

Minutes of the Meeting of Eynsford Parish Council held on Thursday 21st April 2022, at the Olive Seal Hall, Pollyhaugh, Eynsford, at 7.30pm.

8853 PRESENT

Members Present

Mr M Barker

Mrs S Boyle

Mr A Cooke

Mrs W Gee

Mrs F Haxby (left at 9.06pm)

Mr M Richardson

Mr P Ward

Others Present

Two members of the public: Mr Kazi (for the first item only), Mrs Penney, Mr Gough (8.45 – 9.20pm).

Clerk in Attendance

Mrs H Ivaldi

8854 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr J Gee

8855 CHAIR'S REMARKS

Mr Ward thanked all the candidates for the casual vacancy for attending. Mr Ward mentioned that it was now a new financial year and that councillors should familiarise themselves with the new budget. Mr Ward said that he had attended an enjoyable event to launch new railway posters for stations along the Darent Valley line.

8856 CLERK'S COMMENTS

Mrs Ivaldi said that the spring newsletters had now been printed and were out for delivery.

8857 GOVERNANCE

a) Casual Vacancy

Councillors were given the opportunity to vote for their preferred candidate for the casual vacancy out of the three that stood. Mr Kazi, Mr Floyd and Mr Rix. The vote was carried out via paper ballot and votes were counted by the Clerk.

RESOLVED: That Mr Nick Rix is co-opted onto the council. Mr Rix signed the Declaration of the Acceptance of Office.

b) Declarations of Interest

None.

c) Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the last full council meeting held on the 17th March 2022 were presented for approval. A typo was noted on Governance item j.

RESOLVED: That, subject to the above correction above, 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.

d) Finance Notes

The clerk submitted a list of accounts, and a budget report, for March 2022, as per Appendix A. A schedule of payments was also presented.

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

e) Outstanding Actions

Mrs Ivaldi had requested two further quotes for installing an air source heat pump and is waiting for an appointment with one of the companies.

Mr Cooke said that no progress had been made on finding an alternative location for an Ethel Darby plaque. Mrs Haxby agreed to deal with this and suggested putting a plaque on the village sign as Ethel Darby cut the ribbon when it was initially erected.

f) Annual Parish Meeting

Councillors were reminded that the Annual Parish Meeting would be held on 22nd April in the village hall 6.30-8.30pm. Chairs and committee chairs were asked to write short reports to read at the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the reports are forwarded to the Clerk for inclusion on the website and elsewhere in the future.

g) Future Parish Council Meetings

Councillors were asked to decide whether or not to return to the parish office for meetings. There was also a discussion about council surgeries that have been postponed for two years.

RESOLVED: That meetings resume at the parish office from May. That this is reviewed if Covid guidance changes. That council surgeries resume from 28th May (the last Saturday of month) from 9-11am at the parish office.

h) Cost of Football Pitch Project

Mr Cooke told councillors about the tenders received for the works on the football pitch. The four prices were £137,854; £161,153; £167, 908; £173,009 (excluding VAT). Mr Cooke said that all quotes included 10% contingency but also were all little higher than expected. He explained that the Agrostis would check through the tenders. There was also a discussion about how much of the cost the parish council could/would pay and how much would be paid by the village hall and if this payment could be made direct to the parish council.

RESOLVED: That Mr Cooke meets with Burrows who provided the lowest quote, to discuss the project further. That the project team move forward with the lowest quote. That further discussion is held regarding the allocation of costs and a payment plan, and whether funds can be transferred between the two parties.

i) Closure of Harrow Meadow and Playground

Councillors were informed that Harrow Meadow and the children's play area would need to be closed off for a week starting 9th May for safety reasons whilst the archaeological survey is carried out. The company have requested secure fencing where possible. There was also a discussion about whether to close the whole of the meadow during ground works for the football pitch.

RESOLVED: That the whole of Harrow Meadow is securely closed during the archaeological survey and also during the ground works for the football pitch for safety reasons.

j) Eynsford Village Hall Project Costs

Mr Cooke had circulated a spreadsheet setting out costs and upcoming expenditure expected over the next quarter by the parish council and the village hall trustees. It was estimated that the parish council would spend £18,732 and that the village hall trustees would spend £25,020.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

k) KALC Membership

Councillors were asked to renew their membership of Kent Association of Local Councils for 2022/23 at a cost of £728.96 + VAT.

RESOLVED: That membership is renewed at £728.96 + VAT from the Memberships budget.

l) New Village Hall Project

Mr Ward said that the following items needed to be discussed: the terms of the lease for the new village hall building and, whether to apply for a Public Works Loan.

RESOLVED: That these two items are discussed at a separate meeting and brought back to the council for approval.

At this point, 8.46pm, the meeting opened up to questions from members of the public. The meeting resumed at 9.24pm.

8858 PLANNING

a) Notifications of Planning Consents/Refusal

21/04134/LBCALT– Lullingstone Castle, Lullingstone Lane, Eynsford – GRANTED
21/03783/HOUSE – Old Manse, High Street, Eynsford – GRANTED
22/00290/HOUSE – Applegarth, Priory Lane, Eynsford

c) Planning Application 22/00594/HOUSE – October Cottage, Station Road, Eynsford

Councillors discussed an amended application for external alterations to include new doors, windows and white render finish. Alterations to front existing wall.

RESOLVED: That no objection is made.

8859 **HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION**

a) Heavy Vehicles – Crockenhill Lane and Sparepenny Lane

This item was taken during public questions. Mr Gough was asked whether anything could be done to prevent or discourage heavy vehicles from using these lanes when not necessary, as the damaged the surface and could cause obstructions.

RESOLVED: That Mr Gough looks into this.

8860 **COMMUNITY**

a) Police/Crime Report

The Clerk provided details of crime statistics for February 2022:
6 crimes were reported, as follows:

Upper Austin Lodge Road	1 x Public Order Offence
High Street	2 x Violence/Sexual Offences
	1 x Other Crime
Mill Lane	2 x Violence/Sexual Offences

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

b) Affordable Housing, Eynsford

Mr Ward reported back on an online meeting he and Mrs Haxby had attended with Rural Kent and English Rural Housing Association. Following correspondence with landowners over possible sites for affordable housing, one landowner had put forward an alternative site- the section of land behind the allotments between Harrow Meadow and Priory Fields. ERHA were concerned about the expense of constructing a long access road. Mr Ward had said that the site was not ideal for housing development in the parish council's view. It was agreed that the parish council would write again to the landowners about the original plots suggested.

RESOLVED: That the parish council writes to landowners to reconsider the original plots suggested.

c) Membership of Darent River Preservation Society (DRiPS)

Councillors were asked whether to renew the council's membership of DRiPS for 2021/22 at a cost of £20.

RESOLVED: That the £20 membership of DRiPS is renewed from the Membership budget.

8861 **OPEN SPACES**

a) Request to Use Common Meadow

A request had been received to use Common Meadow on 29th August 2022 for 'Eynstock' a live music event raising funds for the new village hall. The event would run from 1pm – 6pm similarly to 2021.

RESOLVED: That permission is given for Eynstock to be held on Common Meadow. That the organisers are asked to ensure that the meadow is left in the condition in which it is found, that all litter should be removed, and that no dogs are allowed, as per the by-laws.

8862 **FACILITIES & ENVIRONMENT**

a) New Walking Trail for Eynsford

Mr Ward and Mr Barker reported back on a meeting they had had with Reece Evans for the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership. They had been discussing planning a new walking trail around Eynsford. Mr Ward presented their proposal to the council. The route, starting at the station, went all around the valley surrounding the village passing sites including Lullingstone Roman Villa, Eagle Heights, Nine Hole Woods, the Percy Pilcher Memorial and the old Rifle Range at Preston Hill. There were a couple of small sections mentioned that are not already rights of way where negotiations would be required with the landowners.

RESOLVED: That the proposed route is sent to Darent Valley Landscape Partnership for them to approve and action

The meeting ended at 9.53pm.

Chairperson: 19th May 2022

Appendix Q

Public Questions from the Meeting of Eynsford Parish Council, held on Thursday 21st April 2022.

At 8.46pm, the meeting was opened to questions from the public.

Mrs Penney said she had received reports that the village is looking a bit scruffy, for instance, the bench next to Norman's needs revarnishing and the bus stop opposite needs some work. She also said that the bench by the viaduct was loose. The English Heritage sign at the top of the village hall drive was very faded, the notice board by the ford slipped down and the notice board opposite the station was bowed. The Clerk agreed to look into these issues.

Mrs Penney said that Eynsford in Bloom had 6 entries this year, some would be judged on the entry form only, but there would be a visit from judges for others on 28th June.

Mrs Penney also mentioned that brambles on the top of the wall of Fountain Court were likely to start growing down again soon, and that the posts and chain at the war memorial were in need of attention.

Mrs Haxby said that over 500 people had booked for the music festival on 4th June and that she would report further at the committee meeting. Mrs Haxby left at this point.

Mrs Gee reported that Speedwatch had restarted this week and that regular sessions were planned.

Mrs Gee said that Mr Gee (Tree Warden) had spoken to James Alexander about the plans for the new acrostic at Lullingstone and hoped that planting could start in September/October. Two of the new willow trees had been snapped by youths at Common Meadow over the weekend. Mr Gee had said that they may re-grow but we would need to wait and see. There would also need to be a watering schedule for the five new trees at Common Meadow during the summer months.

Mrs Gee also reported that there was a lot of flytipping on Crockenhill Lane.

Mr Gough said that flytipping was mainly dealt with by Sevenoaks District Council but that Kent County Council also assisted in looking at patterns and co-ordinating work to reduce it. He agreed to report a sign that had been knocked down on Crockenhill Lane. He also said that the verge edge at the Crockenhill Lane triangle would be repaired.

Mr Gough said that there had been a recent consultation about whether to get rid of the booking system at the tip, but that the majority were in favour of it. There was also a current government debate about getting rid of charges for tips in some areas.

Mr Gough gave a long update on bus service changes including a reduction in funding for some services. However, new funding was coming in which might make some improvements in the future.

Mr Cooke said he had received a complaint from a resident about not being able to walk along Castlefield behind the allotments.

The public questions ended at 9.24 pm.