

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BRENCHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 5TH DECEMBER 2022 AT 7PM AT MATFIELD PAVILION

Present: Councillors J. Buttery (Chair) presided, E Akenhead, C. Churchill, A. Wells, C. Anderson, A. Dewdney, C. Brooks (Clerk)

In attendance: 1 member of the public

1. To accept apologies for absence

The Council accepted apologies from Cllr Tunstall and Cllr Stout who were on holiday.

2. To approve Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes of the meeting of 7th November were approved as an accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair.

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

Cllr Churchill and Cllr Akenhead declared a perception of bias interest in the item relating to Windmill Hill as they both live in the road.

Cllr Wells declared a perception of bias interest in the application for a donation by the Samaritans as her husband volunteers for the organisation.

4. To adjourn to allow public participation.

None.

5. Borough and County Councillor

None present.

6. Chair's Announcements

- Coronation – The Council is awaiting notification of official plans for the weekend but in anticipation have increased the fund in the budget to £1500.
- Toilet block update – Draft transfer documents have been received and are being scrutinised by the Council's solicitors, the final TWBC Cabinet decision to transfer the blocks will be in February next year.
- Streetlights – A discussion had been held during the Finance Meeting as to whether the streetlights could be permanently switched off. However, the Clerk had ascertained that the cost to disconnect is £816 per column, the Council has eight in total. It was agreed that the RFO would investigate ways to reduce the cost of electricity usage.
- PC email server seems to be a little problematic, the Clerk will discuss with Harry Salmon to see if issues can be rectified, and research the possibility of obtaining .gov.uk addresses.
- Note that the next PC meeting in January is on the 9th

7. Councillors' Corner – to outline

The Council discussed a way to engage a little bit more with the community by holding advice sessions. The first session will be on 2nd Saturday of January (14th) 11am-12 at Grays with a rota to alternate monthly on 2nd Saturday of the month with the Star in Matfield. Cllr Buttery and Churchill would attend the first session and advertising would be placed on noticeboards.

8. Committee memberships and responsibilities

The Council discussed requirements and it was agreed that:

Cllr Dewdney would join the Planning, Finance and Policy & Management Committees

Cllr Anderson will take responsibility for Christmas (with Cllr Buttery), PROWS (with Cllr Tunstall), Brenchley Recreation Ground and Porters Wood (with Cllrs Tunstall and Buttery)

A revised list would be circulated and the website updated.

9. Planning

1. Planning Applications

22/02986/FULL Foxhole Farm, Foxhole Lane, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7ES	Extension to existing tractor store building and the provision of a replacement barn for hay storage RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE Extension to existing tractor store building and the provision of a replacement barn for hay storage
22/03084/FULL and 22/03085/LBC Little Portobello, Windmill Hill, Brenchley, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7NP	Erection of small glazed link extension from kitchen, Alterations to existing fenestration, Erection of glazed dormer window box to west of centre roof slope at second floor level, Alterations to internal walls and ceiling RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE The Parish Council notes the Conservation Officer's comments. The Parish Council would have preferred the glazed link and new dormer to have solid roofs, in order to avoid the upward glare into the dark skies of the AONB that the glazed roofs will cause, especially as these will be in parts of the house that could remain lit for a considerable time.
22/03221/FULL Rowan, Maidstone Road, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7LD	Erection of loft conversion with front facing roof light, rear facing flat roof dormer and roof lights. Original approved application 21/02411/FULL – changing RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: NEUTRAL In the original application the Parish Council raised concern about light spillage from the proposed roof lights. The Parish Council notes the comments of the Conservation Officer and accepts that the changes from the approved application are relatively minor. However, it is not only the effect on the Conservation Area that needs to be considered, but also the effect on the AONB. Juliet balconies are not typical of housing in this area of the AONB. The proposal in this application fails to accord with policies D1, D2 and LE8 of the Neighbourhood Plan, and DG7 of the High Weald AONB Housing Design guidance. The PC also notes the concerns expressed by the owner of the immediately adjacent agricultural business concerning privacy and fire risk.
22/03232/FULL 22/03233/LBC Burtons, Crook Road, Brenchley, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7BU	Demolition of existing rear kitchen extension, Erection of new kitchen extension, Erection of extensions to two rear wings, Replacement glazing to existing oak framed extension RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE As the paved area of the garden is to be extended, permeable paving should be required. A condition concerning external lighting is also recommended.

2. Delegation of planning responses

As discussed in previous years the Council agreed that no interim planning meeting would be called.

RESOLVED that Planning Applications that have not already been dealt with that arrive over the Christmas period and are not extended to the date of the next meeting will be delegated to the Clerk to respond to after consultation with the Planning Committee, after circulation of the Council's proposed response by email seeking a majority agreement within 48 Hours.

3. Neighbourhood Plan update

The Council noted the successful outcome of the Neighbourhood Plan referendum. A proposal to "make" (Approve) the Plan should be on the Agenda for TWBC's Full Council meeting on 14 December. At the end of the NDP is a section on monitoring which commits the PC to reporting information annually on the impact of the NDP.

Cllr Akenhead drew attention to section 8 of the Neighbourhood Plan, concerning the need to monitor its implementation and report annually to the community and it was agreed that Cllr Akenhead and the Clerk would agree the relevant information to be included on the general planning spreadsheet from January 2023.

4. Local Plan update

The Council had received the Examiner's Initial Findings, which was briefly discussed. There is a further lengthy delay on the plan's completion with TWBC now expected to consider main Modifications to the LP on 23 Jan 2023 (this was previously planned for 7 Nov 22).

5. Correspondence with Clarendon Homes – to note

The Council noted correspondence, which had been circulated outside of a meeting due to time constraints, concerning Dormouse habitat relating to 22/00757 - Maidstone Road, Matfield.

6. Correspondence with Valtalia regarding community benefits – to note

The Council noted an approach from Will Morgan of Thirty 4/7 on behalf of Valtalia, concerning possible community benefits from proposed Bockingfold Solar Farm.

RESOLVED to delegate meeting with Valtalia regarding community benefits from the Bockingfold Solar Farm to Cllrs Buttery, Churchill and Akenhead.

The Clerk was asked to include BMH, MVH and both the primary and pre-school in Brenchley in arrangements for a meeting in the New Year.

7. Enforcement action regarding 22/03087/AGRIC – to note

The Council noted a further response sent by the Chair regarding 22/03087/AGRIC - Land at Gatehouse Farm, Brenchley.

The Clerk confirmed that no responses or acknowledgements had been received from any of the reports made and was asked to chase these up.

10. Brenchley Post Office – update

The Chair briefly updated the Council on the situation with regard to the lease of the Post Office In Brenchley which remained unsettled.

11. Cinderhill - to consider reinstatement of the woodland at the football pitch

Cllr Buttery and Cllr Akenhead had spoken with Ben Bowmaker regarding an approach for using the football pitch for a nature-based mental health charity programme, which the Council discussed at length. The Council noted the terms of the Lease it has with the Borough Council for the land, the remote nature of the location as well as access difficulties and the designation as ancient woodland.

It was agreed that the football pitch at Cinderhill was not an appropriate location and this approach would not be progressed.

RESOLVED that the football pitch at Cinderhill would revert to woodland.

12. Traffic

1. Highways Improvement Plan – update

Cllr Churchill outlined a positive meeting had been held on 29th November via MS Teams with Demi Richards of KCC, including Cllr Buttery and the Clerk, which looked at the current HIP.

There were lengthy discussions on the items currently on the list and Cllr Churchill advised that some had been achieved and some needed to be amended and re-ordered in the light of current concerns around the Parish. KCC had provided a pack detailing the various traffic mitigation items that could be purchased which would assist in determining affordability, albeit there remained the requirement to ensure KCC agreed to signage and other measures.

There will be a meeting of the Working Group and the PC will review the HIP before a further meeting with KCC to take forwards a small number of agreed priorities.

2. Correspondence from residents about near miss on Brenchley Road – to consider actions

Cllr Churchill advised that numerous letters had been received from residents along Corsica Villas, which had been circulated to the Council. The matter was one of only two main items raised in the meeting above and KCC have agreed to fund some speed surveys and to consider the concerns about the layby.

3. Concerns regarding dangerous parking on Windmill Hill – to consider actions

Cllr Churchill advised that correspondence had been received from a number of residents of Windmill Hill, and provided some information of recent events regarding two work vans and a car parked at the top of the Hill. The Council discussed this safety concern at length and the matter had also been discussed in the meeting with KCC. It was agreed that this inconsiderate parking, whilst legal if 10m from the junction, was extremely dangerous particularly for those crossing from Pixot Hill into Windmill Hill when vehicles were having to pass the parked vans.

Cllr Churchill would further consider the matter.

4. Reed Solar Farm – traffic route

Cllr Churchill had met with the developer of this site (which is not in the parish) on 30th November and the site traffic would be going through Colts Hill. It was made clear that any reports of movements through Matfield could be reported to the site manager.

13. Finance Committee

1. Minutes of the meeting of 23rd November – to approve

The Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of 23rd November approved as a accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair, Cllr Wells.

2. Budget and Precept 2023-24 – to consider

The Council briefly discussed the finalised budget and Cllr Wells outlined that there is a saving of 3.4% in the proposed precept despite an increase in the budgeted expenditure overall. Some movement from reserves is planned to achieve a suitable general reserve at the end of the year.

Following confirmation of the Tax Base by TWBC (based on the number of band D equivalent dwellings in the area) the Parish Council confirmed the Precept for 2023-24 will be **£132,585**, the Band D equivalent will be **£87.97** (£91.05 in 2022-23 which equates to a decrease of 3.4%) and the approved Budget of **£155,015**.

A condensed budget will be created for publication.

RESOLVED that the 2023-2024 budget of £155,015 and precept requirement of £132,585, be approved and submitted to TWBC by the Clerk.

RESOLVED that the Council approves the suggested Fees and Licenses from 1.4.23.as stated below

- Pavilion Licence fees: Cricketers be increased to £280 pa.
- Guides be offered a licence for one evening a week at a fee of £150 from April 2023 with free use until this time.
- Allotment fees would remain unchanged for 23/24.
- Pavilion booking costs to remain at £15 for the first hour and £10 per hour thereafter and an additional winter surcharge be added for bookings between October and March of £1 per hour towards the cost of electric heating.
- Discretionary free use will be offered to: Love Matfield Society, Tunbridge Wells area Committee of KALC and Paddock Wood Community Advice Centre and adding Warm Spaces initiative.

RESOLVED that the Council approve the Finance Regulations as amended.

RESOLVED that the Council approve the Finance and Governance Risk Register as amended.

RESOLVED that the Council opens an easy access deposit account.

14. Policy and Management Committee – to approve minutes and consider recommendations:

1. Minutes of the meeting of 15th November 2022 – to approve

Minutes from meeting of 15th November were agreed as an accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair.

RESOLVED that the Scheme of Delegation as amended be re-approved by the Council.

RESOLVED that the Section 106 Funding Policy be approved by the Council as amended.

RESOLVED that the Policy for Meetings with Developers be approved by the Council as amended.

RESOLVED that the PC rescinds the Website Charging Policy

RESOLVED that the Parish Council re-adopts the Grievance Policy unamended

RESOLVED that the Parish Council re-adopts the Protocol for Engaging with Local Organisations unamended

RESOLVED that the Parish Council adopts the Equality and Diversity Policy as drafted.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council receives and notes the updated Risk Register

RESOLVED that the Council approves the Terms of Reference for the Traffic and Highways Working Group

RESOLVED that the Council approves the Terms of Reference for the Environment and Sustainability Working Group

15. Clerk's and RFO's Report

1. Correspondence – Samaritans donations request

The Clerk advised that the Donations budget for the current Financial year is £2500, with £1k already donated to the Archive.

RESOLVED to donate £250 to the Samaritans

2. Correspondence – Imago / Homestart donation request

RESOLVED to donate £250 to Homestart

3. Accounts payable

2450	C. Brooks	Salary Balance Nov (pay award backdated) £692.74	
		November Mileage £68.40	£761.14
2451	David Izzard	JV Gardening Nov	£25.00
2452	Eventbrite	Attendance of KALC AGM JB and EA	£10.00
2453	CVD	Phone Line rental / Broadband November 2022	£101.42
2454	Eventbrite	Advanced Planning training – Amanda Wells	£60.00
2455	Panetta Horn	Salary Balance November 2022	£31.19
2456	Managed Tech	Collection of Photocopier per contract	£420.00
2457	Managed Tech	Copier costs 16/8 – 14/11	£113.70
2458	Managed Tech	Cancellation of Contract termination fee	£210.00
2459	Rialtas	Consultancy on IE transfer	£420.00
2460	Fence Guru	Installation of 4 Wooden Posts Matfield Green	£95.00
2461	Chris Manwaring	Reimbursement of Zurich Insurance for Christmas Event	£96.00
2462	DAB	External Socket at Hammonds for Christmas Event	£80.00
2463	Printer	New Printer / Photocopier and Inks	£987.87
2464	JP Miles	Repairs to Cinderhill Barrier Post	£282.00
2477	Capel GroundCare	Playground repairs (to be reimbursed from s.106 income)	£957.84

2478 Credit Card Payments

Lloyds Bank Fees	Monthly Fee September	£3.00
WHSmith	Stationery	£22.46
Currys	Inks for Clerks Printer and paper for Pavilion	£80.96

Standing Orders and Direct Debits

2465	SO C. Brooks	Salary November 2022	£1843.99
2466	SO Panetta Horn	Salary November 2022	£528.92
2467	DD Smart Pension	November 2022	£1092.30
2468	DD EDF Energy	Pavilion Electricity Nov	£159.77
2469	DD Microshade	Nov data and application service	£124.30
2470	DD Business Stream	Nov 22 Pavilion water and waste	£7.00
2471	DD Tower	Phone Equipment Leasing Nov 2022	
		36 month agreement ending December 2024	£30.02
2472	DD Smart Pension	Nov 2022 Pension admin fee	£18.00
2473	DD Npower	Streetlight electricity Nov 2022	£43.93
2474	SO Churchill	Nov Toilet Cleaning services	£677.32
2475	SO Capel Grndcare	Playground Inspection July – Dec 22 Monthly premium	£54.00
2476	Capel Grndcare	SIDS battery change and data download from Nov	£73.15

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

16. Meetings attended and reports by Councillors

Cllr Wells advised that the Environment and Sustainability Group had stall at Xmas fair raised which £106 cost less £15 cost which is being transferred to the food bank.

Cllr Akenhead attended the Kent Bee Summit.

Cllr Buttery and Cllr Akenhead attended the KALC AGM.

Cllr Buttery attended the KALC Parish Chairs meeting, held quarterly.

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

18. Date of next meeting:

Full Parish Council Meeting 7pm, Monday 9th January 2023