

**Minutes of the Meeting of Eynsford Parish Council held on  
Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2025, at the Parish Office, Priory Lane, Eynsford,  
at 7.30pm.**

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**9335 PRESENT**

Members Present

Mr A Cooke, Mrs J Laird, Mr V Robson, Mr O Young

Others Present

Mr M Logen (County Councillor) 8.24 – 9.21pm.

Clerk in Attendance

Mrs H Ivaldi

**9336 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Mr J Griffiths, Mr M Barker, Mrs H Sim

**9337 CHAIR'S REMARKS**

Mr Robson said that good progress had been made on the neighbourhood plan. Mr Robson also reminded councillors to write recommendations for agenda items.

**9338 CLERK'S COMMENTS**

None.

**9339 GOVERNANCE**

a) Declarations of Interest

None.

b) Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Annual Meeting and the last full council meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 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 May 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. It was noted that completed actions should be moved from the active sheet.

**RESOLVED:** That the information is noted.

e) Insurance Renewal

The Clerk presented quotes from two companies for the insurance renewal. These were Zurich £1057.74 and Clear Councils £1753.17. These were both for a one year contract.

**RESOLVED:** That insurance is taken out with Zurich at £1057.74. That prices are obtained for adding street light cover to the policy.

f) Electricity Contracts

Further to the decision at the last meeting, prices changed before the agreed contract could be arranged. Therefore, the Clerk has arranged for a new contract with EON for the parish council's electricity at the parish office and at the changing rooms as follows: Parish Office – 36 month contract 24.3 p/kwh standing charge 30p/day – est annual cost £1634.83; Changing Rooms – 36 month contract 24.3 p/kwh standing charge 48p/day – est annual cost £663.39. The broker will receive a small percentage fee from the supplier.

**RESOLVED:** That the new contracts are approved as described.

g) New Domain and Emails

Councillors were informed that the Clerk had set up the new .gov.uk domain name and associated email addresses which councillors need to set up. The Clerk was seeking advice on the best way to manage data storage/email inboxes. An official date would be agreed to move to the new accounts.

**RESOLVED:** That the information is noted.

h) Internal Audit Report 2024-2025

Councillors received and noted the annual internal audit report as part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25.

**RESOLVED:** That the report is noted.

i) Annual Governance Statement 2024 - 2025

Councillors were asked to discuss and approve the Annual Governance Statement to confirm that the council has a sound system of internal controls.

**RESOLVED:** That Annual Governance Statement 2024-2025 is approved and signed by the Chair and Clerk.

j) Accounting Statements 2024 - 2025

Councillors were asked to approve the annual Accounting Statements produced by the Clerk/RFO for 2024/25.

**RESOLVED:** That the Accounting Statements for 2024/25 are approved and signed by the Chair.

k) Office Cleaner

Councillors were asked to review the office cleaner's rate of pay.

**RESOLVED:** That the cleaner's rate of pay is increased to £12.21 per hour and that the work required is clarified by the Clerk. That if required, the Clerk can approve a small increase of up to ½ hour per week.

l) Kent County Council Pensions Consultation

Councillors were told that KCC are currently consulting town and parish councils participating in the fund on proposals to form a Local Government Pension Scheme funding pool specifically for town and parish councils from 1 April 2026. Councillors were asked to agree a response.

**RESOLVED:** That the Clerk seeks further external advice to clarify the proposal and then responds appropriately.

#### m) Neighbourhood Plan Update

Mr Robson gave an update on progress with the Neighbourhood Plan. Two meetings had been held and four sub-committees had been created that would be focussing on questions for the household questionnaire that should go out in July. Mr Robson noted that councillors would need to join a sub-committee to be involved in decisions regarding the Neighbourhood Plan.

**RESOLVED:** That the information is noted.

#### n) Neighbourhood Plan Consultant

Mr Robson told councillors that the Steering Group had recommended Urban Vision as the consultant they wished to work with on the Neighbourhood Plan. The main contact Ms H Barter had said that much of the work required could be done within the council's budget of £5000.

**RESOLVED:** That Urban Vision is appointed to work on Eynsford's Neighbourhood Plan.

*At this point, 8.24pm, Mr Logen arrived.*

#### o) Village Hall Update

Mr Cooke gave an update on the village hall project. The committee had met the previous evening with two potential contractors for the new hall who had very similar costs, so a choice would be difficult. Unfortunately, the application for CIL funding had been unsuccessful so the funding gap remains. The trustees are now looking at undertaking the project in two stage – 1. Build the shell of the hall, 2. Internal fit out. They hope to start the building process this year and have enough funds for the first stage but would need to continue fundraising to complete the second stage of the works. The current site is still on the market but the need for archaeological excavations may put developers off. The trustees plan to announce a new fundraising proposal soon.

**RESOLVED:** That the information is noted.

*At this point the Chair moved to Highways & Transportation item 2 and then Community item 1. The meeting was opened to questions from the public at 9.12pm and resumed at 9.24pm*

p) Quarterly Newsletter

Councillors were asked to suggest items for the next parish council newsletter due out in July.

**RESOLVED:** That the following articles are sought with a deadline of 4<sup>th</sup> July:

- Neighbourhood Plan – Mrs Sim
- Family Fun Day – Mrs Ivaldi/Mrs Tunbridge
- Arbor Day – Mrs Laird
- Change of Domain – Mrs Ivaldi
- Village Hall Update – Mr Cooke
- Community Award – Mrs Ivaldi
- A225 Footpath and Highways Improvement Plan – Mr Young
- Police and Anti-Social Behaviour – Mr Robson
- Raffertys – Mr Martin

p) Review of the Byelaws

Councillors were asked to decide whether to review the council's byelaws for recreation areas.

**RESOLVED:** That Mrs Laird reviews the byelaws and highlights areas that could be changed. That Mrs Ivaldi researches the process for changing byelaws. That the information is brought back to another meeting.

## **9340 PLANNING**

a) Report of the last Planning Committee meeting

Councillors were asked to approve the report of the Planning Committee meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025.

**RESOLVED:** That the report is approved.

b) Notifications of Planning Consents/Refusals

The following information had been received since the last meeting:

25/01098/HOUSE – 1 Darenth Cottages, Station Road, Eynsford – GRANTED

**RESOLVED:** That the information is noted.

**9341 HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION**

a) Streetlight Repairs and Replacements

Councillors were asked to reconsider the list of recommended repairs and replacements of the parish council's streetlights provided by our streetlighting contractor. The Clerk had sought quotes from six different companies, but none were willing or able to quote for such small numbers.

**RESOLVED:** That councillors agreed to replace columns 3, 19, 58 and 68 this financial year. That the contractor is asked to schedule them most cost effectively. When the final costs are known for the replacements, the council will consider the other suggested repairs.

b) Highways Improvement Plan Update

Mr Robson gave an update on a recent meeting with Kent Highways about the Highways Improvement Plan. The council's main priorities were: getting approval for a better footpath along the A225 verge between the station and footpath SD197. Nigel Rowe at KCC promised to try to get this included on the Local Transport Plan and to look at other options such as Active Travel links. The second priority was increasing the 30mph limit further south of Eynsford to link in with the footpath above and to start level with SD 197. Other requests included reducing the speed limit in Eynsford to 20mph and working on parking solutions in various areas of the village.

**RESOLVED:** That the information is noted.

**9342 COMMUNITY**

a) Police/Crime Report

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

Lullingstone Golf Course	1 x Other Crime
Lullingstone Park	1 x Anti-Social Behaviour

Riverside	1 x Anti-Social Behaviour
High Street	1 x Criminal Damage/Arson
	2 x Violence/Sexual Assaults
Upper Austin Lodge Road	2 x Violence/Sexual Assaults
Pollyhaugh	1 x Violence/Sexual Assault

**RESOLVED:** That the information is noted.

b) Assets of Community Value

Councillors were asked to consider registering buildings in the village as Assets of Community Value. Currently only Riverside Tea Room is listed.

**RESOLVED:** That Raffertys, Bridge House Stores, Norman's Butchers and the Baptist Church are registered as Assets of Community Value.

c) Lucy Box Sign

It was noted that a member of the local history society had pointed out that the information on the Lucy box sign was not entirely accurate. Councillors were asked to agree a way forward.

**RESOLVED:** That Mrs Pittman from the local history society is asked to provide new wording for the sign, and that the Clerk organises the creation and installation of a new, replacement, sign.

## **9343 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 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025.

**RESOLVED:** That the report is approved.

b) Transfer of Assets

Councillors were asked to decide whether to express an interest in taking over Saddlers Park green from Sevenoaks District Council. It was not known what costs, if any, would be associated with a transfer.

**RESOLVED:** That the council submits an expression of interest in taking on ownership of Saddlers Park green.

c) Sycamore Saplings

Councillors were asked to agree to the removal of the sycamore saplings adjacent to the recently felled sycamore at Harrow Meadow in order to prevent further growth and to provide more light to the play area.

**RESOLVED:** That the saplings are removed. That Mr Cooke assesses whether or not a tree surgeon is required to do the work.

d) Play Area Survey

Councillors were asked to agree to survey residents about the future use and form of the play area at Harrow Meadow.

**RESOLVED:** That any survey questions are included in the Household Questionnaire being produced as part of the Neighbourhood Plan work.

e) Football Pitch Improvements

Councillors were asked to agree to carrying out improvement to the football pitch including top dressing, and the application of fertiliser and seed as well as watering. The total estimate for this work received was £6412,00.

**RESOLVED:** That the contractor is asked if costs can be reduced if the council orders materials and equipment directly. That the Football Pitch Maintenance Fund is increased as follows to allow for the work to take place: £1500 to be transferred from Contingency, £2500 to be transferred from General Reserves.

## **9344 FACILITIES & ENVIRONMENT**

a) Report of the last Facilities & Environment Committee meeting

Councillors were asked to approve the report of the Facilities & Environment Committee meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025.

**RESOLVED:** That the report is approved.

b) Himalayan Balsam Clearance

Councillors were informed that North West Kent Countryside Partnership were organising a Himalayan Balsam Clearance day on 3<sup>rd</sup> July in Eynsford. Volunteers from the village would be welcome. Councillors were asked to identify any areas that need to be cleared.

**RESOLVED:** That Mr Cooke checks Common Meadow, that Mrs Laird checks Millfield and the viaduct and lets the Clerk know the results.

c) South & South East in Bloom Judging – It's Your Neighbourhood

Councillors were informed that the judging of Chalk Hill as part of 'It's Your Neighbourhood' in the S&SE In Bloom competition would take place on 4<sup>th</sup> July. Members of the Green Team would meet and talk to the judge.

**RESOLVED:** That the information is noted.

The meeting ended at 10.19 pm

Chairperson: 17<sup>th</sup> July 2025

## **Public Questions – 19<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

The meeting was opened up to questions from members of the public at 9.12pm.

Mr Logen, County Councillor spoke about the Highways Improvement Plan and said that he would try to help to progress the proposed footpath along the A225 with the Public Rights of Way Team.

Mr Logen asked about current issues and concerns in Eynsford – these included the proposed development at Pedham Place and issues with Anti-Social Behaviour at Riverside.

Mr Logen said he was keen to improve bus services in the village and would be speaking with Arriva about this.

The meeting resumed at 9.24pm