

Minutes of the Meeting of Eynsford Parish Council held on Thursday 17th June 2021, at Eynsford Village Hall, at 8pm.

8750 PRESENT

Members Present

Mr M Barker
Mrs S Boyle
Mr A Cooke
Mrs W Gee
Mrs F Haxby
Mr G Kirby
Mr M Richardson
Mr P Ward (Chairperson)

Others Present

Mr R Gough, County Councillor (left 9.52pm); Mr A Cheeseman, District Councillor (left 9.07pm); Acting Inspector Pete Ballard, Kent Police (left 9.07pm).
Ten members of the public.

Clerk in Attendance

Mrs H Ivaldi

8751 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

8752 CHAIR'S REMARKS

Mr Ward welcomed everyone and thanked them for their prompt arrival. He apologised for the limited space available.

8753 CLERK'S COMMENTS

None.

8754 GOVERNANCE

a) Declarations of Interest

None.

At this point the Chair inserted agenda item 3 under Community as this was the main reason that most members of the public were attending.

8755 COMMUNITY

c) Policing of Anti-Social Behaviour in Eynsford

Mr Ward welcomed Acting Inspector Pete Ballard to the meeting who had been invited to attend by the parish council.

Mr Ward gave a brief overview of the issues in Eynsford, namely:

- Eynsford has always been a popular destination as a picturesque village accessible from London and Kent, however, busy time bring issues for the area. These have been exacerbated by lockdown with more visitors and fewer facilities.
- Traffic congestion at Riverside with limited parking, and illegal/inconsiderate parking.
- A wide range of anti-social behaviour issues including littering, noise, BBQs.
- Lack of access to public toilets (thanks to the Tea Room for the provision of portaloos).
- Trespass onto private land in the village and damage to the cricket square.
- Disruption and crime committed by some groups from the travelling community affecting individuals and local businesses.

Mr Ward set out the following objectives for the meeting:

- To understand the police response to particular incidents, in particular on 31st May when an individual was shot with a ball bearing, and on 3rd June when a large group with horses and carts caused disruption and anti-social behaviour on Riverside and Common Meadow including breaking the chain across the ford.
- To engage with the police and community on how to deal with these situations.
- To find out what are the workable options for the police, the council and the community.

Members of the public were invited to speak and Mr Ballard answered many questions. A summary of this discussion follows:

Other issues raised were:

- Covid compliance
- Drug use in public areas
- Lack of visibility of police
- Intimidation of members of the public
- Horses being 'raced' along Riverside and risk to members of the public
- Visitors no longer wish to come to Eynsford
- Intimidation and loss of business by local businesses
- Residents of Willow Terrace receive verbal abuse and threats from people using Common Meadow

Mr Ballard reported that four calls had been received on 31st May and that he had not received a report of the ball bearing shooting. When officers attended no crimes were being committed, so no action could be taken. On 3rd June a number of calls were received and police attended. However, when they arrived no crimes or anti-social behaviour incidents were seen by the officers. Mr Ballard had examined the body cams and found nothing requiring action. The police cannot act unless crimes are being committed.

Mr Ballard encouraged members of the public to report all incidents on 999, 101 or online as police resources are allocated based on calls and information. Mr Ballard suggested CCTV could be used to help to provide evidence of crimes but would not solve the issue, and that he would look into this.

Mr Ballard acknowledged that police numbers had been cut over the past ten years but that now recruitment was taking place. He also took on board the suggestion that police attend more often at weekends, bank holidays and warm evenings. He also took on a suggestion of providing plain clothes policing and will look into this. Police can instigate dispersal orders in particular areas, but these need to be agreed in advance. The police cannot enforce parking infringements as this is a civil matter. They also cannot actively police bye-laws.

Mr Gough spoke about the recruitment of Community Wardens and agreed to raise this at KCC again.

Mr Ballard suggested setting up a follow up meeting with the parish council and the Community Safety Unit. Mr Ward thanked Mr Ballard and members of the public for attending.

8756 GOVERNANCE CONT.

b) Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Annual Meeting and the last full council meeting held on the 20th May 2021 were presented for approval.

RESOLVED: That the minutes are accepted as a true and complete record and that the recommendations are approved. Arrangements were made for the minutes to be signed.

c) Finance Notes

The clerk submitted a list of accounts, and a budget report, for May 2021, as per Appendix A. A schedule of payments was also presented.

RESOLVED: That the accounts are approved, and the payments made.

d) Outstanding Actions

Mr Kirby noted that he had received a new contact regarding the Lucy Box.

Mr Richardson said that he had received the contact number of the Crockenhill representative and would look into all aspects of the Henry Cox Eleemosynary Charity, including how recipients are chosen.

No information was available as to whether Mr Baker had spoken to the Millfield Trust about planting additional trees.

Mr Barker said he was seeking quotes to inspect the ash tree at Harrow Meadow and a quote to raise it to the ground. He was also looking into quotes for other trees on parish council land. Mr Barker was working on a tree maintenance/management strategy with Mr Gee.

e) Aged Debtors

Councillors were informed that two allotment fees were outstanding and that a 7 day notice will be sent on Monday.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

f) Quarterly Newsletter

Councillors were asked to suggest articles for inclusion in the next quarterly newsletter due out in July.

RESOLVED: That the following articles are included:

Public Art Project – Mrs Coston

Post-Covid Party – Mrs Haxby

Eynsford Tree of the Year – Mrs Ivaldi

Crime in Eynsford – Mr Ward

Changes to grass cutting in Eynsford – Mr Barker

Community Rail Partnership – Mr Kirby

Speedwatch – Mr Kirby

Annual Parish Meeting/Reports – Ms Morgan.

g) Future Meetings

Councillors discussed future council meeting taking into account the extension of Covid restrictions.

RESOLVED: That halls are booked for all meetings in July and August. That the situation is reviewed at the August main meeting.

h) GDPR Update

Mr Ward told councillors that there had been no reported incidents regarding breaches of GDPR. He reminded councillors to ensure regulations are adhered to including removing personal details from any emails shared from external contacts.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

i) CPRE Membership

Councillors were asked to approve renewal of the council's membership of CPRE at £36.00

RESOLVED: That the council renews its members of CPRE at £36.00.

8757 PLANNING

a) Report of the Last Planning Committee Meeting

Councillors were asked to approve the report of the Planning Committee meetings held on 4th May 2021 and 7th June. (See Appendix B)

RESOLVED: That the report is approved.

b) Notifications of Planning Consents/Refusal

Planning Application SE/21/00722/LDCPR – 6 Upper Austin Lodge Farm Cottages, Upper Austin Lodge Road Granted

Planning Application SE/20/03735/FUL – Bower House, Bower Lane Granted

Planning Application SE/21/01238/HOUSE – 62 St Martin's Drive Granted

Planning Application SE/21/01233/MMA – Hulberry Farm, Lullingstone Lane Granted

c) Planning Application SE/21/01456/HOUSE – Primrose Cottage, 12 Riverside, Eynsford

Councillors discussed an application for the removal of existing rear dormers, the erection of a two-storey rear extension and enlargement of the existing habitable roof space with skylights to a new flat roof and existing front roof.

RESOLVED: That no objections are made

d) Planning Appeal ref: Application SE/21/00214/FUL – Former Railway Goods Yard, Upper Austin Lodge Road, Eynsford

Councillors discussed an appeal made by the applicant regarding their application for the change of use of the land from former railway goods yard to residential including the removal of

unauthorised storage containers and the erection of a 3-bedroom chalet bungalow. The council discussed various points put forward by the applicant and agreed to respond to these in a note to the planning inspector.

RESOLVED: That in addition to the council's original objection, the following points are made to the Planning Inspector:

The applicant states that the site is 'at the very edge of the village envelope'. This is incorrect, it is outside the village envelope.

The applicant states that 'stationing of the three containers is ancillary to the lawful use and should not require planning consent'. We disagree, hence why Sevenoaks District Council have been looking at enforcement to remove the containers.

The applicant states that the use would be 'limited infilling' as it is 'completely surrounded by built development'. This is incorrect. Sevenoaks District Council's guidance on limited infilling is 'the completion of an otherwise substantially built-up frontage by the filling of a narrow gap.'

This does not describe the proposed site.

The applicant indicates that Sevenoaks District Council's planning guidance states that exemptions to building on Green Belt include 'partial or complete development of previously developed sites (brownfield land)' and therefore concludes that this application complies.

However, the general definition of a brownfield site assumes that buildings have previously been in place, and this is not the case on this site.

The applicant states that 'very special circumstances' apply as the site is 'previously developed land'. Again, this has not been proven.

The applicant states that 'permission exists to construct an outbuilding' although there is nothing in the planning history to support this assertion.

At this point, 9.27pm, the meeting was opened up to questions from members of the public. The meeting resumed at 9.35pm.

8758 HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

a) Report of the Last Highways & Transportation Committee Meeting

Councillors were asked to approve the report of the last Highways & Transportation Committee meeting held on 7th June 2021. (See Appendix C)

RESOLVED: That the report is approved.

b) Parking/Traffic Issues, Lullingstone

Councillors were told that this item was prompted by a request from Lullingstone Roman Villa to find solutions to congestion and the blocking of the road by inconsiderate parking. Mr Ward reported that the council had been lobbying for years for parking restrictions on the first bend at Lullingstone Lane. Members of the public present commented on issues caused by bad parking. There was a suggestion that a field could be hired during summer months for parking.

RESOLVED: That the Sevenoaks District Council are contacted to ensure traffic enforcement officers attend Eynsford regularly at busy times. That a site meeting is held with Kent Highways to discuss yellow lines or other solutions to parking on Lullingstone Lane.

c) Joint Transportation Board Update

Mr Kirby updated the council on a recent meeting of the Joint Transportation Board which is a body run by Sevenoaks District Council with delegated powers from Kent Highways on parking and traffic management. Kent Highways are now putting more of an emphasis on safety rather than reacting to accident data. As some local villages have successfully created 20mph zones on A roads, this is something that Eynsford could consider.

RESOLVED: That Mr Kirby writes an article about the possibility of a 20mph zone in Eynsford for the next newsletter.

8759 COMMUNITY

a) Report of the Last Community Committee Meeting

Councillors were asked to approve the report of the last Community Committee meeting held on 7th June 2021.

RESOLVED: That the report is approved. (See Appendix D)

b) Police/Crime Report

The Clerk provided details of crime statistics for April 2021:
6 crimes were reported, as follows:

Lullingstone Park	2 x Violence and Sexual Offence
Village Car Park	1 x Vehicle Crime
Parsonage Bank	1 x Violence and Sexual Offence
Pollyhaugh	1 x ASB
Knights Field	1 x ASB

A local police newsletter had also been received mentioning youth illegally using catapults in residential areas of Eynsford.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

c) Policing of Anti-Social Behaviour in Eynsford

This item was heard at the start of the meeting and minuted there.

8760 OPEN SPACES

a) Report of the Last Open Spaces Committee Meeting

Councillors were asked to approve the report of the last Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 7th June 2021. (See Appendix E)

RESOLVED: That the report is approved.

b) Common Meadow Fencing

Councillors were asked to discuss fencing to restrict access to Common Meadow, other than pedestrians, following recent incidents of horses on the cricket square and other anti-social behaviour. Councillors discussed the installation of estate fencing and a kissing gate to fill the gap adjacent to the archive building. A locked gate would be retained at the other end of the field for vehicular access. This had been discussed with the cricket club who approved the installation of new fencing and the removal of the existing gate at the archive building end. The cricket club also offered to help with installation if necessary.

RESOLVED: That the council agrees to spend up to £3000 to install metal estate fencing and an accessible kissing gate at Common Meadow. That Mr Cooke sources quotes and arranges the work. That the cricket club are told that this may take a number of weeks to arrange, and that they are asked to organise a temporary solution in the meantime. That the cost is taken from the CIL funding held by the parish council. That Mr Richardson consults with residents about the possibility of installing a gate across the bottom of Furlongs Road.

c) Grant for Returfing Riverside

Councillors were told that the grant application for funding to cover the costs of returfing Riverside was unsuccessful.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

8761 FACILITIES & ENVIRONMENT

a) Report of the Last Facilities & Environment Committee Meeting

Councillors were asked to approve the report of the last Facilities & Environment Committee meeting held on 7th June 2021.

RESOLVED: That the report is approved. (See Appendix F)

b) Skip at Castlefield Car Park

Councillors were told that a resident of Fernbank and tenant of Castlefield Car Park had requested permission to site a skip on the small area of grass adjacent to space A during some building works.

RESOLVED: That permission is given to site a skip in the position described for no more than one month. That if a longer time is needed, that the council is re-consulted.

The meeting of the council closed at 10.30pm

Chairperson: 15th July 2021