

Minutes of the Meeting of Eynsford Parish Council held on Thursday 18th December 2025, at the Parish Office, Priory Lane, Eynsford, at 7.30pm.

9388 PRESENT

Members Present

Mr M Barker, Mr A Cooke, Mrs J Laird, Mr D Naylor, Mr V Robson, Mr O Young.

Others Present

Seven members of the public.

Clerk in Attendance

Mrs H Ivaldi

9389 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr J Griffiths

9390 CHAIR'S REMARKS

Mr Robson noted that he had been uncomfortable with the behaviour of some councillors and that unpleasant accusations had been made. He noted that the council was working to resolve these issues.

9391 CLERK'S COMMENTS

The Clerk noted that the parish office would be open on 22nd and 23rd December but would then be closed until 5th January 2026.

9392 GOVERNANCE

a) Declarations of Interest

None.

b) Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the last full council meeting held on 20th November 2025 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 November 2025 along with the most recent schedule of payments.

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

d) Outstanding Actions

Councillors were asked to provide updates on the outstanding actions spreadsheet.

There was nothing to report.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

e) Parish Council Budget and Precept for 2026/27

Councillors were asked to approve the draft budget and the precept amount included.

RESOLVED: That the following amendments are made to the draft budget:

- That £3000 is added to the Contingency budget
- That £1000 is removed from the Village Hall Car Park budget
- That £2000 is removed from the Playground Replacement budget

A precept of £114,292.13 was agreed to be submitted to Sevenoaks District Council.

f) New Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (DBS) Policy

Councillors were informed that further to minute 9382j, research and advice has shown that DBS checks cannot be carried out and data held for councillors and staff without specific reasons. The new policy explains when checks are appropriate.

RESOLVED: That DBS policy is approved and adopted by the council.

g) Village Hall Update

Mr Cooke reported on progress with the building project. Also two trustees were present and answered some questions. A contractor had been appointed and two design meeting had been held. The trustees wish to change the layout of the interior of the hall. The design work will be

finished by 30th January and the contractor will provide full costs for the next stage of the project. The aim is to start building work by April 2026. Mr Cooke reported that the sale is progressing and it is hoped it will coincide with the closure of the hall in March/April. Work on the lease is also progressing. It was noted that there is still a funding gap of about £400K.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

h) Village Hall Project Funding

Councillors were asked to agree in principle to taking out a Public Works Loan in 2027 or 2028 of a maximum of £200,000 with repayments to be made over 20 years. Mr Staniland, a trustee of the village hall spoke about a planned loan scheme to ask residents to lend money to the hall. The village hall trustees may also look at other bank loans to fill the remaining funding gap together with additional fundraising activities. Councillors wished to see other funding in place before they committed to a loan.

RESOLVED: That the parish council agreed in principle to apply for a Public Works Loan of £200K over 20 years to start April 2027 to help to fund the new village hall project.

That the Clerk speaks to the CIL team at Sevenoaks District Council regarding the timing of the CIL funding drawdown.

i) Neighbourhood Plan Update

As Mrs Sim was not present, but had submitted briefing notes to the Clerk and for Mrs Laird to present, Mrs Laird gave an update on progress with the Neighbourhood Plan. The group were starting to draft policies, the first of which will be the Local Green Spaces document about which landowners will be contacted. This will be advertised on the website, facebook, in trident and at pop up events.

A number of members of the public were present and had questions about the Local Green Spaces consultation and were allowed to speak. A question was raised asking why houses on Eynsford Rise were included in the draft plan. Another person asked why such a large area of land as Austin Lodge valley was included, rather than local spaces within the community. Another person asked who was on the Steering Group.

Councillors present had not seen the revised copy of the Local Green Spaces document and were not able to answer all of the questions posed. Councillors were also not clear on who were members of the Steering Group. Mrs Laird offered to find out this information.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

j) Review of the Terms of Reference – Neighbourhood Plan

Councillors were asked to review the Terms of Reference to ensure that they were correct for a single parish project as they had been written for a joint project, and also to make adjustments in line with advice received from the planning consultant.

RESOLVED: That this item is deferred until councillors have time to review the documents. That the Chair of the Steering Group is considered on the next agenda.

k) January Committee Meeting

Councillors were asked to agree to cancel the committee meeting scheduled for 5th January 2026.

RESOLVED: That the January committee meeting is cancelled and that this is advertised.

l) Valuation Fees: Community Asset Transfers

Councillors were asked to approve fees for valuations of Saddlers Park Green and Eynsford Car Park as part of the Community Asset Transfer application process. One had been received which is £950 + VAT each of £1800 + VAT for both. Another quote had been requested.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk goes ahead with the cheapest quote received.

9393 PLANNING

a) Report of the last Planning Committee meetings

Councillors were asked to approve the reports of the Planning Committee meeting held on 1st December 2025.

RESOLVED: That the reports are approved.

b) Notifications of Planning Consents/Refusals

25/02400/HOUSE - Springpark, Station Road, Eynsford- GRANTED

c) Local Plan Consultation

It was noted the parish council's response to the Local Plan Reg. 18 consultation had been submitted by the Clerk on 11th December.

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

d) Planning Application 25/03138/HOUSE – 10 St Martin’s Drive, Eynsford

Councillors reviewed an application at the above address for a single storey extension with rooflight, a two storey extension with alterations to fenestration and landscaping works.

RESOLVED: That no objections are made.

e) Tree Work Application 25/03326/WTCA – Gore Tree Cottage, High Street, Eynsford

Councillors were informed about an application to fell 6 trees – 3 cypresses and 3 leylandii. The application had been sent to the Tree Warden for comment.

RESOLVED: That no objections are made.

9394 HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

a) Parking Issues: Fernbank

Councillors were informed that a member of the public had contacted the council to complain about the ongoing inconsiderate parking issues outside Fernbank where cars are blocking access to the pavement for pedestrians. This had been reported to the police many times with no action taken and in a recent email they noted that there is little that they can do.

RESOLVED: That a letter is written to residents of Fernbank and Alton Cottages asking them to park considerately leaving room on the pavement for pedestrians including pushchair and wheelchair users, and that the police and/or Highways may get involved if the situation does not improve.

9395 COMMUNITY

a) Report of the last Community Committee meeting

Councillors were asked to approve the report of the Community Committee meeting held on 1st December 2025.

RESOLVED: That the report is approved.

b) Police/Crime Report

The Clerk provided crime information from October 2025. Nine crimes had been reported as follows:

Parkgate Road, Lullingstone	1 x Theft
Lullingstone Country Park	1 x ASB
	1 x Criminal damage
Mill Lane	1 x Theft

Gibsons Place	2 x ASB
Pollyhaugh	1 x Violence/sexual offence
Saddlers Park	1 x Violence/sexual offence
	1 x Other

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

c) Public Space Protection Order

Councillors were asked to agree the wording of the proposed Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for Riverside and to agree the area to be covered. The proposed restrictions were: No ASB; No Alcohol; No obstruction on the highway and ford (including all vehicles/carriages).

RESOLVED: That the restriction of No ASB and No obstruction on the highway and ford (including all vehicles/carriages) are included. That the area covered extends to the junction with the A225 and includes the private road to Fulongs Farm and the Riverside Club, if they are in agreement.

d) Church Membership Grant

Councillors were asked to consider a request for funding of churchyard maintenance from St Martin's Church PCC.

RESOLVED: That a donation of £700 is made from the Churchyard Maintenance budget.

e) Membership of Darent River Preservation Society (DRiPS)

Councillors were asked to renew their membership of DRIPS for the coming year costing £20.

RESOLVED: That membership of DRIPS is renewed at £20.

f) Donation to BEAMS

Councillors were asked to consider a donation request received from BEAMS, a charity that supports disabled children and their families in Kent.

RESOLVED: That a donation of £200 is made.

9396 OPEN SPACES

a) Report of the last Open Spaces Committee meeting

Councillors were asked to approve the report of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 1st December 2025.

RESOLVED: That the report is approved.

b) Scattering of Ashes

Councillors were informed that a member of the public had asked if there was anywhere in the parish where they might scatter the ashes of a family member.

RESOLVED: That the use of Chalk Hill, away from the planted areas and footpath, is offered.

9397 FACILITIES & ENVIRONMENT

a) New Member, Green Team

Councillors were asked to approve the co-option of Mr J Ash (the Tree Warden) onto the Green Team).

RESOLVED: That Mr Ash is co-opted onto the Green Team.

b) Parliamentary Motion: Local Community Energy

Councillors were asked to write to MP Laura Trott asking her to support an Early Day Motion in support of local purchasing of community energy.

RESOLVED: That Mrs Trott is asked to support the Early Day Motion regarding community energy.

At this point. 8.59pm, the meeting was opened up to questions from member of the public (see Appendix Q). The meeting resumed at 9.04pm.

The meeting ended at 9.04pm

Signed, Chairperson: 22nd January 2026

Appendix Q

Questions from Members of the Public heard on 18th December 2025 at 8.59pm.

Mrs Penney raised the issue of overgrown hedges. The Clerk recommended that these could be reported to Kent Highways. Mrs Penney noted that she was grateful for the work the road sweepers had undertaken, removing fallen leaves.

Mr Alexander asked about updates on the proposed footpath along the A225. The Clerk updated on the latest news from Kent Highways who had a proposal for a new footpath going forward to the Joint Transportation Board.

Public questions closed at 9.04pm.