Edenbridge Town Council

EDENBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Town Clerk: Caroline Leet

Open Spaces | 09 November 2026 | Short Agenda (Excludes Confidential Items) | v:1

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

Notice is hereby given of an Open Spaces Meeting to be held in Rickards Hall on 9 November 2026 at 7:30 pm, which Councillors are summonsed to attend.

Town Clerk
4 November 2026

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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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.

Members are reminded to the Code of Conduct, and Appendix B - Registering interests and nonparticipation.

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 o f the meeting.

4 **To receive, approve and sign the minutes of the Open Spaces Meeting held on 21 September 2026 (pages 2023-152/1-7).**
Open Spaces | 21 September 2026 v.1 - Minutes (Pages 2023-152/1-7)

5 **To Receive Analysis of Receipts and Payments to 4 November 2026**
Attached is a copy of the income and expenditure from 1 April to 4 November 2026. To note:

Income:

325 Sundry Receipts - £2,965.66 generated from children's fair in May. The fair did not return in August.

305 Cemetery Fees - Income below target currently.

311 Markets Rents - Income slightly above target to date.

Expenditure:

3029 Bulky Waste Collection - Service cancelled by SDC.

3110 OS Vandalism - Underspend in 26/27 to date.
Annex 1: financereport.pdf (click to download).

6 **To Ratify Operational Decisions for Open Spaces Activity**
An Arboricultural Assessment was required by the planning validation department at SDC to support the bandstand planning application. This was booked for 6 November totalling £545.00 excluding VAT.

Members are asked to ratify the expenditure of £545.00 plus VAT.

7 **Correspondence**

8 **Facilities Manager Report**
Routine seasonal maintenance has continued across the Council's open spaces. This has included weed treatment, maintenance of the town's planters, including those at Doggetts Barn, and the flower beds within the cemetery. The team has also been topping up sunken graves,

pruning shrubs and bushes, marking out sports pitches, grass cutting and watering where required.

The autumn pitch renovation programme was carried out at the end of September. Works included light scarification and the application of 100 tonnes of top dressing across the Council's football and rugby pitches at the Recreation Ground and Nomads. These improvements have been made possible through grant funding received from the Football Association (FA) and continue to enhance the quality, condition and year-round playability of the Council's sports pitches.

I am currently undertaking the Council's annual Portable Appliance Testing (PAT). This involves carrying out earth continuity and insulation resistance tests, alongside visual inspections, to ensure that electrical appliances remain safe for use.

The team has commenced the installation of additional security fencing at Forge Croft Allotments, following recommendations made by the relevant authorities in response to ongoing security concerns. The works are progressing well and are expected to be completed within the coming days.

A new security gate has been installed at Market Yard Car Park, between the public toilet block and the Band Hall. This provides an additional level of security for the Council's storage cupboard while also creating a secure storage area for the Market Yard bins.

The team has now completed the renovation of the new community garden area on the High Street. The project has involved both hard and soft landscaping, together with the installation of new street furniture. These improvements have significantly enhanced the appearance of the area, and we have received numerous positive comments from local businesses and members of the public.

With winter approaching, preparations are underway for the Council's seasonal tree maintenance programme. This will include the removal of minor deadwood, ivy clearance and other necessary maintenance works. Any trees identified as dead or dangerous will be assessed and appropriate action taken. Where suitable, timber and cuttings will be retained on site to create wildlife habitats, supporting biodiversity across the Council's open spaces.

The team has also recently planted a new section of hedging at the Recreation Ground to replace an existing hedge that had become heavily overgrown with ivy and subsequently collapsed earlier in the year. The new planting will help restore the boundary and improve the overall appearance of the area as it establishes.

Following the success of the grass pitch maintenance grant, we are now exploring the possibility of applying for further grant funding towards the purchase of grounds maintenance machinery. Additional equipment would provide considerable benefits to the ongoing maintenance and improvement of the Council's sports pitches, helping the team maintain high standards more efficiently. We hope to provide Members with a further update on this opportunity at the next meeting.

8.1 **To consider additional 25m of extra fencing to discourage trespassing at Forge Croft Allotments and the expenditure of up to £650.00**

Members are reminded that, at the June meeting, approval was given for the installation of additional fencing at Forge Croft Allotments, at a cost of £632.14.

This followed a request from the Edenbridge Allotment Gardens Association (EAGA) Plot Officer, who had met with Kent Police in May to discuss ongoing issues of trespass and vandalism at the site.

Following this meeting, it was recommended that an additional run of 1.8m-high chestnut paling fencing be installed approximately 60cm inside the existing boundary fence, along the

area currently being used to gain unauthorised access from Skinners Farm.

During installation, it became apparent that a further 25 metres of fencing would be required to complete the works and adequately secure the site.

The additional fencing would cost up to £650.00, which can be funded from the Council's Small Projects budget.

Do Members confirm to approve the installation of additional fencing at the Forge Croft allotments and the expenditure of £650.00?

9 **Open Spaces Business**

9.1 **To receive the Burial Report**
September: 1 burial; 0 ashes interments.

October: 0 burial; 0 ashes interment.

November to date: 0 burial; 0 ashes interments.

9.2 **South and South East in Bloom (SSEIB) judging results and to consider entries for 2027**
This year the Council submitted four entries, the Open Spaces Officer and another member of the grounds team attended the awards ceremony at Wisley, picking up Gold for Stangrove Park – Parks category; Gold for the Cemeteries category; Silver for Town category; and Silver-Gilt for Millennium Wood – conservation category.

Judges comments to note:

Stangrove Park: Gold - Stangrove Park is an exceptionally well-maintained and highly valued community asset, offering excellent facilities in an attractive and welcoming setting. The judges particularly praised the high standards of horticulture, cleanliness and dedicated maintenance staff. The suggested improvements are relatively minor, with opportunities to further enhance biodiversity and strengthen community involvement, building on the park's already excellent standards.

Cemeteries: Gold - The cemetery is an exceptionally well-maintained and valued community space, offering a peaceful and dignified environment for remembrance. The judges particularly praised the excellent grounds maintenance, healthy trees, biodiversity initiatives and dedication of the staff. The suggested improvements focus on enhancing planting displays and climate resilience, building on the already high standards of care and presentation.

Town/City Centre: Silver - The town is an attractive, clean and well-cared-for environment, benefiting from good horticultural standards, strong heritage features and active community involvement. The judges particularly praised the quality of planting despite difficult weather conditions and the excellent standards of cleanliness. The main opportunities for improvement focus on enhancing planting diversity, improving interpretation signage and, most importantly, better showcasing the valuable work of community groups and volunteers. Strengthening these areas would help ensure future judging entries fully reflect the town’s achievements and community spirit.

Conservation - Millennium Wood: Silver Gilt - Millennium Wood is a valuable, well-maintained community asset offering an enjoyable and educational experience for visitors. The judges praised its accessibility, biodiversity and welcoming atmosphere. Introducing a structured management plan and increasing community involvement would help secure its long-term sustainability and continued success.

Do Members want to continue with the same four categories in 2026/27?

9.3 **To receive the playground inspection reports**

The annual inspection reports for the following sites were carried out in September 2024.

Summary of findings to note:

Stangrove Park playground: Some damage to the bin, bench requires repainting, some surfaces beginning to lift, some paint flaking off metalwork on roundabout and train, loose fixings on springers, damage to basket swing/worn chains. **Risk Factor** - Low risk with some very low risk and 1 moderate risk.

Stangrove Park gym and multi use games area (MUGA): Missing instruction labels for gym equipment, some paint flaking off metalwork, several loose fence posts. **Risk Factor** - Very low risk with some low risk.

Blossoms Park skate park: Bench paintwork worn, bin door not secured, some damage to chain link fence, some unsecured fixings. **Risk Factor** - Low risk with some very low risk.

Recreation Ground playground: Bin door not secured, zip line seat too close to the ground, grass mats underneath spinner and rope swing are silted up, spinner seat damaged, rope swing has some damage, 3 bay swing has some wear on chains/shackles, bolts on the stand up see-saw have come loose, slight damage to side of slide. **Risk Factor** - Low risk, with some very low risk.

Spitals Cross Playground: Some graffiti present, some rot to the wooden bench, some chain wear to swings. **Risk Factor** - mixture of very low and low risk.

All very low and low risk issues identified will be monitored by the Facilities Manager and ground staff, and addressed if necessary along with the one moderate risk.

No inspection carried out on Marsh Green playground as this was in the process of being upgraded.

Do Members have any questions?

9.4 **To receive an update on landscaping works at the former Police Station site and consider proposals for naming the site**

Landscaping works at the former Police Station site have now been completed. The improvements include the installation of new turf, planting around the edges of the site and the erection of a new fence.

At the September meeting, Members supported a proposal to install new handrails at the site. An ETC Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) bid has subsequently been submitted to fund these additional works.

With the main landscaping works now complete, Members are invited to consider a suitable name for the site.

It is proposed that Members put forward suggestions for potential names, from which a shortlist could be agreed. Subject to Members' approval, the shortlisted names would then be put forward for a public vote, allowing residents to have a say in the naming of the newly landscaped area.

Members are asked to:

1. **Put forward suggestions for a suitable name for the site; and**
2. **Determine whether the names should be put forward for a public vote to select the preferred name for the site.**

9.5 **To receive an update on the biannual tree survey**

The Council's biennial tree survey has now been completed, following delays in undertaking the inspection.

Although the formal written report has not yet been received, the surveyor has confirmed that only one tree requires attention, located at Mowshurst.

Once the report has been received, the Open Spaces Officer and the Facilities Manager will review the findings and arrange for any necessary remedial works to be undertaken.

Due to the delays experienced with this year's survey, the Open Spaces Officer will also investigate alternative contractors and obtain quotations for the next biennial survey, with a view to ensuring future inspections are carried out within the required timescales.

Do Members have any questions?

9.6 **Hanging Baskets: To confirm the number of hanging baskets, approve expenditure of up to £6,206 and appoint a contractor for 2027**

The Council has received two quotations for the provision of 58 hanging baskets for 2027:

- **2026 contractor:** £5,504.20, representing an increase of £211.70 on the previous year.
- **Previous contractor (prior to 2026):** £6,206.00.

Committee appointed a new contractor for the 2026 season due to the significant cost saving offered compared with the previous provider.

However, Officers consider that the quality of the hanging baskets supplied in 2026 fell short of the standard achieved in previous years.

The Council office also received several comments regarding the timing of watering, with concerns raised that baskets were being watered during the middle of the day. This was considered less effective due to increased evaporation and resulted in water dripping onto pavements and members of the public.

Members are therefore asked to consider whether the cost saving offered by the current contractor outweighs the concerns raised regarding quality and maintenance, or whether to return to the previous provider for the 2027 season.

Members are asked to:

1. **Confirm 58 hanging baskets to be provided for the 2027 season;**
2. **Determine which contractor to appoint for the 2027 hanging basket provision; and**
3. **Approve expenditure of up to £6,206.00 from the hanging baskets and plants budget.**

9.7 **To confirm the budgeted expenditure of £869.12 for the annual Market Yard Car Park interceptor cleansing**

The Market Yard Car Park (MCYP) interceptor cleansing is due in December. A quote has been received totalling £869.00 (£100 under budget).

Do Members confirm to approve the budgeted expenditure of £869.00 for the annual MYCP interceptor cleansing?

9.8 **To consider and approve repairs to play equipment at Lingfield Road Recreation Ground**

Two items of play equipment at Lingfield Road Recreation Ground require remedial works to ensure they remain safe and operational.

1. Zip Line (Cableway)

The cableway on the zip line has become excessively slack, resulting in the seat no longer travelling along the cable as intended.

The cable requires re-tensioning to restore the equipment to working order. This is a specialist task that cannot be undertaken in-house.

2. Stand-up Seesaw

The stand-up seesaw has become loose in the ground, with fixings also working loose, making the equipment unsafe for use.

The required repairs involve breaking out the existing base, replacing the spring assembly, resetting the unit into the ground and securing it appropriately.

A quotation (attached) has been received from the equipment manufacturer to undertake the necessary repairs to both items, at a total cost of £1,708.50.

Given the nature of the repairs and the specialist work required, it is proposed that the manufacturer be appointed to carry out the works.

Members are asked to:

1. **Approve the necessary repairs to both items of play equipment; and**
2. **Approve expenditure of £1,708.50 and appoint the equipment manufacturer to undertake the works.**

Annex 2: QUOTE 2614598 - Lingfield Rec Ground.pdf (click to download).

10 **Capital Projects**

10.1 **To receive an update on the proposed Bandstand at Stangrove Park**

A planning application for the proposed bandstand at Stangrove Park was submitted in October. However, the application was subsequently returned as invalid, as the Planning Authority's validation team required further clarification regarding the exact location, proposed elevations and overall dimensions of the structure.

With the assistance of architects Turner and Hoskins, the additional information has now been provided and the outstanding queries relating to the proposed structure have been addressed.

The validation team also requested that an Arboricultural Assessment be undertaken to establish whether any existing trees could be affected by the proposed works and to identify any necessary protective measures.

The assessment was carried out on 6 November, and the Council is currently awaiting the formal report.

Once the report has been received, the planning application will be resubmitted with the additional supporting documentation.

10.2 **To receive an update on the new playground at Marsh Green**

The installation of the new playground at Marsh Green was successfully completed in September, with the official opening taking place on 7 October.

The opening was attended by Councillors, Council staff, a representative from the playground supplier, Kompan, and children from Marsh Green Pre-School.

Councillor Baker officially opened the playground, marking the completion of the project. Children attending the event were presented with goody bags to celebrate the occasion.

Since opening, the playground has received very positive feedback, with the new facilities being well received by the local community.

The completion of the playground represents a welcome improvement to the recreational facilities available at Marsh Green, providing an enhanced play area for local children and families.

Do Members have any questions?

11 **To note the submission of a planning application by Edenbridge Cricket Club Ltd for alterations to the car park at Blossoms Park**

The Council has received formal notification from planning consultants acting on behalf of Edenbridge Cricket Club Ltd that a planning application has been submitted to Sevenoaks District Council for works to the car park at the Matthew Cox Community Pavilion, Blossoms Park, Mill Hill, Edenbridge.

The proposed development comprises:

"Resurface and re-organise the existing parking area, together with associated landscaping and boundary treatments."

As Edenbridge Town Council is the sole Trustee of the freehold of the land, the Council has been served with a formal Article 13 Notice under the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), notifying it of the application.

The application is currently awaiting validation by Sevenoaks District Council.

The Article 13 Notice, dated 2 November 2026, advises that any representations from the landowner should be submitted to Sevenoaks District Council by 23 November 2026.

The notification is brought to Members' attention for information at this stage.

Members have any questions?

Annex 3 Confidential annex is omitted from public papers

12 **2026-27 Streetlight programme update**

12.1 **2026-27 Streetlight programme**

November 2025 Committee approved funding for the replacement of the remaining two steel columns and four 1985 concrete columns in 2026-27 through the 30-Year Maintenance Plan. It was also agreed that the replacement of 10 columns on Cedar Drive and Park Avenue would be funded through Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds. In December, the CIL Board approved an award of £40,000 towards the replacement of these 10 concrete columns.

The replacement programme for 2026-27 is detailed below.

Column replacements on Cedar Drive and Park Avenue were due to be complete between 2 and 10 November, However, there has been a fault with the power which needs to be addressed by UKPN. The Cedar Drive and Park Avenue replacements have now been postponed until mid January 2027.

Column No.	Road	UKPN costs £	Streetlights £	Total £	Completion Date

123	Marsh Green	1,992.00	1,515.00		16/10/2026
124	Marsh Green	4,722.00	1,515.00		
10	Cedar Drive	2,110.00	1,515.00		
26	Church Street	1,933.00	1,515.00		10/11/2026
246	Westways	2,110.00	1,515.00		10/11/2026
		12,867.00	**7,575.00**	**20,442.00**	
CIL Funded	**Concrete**				
8	Cedar Drive	1826.00	1,515.00		
9	Cedar Drive	1826.00	1,515.00		
11	Cedar Drive	1826.00	1,515.00		
13	Cedar Drive	1826.00	1,515.00		
14	Cedar Drive	1826.00	1,515.00		
16	Cedar Drive	4522.00	1,515.00		
19	Cedar Drive	1826.00	1,515.00		
155	Park Avenue	1826.00	1,515.00		
158	Park Avenue	4806.00	1,515.00		
		22110.00	**13635.00**	**35,745.00**	

12.2 **To confirm the budget for 2027-28 replacement programme (part of the 30-year maintenance plan)**

The Council's 30-year maintenance has spreads the cost of replacement columns. Each year the Council has been replacing the concrete and older columns.

Outstanding are:

- Concrete columns - 1 column
- Old steel columns (1975s) - 1 column
- Modern (old) steel (1985s) - 16 columns
- Conversion to LED - approx. 100 remaining

The 30-year budget had £30k, this was planned to be one of the higher years (alternates between £25-45K). Due to other budget pressures, and the fact that the vast majority of older columns have been replaced, it is prosed to reduce the streetlight budget for 2027-28 to £20,000. This would cover the replacement of up to four columns, plus approximately 16/17 LED conversions.

Members are asked to:

1. **Consider and approve the proposed reduction in the streetlighting budget for 2027/28 from £30,000 to £20,000;**
2. **Agree that the revised budget be allocated towards replacing the remaining concrete and older steel columns, together with approximately 16/17 LED conversions.**

13 **To consider and approve draft budget recommendations for 2027-28**

The draft Open Spaces budget for 2026/27 has been prepared for Members' review, taking into account anticipated expenditure, operational requirements and the financial pressures facing the Council.

In light of wider budget constraints, Officers have reviewed individual budget headings and proposed reductions where considered appropriate, while ensuring sufficient provision remains for the ongoing maintenance and management of the Council's open spaces.

Proposed reductions include:

- 3110 – Vandalism: Reduced allocation based on anticipated requirements.
- 3016 – Staff Expenses: Reduced allocation to assist with overall budget savings.

Conversely, increases have been proposed in areas where additional funding is considered necessary to meet operational requirements and anticipated costs. These include:

- 3055 – Hanging Baskets and Plants
- 3080 – Contingencies
- 3090 – Subscriptions
- 3070 – Vehicles/Costs/Fuel

The proposed adjustments seek to achieve a balanced and realistic budget while maintaining the Council's open spaces and associated services to an appropriate standard.

Members are asked to:

Review and consider the draft Open Spaces budget for 2026/27 and confirm recommendations to the Finance Committee for consideration as part of the Council's budget-setting process.

Annex 4 Confidential annex is omitted from public papers

14 **News Release**