

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

Notice is hereby given of an Open Spaces Meeting to be held in Rickards Hall on 22 July 2024 at 7:30 pm, which Councillors are summonsed to attend.

Town Clerk
17 July 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

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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 3 June 051/1-8**

 Open Spaces | 03 June 2024 v.1 - Minutes (Pages 2023-051/1-8)

5 **To Receive Analysis of Receipts and Payments to 16 July 2024**

Attached is a copy of the income and expenditure for the first quarter (April-June plus some July expenditure). To note:

3016 - Other staff costs: include £140 for training to be credited back (awaiting refund)
3141 - Annual Maintenance: £1238 for skate park repairs (includes one invoice £590 was for works December 2023, invoice date February but for some reason not processed in 2023-24)
3145 - 30 year maintenance plan: some of the UKPN costs have been processed to enable the replacement column programme
3070 - OS Vehicles: includes new Kubota (£25k); insurance and fuel re tractor supply

Do Members have any further comments?

6 **To Ratify Operational Decisions for Open Spaces Activity**

To ratify the expenditure for the replacement slates for the bowland picnic bench at Stangrove Park following having been set alit in May, total cost £327.98 plus vat.

To ratify the £327.98 for replacement slates for the picnic bench, from the vandalism budget?

 Annex 1: 240718 updated Financial Budget Comparison.pdf

7 **Correspondence**

7.1 **To receive a request from a resident to consider using their falconry pest control services to manage pigeons and seagulls in Edenbridge**

A resident contacted the Council recently 'offering a pigeon and seagulls deterrent service aiming to make the pigeons and seagulls into thinking areas and Edenbridge are not safe

areas to find food or roost up at night or nesting sites'. He says that there would be no culling as his birds would act as a deterrent. He asks for Council/Committee to consider his offer.

The Town Council has responsibility for its sites and property but does not have any jurisdiction over the wider sites and properties in Edenbridge. My understanding to be able to use birds of prey to manage seagulls or other bird populations a licence would need to be obtained. This licence covers situations where the Secretary of State is satisfied that there is no other satisfactory solution as regards the species and purposes that this licence covers. It has worked with Natural England and taken advice.

This licence allows an 'authorised person' to carry out activities in relation to certain species of 'wild birds'. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (section 27/1) says authorised person" means (a) the owner or occupier, or any person authorised by the owner or occupier, of the land on which the action authorised is taken; (b) any person authorised in writing by the local authority for the area within which the action authorised is taken. From this, I consider Kent County Council would be the local authority who could potentially consider this. However, there are restrictions on the types of birds that can be targeted and purposes of preventing serious damage to crops, fisheries and some business property. (For example, wood pigeons can only be controlled for livestock and crops.)

In 2019, "Wild Justice" successfully won a legal challenge against Natural England, making them review the way they interpret legislation when it comes to Gull management. This has resulted in no licences being issued. The [Secretary of State GL42 licence](#), this is a general licence (valid to December 2025) to permit the killing of certain wild birds (gulls are not included on the list). Whilst the resident says his birds would only be a deterrent and would not cull the birds, measures of reassurance would need to be given.

There are pest control companies that do offer bird control/deterrent services, but I believe these are on specific sites/buildings. It is also not clear if the resident is offering this service free or to be paid. (The resident's email correspondence was circulated to Member for information in June.)

My advice (Town Clerk's) recommendation is not to proceed with this.

How do Members want to proceed?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wild-birds-licence-to-kill-or-take-to-prevent-serious-damage-gl42/gl42-general-licence-to-kill-or-take-certain-species-of-wild-birds-to-prevent-serious-damage#fn:6>

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/section/27>

8

Head Groundsman's Report

Routine seasonal work

- Grass cutting, all sites
- Weed treatment
- Maintaining planters through town, including Doggetts barn. and beds in cemetery
- Topping up sunken graves
- Rose pruning
- Flail mowing water meadows and town field
- Pruning of shrubs and bushes

The team has started marking out the football pitches at the Recreation Ground for the coming season. This will be completed over the coming weeks as and when the Rugby Club request them.

Following the felling of some trees along the railway line at Nomads/Mwshurst we have acquired a substantial amount of wood chips which we will use across our various pathways

and flower beds ect.

The annual large scale selective weed spraying took place last week on the Council's sports pitches at Nomads, Blossoms and the Recreation Ground.

The team has been painting the Council's street furniture including the bollards in the Market Yard car park, as well as some benches and various posts around town.

I have now carried out the summer headstone check and any stones needing attention have been reported.

The team repaired the fire damaged bench at Stangrove park.

The in-house summer tree survey has now been completed and a programme of works set for the grounds team. We are also working through recommendations from our 2-yearly external tree survey with any work outside of our remit being passed on to local contractors for quotations.

8.1 **To approve the expenditure of £526 for a new backpack blower**

Following a recent theft from vehicle, a new blower is required (this was reported to the Police and CCTV checked). This would come from vandalism budget 3110 budget £3k. The options include a handheld or backpack, but the backpack is preferred RRP £657.50, supplier can provide for £526. (The handheld option is slightly cheaper at £328.)

Do Members support the expenditure a new replacement blower of £526 for a new Stihl backpack blower?

8.2 **To approve the expenditure of £168 for a replacement air compressor**

To replace the broken air pressor there are two options: Draper 24 litre Compressor £130.00 + vat; or Draper 24 litre oil free Compressor £168.00 + vat. Budget 3040 replacement Equipment and Tools budget £7k; remaining £5,550.

Do Members approve the expenditure of £168.00 for Draper 24 litre oil free Compressor?

8.3 **To approve the expenditure of £540 for a Chainsaw Maintenance & Cross cutting course for the apprentice, plus expenditure for protective clothing budget £250**

The grounds apprentice apprenticeship training at Plumpton College does not include chainsaw training. This would be a benefit to the groundstaff team to have an extra skilled person with a chainsaw licence, and Kai is keen to do this. We have set a proviso that he needs to pass his Pesticide PA1 training and certificate first which is a requirement of the apprenticeship.

The course will require necessary protective clothing to be provided: Forestry Helmet (EN 397) with ear muffs and mesh visor; Chainsaw Protective Trousers (pr EN 381-5) Type A front leg protection or Type C all-round leg protection; Safety Boots with chainsaw protection to BS EN ISO 20345:2004 and bearing a shield depicting a chainsaw to show compliance with EN381-3 (toe cap - EN 345 Chainsaw protection pr EN 345 part 2). Chainsaw gloves (EN381-7). Estimated budget £250.

Do Members approve the training expenditure of £540 for chainsaw maintenance and cross cutting, (includes registration and assessment fee £144 and training fee £396), plus necessary protective clothing and a budget of £250.

9 **To receive the 2-yearly tree inspection report and approve the expenditure for**

recommended tree works, the annual maintenance budget allowed £4,320

Attached (confidential) is a copy of the 2-yearly tree report. The Head Groundsman is currently working through this report and obtaining quotes from the tree surgery contractor we use. One tree has been felled, as recommended for emergency works, £800.

A resident has also been in touch regarding a tree that overhangs their property. The tree report has not identified this tree for work, but there are some dead branches and the tree surgery contractor will be asked to look at these two trees and make a recommendation.

Subject to the contractors report and quotes, it is asked that Committee approves for the Head Groundsman and Town Clerk to approve the necessary tree works, using the annual budgeted (code 3141) tree works allowance of up to £4320. It is noted that £800 for emergency works has been used, but this is covered already within other maintenance plan works.

Do Members have any questions, and do you support the proposal to authorise the Head Groundsman and Town Clerk to approve the necessary tree works, using the budgeted tree works allowance of up to £4320?

🔒 Confidential Annex 2 (omitted from public documents):

10

Open Spaces Business

Recruitment for the Open Spaces Officer unfortunately did not result in an appointment. We have however received two interests, but I have decided to re-advertise and will consider all applications together and selecting for interviews in early to mid September. The role may also be reviewed and will be discussed with Personnel. In the meantime, the Town Clerk and Head Groundsman continue to monitor and implement necessary works, with help of office staff and minutes officer (temp).

Byelaws update: The report requested by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) renamed to the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG), has been written to submit over the next week or so. Once the Byelaws have been approved, we will look at updating all signage across Council sites.

High Street street furniture 4-year repaint: Following approval for the expenditure of this works from the 10-year maintenance plan, works started on Tuesday 16 July. (This has been posted on the Council Facebook page.)

Kubota: Following Committee approval at April meeting, this has now been received, insured and is in use.

Market Yard car park - surface and drain repairs: These works approved at last meeting have been completed.

Pavilion replacement windows and new electric shutters update: These works took place during the first two weeks of July, and they look great. The Buildings Manager (Criag), and myself met the contractor to go through some minor snagging issues which are being rectified. Link below to website post. The guttering and pipework will need repainting; this will be costed and presented to Council.

Playground Inspections: The annual playground inspections for council sites are booked and expected to take place in August.

Pound Green: SES Water has been undertaking pipe replacement works along Lingfield Road. Following investigation of rerouting and connection via other water connections, they had contacted the Council to advise that it will be required to lay a small section of water main through Pound Green (approx. 4m in length across the narrower section of the land). We have already advised SES Water that Pound Green used to be a pond, and that there is a large oak tree at the north/west corner on Crouch House Road section. We have been told that no works

will take place under the canopy area of the tree. A letter will be sent reiterating this and request to ensure the site is made good. At the moment, these works are pencilled for September 2024 and are expected to last 10 working days.

Seesaw replacement, Stangrove Playground: Approved September and April Committee. New replacement glow worm seesaw and wetpour surfacing has been ordered. We are expecting delivery and works to start soon.

Saturday Waste Freighter collections - feedback: The collections, funded by Council, on 22 June, seem to go well – there were no complaints to the Council office, though we have been advised of some waste being left at a couple of sites in advance. SDC provided two freight vehicles this time and for usual four locations: Church Street (9.15-9.45 am), Skeynes Road (10.00-10.30 am), Stangrove Park (10.45-11.15), and Spitals Cross (11.30-12 noon).

Next collection is booked for October and will be published 2-3 weeks in advance.

Stangrove Park new planting programme: Last Committee meeting approved to proceed with the low-cost project to create suitable flower beds at the frontage of Stangrove Park. Due to other work, preparation works hope to start in the autumn ready for the bulbs to flower spring time.

🔗 <https://www.edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk/recreation-ground-pavilion-enhanced-with-new-windows-and-shutters/>

10.1 **To receive the Burial Report**

Burials and ashes for:

June: 0

July: 1 burial

Cemetery activities the past two months have include ashes bookings for August (triple fees) and November, Wall of Remembrance booking, enquires for the cemeteries and catching on the filing and updating the manual books.

10.2 **Cemetery matters**

10.2.1 **To receive the periodic Memorial Safety Inspections**

To note: The Head Groundsman has carried out a recent check of the memorials . Identified was:

Churchyard: One headstone with a big crack, it has been laid down for safety

Cemeteries 1&2: nothing to report

Cemetery 3: One headstone with movement - Grant of Right holder has been contacted

10.2.2 **To receive an update on Memorials in the cemeteries which are not compliant with Memorial Regulations**

Outstanding Memorial issues: A further recent inspection of the cemeteries identified 15 Memorials not compliant with the regulations; a few of these are ongoing cases where contact has already been made, and some others were new ones with excessive planting being the main issue. The office is in the process of preparing and sending out further letters to Grant of Right (GOR) holders with memorials who are in breach of the memorial regulations having expanded the permitted size, area, and/or placed photos, badges, artificial flowers/plants and other items. Staff shortages and other projects is slowing this work. The Council's solicitor is assisting with advice on certain issues, with letters being issued in certain cases.

Work on the new signage has started. Once this has been finalised and installed, we will

then look to clear the artificial flowers which are not permitted.

Do Members have any further comments?

10.2.3

To receive two separate requests for a Memorial Headstones

Two separate requests have been received for memorial headstones, both fit within the permitted measurements 1.07cm height, 76 cm width, 30 cm plinth depth. However, they are both of a different style to other examples already in the cemeteries and are therefore being put to Committee to consider if they are suitable and meet the requirements of headstone memorials.

The rule book says:

(20) All requests for memorials must be approved in advance by the Burial Authority and **considered by it to be within the character of the Cemetery.**

(22) All monuments shall be constructed in a manner and of materials to be approved by the Burial Authority.....

(24) Approval will not be given for any memorial which bears a photographic or other image of the deceased, or parts of the deceased such as hand or footprints, nor for the use of bright coloured grave toppings etc.

(25) On grave spaces all monuments shall be erected centrally at the head, fixed upright and level, on to suitable stone or concrete on the correct grave space.

For information: Memorial headstones with either an engraving on the memorial stone itself, or with a small angel which is a small addition to the headstone, would potentially be considered in keeping but only because a precedence exists for such a memorial (approx. 1995). Anything larger is not in keeping with the visual harmony of the lawn cemeteries three and four.

Members are asked to consider:

Resident 1 request: The initial request was turned down by officers as was for statue style memorial with an inserted memorial tablet (the rule book allows for memorial headstones and tablets, not for statue like monuments). The resident has come back and asked for the decision to be reconsidered as the proposed memorial would be within in the memorial headstone permitted measurements/size. (Confidential attachment showing image of the type of memorial being requested.)

How do Members want to proceed, do you approve the Memorial request as per the attached example (image 1)?

Resident 2 request: A tapered headstone and pitched edges to create a memorial reminiscent of a traditional boulder. The resident is looking for something more natural in appearance rather than uniformed in material and shape. (Confidential attachment showing image of the type of memorial being requested.)

How do Members want to proceed, do you approve the Memorial request as per the attached example (image2)?

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

Confidential Annex 3 (omitted from public documents):

Confidential Annex 4 (omitted from public documents):

10.3

Allotment matters & updates

10.3.1

To approve the expenditure of £2,300 for new replacement doors to stores/garage at the Forge Croft Allotments

It has been known for quite some time that the main storage building at the Forge Croft Allotments is not secure as the doors are old and damaged, and the timbers holding the current doors are rotted. We have received three options to replace and make secure:

Option a) Solid gates with new steel frame, powder coated, slave door to have shoot bolt, main door to have dead lock. Supply and fit £2350.00 plus vat

Option b) Remove rotting timbers to allow for new shutter to be fitted externally. Remove and dispose of double doors. Supply and fit 1no Extruded Aluminium Shutter, externally installed to face of brickwork, full Canopy included. Operation by single phase tubular motor, wired back to a suitable live supply, *pre-installed by others prior to install*. C/w Keyswitch, safety brake, manual override included. PPC Green (Stocked RAL), Overall 2880mm (W) x 2095mm (H). Supply and fit £2546.40 plus vat.

NB: There would be additional cost for 13amp fused spur to be installed by electrician.

Option c) Same as option b (aluminium shutter), but to be manual push up and pull-down c/w ground lock. Supply and fit £ 2300.00 plus vat.

This works have not been budgeted for in the 10 year buildings or open spaces maintenance plan at all, so would be an overspend to either budget code: 3140 (budget £19,244), or central services 2062 (£8,770). It is proposed to put this to CS 2062.

How do Members want to proceed? So Members support option C, and to be funded from the buildings 10-year maintenance plan?

10.4 **To receive an update on the Annual Works Programme**

Nothing additional to add since June meeting, that hasn't already been reported in these papers. Routine annual works are being worked through.

Works on the annual schedule for later in the year, will be reported back to future committee including Blossoms Park - skate park chainlink fencing replacing. Budget £5,600. MYCP and Rec car park annual gully posts empty to schedule in autumn.

10.5 **Vandalism report**

Skate Park panel removed from the framework - groundstaff repaired and replaced. Stangrove Park picnic bench has had all slates replaced following being set alit in May.

There has been some minor graffiti on noticeboards, cleaned by Community Warden.

10.6 **Gardening Competition**

Due to the slow start to the summer, the closing date has been extended to 22 July.

reminder: Neil Miller, Head Gardener for Hever Castle is our guest speaker and present the prizes to the winners at a special afternoon awards presentation on Monday 2 September, 4.00 - 6.00 pm. The Community Warden (CW) and Planning and Admin Officer (P&AO) have secured some fabulous prizes including days out at Penshurst Place, Wakehurst Place, cinema tickets and other local attractions as well as some vouchers. This year's Edenbridge Garden's In Bloom competition categories are: allotment, front & back garden, youth/school groups, young gardener, window boxes & hanging baskets, and the strangest/unique space to create a colourful display.

Judges are: Cllrs Baker, Layland and McArthur.

Please confirm to Debbie if you can attend the award presentation.

10.7 **Summer Family Fun Days**

Reminder: Family Fun Days are run by Play Place, one session is funded by SDC and three funded by the Town Council. Activities provided include everything from crafts and games to sports and face painting in a friendly, safe environment for children up to 12-years old, and must always be supervised by a parent or guardian.

The Town Council is also funding an extra activity, we have invited back Mr Hiccup as is very popular with the children with his magic and balloon modelling.

Dates for Edenbridge, Thursdays in August, 2.00 - 5.00 pm Stangrove Park: 1st (with Mr Hiccup); 8th (funded by SDC); 15th, and 22nd. Details are included in the July/August edition of the newsletter (Edenbridge Magazine) and will be on Facebook page.

10.8 **Open Spaces sites visit/inspection date**

Unfortunately, I had to cancel July's councillors walkabout (it also rained heavily on that date). Proposed date Wednesday 18 September, 10 am meet at the Recreation Ground Pavilion.

All councillors are invited and asked to confirm by email your attendance.

11 **Streetlights maintenance plan and works update**

11.1 **Update on proposals for 2024-25 replacement programme**

The confirmed replacement programme 2024-25 (budget £45k) now has a total spend of £36,606, reported June meeting. UKPN are expecting to undertake its work to streetlights 25 Church Street, 31, 33 and 32 Croft Lane, 109 and 111 MYCP, 118 and 117 Marsh Green Road on 9, 10 and 11 September. 120 and 122 Marsh Green Road has a road closure so will need to be booked separately so are tbc. Streetworks work on these columns will be similar period.

Do Members have any questions?

11.2 **To consider adding to 2024-25 replacement programme streetlight 110 between toilets & old Natwest Bank and using the surplus funding from this year's programme**

Presented to full Council at its July meeting an update on the proposals for UK Shared Prosperity Fund (via SDC) funding for a project for the Market to utilise the access road from the High Street creating an additional space and new archway. Part of this would require streetlight 110 set in the centre of the bollards near the access road and toilets, proposed to move about 4metres near to the noticeboard. Council support the proposal subject to the costs from UKPN and Streetlights. These are yet to be confirmed.

The proposal would be to fund from the the replacement programme for 2024-25 surplus £6,394 due to other street lights not viable to proceed. Committee last month, suggested holding this money back to see what may come up in terms of the replacement programme or for LED conversions.

Details of costs to relocate and replace column 110 will be presented to Council September meeting to approved.

Do Members have any questions?

12 **Health & Safety Audit July 2024**

12.1


Stangrove Pond: To approve a budget of £800 for the expenditure for two new lifebouy rings, housing station and posts and approx. £200 for new signage

Following the Health & Safety audit in July, the H&S Inspector visited the open spaces and has made several recommendations, which will be presented in a full report to Council in September. However, Council was picked up on safety at the Stangrove Park pond, suggesting the existing throw ropes were not sufficient, and only proved emergency coverage for part of the pond. The strong recommendation was that there should be at least two life ring stations, one either side of the pond, plus improved signage and instructions. Initial quotes for two lifebouy rings (two sizes) with housing box/station and posts is approx. £800. The housing box/station is not a necessity but would provide added protection against vandalism and misuse.

Signage costs will depend on the size and fittings, but propose signage on dibond displayed either on the life boy post, or on metal lecterns (already have stock) or between two wood posts. A budget of £200 is proposed.

This would need to be funded from 3080 contingencies (budget £3k) or small projects 3100 (£2,500).

How do Members want to proceed? Do Members approve the expenditure of up to £800 for two lifebouy rings and stations, plus signage of approx.£200?

 Confidential Annex 5 (omitted from public documents):


13

To consider permitting a children's fun fair for two weeks - 20 August to 3 September

The company that provided the Children's Fun Fair (24 May - 2 June) has asked if they could come back at the end of August. A reminder that when they were here, the children's fair was well received by the community, we had no issues, and they were accommodating with arrangements to protect the ground at Stangrove Park.

It would be the same rides as last time, but laid out differently with some new games, stalls and marquees. A link with images of their current set-up to provide an idea of the new layout has been provided below. See below link. Fees charged were £998.29 for fun fairs plus deposit against damages£1k.

How do Members want to proceed?

 <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1x7EI3osJ9xhE2xCmZN-CktGvspTsjwEK>

14

News Release

15

Date of next meeting - 16 September 2024