



EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

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ESTATES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 4 June 2026

Committee Members: Cllr S Ody (Chair)
Cllr. R Whittaker (Vice Chair)
Cllr. S. Barnett*
Cllr. I Gibson
Cllr. C Pond
Cllr T Scott*
Cllr F Visser*
Cllr L Gibbs (substitute)

In attendance: Deputy Town Clerk

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were in attendance

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs. Visser and Scott were absent; no apologies were received.
Cllr. Gibbs was present substituting for Cllr. Barnett.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs. Whittaker and Gibson noted they were MSDC Councillors in relation to discussions on S106 funds.

3 CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed members to the initial meeting of the Estates & Environment Committee and noted the committee was responsible for the management, maintenance, and improvement of all council-owned properties, cemeteries and public amenities. It would oversee environmental initiatives, explore ways to enhance town connectivity, and lead projects that strengthen the Council's assets, promote sustainability, and reduce its carbon footprint.

It was noted the Town Improvement Plan sat under Community & Tourism Team. It was requested that bound copies of the plan were provided to all Councillors.

4 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE REGARDING OPEN ACTIONS (MERGED FROM E&ST AND A&T COMMITTEES) (APPENDIX A)

The action list was reviewed and the following noted:

A&T Min No 20: Land at Mount Noddy: it was requested that this matter was chased and a timeline added. Queens Road Cemetery: The committee requested the structural survey report was circulated with additional information on progress, it was noted Councillors had recently received an invitation for a site visit by the Cemetery Manager, however a further opportunity was requested to view the wall.

A&T Min No 43: St Georges Field: the lack of response from the MSDC officer in respect of maintenance costs was noted and the Deputy Town Clerk advised a meeting was being held with MSDC Communication Officer next week where this could be raised. Glendale should be able to provide the maintenance costs.

E&ST Min No 29: Renewables: it was suggested local companies should be approached to quote. S106 funding was discussed and the Committee requested an updated list of funds available to the Council. MSDC S106 Officers had been asked for this information, and it would be circulated to Council once the updated spreadsheet was received.

5 TO RECEIVE A QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORT FROM CEMETERY & COMPLIANCE MANAGER (APPENDIX B)

The report was noted.

The decline in earthen burials was discussed, particularly the potential impact on future cemetery income should the trend continue towards ash interments rather than traditional burials.

The incident was discussed in respect of the damage to the cemetery wall, unfortunately details of the vehicle that caused the damage was not available, therefore the Council would claim on their insurance. Wheel stops had been installed to protect the wall from further incidents.

6 TO RECEIVE A QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORT FROM DEPUTY TOWN CLERK (APPENDIX C)

The report was noted.

A further update was provided on the auction date for St Margaret's Loop as due to delays with Railway Paths' solicitors preparing the legal pack, they were unable to meet the July date. With no auction schedule for August, this will now move to September.

Bookings systems were discussed and it was suggested contact was made with Chequer Mead, as they had recently had a bespoke software system built which could be worth consideration for the future. The current bookings software used by the Council integrated the finance and cemetery departments, meaning invoicing had been the issue with other booking system considered. It was noted that AI technology was being used for recommendations/reviews rather than other mediums such as Google reviews, so this should be considered for the future.

The Committee noted that it was positive to learn bookings were currently increasing.

7 TO RECEIVE A QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORT FROM HEAD OF ESTATES & CIVIC PRIDE (APPENDIX D)

The report was noted.

The Committee noted that it was pleasing the water fountain was open again. The tennis court wall was raised, and it was requested additional information be circulated in respect of the urgency of the work and to confirm that the Council was responsible for this wall.

8 TO CONSIDER THE REPORT AND COSTINGS FOR THE PROPOSED INTERNAL CHANGES TO THE OLD COURT HOUSE (APPENDIX E)

An addendum to the initial report was provided at the meeting, which provided further information including photographs of the area and updated costings. It was confirmed that the S106 application had been approved by MSDC for the sum of £17,600. Building Control application was still awaiting approval.

The proposed work was discussed, alongside the forthcoming additional costs for the new boilers in the Old Court House, which would be in the region of £25,000 to £35,000. The Council cannot claim the VAT back on any works as the building was not VAT registered. The current boilers must be replaced urgently prior to the winter.

The Committee felt that the recommended internal changes would benefit the nursery in respect of safety and security and make the space more workable for other hirers. It was suggested that the nursery was approached to commit to a longer lease as this was currently a rolling annual renewal basis.

RESOLVED: To proceed with the proposed internal separation alternation works for the estimated costs of £19,757.83 using S106 funds and ear marked reserves, which included VAT as this couldn't be reclaimed. Subject to additional quotes the boiler replacements should be recommended for approval at the next F&GP committee meeting, as the work needed to be completed as soon as possible to avoid heating issues this winter, taking into consideration the location of the boilers/pipework when considering how space might be used in the future.

9 TO CONSIDER THE REPORT IN RELATION TO THE MEMORIAL PLAQUE FEE PROPOSED INCREASE (APPENDIX F)

The same supplier was used for memorial wall plaques to ensure they were uniform in style, size and finish. Due to an increase in supplier costs, the report recommended the fee for memorial plaques was increased as currently the fees did not cover the Council's costs.

RESOLVED: To increase the memorial wall plaque fee from £354 to £405.

The meeting was closed 20.18 hrs.

Next meeting: Thursday 10th September 2026 at 7pm.