

Minutes of the Meeting of Eynsford Parish Council held on Thursday 15th August 2024, at the Parish Office, Priory Lane, Eynsford, at 7.30pm.

9208 PRESENT

Members Present

Mr M Barker
Mr A Cooke
Mrs J Laird
Mr D Naylor
Mr V Robson
Mrs H Sim

Others Present

Two members of the public

Clerk in Attendance

Mrs H Ivaldi

9209 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr J Griffiths, Mr O Young.

9210 CHAIR'S REMARKS

None

9211 CLERK'S COMMENTS

None

9212 GOVERNANCE

a) Declarations of Interest

Mr Robson declared a non-pecuniary interest in items 9216a, b & c relating to the football pitch, as Treasurer of Eynsford Football Club.

b) Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the last full council meeting held on 18th July 2024 were presented for approval.

RESOLVED: That the minutes are accepted as a true and complete record and that the recommendations are approved.

c) Finance Notes

The clerk submitted a list of accounts, and a budget report, for July 2024 and a schedule of payments.

RESOLVED: That the accounts are approved, and that the payment schedule is approved and signed.

d) Outstanding Actions

Councillors were asked to review any outstanding actions.
There were no updates.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

e) WhatsApp Policy

A proposed policy about the council's use of WhatsApp had been revised and was presented for approval.

RESOLVED: That, subject to adding a line in section 8 to read 'Avoid the use of acronyms where possible', the policy is approved.

f) Change of Signatories for Bank Accounts

Councillors were informed that new signatories are needed for the council's bank accounts as previous signatories have left.

RESOLVED: That Mrs Laird and Mr Robson are added as signatories.

g) Land Swap Agreement

The land swap agreement regarding land adjacent to Harrow Meadow was presented for approval and signature.

RESOLVED: That the land transfer agreement between Eynsford Holdings Ltd and Eynsford Parish Council regarding land at Castlefield and Eynsford Mount Farm is signed in accordance with the Standing Orders by two councillors, Mrs Laird and Mr Cooke, and witnessed by the Clerk.

h) Payment Schedules and Financial Regulations

The Clerk presented councillors with a proposal to change the approval of payments to align more closely with the Financial Regulations of the council.

RESOLVED: That the payment schedule is presented for approval at the parish council meeting monthly. That, where payments needed to be made prior to the meeting, that signatures of two councillors should be obtained for BACS payments. That the Clerk's payment limits within the Financial Regulations are reviewed at the next parish council meeting.

i) Licence Agreement Costs

Councillors were asked to agree to expenditure on licence agreements at Harrow Meadow as part of the new village hall project.

RESOLVED: That estimated costs for creating licences are approved as follows: Car Park licence, £950 + VAT; Storage Container licence, £450 + VAT. That these fees are paid from the Village Hall Associated Fees budget.

j) Outstanding Invoices

The Clerk noted that there were two outstanding invoices that had not been paid since 1 April 2024, one for an allotment (£30) and one for a car park space (£75). The Clerk referred to the council's Aged Debtor Policy.

RESOLVED: That a final seven days' notice is given to both parties which will result in the termination of their tenancy agreements if not paid. That no Small Claims action is taken.

9213 PLANNING

a) Notifications of Planning Consents/Refusals

24/01444/LDCEX – Unit 10, Furlongs Farm, Riverside, Eynsford – REFUSED

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

b) Planning Responses

The Clerk responded to the following application on behalf of the council due to the cancellation of the committee meeting as follows:

24/01673/LDCEX -Former Railway Goods Yard, Upper Austin Lodge, Eynsford

We do not support the application for change of use to B8 due to the probable future impact on the openness of the green belt. We accept that the shipping containers that have been on site for more than 4 years can stay. There is correspondence with SDC to show that complaints were made about the installation of shipping containers before they had been on site for four years. Also, an inspection of the site in 2021 showed that SDC were aware of containers installed without permission and should have had them removed then. The enforcement officer was aware and it is disappointing that no action was taken. If containers are to be allowed on site, there should be no more than the three that were on site when the inspection took place.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

c) Planning Application 24/01923/HOSUE – 38 Eynsford Rise, Eynsford

The council was consulted on an application for a loft conversion with roof extension to the rear of the property including hip-to-gable extensions of the rear roof and rear dormer, a new side window, enlarged side window and two rooflights plus alterations to the fenestration.

RESOLVED: That councillors offer no objections.

d) Planning Application 24/01900/FUL – Land Adj. 42 Riverside, Eynsford

The council was consulted on an application to install two air source heat pumps at the above property.

RESOLVED: That the council supports the application.

e) Tree Work Application 24/02059/WTCA – Eynsford House, High Street, Eynsford

The council was notified of an application to reduce the height of a Laurus nobilis by approx.. half, to 1-2m above the top of the wall.

The details had been sent to the Tree Warden for comment.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

f) Tree Work Application 24/02075/WTCA – Crayfish Cottage, High Street, Eynsford

The council was notified of an application for various works to trees.

The details had been sent to the Tree Warden for comment.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

g) Pedham Place Update

Mr Robson gave a verbal update on the meeting with Laura Trott MP and representatives from other neighbouring parishes. Ms Trott had explained the government's new housing targets which

had increased putting more potential pressure on the Green Belt. The new NPPF indicates that building on Green Belt is still prohibited apart from in exceptional circumstances, however, if local authorities are unable to meet their housing targets, with non-Green Belt land, then that could be considered an exceptional circumstance. Ms Trott agreed to take questions raised by the parishes to Sevenoaks District Council.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted. That an article about the meeting and Pedham Place is put on the council's facebook page.

9214 HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

a) Highways Improvement Plan Update

Councillors were told about information received from Kent Highways relating to our Highways Improvement Plan summarised as follows:

- Parking outside the Five Bells: Kent Highways would be willing to implement double yellow lines outside Elizabeth Cottages and around the Bower Lane junction, subject to a public consultation.
- Pedestrian Crossing at Station Road: a pedestrian count survey and a traffic count were carried out at the potential site at the top of Station Road. Unfortunately, the data, plus no record of accidents does not show a need for a pedestrian crossing. No other physical measures are possible.
- Speed reduction on the High Street: Flashing 20mph lights near the school may be possible although more studies may be required. The parish council may need to fund this.
- Speeds on Sparepenny Lane: Average speeds on Sparepenny Lane are 21mph, although more detailed speed reviews are needed.

Councillors discussed these findings.

RESOLVED: That the Highways officer is asked if the yellow lines could be moved outside the Five Bells instead of in the current position. That the 20mph lights are not progressed at present. That research is carried out into 'Quiet Lanes'. That an update is posted on the council's facebook page.

b) Southeastern Grant Fund

Councillors were asked to agree to the Clerk applying for funds of up to £50K from the Southeastern Customer and Community Improvement Fund with a deadline of the end of August 2024.

RESOLVED: That funding is applied for to improve the path along the A225 verge, subject to obtaining quotes for the work in time.

9215 COMMUNITY

a) Police & Crime Report

The Clerk provided details of crime statistics. In June 14 crimes were reported as follows:

Lullingstone Country Park	1 x ASB 1 x Criminal damage/arson
Eynsford Station	1 x Other crime
Station Road	1 x Violence/sexual offence
High Street	1 x Criminal damage/arson 1 x Violence/sexual offence
	1 x Vehicle crime
Parsonage Bank	1 x Criminal damage/arson

Riverside	1 x ASB
	1 x Burglary
Gibson Place	3 x Criminal damage/arson
	1 x Vehicle crime

It was also noted, that following prompting from the parish council, the Sevenoaks District Council traffic enforcement and the local police officer were working together to tackle illegal parking at Riverside.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

b) Funding For All Conference in Sevenoaks

Mr Robson had attended this training session and said that he had made some valuable connections there including meeting someone willing to provide free marketing advice to the council. He suggested making a donation.

RESOLVED: That a donation of £50 is made to Funding for All from the Donations budget.

c) Village Beacon

Councillors were asked to consider purchasing a beacon for the village to use to commemorate special national events. There was a discussion about where a beacon might be positioned in the village and whether it was value for money for the community.

RESOLVED: That an article is written for the next newsletter to ask for residents' views on the purchase of a beacon.

d) The Space update

Mrs Sim reported on her recent visit to The Space in Eynsford. Mrs Sim said that she had facilitated a regular monthly attendance at The Space by Citizens Advice, and that they were providing a tablet for other sessions that they could not attend which would enable residents to access their services. St Martin's Church have offered a private space if residents wish to talk to an advisor confidentially.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

9216 **OPEN SPACES**

a) Grass Pitch Funding

Councillors were informed that the Clerk is applying for FA funding towards maintaining the grass pitch. Up to £3200 is available spread over 6 years in a tapering grant. Councillors were asked to decide whether to provide matched funding for the tapering years which would be a commitment of £1600 in future budget years.

RESOLVED: That matched funding of £1600 is approved to be allocated from the Harrow Meadow Pitch Maintenance budget.

At this point, 8.47pm, the meeting was opened up to members of the public as minuted in Appendix Q. The meeting resumed at 8.55pm.

b) Service Level Agreement – Eynsford Football Clubs

Councillors were asked to approve a Service Level Agreement for the football clubs to prove the council's commitment to continued usage of the football pitch at Harrow Meadow and to support the council's application for funding.

RESOLVED: That the Service Level Agreement is approved.

c) FA Grant for Football Pitch Equipment

Councillors were asked decide whether the council should purchase any equipment to look after the football pitch, and if so, whether to apply for funding towards this.

RESOLVED: That costs are obtained for a verti-drainer and a tow-behind roller. That the Clerk looks into the grant requirements. That the Clerk circulates the guidelines on grass pitch maintenance.

d) Quotes for Signs for Recreation Areas

Councillors provided with quotes for signs from three different companies ranging from £25 - £35 + VAT for approx. 200 x 300mm signs highlighting some of the council's bylaws. Prices differed according to the type of fixing e.g. post mounting or wall mounting.

RESOLVED: That the council approves that up to £210 can be spent on the new signs. That councillors look at sites where they can be erected during the annual walkabout on Saturday and report back to the Clerk.

e) Allotment Path Cut

Councillors were asked to approve a quote to cut back vegetation alongside the allotment path.

RESOLVED: That the quote for £150 to cut back vegetation along the allotment path is accepted.

9217 FACILITIES & ENVIRONMENT

a) Climate Emergency Training

Mr Naylor gave a brief summary of the climate emergency training that he had attended recently. Mr Naylor noted that is was more relevant to local authorities as it dealt with active transport plans, neighbourhood plans and more strategic issues. However, many of the other points were already being addressed by Eynsford's Green Team.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

The meeting ended at 9.15pm.

Chairperson: 19th September 2024

Appendix Q

Public Questions from the Meeting of Eynsford Parish Council, held on Thursday 15th August 2024

At 8.47pm, the meeting was opened to questions from the public.

Mr Barker reported that a resident had complained about inconsiderate parking on the pavement outside properties on Bower Lane. Councillors suggested writing a letter to residents asking them to park more considerately.

Mr Barker reported that another resident had complained that Common Meadow was not wheelchair accessible. Councillors agreed to check the accessible kissing gate during the walkabout.

Mrs Laird mentioned overgrown vegetation from some properties blocking the pavement. It was noted that an article was already planned for the newsletter on this.

Mr Cooke noted that works on the car park at Harrow Meadow had now started and that herring fencing had been put around the area. However, one of the small diggers had been damaged by youths.

The public questions ended at 20.55pm.