

Minutes of the Meeting of Eynsford Parish Council held on Thursday 16th January 2025, at the Parish Office, Priory Lane, Eynsford, at 7.30pm.

9263 PRESENT

Members Present

Mr A Cooke
Mrs J Laird
Mrs H Sim
Mr D Naylor
Mr O Young

Others Present

PC Ashleigh Wilson 7.30 until 7.50 pm.

Clerk in Attendance

None, due to absence. Minutes taken by Mrs Laird.

In the absence of Mr Robson, Mr Cooke chaired the meeting.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr J Griffiths, Mr V Robson

9264 CHAIR'S REMARKS

Thank you to Jo for distributing and folding newsletters.
Thoughts go to George Ivaldi.

9265 CLERK'S COMMENTS

None.

Due to the presence of PC Wilson, the Community section was discussed at the start of the meeting.

9266 COMMUNITY

a) Report of the Last Community Committee Meeting.

Councillors were asked to approve the report of the Community committee, held on 6th January 2025.

RESOLVED: That the report is approved.

b) Police/Crime Report

The latest crime figures for November 2024 had been provided for the Councillors to review, there were 9 offences reported:

The Plough Inn, Parking Area - 2 x Anti-Social Behaviour
Lullingstone Country Park - 2 x Criminal Damage / Arson
The Plough Inn, Parking Area - 1 x Drugs
Tower Croft - 1 x Theft
Eynsford Car Park - 1 x Theft
The Plough Parking Area - 1 x Violent / Sexual Offence
Eynsford Station, Parking Area - 1 x Violent / Sexual Offence

PC Ashleigh Wilson was at the meeting and Mr Young asked her if she had any more information on these offences and in particular the nature of the violent/sexual offence at the station and the time they took place. PC Wilson didn't have further details but said she would look up the records and provide information where possible.

PC Wilson informed councillors that there was a burglary on Christmas Eve and there was an assault against a farmer concerning quad bikes on private land. Other than these two offences she said there were not many calls in December for Eynsford.

Mr Cooke asked if anti-social behaviour is reported at Common Meadow can the police remove those causing trouble or is this not possible because this is public land rather than private land. PC Wilson confirmed that the Police can remove persons if there is criminal behaviour but if it is only a nuisance it is hard to remove. Police don't investigate whether land is "common" or private, if there is criminal act they can remove the perpetrators. The problems at Riverside and Common Meadow this summer were discussed. The Police have told residents to call in as soon as an issue because the problems need to be reported, and this has resulted in more calls. PC confirmed they do look at Riverside cameras to help them but often hard to identify people.

Mr Cooke mentioned the Annual Parish Meeting and that we would let her know when this is taking place, and we would very much like her to attend to meet residents. PC Wilson said subject to work commitments she would come.

For information only.

PC Wilson left at this point, 7.50pm.

c) Sign for Eynsford Castle

The council previously agreed to a donation towards the cost of a new brown tourist sign for Eynsford Castle. However, Kent Highways have not granted permission to place the sign, so the project is cancelled for now.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

9267 **GOVERNANCE**

a) Declarations of Interest

None.

b) Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the last full council meeting held on 19th December 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 December 2024.

RESOLVED: That the accounts are not approved at the next meeting due to query which Councillors wanted to check with the Clerk. That this item is deferred until the next meeting.

d) Outstanding Actions

Councillors reviewed the outstanding actions and noted the following items on the Outstanding Spreadsheet should be amended:

Item 6) ECC meeting has taken place and will be reported at next meeting.

Item 7) Needs to be deleted because we are going ahead and it is dealt with later in the plan.

Item 69) Neighbourhood plan – Mr Naylor has sent a map of the two parishes to the Clerk and this will be sent to the clerk of Farningham PC.

RESOLVED: The information is noted, and it is requested that the Clerk updates the plan.

e) Boundary Review Consultation

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) are currently undertaking an electoral review of Sevenoaks District Council. They have decided that the number of Councillors on Sevenoaks District Council should be 48, currently 54, and will take effect from the elections held in May 2027. A consultation will run for 10 weeks, ending on 20 January 2025. Mr Barker explained that SDC wish to merge wards so that on average each ward has about 1900 people per councillor, so Eynsford is too small and it has been suggested that Eynsford will be merged with Farningham and Horton Kirby. Mr Barker said that in his view it was preferable to keep a councillor for each village as geographically and demographically each village is different and areas shouldn't be merged.

RESOLVED; It was agreed that Mr Barker will respond to the consultation on the basis that Eynsford does not wish to be merged with another ward.

f) Devolution

Councillors were told that the Government has published a White Paper on devolution. It plans to give more power to local authorities in England and to get rid of two-tier areas by creating new unitary authorities. Parish Councils will not be changing although the local government environment will.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

g) Report from the HR Sub Committee

Mrs Sim confirmed that the HR subcommittee (Mr Cooke, Mr Griffiths & Mrs Sim) had worked with the Clerk and agreed future working practices based on KALC guidance. This includes an appraisal system, review of contracts of employment, salary payment and recording of holidays and time in lieu. Line Management will be through the HR subcommittee.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

h) Street Light Energy

The electricity contract which will run for 3 years until 31/03/2028 has now been signed. This was delayed due to discrepancies with the MPANs and other figures. UKPN has now removed two MPANs from the billing system and the estimated annual expenditure will be £3996.49.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

i) Date for Annual Parish Meeting

Councillors are asked to agree a date for the next Annual Parish Meeting and to agree on its format. It must take place between 1 March and 1 June and cannot start before 6pm. (LGA 1972, Schedule 12, part III, para 14).

RESOLVED: The Annual Parish Meeting will take place on Friday 25th April at 7pm at EVH and will be between 7 and 9pm and will follow a similar format to last year. There will be no formal reports, but each councillor will represent their own committee areas. The clerks will invite the usual village and community groups including this year the Car Share Scheme and there will be a presentation from Eynsford Village Hall Trustees between 8-9pm. That we will serve cheese and wine, and the Community Award will be presented.

9268 PLANNING

a) Report of the Last Planning Committee Meeting

Councillors were asked to approve the report of the last Committee meeting held on 6th January 2025.

RESOLVED: That the report is approved

b) Notifications of planning consents/refusals

Brooklands, Crockenhill Lane, Eynsford

24/02884/HJHOUSE Demolition of existing garage. Erection of detached double garage – Granted

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

9269 HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

a) Report of the Last Highways & Transportation Committee Meeting.

Councillors were asked to approve the report of the Highways & Transportation committee, held 6th January 2025.

RESOLVED: That the report is approved.

b) Charges for Street Lamp Replacement

Earlier in the year the council agreed costs to replace a damaged streetlamp column outside the school. UKPN scheduled this for October half term but got the dates wrong. They wish to charge extra to rearrange and are suggesting a Sunday which will cost an additional £3526. We have already paid £3864+ VAT for this work to UKPN and I am seeking clarity on the charges. The street light contactor's cost would be £1350 * VAT. Councillors are asked to decide whether to go ahead with the job with these additional costs.

RESOLVED: Not to pay the additional costs for the work to take place on a Sunday. Ask if this work can take place in February half term and clarification on £1,350?

c) Castlefield Car Park Rent

Councillors were asked to agree to the rental fee of £165 per annum for car park spaces for the financial year 2025/26.

RESOLVED: The Council agreed the rental fee of £165.

9270 OPEN SPACES

a) Report of the Last Open Spaces Committee Meeting.

Councillors were asked to approve the report of the Open Spaces committee, held on 6th January 2025.

RESOLVED: That the report is approved.

b) Use of Riverside

Grace Center Church have asked permission to use Riverside green for their annual community picnic on 26th May 2025.

RESOLVED: That permission is granted subject to the usual conditions

c) Harrow Meadow Changing Rooms Refurbishment

A second quote has been received to project manage the refurbishment of the changing rooms. Councillors are asked to decide on how to progress.

RESOLVED: That the quote of £7500 + VAT of PJM building services is accepted.

d) Castlefield Allotments Rent

Councillors were asked to agree to the rental fee of £35 per annum for allotment plots for the financial year 2025/26.

RESOLVED: The Council agreed to the rental fee of £35.

9271 FACILITIES & ENVIRONMENT

a) Hedgerow Heroes Project

Councillors were asked to identify any parish owned sites where new hedging could be planted, or hedges 'filled' or restored as part of a CPRE Kent project for which they are seeking funding. The deadline for submitting sites is 31st January.

RESOLVED: The Council identified Chalk Hill, and noted that although hedge saplings have been obtained from a nature charity for the ridge on chalk hill these may not cover all of the ridge and it was also discussed that perhaps more could be planted along the fence line running between the field and chalk hill. Mr Naylor also suggested Millfield and suggested the Clerk make enquiries of Millfield Trust.

b) Tree Work Quotes

Councillors were asked to make a decision regarding quotes for tree work as agreed at the last meeting. However, not all quotes had been received in time for the meeting.

RESOLVED: That no decision is made until all the quotes have been received.

c) Riverside Interpretation Board

Councillors were asked to discuss the design and location of a new interpretation board for Riverside funded by DVLP/Kent Downs

RESOLVED: That the council approve the design of the new interpretation board, and that Mr Naylor, Mr Young, Mrs Sim and Mr Cooke will meet at Riverside to decide on the location of the board.

The meeting ended at 9.40 pm

Chairperson: 20th February 2025

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee of Eynsford Parish Council held on Monday 6th January 2025 held at Eynsford Parish Office at 7.30 p.m.

Members Present:

Mr M Barker (Chair of the Planning Committee)
Mrs H Sim
Mr V Robson
Mr D Naylor
Mr A Cooke
Mrs J Laird
Mr J Griffiths

Clerk in Attendance:

Mrs J Tunbridge

Others Present

Mr Josh Plaskett

Apologies for Absence:

Mr O Young

- 1) Declarations of Interest
None
- 2) Planning Application 24/03216/HOUSE, 1 Darenth Cottages, Station Road, Eynsford
Councillors Discussed the demolition of the existing rear conservatory, the erection of a single storey rear extension with skylights and alterations to the existing fenestration.
Resolved: That there are no Objections.
- 3) Planning Application 24/03160/HOUSE, Wild Meadows, Upper Austin Lodge Road, Eynsford
Councillors were asked to discuss the application for a new outbuilding
It was noted that the application had been withdrawn.
Resolved: That the information is noted.
- 4) Planning Application 24/03233/OUT, 1 Fairview Villas, High Street, Eynsford
Councillors were asked to discuss the outline application for a new dwelling with associated parking with some matters reserved.
Resolved: That no objections are made. That a comment is added to ask if there could be a restriction on further development on this site if the bungalow is agreed.

The meeting of the Planning Committee closed at 7.53 p.m.

Minutes of a meeting of the Highways & Transportation Committee of Eynsford Parish Council held on Monday 6th January 2025 held at Eynsford Parish Office at 7.53 p.m.

Members Present:

Mr M Barker
Mr V Robson (Chair of the Highways & Transportation Committee)
Mr D Naylor
Mr A Cooke
Mrs J Laird
Mr J Griffiths

Clerk in Attendance:

Mrs J Tunbridge

Others Present

Apologies for Absence:

Mr O Young

1) Declarations of Interest

None

2) Review of Priorities – Highways Improvement Plan

Councillors were asked to prioritise the items on the Highways Improvement Plan following comments from the Highways engineer.

Resolved: That the following changes are made to Eynsford's Highways Improvement Plan:

- 1) Outside Five Bells, Traffic Congestion, to install yellow lines – Move to the end of the list
- 2) Station Road, Pedestrian Crossing, Puffing Crossing – Remove from the list and add to Historic requests.
- 3) High St, Excessive Speeding, to install 20 MPH Speed Limit - Move to number 2 on the list.
- 4) Crockenhill Lane, No Pavement – Stay on list where it is.
- 5) High St outside Fernbank, Indiscriminate parking – Stay on list where it is.
- 6) St Martins Drive, Dangerous Junction, install give way lines – Stay on list where it is.
- 7 & 8) Shoreham Road, Footpath & 30mph Sign near railway bridge – Move to number 1 a&b on list.
- 9) Sparepenny Lane, excessive speeding, reduce the speed limit – move to bottom of list.
- 10) Lullingstone Lane, Inappropriate parking, install yellow lines – Move to Historic requests.
- 11) High Steet from school to Castle Hotel, Traffic Congestion – Stay on the list where it is.

The meeting of the Highways & Transportation Committee closed at 8.15 p.m.

Minutes of a meeting of the Community Committee of Eynsford Parish Council held on Monday 6th January 2025 held at Eynsford Parish Office at 8.15 p.m.

Members Present:

Mr M Barker
Mr V Robson
Mr D Naylor
Mr A Cooke
Mrs J Laird (Chair of the Community Committee)
Mr J Griffiths

Clerk in Attendance:

Mrs J Tunbridge

Others Present

Apologies for Absence:

Mr O Young

1) Declarations of Interest

None

2) Christmas Lights

Councillors were asked to review the council's Christmas lights in Eynsford and whether to make any changes for next year

Resolved: Councillors agreed to take down all lights at the church and the war memorial, and then the battery packs at the other locations. Mrs Laird & Mrs Tunbridge agreed to meet to do this.

Next year the councillors will put up the lights and turn them on at the same time at the same locations as the budget is tight so no extra decorations can be approved at this time.

3) Emergency Planning

Councillors were asked to review the first stage of the Emergency/Community Resilience Plan.

Mrs Laird had drafted a Plan and letter, and Mr Barker has contributed an article for the newsletter. The letter and article explain the 1st stages of the plan explaining the proposed plan and inviting members of the community to put themselves forward as a contact for emergencies.

Resolved: That the first stage is approved. That the letter is distributed with the newsletter. That more information about the plan is added to the website and facebook page.

4) The Space

Councillor Sim provided a report on a recent visit to The Space in Eynsford. Attendees raised various issues with Mrs Sim including: parking in the village and lack of it causing problems, also trees causing hazards to them regularly, and the kissing gate at the cricket ground that they would like removed for disabled access.

Resolved: That these items are added to the Tasks/Action list to be dealt with by the council and clerks as appropriate.

The meeting of the Community Committee closed at 8.48 pm.

Minutes of a meeting of the Open Spaces Committee of Eynsford Parish Council held on Monday 6th January 2025 held at Eynsford Parish Office at 8.48 p.m.

Members Present:

Mr M Barker
Mr V Robson
Mr D Naylor
Mr A Cooke (Chair of the Open Spaces Committee)
Mrs J Laird
Mr J Griffiths

Clerk in Attendance:

Mrs J Tunbridge

Others Present

Apologies for Absence:

Mr O Young

1) Declarations of Interest

None

2) Permissive Path at Chalk Hill/Castlefield Allotments

Councillors were asked to discuss different options for creating a permissive path with information provided by Kent Public Rights of Way team.

Resolved: Councillors agreed for option 1, which would mean that Eynsford Parish Council keep the ownership of the path and maintain it, giving the council full control over it. Mrs Laid advised we should check the insurance to make sure we are covered.

3) Holes at Riverside

Councillors were asked to discuss solutions to the ongoing issue of holes in the bank at Riverside. The Environment Agency were contacted before Christmas for advice. The temporary post and sign have been removed by someone, and a temporary cover has now been placed over the hole.

Resolved: That the Clerks chase the Environment Agency and, in the meantime, Mr Griffiths will have his builders fill the hole with concrete.

The meeting of the Open Spaces Committee closed at 9.04 p.m.