

Minutes of the Meeting of Eynsford Parish Council held on Thursday 20th January 2022, at the Olive Seal Hall, Pollyhaugh, Eynsford, at 7.30pm.

8823 PRESENT

Members Present

Mr M Barker
Mr A Cooke
Mrs W Gee
Mrs F Haxby
Mr M Richardson
Mr P Ward

Others Present

Four members of the public: Mr Gee, Mr Baker, Mrs Penney, Mr Holbrook.

Clerk in Attendance

Mrs H Ivaldi

8824 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mrs S Boyle, Mr R Gough (County Councillor)

8825 CHAIR'S REMARKS

None.

8826 CLERK'S COMMENTS

None.

8827 GOVERNANCE

a) Declarations of Interest

None.

b) Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the last full council meeting held on the 16th December 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 December 2021, as per Appendix A. A schedule of payments was also presented.

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

d) Outstanding Actions

There was no update from Mr Baker about planting trees at Millfield.

Mrs Ivaldi had no further update on installing an air source heat pump.

In October 2021 it was agreed in principle that the council looks further into installing a red phone box. No action has been taken.

e) Village Hall Update

Mr Cooke gave an update on the village hall project. He had instructed the Agrostis to secure tenders for the football pitch project with works currently scheduled for July 2022 (tbc). A fundraising meeting was held and around 15 volunteers attended which was encouraging. Some good ideas came out of the meeting, but also some queries about the building design.

Mr Cooke has appointed a quantity surveyor, structural engineer and architect to make some changes to the plans for stage 1 of the tendering process for the new hall.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

f) Land Swap Costs

The council had written to Mssrs Alexander about the proposed land swap at Harrow Meadow and had asked about any compensation required if the work were to start before the end of July 2022. The response stated that compensation required would be £5000.

RESOLVED: That the council awaits tenders and costs before making a decision as to the timing. That Mr Cooke finds out how long the football pitch works would take.

g) Banking & Finance

Mrs Gee gave an update on the recent meetings of the Banking and Finances working group which had been looking into the council's current bank accounts and systems and at what changes could be made. Mrs Gee noted that in order to keep the council's money safe from risk, no more than £85K should be held in any individual bank, as greater amounts were not covered by the financial services insurance scheme. The group also looked at signatories and now the banks accounts were managed on a day to day basis. Thanks were given to Mrs Gee and Mrs Morgan Wintour for their work on this.

RESOLVED: That the bank signatories will no consist of 3 councillors – Mr Ward, Mrs Boyle and Mrs Gee, and both Clerks – Mrs Morgan-Wintour and Mrs Ivaldi.

That the current Co-op account and savings account are maintained with no more than £85k split between them; that an Instant Access Business Premium account is set up with Barclays to contain no more than £85k; that an Instant Access account is set up with Lloyds bank to contain no more than £85k.

That £1 is moved between the accounts each month to prevent them from becoming dormant.

That both Clerks are fully trained in the financial software and in the use of online and telephone banking for each account.

That banking and finances are reviewed annually in March.

8828 PLANNING

a) Notifications of Planning Consents/Refusal

21/03741/HOUSE– 58 St Martin’s Drive, Eynsford – GRANTED

21/03864/HOUSE – 46 Eynsford Rise, Eynsford – GRANTED

b) Planning Application 22/00008/FUL -The Bungalow, Park House Farm, Bower Lane, Eynsford.

Councillors discussed an application for change of use of land to residential use and erection of fencing.

RESOLVED: That councillors object to this application. The proposed change of use of agricultural land to a residential use would represent inappropriate development that would be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt which would fail to meet one of the five purposes of the Green Belt by failing to safeguard against encroachment of the adjacent countryside.

c) Delegated Planning Responses

As there was no committee meeting held in January, the clerk made the following delegated responses to planning applications:

21/00620/FUL – Littlecroft, Eynsford Road, Eynsford (Various conditions: 7, 8, 9 & 12) – No comment.

21/04129/HOUSE – The Bungalow, Park House Farm, Bower Lane, Eynsford (Erection of a garden shed and parking) – No objections.

21/04027/MMA – Oakdene, Station Road, Eynsford (Amendment to 20/02183/HOUSE) – No objections.

21/04061/HOUSE – Chestnut Rise, Sparepenny Lane, Eynsford (Demolition of side and rear extensions and existing shed and erection of two storey/single storey side and rear extension) – We support the Planning Officer’s final assessment of the planning history and 50% rule calculations.

21/04063/HOUSE – 59 Pollyhaugh, Eynsford (Two storey front extension with side dormer and alterations to fenestration) – No objections.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

8829 HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

a) Damaged Street Lamp

Councillors were informed that a quote had been received to replace the street lamp and column for £3998.40. This includes the costs of UKPN and our streetlight contractor.

RESOLVED: That the quote is accepted to replace the street lamp and column. That the Clerks continue to chase DVLA and the police for details of the motorist involved so that compensation can be sought.

b) Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership

Mr Richardson had circulated a document outlining plans for the station building at Eynsford including refurbishing the old waiting room so it can be used. Mr Richardson had also discussed

with DVCRP the possibility of installing lifts to the foot bridge instead of a ramp to the proposed new car park south of the railway. This will be investigated further.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

8830 COMMUNITY

a) Police/Crime Report

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

Bower Lane	2 x Burglary
	1 x Violence/Sexual Offence
Riverside	1 x Burglary
Lullingstone Castle	1 x Violence/Sexual Offence
Eynsford Rise	1 x Vehicle Crime
Station Approach	1 x Other Theft
St Martin's Drive	1 x Vehicle Crime
Pollyhaugh	2 x Vehicle Crime
Saddlers Park	1 x Criminal Damage/Arson
High Street	1 x Vehicle Crime
Mill Lane	1 x Vehicle Crime

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

b) Post Covid Village Event

Mrs Haxby gave an update on plans for the village event on 4th June 2022. Funding had been secured from Eynsford and Farningham Parish Councils and the National Lottery. Lots of groups had signed up for stalls at the afternoon fete. One issue to be resolved was whether or not to hire in overnight security at Harrow Meadow as the staging and rigging would be set up the day before. Mr Cooke mentioned that the hedge at the top of Harrow Meadow would have been removed by then, so some temporary security fencing may be required. Thanks were given to Mrs Haxby and Mrs Morgan Wintour for their work on this event.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

At this point, 8.45pm, the meeting was opened up to questions from members of the public.
The meeting resumed at 9.21pm.

c) KALC Community Award

Councillors were asked to choose a person or group to receive the Kent Association for Local Councils Community Award from those nominated by members of the community.

RESOLVED: That Lynda Newton receives the award for her services to the community as teacher, Deputy Head and Head Teacher at Anthony Roper Primary School.

d) Churchyard Maintenance Donation – St Botolph’s Church

Councillors were asked to consider donating towards the costs of ground maintenance at St Botolph’s Church.

RESOLVED: That a donation of £200 is made.

8831 OPEN SPACES

a) Ash Tree at Harrow Meadow

Councillors discussed the ash tree at Harrow Meadow which is believed to be dead or dying and whether it was a safety concern. Quotes had been received from Mr Smith for £800 and Mr Harris for £1050.

RESOLVED: That Mr C Smith is asked to remove the ash tree before 1st March for his quote of £800 and to arrange access with Mssrs Alexander.

b) Ground Maintenance Contracts

Councillors were asked to discuss whether to make any changes to the grounds maintenance contracts for the coming season before tenders are sent out.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk works with Mr Barker and the Green Team to look at what worked last year and to make any adjustments. That Mr Gee’s suggestions from last year are also considered in finalising the tender documents. That councillors email any suggestions to the Clerk.

c) Kissing Gate, Common Meadow

Councillors were asked to consider a quote to concrete underneath the new kissing gate at Harrow Meadow. At £650 the quote was thought to be very high for a small job.

RESOLVED: That alternative quotes are sought.

8832 FACILITIES & ENVIRONMENT

a) Dog Bins

Councillors were told that a member of the public had been in touch about installing additional dog bins at the top of Priory Lane (at the entrance to the byway) and by the Bower Lane footpath. The Clerk noted that the cost of installing litter bins was £350 + £150 installation. It was noted that there was already a dog bin at the entrance to the footpath off Bower Lane.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk responds to the parishioner about the dog bin at Bower Lane. That the possibility of installing litter bins at locations, possibly including Priory Lane triangle and by the bridge at the viaduct on Lullingstone Lane, is put on the next agenda. That Mr Barker checks the suitability of these locations.

b) Coppicing at Chalkhurst Woods

Councillors were told about the recent coppicing at Chalkhurst Woods which many people were unhappy with. There were questions about the management plan and the safety of the area.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk contacts SDC/KCC about the council's concerns, and to find out what was permitted under the licence for felling in terms of the number of trees. Also, about the safety of the footpath during and after works and the lack of a stopping up order. In addition, the footpath linking the woodland with Bower Lane (Park House Farm) had been destroyed by heavy plant.

That the Clerk works with Mr Gee in identifying owners of ancient woodland in the parish.

c) New DVLP Walking Trail

Councillors were asked to discuss a proposed circular walking route around Eynsford put forward by the DVLP.

This item was deferred until the next committee meeting.

d) Welcome Back Fund

Councillors were asked to agree on what items to request under the Welcome Back Funding available via Sevenoaks District Council. The funding is for non-permanent, physical improvements to our community. Orders must be submitted before the end of January 2022.

RESOLVED: That the following items are requested:

Two Holmfirth planters from NBB Recycled Furniture at £535 each;

An external post mounted noticeboard from The Noticeboard Company at £320;

A large wooden noticeboard for Ford House car park either from Terry Malone, or an equivalent.

The meeting of the council closed at 10.25 p.m

Chairperson: 17th February 2022

Appendix Q

Public Questions from the Meeting of Eynsford Parish Council, held on Thursday 20th January 2022.

At 8.45pm, the meeting was opened to questions from the public.

Mr Baker said that he would speak to Millfield Trustees about planting more trees at the weekend.

Mr Holbrook asked what could be done about trees blocking the lights and the belisha beacon outside the churchyard. He had reported this previously and it had been reported to Kent Highways. He said that the trees concerned were the large yew in the churchyard and another tree leaning out from the corner of Parsonage House. The Clerk agreed to report these again.

Mr Holbrook also noted that various hedges were overgrown narrowing the footpath. He was asked to send details into the council so that they could be reported, or else to report online to Kent Highways. Mr Holbrook asked about the possibility of creating a footpath linking the Bower Lane path behind Harrow Meadow with Priory Lane. Mr Ward said that the council were not looking at that at present, but it could be discussed in the future.

Mr Holbrook asked whether there had been any progress on the creation of a burial ground in Eynsford. Mr Ward explained that a detailed study was carried out several years ago by the council into possible sites, and no suitable sites were found. It was agreed then not to proceed. However, Mr Ward said, that if a suitable site did become available, the council would reopen investigations.

Mrs Penney reported that the yew tree near the war memorial on Fountain Court bank was overgrown and needs to be cut right back. Also that brambles in the location often hang down the wall causing a hazzard for pedestrians. Luckily volunteers cut them off. The site is looked after by West Kent Housing Association. Permission was granted some time ago for them to cut back trees, but it was unclear whether or not this had happened.

Mrs Penney also reported broken posts at the war memorial, and that the wood surrounding the beds under the village signs at the south of the village were rotting.

Mrs Penney noted that ivy was growing over the path at Parsonage House and Braemar.

She also noted that recently she counted over 70 cars parked outside the school at pickup time. Mrs Haxby said she was working with Mrs Newton on reviving the School Run Safety Campaign. There was a discussion about alternative parking for parents and for other visitors to the village.

Mrs Penney said that residents of Fernbank did not look after their front borders at the wall. Mr Ward said that there was little the parish council could do, but was happy to include an article in the next newsletter about hedges and front gardens.

The public questions ended at 9.21pm.