

MINUTES OF A FULL MEETING OF BRENCHLEY PARISH COUNCIL ON MONDAY 3rd AUGUST 2009 IN BRENCHLEY MEMORIAL HALL

Present

Chairman M Mackenzie presided, Vice Chairman J Barsley, R Carter, I McEwen, P Randall, R Dafter, B Stanley, Mrs C Cornford and Clerk M Powell. Borough Councillor Mrs M Callow. Two members of the public.

Apologies for absence

Borough Cllr Mrs S Slade for family commitments.

Declaration of Interests

Members were reminded that if a member has a *prejudicial* interest in an agenda item, this should be declared at the start of the meeting.

Personal interests may be declared at this point or, alternatively, can be declared at the time a specific item is being discussed if that member wishes to speak on the item in which s/he has a personal interest. In case of doubt about such an interest Councillors are advised to contact the Monitoring Officer before the meeting or declare the interest anyway.

Confirm Minutes of the full and finance meetings on 6th July and planning meeting 19th May

The minutes were duly confirmed as accurate and signed by the Chairman

Proposal of exempt item

It requires a proposal and agreement that, pursuant to section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the final items of business on the grounds it may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act. This was proposed and agreed to.

Public Question Time

A question was raised regarding progress on the village shop/post office. As this was an agenda item the resident was happy to wait until the subject was raised.

A resident asked if the policy of TWBC was known regarding wind turbines. It was explained that a firm policy was not known as various applications had resulted in different decisions, but at present it would appear each application was judged on its merits.

A further question was raised about what was known about the sale of the Kent National Golf Course and proposals for its future. Vice Chairman J Barsley replied that nothing firm was known, but that he had been informally approached by a local firm of estate agents who had asked if they could present some proposals to the PC. The Council discussed and agreed this would be acceptable and suggested that 7pm on 7th September would be a preferred occasion. Cllr Barsley said he would ask the firm to get in touch with the Clerk to discuss it.

Planning Applications.

09/01932/FUL/CLC

Little Dunks Farm Cuckoo Lane Brenchley

Change of use from agricultural to equestrian use; retrospective circular riding arena

Recommendation-Approval

Subject to no outside lighting.

09/02088/FUL/CLC

Becketts Grove Farm Sophurst Wood Lane Matfield

Conversion of existing store with alterations to form new gym. New pitched roof and connection into adjacent building

Recommendation-Approval

09/01611/FUL/CLC

3 Old Inn High St Brenchley

Replacement of existing exterior staircase to rear with new staircase and small area of decking

Recommendation-Approval

The Clerk was asked to question if a listed building application should have been received.

09/02232/FUL/GM2

3 Willow Cottages Crook Road Brenchley

Change of flat roof to tiled pitch

Recommendation-Approval**09/01975/FUL/CT2**

Cherry Trees The Green Matfield

Erection of 3 buildings comprising one pair 2 bedroom semi-detached houses, one 3 bedroom detached house and garage, associated parking, extension of existing access and associated works. This application had already been considered at a previous meeting and the PC had recommended refusal. It would appear that our principal objection regarding poor access has not been considered in the same light by the Highways Officer. Consequently Brg Cllr Mrs Slade has agreed to call this application in to committee.

09/01264/FUL/CT2

Land adjacent Birch Close, Chestnut Lane Matfield

Removal of existing woodland and construct affordable housing 2No3 bed houses, 2No 2 bed houses, and 2No 1-bed maisonettes with new access road and parking area

In answer to questions as to progress on this application it is understood that the developer has been asked to provide some compensation for the loss of the amenity of some of the land proposed. A contribution to Cinder Hill Wood has been suggested. The owners of the land have asked for assurance that if the scheme does not proceed they are at liberty to approach another housing association or put the land on the open market. It was thought by the PC that the latter would be unlikely to succeed, as it would only be considered as an exception site. The Clerk was asked to write to ask what are the consequences of such a delay and who will be taking the final decision and when. A separate letter of similar content to be sent to TCHG with an expression of surprise we have not been kept informed of such problems.

Decisions taken by TWBC**09/01516/FUL/CP3**

Little Dunks Farm Cuckoo Lane Brenchley

Change of use and alteration of redundant milk parlour to form single dwelling

Recommendation-Approval Decision-Refusal**09/01707/FUL/SJM**

Holly Cottage Tibbs Court Lane Brenchley

First Floor front extension

Recommendation-Approval Decision-Approval**09/01703/FUL/CP3**

Unit 9&10 Pine Cottage Maidstone Road Matfield

Change of use to repair and maintenance and storage of lawn mowers and garden machinery and ancillary sales

Recommendation-Approval Decision-Refusal

The Clerk was asked to write and enquire as to why this particular application has been refused when others on the same site have been approved.

09/01854/FUL/CLCSwingle Swangle Farm House Goshen Farm
Matfield Construction of domestic driveway and change of use of land from agricultural to residential curtilageRecommendation-Approval Decision-Refusal**Decisions taken by Clerk out of meeting**

War Memorial ground Damage

Following the car accident that destroyed the seat and damaged some shrubs monies have been received from the insurance company. The Clerk has ordered a replacement bench.

Other Meetings Attended**KALC**

Cllr Randall attended a meeting of KALC. It was reported that now 90% of parish councils in Kent are members

Pembury Hospital

Cllr Randall also attended a meeting hosted by Greg Clark MP to discuss public transport arrangements for the new Pembury Hospital. One of the conditions of the planning permission was that there should be adequate public transport but at present it is still undecided on who is going to pay for it. There were concerns expressed about the adequacy of the parking arrangements. Although 1200 spaces have been allocated and the bed count has reduced from 600 to 500 the majority of the parking will largely be for staff. Visiting hours are more flexible which should help to alleviate the problem but more land may be required. Although some temporary parking arrangements have been made in Nottcutts Garden Centre there are already concerns that some contractors are parking on side streets in Pembury to avoid the charges.

Brenchley Memorial Hall

Cllr Carter advised he had attended a meeting of the Brenchley Hall Trustees. The question had been raised as to why the Council no longer cut the hedge of the cricket pitch. It was discussed that in fact it was Jack Wish acting independently who had cut the hedge and was not part of the Council's responsibility. He also advised that an Abba Tribute Concert had been held. The proceeds amounted to some £400 which although more than had been raised at previous functions was less than had been hoped for and a repeat performance was unlikely in the near future.

Post Office

Cllr Mrs Cornford reported on several meetings had to discuss the post office/shop. Together with Mr Shaun Carter she had discussed estimated costs and after comparison with the successful venture at Barham £16000 was thought to be a starting point. This should include expenses such as the purchase of a suitable building, fitting out, legal expenses etc. The subject of grants had been explored and there was a possibility of up to £10000 from KCC, which needed applying for late September, and the possibility of another £5000 from Rural Services Agency. The crucial point was that the support of the Matfield residents was essential and a date towards the end of September had been earmarked for a public meeting to solicit this. The PC would be part of the steering committee. Another meeting had been held with the Post Master of Five Oak Green who had expressed interest in running the establishment. The issue of planning permission had so far proved to be a fiasco. Advice had been sought and that received said that the area in question was outside the LBD. This with the help of Darryl Jones, Economic Development Officer this had proved to be wrong and we are now waiting for the Estates Team from TWBC to visit to consider the issue. Cllr Barsley asked B/Cllr Mrs Callow if she could have a conversation with the Planning Department to see if they are prepared to work with and support the PC rather than be in opposition. He also raised the question of the removal of the paper and can recycling bins at Matfield, which would both improve the space available and result in a cost reduction to TWBC as these items were now collected door to door. A budget needs considering for legal issues regarding the shop/post office and it was agreed to review the matter for September/October

Matters Arising**Ward Walks**

Following the ward walks programme in which Cllrs were involved with, four copies of the report have been received which were available for distribution.

Dog Fouling

The Clerk had been asked to purchase some anti dog fouling signs for Matfield. However after research it would appear that signs are usually some 2-300mm diameter and for safety be situated 2.1m above ground level. The Council considered this and agreed to drop the idea, as a further proliferation of signage especially at this height would be visually damaging to the green. The Clerk was asked to contact the dog warden to ask if further patrols were possible.

Correspondence**Alex King**

Advice that speed checks in Matfield are scheduled for September and that a licencing scheme from Highways is due to start to remove the problems of one utility opening the road only to be followed by another shortly afterwards.

Kent Highway Services

Advice that there is an intention to impose speed restrictions at various locations including some within our Parish and notification that letters of support or objection need to be received by 17th August. All locations for Brenchley and Matfield are for 50mph limits. The locations were reported as: -

B2160 Gedges Hill

From the boundary of Paddock Wood southward to Maidstone Road

B2160 Maidstone Road

From B2160 Gedges Hill south westerly to a point in line with the south west boundary of Long Leas

Pralls Lane

From its junction with B2160 Gedges Hill north westwards for 21m

Coppers Lane

From its junction with B2160 Maidstone road south eastwards for a distance of 40m
B2160

B2160 Maidstone Road

From a point 71m south west of the access lane to Court Farm House south-westward to its junction with the A21 Kippings Cross

Sophurst Lane

From its junction with the B2160 southwards for a distance of 26m

Bramble Reed lane

From its junction with the B2160 north westwards for a distance of 56m

Kings Toll Road

From its junction with the B2160 south westwards for a distance of 43m

The Clerk was asked to inspect the maps at the Town Hall and write to say that in principle the PC agrees with the proposal but to note we would prefer 40mph. Also to point out that we have been asking for a long time to get a speed limit imposed on the Brenchley Road between Standings Cross and Petteridge lane.

Hospice

A request has been received for the annual "tree of life" to be erected by Matfield pavilion from December 5th to twelfth night. The Council agreed to this.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire had been received from Ms Karen Broom regarding Travellers and Gypsies to support a dissertation on the subject. The issue was discussed and it was felt that although well meant because of the nature of the questions some of the answers could be prejudicial. The PC via the Clerk agreed to write to this effect.

Plum Orchard Fairmans Lane Brenchley

Various emails have been sent regarding the construction of hard standing at the above contrary to an injunction. It was felt by the PC that TWBC were acting under difficult circumstances dictated by the legislation that they are obliged to adhere to and that they were being defensive in their replies to our emails of concern. The issue was discussed and it was agreed to review the situation at the next meeting.

Accounts for Payment

KALC	Declaration of office forms	£4.31
M Powell	Salary and expenses	£1244.85
Post Office Ltd	Tax & NI	£306.84

Other Matters as maybe previously notified

Computer requirements

The main PC of the Clerk is backed up weekly onto a stand-alone hard drive and also synchronised with a laptop. It would be desirable to have a remote storage facility for backed up data. The Clerk reported that companies existed that would provide an automated system for this at a cost of under £50pa and a small consultancy charge would be necessary to install it in the first place. The Council agreed to this but before proceeding Cllr McEwen would check to see if such a thing was practical using the server of our web site provider.

Training Budget

In light of various correspondence it is thought likely that further training for the Clerk and Councillors is probably going to be required. The Council considered this and agreed that the existing £400 budget would be sufficient but would keep an open mind if matters changed.

Taxable Benefits

A question was raised by the Clerk as to the taxable status of an office allowance. Cllr Carter was of the opinion that it was not a benefit but a fully justified expense and that he would assist the Clerk in calculating the actual costs incurred to be able to justify this if required.

Jubilee Seat

Councillors are asked to consider whether the PC should replace the Jubilee Seat, which although not originally provided by the PC was written-off following damage and general decay. The Council discussed the matter and agreed that there was sufficient furniture on the green and they would not replace the seating.

Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be a planning meeting on 18th August in Brenchley Memorial Hall

Exempt Items

Exempt items are recorded in a separate minute Page No 1465