cutting, vegetation clearance etc)**

12.1.4 **Sevenoaks District Council: Ground maintenance services, Town Field, playground**

inspection, weed spraying on residential estate (£1,701)

12.1.5 **War Graves Commission: Maintenance of War Graves (£300)**

12.1.6 **Involve Kent (£3,000)**

12.2 **Professional services engaged (* last years charges, 2024 tbc):**

Referring to the list below, do Members:

12.2: Confirm the continuation with the current professional service providers engaged by the Council 12.2.1 to 12.2.18?

12.2.1 **Business Stream - water (£1011*)**

NB: we are looking to move from Business Stream to SES water during the coming year.

12.2.2 **Canon UK (photocopier) (£605.40* plus copying costs est. £380)**

12.2.3 **EDGE IT - software packages: Finance (£869), Assets register (£269), Epitaph (£307), Rickards Hall hire (£249), additional costs £16.35**

12.2.4 **Fusion4/Besure/Continental (facilities security management, key holding and fire alarms -£3,700*; with approx. £1,750 recharged to EVM; plus call out costs)**

12.2.5 **Gallaghers (Hiscox) Insurance (Council insurance item 15)**

12.2.6 **Health Assured (employee assistance/wellbeing mental health programmes) reviewed item 6.3 (£639.52)**

12.2.7 **Mazars (external auditor) (£2,100*)**

12.2.8 **PS Technology (IT support and Licences) (£12,011 variable)**

12.2.9 **NFU Mutual Insurance (vehicles) (£2,287.89)**

12.2.10 **Keith Robertson (internal auditor) (£600 est)**

12.2.11 **Npower – Street Lighting Energy (£18,412*)**

12.2.12 **SAGE payroll & P11 software services (£857; NB some cost recharged to CAB)**

- 12.2.13 **Streetlight Maintenance – Streetlights (£8524.70)**
- 12.2.14 **Summer Fun Days – Play Place (£2,892*)**
- 12.2.15 **Total Gas (utilities energy all buildings - current contract to 31 January 2025; renewal was agreed August 2023 up to 2027) (£4,837*)**
- 12.2.16 **Vatix – Lone Working Alarms (3-year agreement, up for review) (£523*)**
Lone working alarms is due for reviewed and will be presented to Council soon to reconsider.
- 12.2.17 **Wilkin Chapman Solicitors (legal advice of FOIs, contracts and agreements and other matters) (varies on use)**
- 12.2.18 **Worknest (HR and H&S support) (£2815* plus £657 eLearning)**

13 **To appoint representatives on to/work with external bodies and arrangements for report back**

The list, as appointed at the new Council meeting May 2023 is published on the website, link below or paper attached.

Do Members confirm the Councillors reps to local organisations, or are there any amendments or additions?

<https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/2300703-Outside-organisations-Cllr-Reps.pdf>

Annex 1: 2300703 Outside organisations Cllr Reps.pdf

14 **To review the inventory of land and other fixed assets including buildings and office equipment - Fixed Assets Register**

The assets registers as of 31 March 2024 is published on the website, link below.

Do Members confirm the Council's Assets and the closing balance for year-end 2023/24 of £4,300,245.42?

<https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Asset-Register-April-2024.pdf>

15 **Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks and the annual expenditure of £16,800 (this is year 3 of 3)**

The policy is still under a Long Term Agreement so the only increase in premium will be due to the index linking of the sums insured and at the current time Hiscox are using 9% on Buildings and 6% on Contents.

Each year we complete a pre renewal form, as any changes to contents, of building may affect the premium. I should be meeting with Gallaghers mid May so they can update the details to prepare the renewal. Last year's premium was £15,646.92

It is expected the the insurance will be in the region of £16,745; renew date 20 July.

Do Members confirm the insurance premium for 2024-25 in the region of £16,800?

16 **To review and confirm the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies**
Do Members confirm the annual subscriptions as listed 16.1-16.13?

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

16.2 **Edenbridge Allotment Gardens – Affiliation fees from Swan Lane Members £105**

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

16.4 **Grounds Management Association £157.50**

16.5 **Information Commissioner Office £55**

16.6 **Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management £100 (24/25)**

16.7 **Kent Association of Local Council (KALC) £1,765 (24/25)**

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

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

16.10 **Open Spaces Society £45**


16.11 **Rural Market Town Group Membership £115 (24/25)**

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

16.13 **Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) Town Clerk's membership £416 (24/25)**

17 **To confirm the direct debits and standing orders arrangements**

See the attached list. Amounts shown do vary. **Do Members confirm the continued direct debits?**

 Annex 2: 2024-25 direct debits .pdf

18 **To confirm the Council's bank signatories**

Council Standing Orders and Financial Regulations does not currently specify that signatories need to be Finance Committee members. Attached (confidential) is a list of the Council's signatories. Unfortunately, we are still in the process of adding the new signatories appointed May 2023; each account requires two signatories plus the RFO or Town Clerk to raise the payment/s.

ACCOUNT	Minimum signatories	Have	Process of adding
Barclays	6	4	4
CCLA	4	3	1
Lloyds (<i>Account to be Closed</i>)	n/a		
Charity a/c Natwest	3	2	
Scottish Widows Investment (Norman Foundation)	3	3	1

Propose to potentially add another signatory to Lloyds Bank if required to close account.

Do Members re-confirm the attached signatories, and are there any they wish to add?

Confidential Annex 3 (omitted from public documents):

19 **To review the Council's complaints procedures (reviewed and amended December 2021)**
Do members confirm the Complaints Procedure?

<https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/21-12-19-11-adopted-Complaints-Procedure-May-2016-amended-06.12.21.pdf>

20 **To review the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under Freedom of Information and Data Protection Legislation (reviewed November 2019): Retention and Disposal Policy, the FOI publication Scheme, Information and Data Policy, and the Privacy Policy**

Do members confirm the above policies and procedures?

<https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/19-11-amended-FOI-and-Publication-Scheme-2018.pdf>

<https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Information-Data-Protection-Policy-20181.pdf>

<https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/19-11-Retention-and-disposal-Policy-with-appendix-A.pdf>

<https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/policies/website-policy/>

21 **Communications Policy**
Do members confirm the Communications Policy?

<https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Communication-and-Community-Engagement-Dec-2018.pdf>

22 **General Power of Competence: to note the Town Council continues to meet the conditions as resolved at its meeting 15 May 2023**

It is good practice for Council to confirm each year that it continues to meet the conditions of General Power of Competence as per the eligibility conditions under the Localism Act 2011, chapter 1 S8.

General Power of Competency (Localism Act 2011, sections 1 to 8) allows eligible Councils to have more choice and flexibility to carry out its powers and duties (within the law). To use the GPC, the Council must resolve it meets the eligibility criteria at the first annual meeting of the new council after the ordinary elections (4-yearly).

Criteria for eligibility:

1. The number of councillors elected at the last ordinary election must equal or exceed two thirds of its total number. ETC meets the criteria: 11 members stood for 15 vacancies and was

uncontested at the May elections.

2. The clerk must hold at least one of the sector-specific qualifications. ETC's Clerk holds CiLCA.

The benefits GPC can be used for most of the activities the council carries out and enabling it to deliver a wider range of activities, rather than without, and using the Local Government Act 1972 section 137 legislation.

To note, the Town Council continues to meet the conditions as resolved at its meeting 15 May 2023.

23 **To receive the calendar of Council and Committee meetings for 2024**

To receive the current meetings calendar 2024 (link below). **Do Members have any questions?**

<https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Meetings-dates-for-2024-Approved-230911-amended.pdf>

24 **Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 31 March 2024**

Attached is the AGAR for 2023-24.

- Page 3 - Internal Audit Report (item 24.1)
- Page 4 - Governance Statement (item 24.3)
- Page 5 - Accounting Statement (item 24.4)

[Annex 4: 240331 AGAR for AMTC with IA redacted.pdf](#)

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

The Internal Auditor carried out the end-of-year review on on 23 April. He carried put an extensive review of the accounts up to 31 March 2024, Council's financial procedures and other administrations procedures. There were no issues, and he was pleased with budgeting reporting and reserves reporting improvements. Copy of the report is attached together with completed AGAR Internal Audit Report (page 3 of AGAR).

Do Members have any questions?

<https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/internal-auditor-reports/>

[Annex 5: 240502 Final Edenbridge Internal Audit Report 2023-24.pdf](#)

24.2 **To receive the end-of-year financial statements**

A copy of the end-of-year EDGE finance reports is attached with the Bank Reconciliation, budget comparisons and summary of the earmarked and general reserves summary.

To note:

- The Consolidated balance sheets confirms the total net assets (match box 7 on AGAR): £953,946.12
- The I&E Account confirms total actual Income £845,115.71 (boxes 2&3 on AGAR), Expenditure £873,187.65
- Budget Comparisons confirm the budgeted I&E including creditors and debtors, and CIL I&E
- Budget Comparisons Report includes all CIL I&E. Without CIL I&E, the budgeted surplus £99,728.50. Of which £72,578 was moved to Earmarked Reserves (EMR) for projects not completed in 2023-24. This leaves £27,150.50 surplus to move to General Reserves (GR); budgeted had forecasted £23,149 movement.

Do Members have any questions?

Do Members confirm the end-of-year financial position: Total net assets £953,946.12? This is made up of General Reserve £320,058.08; Earmarked Reserves £477,794.49; CIL funds (allocated and unallocated) £156,093.55.

📎 Annex 6: Consolidated Balance Sheet to 31 March 2024

📎 Annex 7: Income and Expenditure to 31 March 2024 Full Council

📎 Annex 8: 310324 Bank rec 24.04.24.pdf

📎 Annex 9: 310324 Financial Comparison 07.05.24.pdf

📎 Annex 10: 2023-24 Reserves 310324 actuals for AMTC.pdf

24.3 **To approve the annual governance statement for 2023/24**

Item 24 has the full AGAR. Page 4 is the Annual Governance 2023-24. **The Chairman to read out each statement and members to confirm each, as read.**

24.4 **To resolve the accounting statement for 2023/24**

Item 24 has the full AGAR. Page 5 is the Annual Accounting Statement for 2023-24. **The Chairman to read out each item (boxes 1-9) and members to confirm each, as read.**

25 **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.

26 **To receive County and District Councillor Reports**

26.1 **County Councillor**

26.2 **District Councillors**

27 **To receive reports and recommendations from the Town Clerk and Officers; Working Groups; and Delegated Reports**

27.1 **Clerk's Report**

Byelaws update: The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) confirmed receipt in February and raised a couple of questions, which I have responded to and confirmed the Town Council owns (some are on long leases and two the Council are sole managing trustee) and maintains all sections of land referred to in the draft proposed byelaws. Therefore, the application is being made under powers in both section 164 of the Public Health Act 1875 and sections 12 and 15 of the Open Spaces Act 1906. We have been asked to submit an accompanying report summarising Council's reasons for the updates and

the processes undertaken in preparing the revised/updated Byelaws; this is in the process of being prepared and submitted.

Car parking issues in Council car parks: Blossoms Park still has residential parking use in the evenings and overnight; however, Cricket Club has said they have not seen any issues currently. We will be looking at carrying out a parking audit of town car parks later this year, to assess current parking patterns, issues and needs. This will be presented at the July Council.

Cemeteries: Continuing with work to ensure the standards of the cemeteries and consistency with the rule book and the memorials, further notices have been displayed advising that artificial flowers and other memorabilia will need to be removed. A new audit on memorials will be carried out soon with Grant of Right holders contacted accordingly. The Open Spaces Committee will receive updates on cemetery matters.

DBS checks: Three more staff have had DBS checks recently. This will bring the total DBS for staff to five, plus the volunteers for the Games Club.

Declarations of Interest and new co-optees: All new councillors' interests are now on the website and returned to the Monitoring Officer. A reminder to all councillors, it is your responsibility to ensure these are kept up to date. Any changes, please let me know so I can ensure updated forms are published.

Edenbridge Gardens in Bloom: This year's gardening competition is currently being advertised, and we have a couple of banners. Debbie (Planning & Admin Officer) and Kevin (Community Warden) have done a great job organising a selection of fantastic prizes include entry to a number of local historic attractions, a year's membership to Wakehurst Place, garden centre vouchers, afternoon tea and cinema tickets to name a few. This year we have six categories include a new one for Strangest or unique space to create a colourful display. Closing date for entries 12 July. Presentations early September, by Neil Miller Head Gardener, Hever Castle.

Electric Vehicle Chargers (EVCs): Four EVCs have been well received, and it is fantastic that KCC has advised that the Edenbridge EVCs are the 4th best performers across Kent. Unfortunately, they have had to be put out of action for a couple of weeks but will be up and running again very soon. On another note, we are still waiting for the invoice for the ETC contribution for the installation, funded via a CIL award.

Facebook page: Davina, (The Communications Officer) has been doing a great job with the Council's social media and Facebook posts. If not following, you should be, check it out. Also the Community Warden's page, and Market page.

Forge Singers: The solicitors have heard back from the Forge Singers re the new drafted lease. I am waiting an update on feedback and acceptance of the Lease and conditions.

Land outside the old Police Station: I have chased progress with the developer and awaiting an update.

Lease meetings: The annual lease meetings with Cricket and Rugby Clubs and Nomads have taken place. There were no significant issues. Cricket and Rugby updates reported previously. Nomads is still hosting youth football and hoping to expand this next season. The Clubhouse has some bookings. Unfortunately, men's football is struggling but they are still hoping to get a team together if not this coming season next. Ladies football folded due to lack of available coaches.

Local Plan: We continue to liaise with SDC and the consultant. (agenda item 28)

Market: The Market has a consistent number of traders, with weekly attendance between

10-15. The new cooperative stall is doing well. The new Italian stall is attracting more people from further afield, partly a result of his own advertising to old customers from the Westerham area. We have agreed not to do any specific summer activities this year as not sure they brought in new shoppers. We are considering the possibility of a loyalty card, as well as encouraging traders do run promotions. We have also discussed an additional A-board/chalkboard to help promote this.

PACT meeting: Another PACT meeting organised by SDC took place last month. The usual agencies attended to discuss local issues, and two members of the public. The next PACT is 22 July, 2.00 pm Rickards Hall. The local Police Officer and Kevin (CW) have been out on a couple of patrols recently around the town, and Kevin attended a recent Police meet and chat session.

Streetlights – Four Elms Road: The new streetlights at Four Elms Road which were installed as part of the new Medical Centre works, remain not working. However, we have been advised that all parties have been working on this and should be working imminently.

Vandalism: 2024-25, so far, we have a smashed glass panel Swan Lane bus shelter, and damage to one of the noticeboards.

Volunteers: Kevin (CW) held a successful ‘volunteers needed, come and meet for a cuppa and cake’ on 8 May (and 13 May). The first session had about 20 people attend (included a few current volunteers), with eight newbies signing up for Speedwatch and litter picks. Some forms were also taken away to be returned.

Kevin has also started up the Speedwatch sessions again, and once the new volunteers are trained up hopes be able to organise more regular sessions around the town.

War Memorial: A meeting took place with NHS Properties last month to discuss the future of the site. Summary of the meeting: the current position of the site remains vacant and secured, there is CCTV, bollards and security on site, and will remain until all assets removed. The intention is to sell the site and it has been included in the emerging Local Plan as a potential housing development site.

The location of the War Memorial (WM) remains a matter for consideration. NHS Properties has had experience of similar with other sites and are in touch with the War Memorials Trust. The intention is to include the WM in the tender document inviting potential developers to consider leaving on site and include as part of new plans, or to fund the possible relocation to an agreed suitable alternative location. The Town Council and RBL would be included in these discussions.

For now, the WM remains at the hospital. Access will be given for the Remembrance Sunday Service and the site will be cleared and made safe for public attendance. The bollards will remain in place.

Waste and Garden bags: The office has received the last stocks from SDC of the black sacks, we have quite a few recycling rolls also which the office is still selling until stocks run out. SDC are phasing these out the clear plastic bags cutting down on single use plastics, swapping for the new ‘bag for life’ recycling sacks which will be distributed to households over the summer period. Garden sacks will continue to be sold via the Council office during office opening hours (Monday to Thursday 9.00 am – 3.30 pm).

NABMA (The National Association of British Market Authorities) and SLCC (The Society of Local Council Clerks) MARKET EVENT: As more and more local councils are becoming involved in the markets industry then this is an excellent event to learn and share knowledge. Members of the NABMA team will be available throughout the event to answer your questions. This event is aimed at local councils operating markets or want to know more about markets and their offer to high streets and communities. Thursday 27 June, at

South Molton Pannier Market, Devon 10 am – 2.30 pm, is a free event to attend for NAMBA and SLCC members.

This event was published after the agenda was confirmed. I would like to consider sending at least one person to this event, ideally the Market Officer. Cost to Council would be train tickets (or fuel allowance) and hotel accommodation for 26 June. Lorraine and I attended a NABMA event a couple of years ago which was extremely useful. **Do Members support the expenditure for at least one person to attend this event (reasonable budget hotel costs and travel)?**

<https://www.facebook.com/people/Edenbridge-Town-Council/100068952408297/>

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100069218589753>

<https://www.facebook.com/edenbridgemarket/>

28

Draft Local Plan - update

Since the March Council, with the help of the consultant, we have submitted a letter to SDC regarding Pedham Place with some comments/observations asking for consideration to be given when considering the site allocations for the Reg 19 Plan.

The letter said: *As you know there is great concern with the proposed housing numbers to be imposed on Edenbridge. Whilst we appreciated there is currently no firm decision on the sites to go forward in the Reg 19 Plan, the Town Council would like to express its real concern about the proposals.*

We have looked at the numbers that the District Council is expected to provide for, and question if Pedham Place is to be included in the Reg 19 Plan, then surely the release of Green Belt around Edenbridge is not justifiable at all. Each site proposed does have strong Green Belt features. In the letter we highlighted that the Plan overall requirement for the district is 10,680, with the possible inclusion of Pedham Place this would take the housing supply to 11,000 with a surplus of 320. If all the sites for Edenbridge were to be removed from the Plan, the shortfall would be 571. Whilst the Town Council does recognise the challenges but does not feel that there is sufficient justification to keep the Green Belt sites allocated in Edenbridge in the Plan should Pedham Place be included. Should any of the sites be put forward to the Reg 19 Plan, that there must be some assurances given that the quoted housing numbers for each site are not exceeded in any subsequent planning application, and that there will be enhancements to secure the amended Green Belt boundary as a result of development.

We have also submitted proposed amendments to the Town Strategy. This prompted a meeting with the Working Group and SDC. It was a productive meeting and SDC has since confirmed they will amend the strategy to reflect a more realistic and achievable vision. For example, removing 'improved river connections' to 'river accessibility', and specifying some new and enhanced community facilities:

The following potential projects and development opportunities have been identified to help realise the future vision for Edenbridge Town Centre. For further details of each of these projects, including delivery considerations, please see the Town Centres Strategy.

1. *Redevelopment of the Leathermarket site (see development guidance in chapter 2);*
2. *Shopfront renewal;*
3. *Sensitively enhanced river accessibility;*
4. *Improved footpaths to existing pedestrian crossings on the bypass, to provide better access into the town centre;*
5. *New and enhanced community and youth/education facilities (e.g. leisure centre, bandstand, skate-park and provision of a secondary school in the town).*

These projects will be delivered through partnership working between a number of different organisations, including SDC, ETC, and KCC with potential funding from development in the local vicinity.

We remain in touch with the consultant who is monitoring other Local Plan Hearings.

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

29.1 **UK Shared Prosperity Fund (via SDC) funding: Update on proposed project for Market and to consider a proposal to utilise the access road from the High Street to create an additional space and new signage**

SDC has been awarded funding to work with Town Councils, providing £5k each year of the programme (3 years) towards capital projects and items to support the Town Centres and markets. The aims of the fund is to help boost productivity, restore sense of community and create opportunities. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund award is part of a wider project, with an allocation for each town council in the district.

Council May 2023 appointed a Working Group to consider viable proposals to work with the Town Clerk to consider potential schemes for High Street. We met with SDC in July and discussed several possibilities, concluding that investment in the market would help to support the sustainability of the High Street attracting users to both the market and local businesses, and was the most viable option and to consider improvements. These included a potential archway; possible gazebos; market campaign. The later has since been advised not eligible as considered advertising/revenue costs.

The office has looked at several options including costs and considered how to make the market more inviting from the High Street, potential for an archway and utilising the access part to Market Yard car park. The funding deadline is February 2025, though the works do not have to be fully completed by this date.

The Working Group met recently to consider a proposal to Council. It was agreed, to ask Council to *'support a proposal to improve and create a usable space between the bollards at MYCP and the High Street creating an extension/alternative space utilising the access road on market days. This would require removable bollards, improved signage including a possible archway and market gazebos'*.

As the market is in a conservation area this would likely require a planning application. Details of the proposal and submission of the planning application would need to be approved before February 2025 to release the funding.

Do Members support the proposal above, and to authorise the Working Group and Officers to investigate a suitable plan to submit to SDC UKSPF for support and a planning application?

29.2 **Pavilion replacement windows and new shutters update**

CIL Board November 2022 approved an award of £85k replacement windows and new shutters at the Pavilion. Following a public tendering process, Council appointed a contractor at its October 2023 meeting: Rite Doors to carry out the works to the Pavilion windows at £57,176 plus VAT, and to allow 10% contingency in addition for any changes and "making good".

The tender did not include electrical works, or a fire release bar for the main door.

The contract has been drafted and issued, using the long form construction works agreement. All other contractors paperwork has been received; PL insurance valid to December 2024. They have also liaised with the Rugby Club, and are will to fit around their end of season, end of May/early June.

Cllr Baker, the Head Groundsman and myself have also met the contractor on site and

confirm the colour of the windows and shutters.

- 29.2.1 **To approve the amendment to the tender, and the additional expenditure for a single fire release bar on main door - additional £377**
Do Members approve the amendment to the tender, and the additional expenditure for a single fire release bar on main door - additional £377? Total contract cost now £59,633.
- 29.2.2 **To confirm the expenditure of £1,110 for the electrical works for the shutters (installation of 5amp switched FCU (spur) to be mounted for each window)**
Using the Council's usual electrician,
Do Members confirm the expenditure of £1,110 for the electrical works for the shutters (installation of 5amp switched FCU (spur) to be mounted for each window)?
- 29.2.3 **To ratify the expenditure of £325 for electrical works, relocation of the power points above the main entrance to the Pavilion, to allow room for the shutter**
For the shutters to fit above the main doors, there were some electrics used by the Club which needed to be moved. This was authorised, and we used the Council usual electrician.
Members to ratify the expenditure of £325 for electrical works, relocation of the power points above the main entrance to the Pavilion, to allow room for the shutter.
- 29.2.4 **To confirm the release of the initial payment (£29,816.50, 50% of tender) to the contractor for the windows and new shutters so the items can be ordered for installation end of May/early June**
A contract has been issued to the contractor for the new windows and shutters. As part of the accepted tender, the Council is pay 50% of the invoice upfront with the balance payable upon completion. The contractor has done work for the Council before, all contractor paperwork has been completed and received.
Do Members confirm release of the initial payment to the contractor for the Pavilion new windows and doors, £29,816.50 plus VAT?

29.3 **Annual Community Event - D-Day 80th Anniversary activities**

- 29.3.1 **Commemorative community event Thursday 6 June, Stangrove Park**
The Working Group has meet and confirm a schedule for the D-Day Commemorations on Thursday 6 June. The Planning & Admin Officer, and the Community Warden have liaised with relevant parties and confirmed the following programme for a "bring your own picnic in the park and enjoy 1940s & 50s music to commemorate 80th D-Day anniversary":

Opening: 7.00 pm to 7.30 pm Church bells ringing as people arrive at 6.45 to 7.15 pm Stangrove Park.
7.30 pm to 8.30 pm – Steve Conway – Swing singer
8.30 pm – 9.00 pm Town Band plays
9.00 pm to 9.10 pm Town Band will play music specified for the commemoration
9.10pm Chairman of the Town Council to do the reading 9.15 pm light the beacon

The Bonfire Society has confirmed it will be helping with the lighting of the beacon. The Leisure Centre will allow public use of its toilets. There may be some local groups with

displays, possibly a couple of refreshment stands BUT the event is more to come along, enjoy some music and see the beacon being lit commemorating D-Day anniversary. We will provide some memorabilia which will be handed out at the event. Advertising includes: Edenbridge Magazine (current edition), social media and noticeboards and a banners has been ordered for Stangrove railings.

29.3.1.1 **To confirm expenditure from events budget to cover generator and security costs**

The budget for the event allowed £5,000. So far, expenditure includes the Swing singer, the banner and some memorabilia. Cllr Gemmell Smith is loaning his PA and speakers but these will need to be powered by a generator. (At the time of preparing the papers the price is tbc.)

We have not been successful getting marshals for the event, including trying the Cadets who are unavailable. As the event will not be having a activities and food vans on the field, and a no vehicle policy during the event, we will require some stewards in high-viz. Councillor volunteers requested and/or other volunteers.

The Working Group supports a proposal to engage professional security, two - three personnel in the event that there may be an issue and to also help with ensuring no inappropriate activity or vehicles moving. (At the time of preparing the papers quotes were to be obtained.)

Whilst quotes are yet to be obtained for a generator and security, the budget does have the capacity. **Do Members support funding a generator and security for the D-Day Commemoration event using the event budget set?**

29.3.2 **Commemorative afternoon tea Wednesday 5 June (funded by WKH and SDC Chairman)**

Following the success of last year's 'afternoon tea' which we hosted and funded via a grant, to help with integrating getting older people back to social activities following the pandemic as well as promoting the Games Club, the Planning & Admin Officer and the Community Warden thought it would be fitting to host a similar event for some of the older residents in the community who may not be comfortable attending an evening event at Stangrove Park and the 80th D-Day commemorations would have more meaning and value to them. They sourced funding from West Kent Housing Association (WKHA) who are inviting their older and vulnerable residents helping them to also reintegrate in community activities and wellbeing; and Cllr Alan Layland has made a contribution from his SDC Chairman's allowance.

The afternoon tea event on the Wednesday afternoon 5 June is by invitation only, and attendees will have to have RSVP to attend. The same Swing singer (Steve Conway) will provide entertainment with 19940s/50s songs. Invitations are currently being sent out with RSVP.

29.4 **Rickards Hall maintenance repairs update**

July 2023, Council received a report advising of the need for maintenance repairs to the exterior and interior of Rickards Hall. There had been a number of harsh wet winters which had affected the exterior wall at the rear of the building which has suffered severe weathering and has allowed damp to get inside so there are also some repairs to the internal walls needed. Members acknowledge the urgency for the work to make the building watertight, but request a surveyors report first. Following another harsh wet winter, the roof has had some further slipped tiles, and rain water will have affected the outer and inner rear wall.

It should be noted, that Rickards Hall building maintenance has had very little expenditure

over the past few years. There has been repair to the main door; and partial redecoration of the Hall and floor repairs, re-sanded and varnished about four years ago.

29.4.1 **Surveyors report: To receive a summary report**

The surveyors report and 10-years maintenance plan was received December 2023.
Extract from report:

The building is joined to the Edenbridge Museum on the East side which is a Grade II Listed building and Edenbridge Town Council offices (Doggetts Barn) to the West side which is also Grade II Listed.

The building is in sound structural condition, there is evidence of significant penetrating damp to the north elevation which has caused damage to internal plaster and decorations, it has also caused timber decay to the built in cupboards to the hall.

*The damp is caused by a combination of leaking gutters, defective pointing and a poor weathering detail to the top of the wall to the north elevation.
There is also evidence of penetrating / rising damp to the entrance lobby.*

A specialist damp report should be obtained and we would recommend a specialist.

Repairs are required to the external fabric to prevent further damp ingress and these are itemised in the planned maintenance schedule attached. In respect of the works required in the next 12 months (year 1) including health and safety items, we estimate the costs to be £20,500 plus VAT (£24,600). This assumes outside contractors are used for all of the works, if inhouse maintenance staff are used the costs will be reduced.

The planned maintenance programme includes for costings for an annual inspection / servicing of the fire alarm, fire extinguishers, electrical installation. If you already have contracts in place the cost estimates can be adjusted accordingly.

Recommend works in year 1 include: main roof repairs; gutters and downpipes; external walls repointing; external joinery; lead lined parapet gutter; Load bearing masonry wall with a mixture of solid brickwork in Flemish bond and cavity brickwork, mixture of brick headers and timber lintels, exposed timber wall plate with mortar and lead capping to north and west sides; painted timber casement windows to north elevation of main hall.

Recommendations from the report for the 10-year maintenance plan will be reviewed and feed in to the buildings 10-and 30-year plans for budgeting 2025-26.

29.4.2 **To approve the additional expenditure for the maintenance works to the exterior building. Reserves holds £9k, total cost in region of £17k, additional funding to approve up to £8k from the 10/30 year buildings reserves**

September 2023 Council resolved: subject to the surveyor's recommendations for essential external works that needed to be carried out this year, for officers (the Town Clerk and Building Manager) along with the Cllr Baker, could obtain revised quotes for these works and then engage with a contractor that is a) able to attend to these works this autumn and b) offered best value, so as to ensure the necessary works were addressed as soon as reasonably practicable.

We have now gone out to four contractors, two of which requoted for the works in receipt of the surveyor's report (received late last year), one had previously mostly addressed the issues in the report already and was included in the comparison, and the fourth company was not able to commit until October. Having reviewed the report and quotes, the contractor which best matched the surveyors report and had the range of experience/resources is considered most suitable and cost effective, making the building

water tight, carrying out repointing, brick replacement, new lead work, new window lintel, roofing/tile repairs and felt, dormer window repairs, painting, scaffolding. Based on the quote and information provided in the surveyor's report, the initial £9k in reserves is not sufficient and additional money is needed to complete the works making the building watertight.

The internal works, we have decided to look at this separately, and to go out again for quotes once we have confirmed the works for a new specification. There was quite a bit of variation in the quotes received and as this is not so urgent and to allow some time for the walls to dry out following the external work, we feel this can be represented to Council. Estimated internal costs range £4,000 to £10,000 depending on amount of redecoration to the Hall including ceiling, and if utilise existing cupboards or replace.

Do Members confirm the additional expenditure to enable the needed external maintenance repair works of up to £8k using the 10/30 year buildings maintenance reserve for Rickards Hall. Total funding from 10/30 year buildings reserves would be up to £17k.

Do Members support, Finance Committee consider in its budgeting for 2025-26 to include a budget allowance specifically to replenish the building reserves?

- 29.4.3 **To approve additional exterior works to include joinery repairs and repainting of the dormer windows whilst scaffolding is up, expenditure of £750 (included in above total)**
As the contractor will be have the scaffolding for the roof and dormer repairs, it makes sense to have these painted at the same time. Additional cost for this £750. The quote currently allows for four windows to be repainted and repairs, excluding the dormers.

Do Members support the additional £750 for the two dormer window joinery and repaint?

- 29.4.4 **To confirm the appointment of the Contractor to carry out the external repair works to Rickards Hall**
Cllr Baker, the Head Groundsman and myself, have viewed all the quotes received last year, and this year. Having drawn-up a comparison of costs, and considering the recommendations from the surveyors report, it was agreed that only one contractor had met the criteria and provided a quote suitable to address the external works, as reference above (items 29.4.1-29.4.3). The contractor is available to start from 14 June, which fits around Rickards Hall bookings; they would expect the works completed within four-weeks.

Do Members approve the appointment of the recommended contractor, RJH Builders (South East) Ltd for the external maintenance repair works to Rickards Hall?

- 29.4.5 **To approve the expenditure for replacement fire shutter to kitchen/main hall hatch, and expenditure of £3,071.20**
The 5-yearly fire safety inspections (February 2023) for Rickards Hall picked up the lack of working fire shutter between the kitchen and hall. This had also been picked up on the annual health and safety monitoring visits previously. Attached is a copy of the RA report and quote. 2023-24 moved £2,500 to the earmarked 10/30 year building reserves towards a new shutter. The balance could be funded from Building general maintenance/repair costs (code 2065), budget allowed £2,500. Any overspend to budget would note this expense.

Do Members approve the expenditure of £3,071 for a new replacement fire shutter to kitchen/main hall hatch, using £2,500 from reserve and balance from maintenance

repairs budget?

Annex 11: 23 02 extract RA re Rickards shutter.pdf

29.4.6 **To approve the expenditure of £1,145 for a replacement automatic filled water boiler/urn**

The mains fed hot water boiler/urn in the kitchen has broken and is leaking water. As an interim measure we purchased a portable 8L urn. However, the mains fed boiler/urn is safer

There are three main types of water boilers used for catering and hospitality. Automatic fill boilers, manual fill boilers (urns) and electric airpots. The later two require manual filling, switch on/off.

Automatic Fill Water Boiler/urn

These are directly plumbed into a mains water connection and as such, are kept in a static location such as behind the counter, provide instant hot water and are safer as they are not at risk at being moved for manual filling, or forgotten to be switched off.

Manual Fill Water Boiler/urn and Electric Airpots

These are both manual fill water boilers (sometimes called tea urns), are portable units, ideal for mobile catering or sites with limited access to a mains water connection. Electric airpots are the smallest type (aside from commercial kettles). Both of these need to be switched on/off before and after use. Also limited for larger functions.

Having been using a portable 8L manual water fill urn for the past couple of months, we have found the users have struggled with filing, and has been left on when we have been checking the hall (despite labels and notices).

This expense would be allocated to budget for building maintenance and repair costs (code 2065).

Do Members support the expenditure of £1,145 for a replacement automatic filled water boiler/urn and installation for Rickards Hall?

If the water boiler is not replaced, there will still be costs to remove and close off the water source, to make safe.

29.5 **Chairman's Reception 2024**

At the March meeting, Members supported a Chairman's Reception for 2024. Budget for Community misc/Chairman's Reception/PR is £1,200 (code 1020).

How do Members want to proceed? Do you consider a summer or winter reception? Does the Chairman want to them the event again, for example 2022 was a thank you to organisations helping with dementia and elderly care.

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

30.1 **Pension Scheme Review: Recommendation from Personnel Committee to continue with the Kent Pension Scheme (re Council December 2019, to investigate alternative schemes on triennial basis)**

The Council is part of the Kent Local Government Pension scheme. The employer contribution rate last year and this year is 23.9%, with employee rates ranging from 5.5% to 6.8% (higher contributions dependant on pay level). In November 2019, Personnel Committee proposed to Council if consideration could be given to review the pension

scheme and asked if research into private schemes could be considered for new employees. Council's December meeting, concluded that there was no opportunity for the Town Council to ask to join a scheme designed for employees of commercial organisations. However, it was agreed that as pension legislation changes it would be worth reviewing on a triennial basis. Below is a link to the Council minutes and discussion - item 11.2.2.

NB: Eligibility for auto-enrolment - aged between 22 and State Pension age, and earns £10,000 a year or more. Under these rules employees must be put into a pension scheme and have money paid in to their pension pots on a regular basis.

Personnel Committee considered at it April meeting, and resolved to make recommendation to full Council to continue with Kent Pension Scheme, but to keep on a triennial review for each council term to confirm or review.

Do Members support and confirm recommendation by Personnel Committee, to continue with Kent Pension Scheme, but to keep on a triennial review for each council term to confirm or review?

30.2 **Doggetts Barn lift - to approve the expenditure of of £1,589 to replace defective gear unit**

The office lift has for some time been a regular fault on the quarterly service reports (past 3-4 years). Engineers have done what they can to keep it going, but the advice now is it needs to be replaced. The works would be to: attend site to carry out a total strip down of the equipment and re-pack with grease/lubricant where required as recommended due to the 'worm drive' being noisy. Upon completion the lift will be returned to normal service. This would be a further cost to building maintenance and repair costs (code 2065). (With other expenditure, this would put expenditure to code 2065 over budget spend of £805.20).

Do Members approve the expenditure of £1,589 for a replacement gear unit to the lift in Doggetts Barn?

30.3 **Health and Safety review of Council policies (as checked and confirmed Worknest April 2024)**

These would normally be attached to the papers as draft (confidential) documents, until approved and then published on the the websites. However, as there are 72 pages and 69 pages documents respectively, and no changes to the previous version (mentioned on page 3 of the H&S Policy Manual) , I have uploaded on the website as drafts (to be approved); links to access are below - Council polices/scroll down to Health & Safety.

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

30.3.1 **Health & Safety Policy Manual - To receive and confirm**
Do Members confirm the Health and Safety Policy Manual for 2024?

30.3.2 **Health and Safety Employee Handbook - To receive and confirm**
Do Members confirm the Health and Safety Employee Handbook for 2024?

30.3.2.1 **To confirm the Health and Safety Policy Statement for 2024/25**
See page 2 of Handbook.

Do Members confirm the H&S Policy Statement?

30.3.2.2 **To confirm the Environmental Policy Statement**
See page 3 of Handbook.

Do Members confirm the Environmental Policy Statement?

30.4 **Pavilion - requests from the Rugby Club:**

30.4.1 **To approve need for new heating and option for caged unit(s) on outside of Pavilion building**

The Rugby Club has said that the current heating system is not fit for purpose, is expensive and now no longer works. They have investigated options and started fundraising for a new heat pump system. The units can be fitted inside or outside, but externally fitted frees up internal space and their contractor has recommended to have them outside. *See the attached datasheet.*

Buildings Manager has met with the Rugby Club to discuss the units. The Pavilion already has a unit fitted on the side of building closest to the football pitches. The proposal would be to have the caged units fitted one each either side of the Pavilion, or alternatively at the rear of the building. The noise levels are consider low, and would only be on when the Pavilion is open.

There is a question regarding the Lease which is covered under the Lease item 33.1 (*confidential item*). However, Council is asked to consider the below and provide permission for the the following:

Do Members support the need to replace the heating system? Do Member support the recommendations by the Rugby Club, who are funding the new system?

Do Members support the units to fitted externally on the Pavilion building?

Do Members want to consider engaging its own heating engineer for survey report with recommendations, and the expenditure of between £400-600, prior to any changes to the Club making any changes to the heating?

[Annex 12: MXM-A_Datasheet_UKPLEN22-1135_final.pdf](#)

30.5 **To receive a request from the Bonfire Society for free hire of Rickards Hall for its presentation evening (29 November)**

The Bonfire Society has previously used Rickards Hall for presentation events. All local organisations and groups are charged for the hire of Rickards Hall, as the Hall is an income source for the Council and the Hall itself does have considerable overheads. The Council does receive several requests each year for free use of its facility, Council considers these on a case by case.

How do Members want to proceed?

31 **To ratify the annual Service Level Agreement grants for 2024**

The Service Level Agreement (SLA) grants are considered during the budgeting process each year. Each SLA has to submit progress reports which are reported and circulated to Members. Council nominates councillor representation on to each group/organisation also. The expenditure is usually ratified at the July Council meeting, but one organisation has requested if this could be brought forward.

31.1 **Eden Valley Museum £6,500**

Do Members confirm the budgeted SLA agreement for the Eden Valley Museum and grant of £6,500?

The Museum has £3,266 of outstanding invoices with the Council since March 2023. The Museum has asked for evidence of the calculation of some of the charges relating to BeSure Security Systems. This was provided with each invoice, and we are currently preparing records of these to present again. They have not refused to pay these, just there has been some changes in personnel and they are checking the details. In addition, they are in arrears with one rental payment £1,115 (3 of 4 rent payments made - Oct/Dec/March)

The Museum has requested payment of SLA funds for 2024 as soon as possible.

To note: the Lease renewal is due March 2025, and would be timely to review the details of the SLA together. A quote for the new draft Lease will be presented to Council at its July meeting.

Do Members approve release of 2024 SLA award of £6,500?

31.2

HOUSE £9,000

This is usually paid mid way in to the financial year, and on receipt of an invoice request.

Do Members confirm the budgeted SLA agreement for HOUSE and grant of £9,000?

32

Consultations

None.

In view of the confidential nature of Agenda Items 33, 33.1, 33.2, 33.3, 33.4, 34 to be discussed, the Chairman will move that the press and public be excluded from the Chamber. Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972 s100 and 102.

33

[CONFIDENTIAL] Legal matters updates:

Confidential item omitted from public papers.

33.1

[CONFIDENTIAL] Pavilion Lease - to consider legal costs for an amendment in view of the proposed new heating system

Confidential item omitted from public papers.

33.2 **[CONFIDENTIAL] To ratify use of solicitor for cemetery matters**
Confidential item omitted from public papers.

33.3 **[CONFIDENTIAL] Forge Singers Lease**
Confidential item omitted from public papers.

33.4 **[CONFIDENTIAL] Update on unauthorised access/gates on to Council land**
Confidential item omitted from public papers.

34 **[CONFIDENTIAL] To give retrospective permission for Ashes which have been interred at Blossoms Park**
Confidential item omitted from public papers.

35 **Date of next meeting - 01 July**