

Minutes of the Meeting of Eynsford Parish Council held on Thursday 16th May 2024, at the Parish Office, Priory Lane, Eynsford, at 7.35pm.

9168 PRESENT

Members Present

Mr A Cooke
Mr J Griffiths
Mrs J Laird
Mr O Young

Others Present

Mrs R Gardner (left 8.30pm), Mrs P Penney

Clerk in Attendance

Mrs H Ivaldi

Mr Cooke chaired the meeting.

9169 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr M Barker, Mr D Naylor, Mrs H Sim, Mr V Robson, Mr J Gee, Cllr R Gough

9170 CHAIR'S REMARKS

None

9171 CLERK'S COMMENTS

None

9172 GOVERNANCE

a) Declarations of Interest

Mr J Griffiths declared a pecuniary interest in Planning (minute 9174b) as owner of 10 Riverside.

b) Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the last full council meeting held on 18th March 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 April 2024, as per Appendix A and a schedule of payments.

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

d) Outstanding Actions

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

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

e) CIL Payment for 2023/4

Councillors were informed that a payment of £13,086.56 had been received from development in Eynsford in the past year. It was noted that this can only be spent on infrastructure in the parish and must be spent within 5 years or returned.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

f) Approval of Annual Governance Statement 2023/24

Councillors were asked to approve the annual governance statement which forms part of the council's annual audit.

RESOLVED: That the governance statement is approved and signed.

g) Approval of Annual Accounting Statement 2023/24

Councillors were asked to approve the annual accounting statement which forms part of the council's annual audit.

RESOLVED: That the accounting statement is agreed and signed.

9173 COMMUNITY

a) Police & Crime Report

The Clerk provided details of crime statistics. In March 3 crimes were reported as follows:

Lullingstone Castle	1 x ASB
Eynsford Station	1 x Criminal damage/arson
Bower Lane	1 x Violence/sexual assault

It was noted that issues at Riverside would be discussed at the next committee meeting and that a meeting with the police would be organised after that.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

b) Harrow Meadow Playground / Provision for Children

Councillors were asked to consider the facilities that they provide for children of all ages in the village and whether more could be provided at Harrow Meadow or anywhere else in the village. A resident, Mrs Gardner attended and spoke about her ideas of how the provision could be improved, by updating the existing play area and by providing a MUGA for older children that could include hard standing for bikes/scooters, basketball hoop, table tennis etc. Mrs Gardner also said the play area would be more attractive if there were toilet facilities accessible and access to a café at the new hall. Councillors discussed possible options.

RESOLVED: That an article is written for the next parish council newsletter about the current play area and about options for future development, with an opportunity for residents to put forward suggestions. That Mr Cooke speaks to the village hall trustees about whether public access to the toilets could be incorporated into the design. That the council looks at providing more facilities for children in the village subject to space and budget.

c) Riverside Tearooms – Asset of Community Value

Councillors were asked to consider re-listing the Riverside Tearooms as an Asset of Community Value with Sevenoaks District Council. This would mean that the community could be given an opportunity to buy the Asset if it went up for sale.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk relists the Riverside Tearoom as an Asset of Community Value, if this is possible.

9174 PLANNING

a) Notifications of Planning Consents/Refusal

24/00291/FUL – Partridge Cottages, Lullingstone Lane, Eynsford – GRANTED

24/00339/CONVAR – Land North of 2 Upper Austin Lodge Farm Cottages, Upper Austin Lodge Road, Eynsford - GRANTED

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

b) Planning Applications - Delegated responses

Due to deadline timings, four applications were responded to by the Clerk as follows:

24/00032/HOUSE – Chalkhurst, Upper Austin Lodge Road – No Objections

24/00710/VAR106 – Holmesdale Hall, Parkgate Road, Orpington – Objected.

24/00735/HOUSE – The Willows, 10 Riverside, Eynsford – No Objections

24/00652/HOUSE – Greenkeepers, Upper Austin Lodge Road, Eynsford – No Objections

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

c) Planning Application 24/00806/HOUSE – 38 Eynsford Rise, Eynsford

Councillors reviewed an application for a loft conversion with roof extension to the rear of the property, hip-to-gable and full rear dormer, new side window, two new rooflights and alteration to the fenestration for the above property.

RESOLVED: That no objections are made.

d) Planning Application 24/00918/HOUSE – 1 Darenth Cottages, Station Road, Eynsford

Councillors reviewed an application for the demolition of the existing rear conservatory and the erection of a single storey rear extension with roof lantern plus alterations to the existing fenestration.

RESOLVED: That the council objects as the proposed extension is overbearing and would have a detrimental impact on the neighbouring property.

e) Planning Application 24/01047/CONVAR – Land Adj, 42 Riverside, Eynsford

Councillors reviewed plans for the variation of conditions 2 and 7 of 22/03445/FUL for the erection of one building containing two new semi-detached dwellings with associated hard and soft landscaping, including new access from Riverside with alterations to the retaining wall and fence.

RESOLVED: That no comment is made.

f) Planning Application 24/01048/FUL – land Adj. to 42 Riverside, Eynsford

Councillors reviewed an application for the installation of two air source heat pumps.

RESOLVED: That councillors support the application.

g) Pedham Place Budget

Councillors were asked to agree to which budget the pre-approved £500 donation towards legal costs for Pedham Place should be taken.

RESOLVED: That a new budget heading is created named 'Pedham Place' and that £500 is transferred into it from the Contingency budget.

h) Pedham Place Update

Mr Young told councillors that he and some other councillors from surrounding parishes had met with Laura Trott MP at Pedham Place to show her the area that needs protecting. Ms Trott seemed to be supportive of opposing development in the Green Belt in general. If Pedham Place remains in the Local Plan as a development site, then the parishes will approach her for further help.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

i) Consultant for the Local Plan

Councillors were able to review a draft tender brief document drawn up by Farningham Parish Council that would be used to recruit a planning consultant to help with the campaign against development at Pedham Place, Eynsford & Farningham and Petham Court, Crockenhill. Councillors were told the consultant could cost between £10,000 and £20,000 but the actual cost would not be known until tenders are received.

RESOLVED: That the clerk checks the council's powers regarding paying for a planning consultant. That the council approves the tender document but asks that the inclusion of Petham Court in the brief is made more prominent. That no financial decision is made at this point.

9175 HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

a) Fernbank Project

Mrs Laird reported on a recent meeting with Kent Highways about the proposal to replace the verge with 'grasscrete' to improve pedestrian access around the parked cars. Kent Highways had said that it would not be possible as they could not encourage pavement parking. The only other option they suggested was installing yellow lines. There was a discussion about possible options to improve the situation.

RESOLVED: That Fernbank is added to the Highways Improvement Plan as an area to be investigated. That a letter is written to Fernbank residents to let them know that the council was considering installing double yellow and asking drivers to park more considerately leaving space for pedestrians, pushchairs and wheelchairs to pass on the pavement.

b) Highways Improvement Plan

Councillors were asked to review the updated Highways Improvement Plan. Councillors were happy with the schemes listed on the plan.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

c) Castlefield Access Road

This item was deferred as no information was available.

9176 OPEN SPACES

a) Use of Common Meadow for Eynstock

Councillors were asked to approve an application to use Common Meadow for the Eynstock music event on 26th August 2024 between 11am and 6pm.

RESOLVED: That permission is given subject to the usual conditions and a full risk assessment being provided in advance of the event.

b) Greenhouse Request for Allotment

Councillors were asked to approve an application to remove a dilapidated shed and to replace with a glass greenhouse at Castlefield Allotments.

RESOLVED: That permission is given to erect a greenhouse of no more than 6 x 8' and made of polycarbonate (not glass), provided that the shed is removed beforehand.

c) Grass Cutting at Harrow Meadow

Councillors were asked to approve extra work at Harrow Meadow as part of the proscribed maintenance schedule for the new pitch. Three extra cuts are needed, and these would be covered by the Eynsford Village Hall contract so would be of no extra cost to the parish council. However, an extra application of fertiliser costing £400 to be applied in October, would need to be funded.

RESOLVED: That cost of the fertiliser application (£400) is approved to be taken from the Harrow Meadow Pitch Maintenance budget.

d) Playground Maintenance

Councillors were told that recent inspection of the children's play area at Harrow Meadow had raised a few minor issues that needed to be monitored. There was a discussion about the playground in general and its future.

RESOLVED: That an extra cut of the grass in the play area is approved to be carried out before half term. That the playground equipment is checked regularly.

e) Outdoor Gym

Councillors were asked to consider asking local gyms to sponsor an outdoor gym at Harrow Meadow and a draft letter had been prepared to send out to local gyms.

RESOLVED: That this proposal is not pursued. That further discussion is held about the use of the former trim trail area at Harrow Meadow.

f) Condition Report, Harrow Meadow Changing Rooms

Councillors discussed the report produced by a building surveyor about the condition of the changing rooms and what work was needed to improve it and to solve the damp problem. There was a discussion about the work required and the length of time it would take to get quotes and get the work done. The intention was to apply for a grant from the Football Association to cover some of the costs, and this would increase the timescale.

RESOLVED: That the work is deferred until the end of the next season, around May 2025. That time is taken to get quotes and apply for a grant. That in order for the changing rooms to be ready for the start of the new season, a deep clean is carried out, the electrics are made safe, Brodex is contacted to re-start the water testing and the loft ladder is repaired.

9177 FACILITIES & ENVIRONMENT

a) Pruning the Cherry Tree at the War Memorial

Councillors were told that work needed to be carried out on the cherry tree at the war memorial this summer and to approve getting quotes for this work and applying for permission from Sevenoaks District Council. The specification for the works, provided by the Tree Warden is: to raise the crown/lower branches up to one metre to give a better sight line for lorries and tractors pulling out of the junction. Branches should be removed to keep the balance and appearance of the tree shape. Remove the dead branch.

RESOLVED: That quotes are sought and that permission for the works is sought.

b) Lullingstone Liaison Group

Mrs Laird reported on a recent meeting of the Lullingstone Liaison Group. The new multiuse path had been delayed due to ownership issues. A new sculpture was being installed and wooden frames looking at the landscape had been put in. The goats were doing well at Preston Hill. Lullingstone Country Park were keen to get involved in the new UNESCO Geopark project which included the north downs. The Darent Valley Landscape Partnership's funding was coming to an end sadly.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

The meeting ended at 10.16pm.

Chairperson: 20th June 2024