



BRECHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
Matfield Pavilion, The Green, Matfield, Kent, TN12 7JU
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MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF BRECHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.00PM ON TUESDAY 2ND MAY 2023 AT MATFIELD PAVILION

Present: Councillors J. Buttery (Chair) presided, E Akenhead, A Stout, A. Dewdney, C. Churchill, A. Wells, C. Anderson, R. Groves, C. Brooks (Clerk), P. Horn (RFO)

In attendance: Katie Hargreaves (Paddock Wood Community Advice Centre)

1. Election of Chairman of the Parish Council and Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Buttery requested nominations for Chair. Cllr Akenhead nominated Cllr Buttery and there were no further nominations. By a show of hands Cllr Buttery was unanimously elected as Chair of Brenchley and Matfield Parish Council. A Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed, dated and countersigned by the Clerk.

2. Election of a Vice Chairman of the Parish Council and Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Buttery requested nominations for Vice-Chair. Cllr Buttery nominated Cllr Dewdney and there were no further nominations. By a show of hands Cllr Dewdney was unanimously elected as Vice-Chair of Brenchley and Matfield Parish Council. A Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed, dated and countersigned by the Clerk.

3. To accept apologies for absence

The Council accepted apologies from Cllr Tunstall who was on holiday.

4. To approve Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes of the meeting of 3rd April 2023 were approved as an accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair.

5. To record declarations of interest in any item on the Agenda

None.

6. To adjourn to allow public participation. At the Chairman's discretion, 15 minutes will be set aside for questions from members of the public each one of whom may speak for a maximum of 3 minutes in total relating to items on the Agenda or about issues of local concern. Members of the public are not permitted to participate in the meeting after this agenda item, without prior invitation from the Chairman.

None.

7. Chairman's Announcements

- Coronation Event – Cllr Buttery confirmed details for the event on Sunday 7th May at Brenchley Memorial Field.
- PC Logo – The new logo has been publicised and documents such as Policies will be updated over time.
- Cllr .gov.uk email addresses – these are in place, an automatic re-direct from previous addresses will be for 1 year, an email disclaimer is added to Cllr and Staff emails where possible.

- Training Schedule – Cllr Buttery reminded Cllrs to sign up for required training for Planning and Finance Committee members, and Cllrs were reminded of the KALC Bitesize courses available. Course should be booked with the RFO.
- APM – The Chair reminded everyone about Thursday 25th May, 7pm, BMH, room setup and refreshments from 6.15pm, to include wine.
- Roundabout articles on behalf of the Council, a draft to be provided to Clerk and Chair for proofreading and to be signed off with the Cllr's name and "Brenchley and Matfield Parish Council".

8. Allocation of responsibilities and Committee membership

The Council discussed the Committee structure and membership of standing Committees (Planning, Policy and Management and Finance). A list was compiled nominating Councillors for specific responsibilities, this would be published on the Council website.

Finance Committee:

Cllr Wells (Chair), Cllr Buttery, Cllr Stout, Cllr Dewdney

Policy and Management Committee:

Cllr Buttery (Chair), Cllr Churchill, Cllr Dewdney, Cllr Groves

Planning Committee:

Cllr Akenhead (Chair), Cllr Buttery, Cllr Dewdney, Cllr Groves, Vikki Heath (Non-Voting Member), Georgie Warner (Non-Voting Member)

Employment Panel:

Cllr Buttery (Chair), Cllr Stout, Cllr Akenhead

Traffic and Highways (Working Group):

Cllr Churchill, Cllr Akenhead, community representatives

Environment and Sustainability (Working Group):

Cllr Wells, Cllr Tunstall, community representatives

Christmas (Working Group):

Cllr Buttery, Cllr Anderson, community representatives

Cinderhill:

Cllr Akenhead, Cllr Stout

Porters Wood:

Cllr Anderson, Cllr Buttery

Recreation Ground and Playground:

Cllr Anderson, Cllr Buttery (Health and Safety Officer)

Allotments:

Cllr Tunstall, Cllr Anderson

Matfield Green and Pond:

Cllr Stout, Cllr Groves

Cooksfield:

Cllr Wells, Cllr Dewdney

PROWs:

Cllr Tunstall, Cllr Anderson

Weald PCN Patient Participation Group:

Cllr Churchill

Data Protection Officer:

Cllr Buttery

Police Liaison Officer

Cllr Churchill

Matfield Pavilion:

Cllr Buttery

9. Paddock Wood Community Advice Centre – to receive report on use of PC grant 2022-23

Katie Hargreaves presented a short report on the use of the grant funding provided by the Parish Council to PWCAC, and expressed her gratitude for the Council's continued support, it has been a challenging year for the organisation. Katie outlined that there are quite a few advisers that live in the parish as well as those using the service. They are finding it increasingly hard to attract a paid manager with sufficient expertise, given the heavy responsibility to be up to date on information.

The Council thanked Katie for her work and expressed a commitment to continue to support the organisation.

10. Planning

1. Response to Capel Regulation 14 (pre-submission) NDP

The Council discussed an outline draft of a response to the above and agreed to object to the proposal in the Capel Highways Improvement Plan regarding turning into and out of Crittenden Road as the alternatives to this would impact on other areas of this parish.

Cllr Akenhead would provide the Clerk with the finalised text for submission by the deadline of 26th May.

Action Cllr Akenhead, Clerk

2. NDP Monitoring Data for information

The Clerk had provided the running list of planning applications which records the NDP Policies that have been referred to in the PC's recommendations, there is also a column recording the NDP Policies that have been mentioned in the delegated report. It was noted that Developers are starting to name NDP policies that support their applications on their planning statements.

3. Planning Applications

23/00511/LBC Town Farm House, High Street, Brenchley, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7NH	Listed Building Consent - Demolition of outbuildings, Creation of bathroom, Restoration of existing bathroom, Installation of partition wall to create boiler room, Kitchen upgrades RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: NEUTRAL The Parish Council is concerned that the loss of the amenity of the external toilet block could impede the ability of the ground floor to be used as a commercial premises in the future. Relevant policy in the Neighbourhood Development Plan is BE1 Retention or re-development of agricultural buildings and commercial sites for residential use
23/00738/FULL Bell Cottage, Hatmill Lane, Brenchley, Kent, TN12 7AE	Demolition of single-storey lobby, Proposed two storey extension, replacement of fenestration RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE
23/00800/FULL Far Far Away, Beech Lane, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7HG	Increase of amenity area associated with the mobile home permitted under 22/02633/FULL; submission of details to address conditions 3-5 of 22/02633/FULL

	RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: REFUSE The land for proposed increase in the amenity area for this application will be taken from land associated with the conversion of a warehouse building to the North of the property (21/02865 and 21/01001/SUB). The Parish Council supported this earlier application and it was subject to a biodiversity plan which included a wildflower garden/meadow. Much of this area will now be lost to the current proposal. The applicants have identified alternative areas of land for the proposed ecological enhancement, between the re-sited mobile home and the tree line, as well as to the side of the drive. Both areas are likely to be impacted by the shade of the tree canopy and we are concerned that this replacement land will not provide the increased biodiversity that the meadow would have offered. Relevant policy in the Neighbourhood Development Plan is: LE6 Biodiversity
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11. Post Office – to discuss options

Cllr Buttery had circulated a note outlining discussions held with the landlord of the Post Office Premises, Jeremy Richardson, at a meeting with himself, Cllr Dewdney and the Clerk. The Council discussed the principle of accepting the offer to purchase the premises, following some work to re-configure the layout to provide a single unit to include a small kitchenette and toilet facilities, together with a small storage unit outside.

There was extensive discussion on numerous factors to be considered including the legal and consultancy expenses that would be incurred, the commitment as regards service and maintenance charges, the potential difficulty in finding a tenant, the type of retail outlet that might be able to realise a profit from a small unit, the requirements for energy performance and other costs that might ensue.

The Council agreed that all avenues to retain the premises as a retail outlet to serve the community should be explored and that a positive indication of interest would be passed to Mr Richardson.

Action Clerk

Cllr Buttery and the RFO had located an organisation, The Plunkett Foundation, which could provide advice on the venture. It was agreed that professional advice, for which there was an existing budget available this financial year of £8,000, would be sought from an independent valuer, such as Bracketts, no cost limit on this was set.

RESOLVED to obtain a report and valuation related to purchasing the Post Office in Brenchley.

12. Finance – to agree Earmarking funds

Cllr Wells had provided a list of proposed funds for earmarking in the new financial year accounts, given that these are now on an Income and Expenditure basis and can allow for more extensive accruals to recognise projects that will be delivered this year and were underspent last year.

The Council agreed to Option 3 of those proposed but with £2k added to Legal and Consultancy totalling £8k.

Action RFO

13. Policy and Management Committee

1. Minutes of the meeting of 12th April 2023

Minutes were approved as an accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

2. Dignity at Work Policy - to consider draft

A draft version was discussed, incorporating the NALC template. Cllr Dewdney outlined some background on this and the Council agreed to the broad aims of the policy. However, it was not felt that a pledge was necessary, as this may suggest an audit on compliance would be required.

RESOLVED to adopt the Dignity at Work Policy

3. Recommendations

Following recommendation by the Policy and Management Committee the Council discussed the Core Policies.

RESOLVED to re-adopt the Code of Conduct unamended

RESOLVED to re-adopt the Gifts and Hospitality Policy unamended

RESOLVED to re-adopt the Standing Orders unamended

RESOLVED to re-adopt the Health and Safety Policy unamended

RESOLVED that the PC adopts the Land and Assets Risk Assessment as amended

14. Environment and Sustainability

1. EV Charging points update

Cllr Wells provided an update on the status of the previously made application for EV charging points at Matfield Pavilion. Following a site visit the KCC engineers advised that the location in the parking verge at the back of the Green would be preferable. Given the data on usage on their two points in Brenchley, KCC have indicated that resubmitting an application now would not be successful in the current funding phase but may be considered in future.

2. Big Green Week

The Council briefly discussed the option for an allotment open day however as all plots were now tenanted this was not deemed necessary.

15. Projects

1. Porters Wood – to consider quotes for playground project

Cllr Anderson had provided an extensive project outline and quotes for a new Playground at Porters Wood. The Council discussed various elements including the picnic bench as well as a bench with a back for elderly people and a springer item would replace a see-saw.

In terms of costs, the quotes were reviewed (Wicksteed, Peak Playgrounds and PlayQuest). PlayQuest were considered favourable as the equipment is recycled plastic.

Cllr Anderson outlined that the current year budget for the project was £7,700 and that there is a potential maximum funding stream of £3500 from the UKSPF round 2. An amount would also be requested from the KCC Member's Grant. The remaining amount for the project would be obtained via a drawdown of funds from the amount being held by TWBC from the Fernham developer contribution. The amount of the drawdown was unknown given the variable in other funding requests but the Clerk was asked to commence an application as soon as possible for a sum in the region of £10k.

Action Cllr Anderson, Clerk

Inspections costs for the playground and the bin collection were not included as these are not a capital costs.

The text of the signage would be agreed in consultation with the Clerk.

Action Cllr Anderson, Cllr Buttery, Clerk

RESOLVED to allocate a sum not exceeding of £20,000 for the playground project at Porters Wood with PlayQuest

The Council further discussed two quotes for scrubbing out the perimeter of the site. They were broadly similar in cost at £1600.

RESOLVED to instruct JR Cooper to undertake scrubbing out work at Porters Wood

2. Matfield Pond - update

Cllr Groves provided an update on works completed and planned for the pond, further publicity has been put in Roundabout. Contact has been made with the EA regarding their decision that only draining the pond completely would be acceptable. A meeting with Mark Hardcastle, KCC Drainage Manager took place last week to look at the capacity of the overflow pipe, which they excavated several years ago, to be used for draining the pond.

Cllr Groves confirmed that the fish will be removed (this had previously been resolved) and after the summer months may have evaporated the level of water, the remaining water will be drained via the overflow, probably in August. The Pond will be left empty for a few weeks.

Cllr Groves will provide a costed proposal for works to the pond whilst it is empty (such as removing the tree on the small island and adding a French drain to reduce the flooding on the Green).

Action Cllr Groves

16. Clerk's and RFO's Report

1. Verges on Matfield Green

The Council discussed damage done to verges outside Hatherleigh and Seymour Cottage and it was agreed that the residents would be asked to repair the roundel and re-seed. Any future damage would be re-assessed.

2. WW1 Tommy Silhouette

The Council discussed a request to obtain a WW1 Tommy Silhouette and it was agreed that given there is a representation of a Tommy at Brenchley Memorial field entrance, this was sufficient.

3. IT Support Contract – to consider

The Clerk outlined a quote for technical IT support from a local company, TecWork, which would provide easy access to IT support for staff and Councillors as well as ensure the long term stability of the website management. Cllr Churchill had received support in the recent setup to the new .gov.uk email address. Support would be provided via a ticketing system and the cost would be paid upfront diminishing over time with support costs.

RESOLVED to enter into an IT support contract at £700 for 10 hours with TecWork

4. RFO announcements

The RFO outlined that there had been a delay in the Rialtas Year End Shutdown such that the AGAR would be presented to the Council at the June meeting.

5. Annual review of Standing Orders and Direct Debits

The Council reviewed the list of Standing Orders and Direct Debits as annually required.

6. Accounts payable

The Clerk commented that the Policy and Management Committee have asked her to allocate responsibility for authorising the accounts payable via a monthly rota to ensure this is established in advance of the meeting. The nominated Cllrs for the month will be stated when the Agenda is circulated.

Payments Previously Authorised by exception

2634 T Barham	Exterior Painting to Matfield Pavilion	£2,200.00
2515 Capel Groundcare	Playground Inspections Due to expired standing Order	
	2515 Dec, 2557 Jan, 2627 Feb 2591 Mar	£216.00

Payments for Authorisation

2635	HMRC	Tax and NI April 2023	£612.80
2636	C. Brooks	Salary Balance April 2023, April Mileage	£108.53
2637	Panetta Horn	Salary Balance April 2023	£66.61
2638	Capel GrndCare	Repairs to Playground Fence	£59.52
2639	Capel GrndCare	Burma Bridge Repairs – Materials only	£1587.00
2640	EJP	Annual Fire Extinguisher Service	£85.20
2641	Waste Way	Bin emptying Jan-March at Rec	£115.20
2642	MSB Magic	Magician for Coronation Event	
		Balance Payment (deposit already paid)	£130.00
2643	Knockout Print	Banners, leaflets Posters Coronation event	£144.00
2644	PWCAC	Annual Community Grant	£2,000.00
2645	Patinas	Live Musical Services for Coronation Event	£250.00
2646	Streetlights	First part of Maintenance Contract for Streetlights (Apr and Oct)	£276.92
2647	KALC	Annual Subscription	£1,315.68
2648	Microshade	Balance Between increased prices and old Standing order amount (April)	£6.64
2649	Revive Medical Solution	Medical Cover Coronation Event	£100.00
2650	Tec Work	IT Support for Cllr Churchill	£222.00
2651	K. Twyman	April cleaning Pavilion 30/3, 14/4	£30.00
2652	Knockout Print	Banners for Annual Parish Meeting	£96.00
2653	Rent n Event	Gazebo and Games for Coronation event	£90.00
2654	Microshade	Migration to Microshade Cllr mailboxes	£144.00
2655	Rialtas	Replacement payment due to account change Rialtas (original payment returned)	£114.00

Payments by Credit Card

2656	Multicard Fees	Monthly Fees	£3.00
2657	TSO Host	SSL Certificate for website	£59.99
2659	Direct 365	Sanitary Dispenser	£33.61
2660	B&Q	Hardboard for posters	£33.77
2661	Amazon	First Aid and Stationery	£21.32

Standing Orders and Direct Debits for Information

2662	SO C. Brooks	Salary April 2023	£1843.99
2663	SO Panetta Horn	Salary April 2023	£528.92
2664	DD Smart Pension	April 2023	£751.13
2665	DD EDF Energy	Pavilion Electricity April	£150.00
2666	DD Microshade	May data and application service	
		New amount from 1.6 £202.82	£132.68
2667	DD Business Stream	April Pavilion water and waste	£43.00
2668	DD Tower	Phone Equipment Leasing April/May 2023	
		36 month agreement ending December 2024	£30.02
2669	DD CVD	Phone Line rental / Broadband April 2023	
		Feb Call Charges	£88.49
2670	DD Smart Pension	April 2023 Pension admin fee	£18.00
2671	DD Npower	Streetlight electricity March 2023	£53.49
2672	SO Churchill	April Toilet Cleaning services	£677.32
2673	SO Capel Groundcare	Playground Inspection Monthly premium May 2023	£54.00
2674	SO Capel Groundcare	SIDs battery change, data download and movement	
		Monthly premium of annual contract April 23	£158.50
2675	DD Norton	Annual Subscription for PC protection	£99.00

The RFO having provided invoices for scrutiny the accounts were approved and would be authorised by Cllr Akenhead and Cllr Churchill.

17. Meetings attended and reports by Councillors

Cllr Groves had attended an initial meeting with the MVH Committee and would attend a full meeting in June, representing the Parish Council.

18. To be advised of urgent business as may be previously notified

19. Date of next meeting:

Full Meeting of the Council, Monday 5th June 2022, 7.00pm, Matfield Pavilion