

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

Present: Councillors J. Buttery (Chair) presided, J. Spencer, A. Stout, E Akenhead, C. Churchill, A. Wells, M. Tunstall, C. Brooks (Clerk)

In attendance: Cllr Steve McMillan (TWBC), Cllr Sarah Hamilton (KCC), 2 members of the public

1. To accept apologies for absence

Councillor Miconnet did not attend.

2. To approve Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes of the meeting of 4th July 2022 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

None.

4. To adjourn to allow public participation.

Sean Miller spoke as a professional in the area of fish management and outlined concerns about the health of the larger fish in particular in the current prolonged dry weather, and expressed the view that all fish should be removed without delay.

Adrian Toms also spoke briefly concerning the pond.

5. Co-Option of a new member of the Parish Council – to consider application

Cllr Buttery advised that no applications had been received for the current vacancy although there were several expressions of interest which would be pursued and the vacancy re-advertised at a suitable time to ensure applications.

6. Borough and County Councillor

Cllr McMillan advised that he had received an offer from Fernham Homes to contribute to some projects in the Parish and this would be clarified with Fernham so that the Council could agree which projects to spend the donation on.

Parking charges were under consultation and these would have an effect on parish residents particularly visiting Paddock Wood. Cllr McMillan commented that he had been monitoring the use of the car park at Branchley Playground he had identified that the majority of car users parking there were likely to be employees working the School.

7. Chair's Announcements

The Chair announced that Cllr Spencer had tendered his resignation from the Council effective from this meeting, due to work commitments. The Council thanked Cllr Spencer for his time on the Council and in particular for his work at Petteridge.

The Casual Vacancy Notice would be issued by the Clerk.

8. Planning

1. To confirm responses submitted during Parish Council summer recess – for information

Application	Detail
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22/01745/LBC Kings Toll Farm Maidstone Road, Matfield Tonbridge, Kent	Replacement of casement windows to West Elevation, introduction of fixed glazed conservation style roof light to north Porch, additional minor internal alterations and re-landscaping of existing yard to the north of the property. RECOMMENDATION SUBMITTED: APPROVE
22/02007/LBC Mill Cottage, Windmill Hill, Brenchley, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7NR	Installation of electric vehicle charger on garden wall at the end of driveway. RECOMMENDATION SUBMITTED: APPROVE
22/01849/FULL Whitethorns, Brenchley Road, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7PR	Erection of new stable block RECOMMENDATION SUBMITTED: APPROVE
22/02038/FULL Far Far Away, Beech Lane, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7HG	Retrospective erection of an agricultural building RECOMMENDATION SUBMITTED: APPROVE request a condition requiring the complete removal of the dilapidated shed it is designed to replace, in order to conserve and enhance the character of the AONB countryside and avoid the unnecessary proliferation of buildings in this rural area.
22/01747/FULL Old Broad Oak, Land Adjacent, Windmill Hill, Brenchley, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7NP	Erection of two detached dwellings RECOMMENDATION SUBMITTED: NEUTRAL The PC's main concerns with this application revolve around the following 3 points: 1. Sustainability: While the application is referred as "sustainable" several times throughout the documentation submitted by the applicant, the PC notes that it fails to address the following points: • There is no detail around the heating/insulation arrangements for either of these two newbuild properties; • There is no assessment or mention of the energy impact these two newbuilds will have; • There is no detail around the water surface disposal for either of these two newbuild properties; • There is no provision for electric car charging points; • The pre-application advice specifically requests a biodiversity net gain assessment to be completed which has not been supplied as part of this full application, which would be expected to include mitigation measures counteracting the felling of the trees in the way of the proposed builds, the replacement of the portion of hedge needed to be destroyed to provide access to unit 1 and enhancement actions to ensure wildlife and protected species continue to inhabit the site as pointed out in the ecological survey; • There is no detail provided around the lights which are planned on being installed internally and externally, including potential external lights around the pool and fire pit proposed with Unit 2. As the site has been recognised as a potential bat roosting site, an appropriate lighting plan is needed to ensure this site remains a viable environment for its wildlife; • The PC seeks clarity on the treatment of the site boundaries as there are inconsistencies between the documents submitted. 2. Conservation area: The council notes that this application did not include a full conservation report from the conservation officer at the time of its review, even though the site lies within AONB and the Conservation area. In addition, the PC would like to point out the following: • The donkey field is one of the last green open spaces within the village and has been designated as a site of "landscape importance" locally by TWBC.

- The proposed design for unit 1 does not allow for the building to blend in with its surroundings or comply with the requirements of EN5 of the Local Plan to preserve and enhance the appearance of the conservation area
 - o The materials suggested in the design statement (cedar shingle) are not in keeping with the local area;
 - o The design concept, reflecting the Arts and Crafts style of some of the houses along Broad Oak, does not sit well within the immediate surroundings of the verdant, rural setting of the Donkey Field.
 - o The dormer windows to the front of the building are not a recognisable feature on Broad Oak.
- Proposed design for unit 2 does not allow for the building to blend in with its surroundings:
 - o The materials suggested in the design statement (charred timber cladding) are not in keeping with the local area;
 - o The modern design of the building with its two tall flat roofed structure is not in keeping with its surroundings or local area.

3. Impact:

While the PC acknowledges that the proposed access design for Unit 2 makes use of an existing access, this has not been in regular use for many years but will become so once occupied. The PC does not feel this is a safe access point given that it is sited on a blind corner and immediately opposite the turning to Broad Oak Close.

- While the PC understands that the siting of the two proposed dwellings has carefully taken the existing trees and vegetation into consideration, the siting of unit 1 will have a considerable detrimental impact on the neighbouring property, Lower Broad Oak, being separated by a mere three meters. The Planning Statement maintains that the proposal will maintain a good separation distance between the proposed dwellings and existing surrounding dwellings, the PC disagrees that this has been achieved and echoes the concerns raised in the response of Environment Protection regarding the impact of noise, light and dust emissions. The height of unit 1 and its proximity to the adjoining hedge means a potential lack of privacy and will negatively impact on the light currently enjoyed by Lower Broad Oak. It should be considered to site Unit 1 further into its allocated plot;

- As stated above, no lighting plans have been produced for unit 1, however the property in its current design includes 21 windowpanes (including the two large concertina doors at the rear of the property and the glazing on each of the external doors) as well as a skylight, raising the concern for light pollution on the surrounding area and its direct neighbours given the proximity of unit 1 to Lower Broad Oak

The PC resolves to vote neutral on this application and encourages that the following conditions are set out prior to the commencement of the building work on this site:

1. That the rights to build on the land are limited to these two dwellings only;
2. That a biodiversity net gain assessment be completed to ensure that:
 - o mitigation measures are put in place on site to account for the felled trees and loss of the existing hedge, necessary to the completion of the planned work;
 - o enhancements measures (bird boxes, bat boxes, hedgehog boxes etc) are put in place so the site remains habitable for wildlife and local populations can grow in the long term;
3. That none of the work on the hedge happens during bird nesting season;

	4. That the recommendations outlined in 6.1.5 of the protected species survey be respected and implemented; 5. For a TPO to be issued for T1.
22/02024/FULL Burford Place, High Street, Brenchley, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7NQ	Living room extension infilling small gap. RECOMMENDATION SUBMITTED: APPROVE The PC is concerned, however, that if this application is approved it could then be followed by applications for new storerooms/ garden machinery stores/ oil tank relocation to replace these areas that would now be used as gym and bedroom. There is also the risk that the addition of this new living space could enable a separate annexe to be created. The PC requests therefore that suitable conditions are imposed, given that this building is on an important site, designated EN21 in the Local Plan 2006, in the centre of the Conservation Area where additional buildings and accesses would be unacceptable.
22/02049/FULL Garden Croft, Foxhole Lane, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7ES	Erection of one and a half storey side extension, Repositioning of existing oil tank RECOMMENDATION SUBMITTED: APPROVE
22/02079/FULL Walnut Tree Farm, Crittenden Road, Matfield, Kent, TN12 7EN	Conversion and extension of existing redundant barn into five dwellings. RECOMMENDATION SUBMITTED: REFUSE The PC feels there is insufficient documentation as currently proposed.
22/02228/LBC The Star Inn, Maidstone Road, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7JR	Erection of illuminated and non-illuminated signs to the exterior of the building RECOMMENDATION SUBMITTED: APPROVE subject to a condition restricting the lighting to the outside terrace to opening hours
APP/M2270/W/22/3297919 21/03865 Land Rear Of Maynard Cottages, Brenchley Road, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TW/21/03865/FULL	Change of use and conversion of an existing outbuilding to provide a two bedroom holiday let, with associated amenity area, landscaping and parking APPEAL RESPONSE SUBMITTED: Brenchley and Matfield Parish Council maintains its objection to this planning application, for the reasons previously given. The appellant argues that, having deliberately separated the summerhouse from 2 Maynards Cottages in contravention of a condition of planning permission 00/00237/FUL, which was the basis upon which the building was allowed, he should therefore now be permitted to put it to a separate and different use. To allow this would make a mockery of the planning system. Far from being “a vast improvement to the AONB” as alleged in paragraph 6.23 of the appellant’s statement, the proposed extended size of the building would not conserve or enhance the AONB. The increased amount of glazing and the increased use of the building would shed an increased amount of light, damaging the dark skies of the AONB. Paragraphs 5.3.32 and 5.3.33 of the appellant’s statement allege that the proposal will bring extensive and significant biodiversity improvements. In fact, these should at best be considered as necessary mitigation to offset the development. The provision of a small wildflower meadow, a bug hotel and planting a couple of trees can hardly be described as extensive or significant and the effect of the increased use on the biodiversity of the neighbouring woodland is likely to be damaging. We note that the appellant refers to the proximity of National Cycle Route 18 as a means of exploring the High Weald AONB. This cycle route is entirely on-road in this parish, without any cycle lanes, on roads that are used as rat-runs, and is widely accepted as not being fit for purpose. Certainly it is not suitable for use by young children or inexperienced cyclists.

22/02214/ADV The Star Inn, Maidstone Road, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7JR	Erection of illuminated and non illuminated signage to the exterior of the buildings RECOMMENDATION SUBMITTED: APPROVE This application appears to be largely retrospective and to be a minor variation on the ADV application and accompanying listed building application that were approved by TWBC in April this year. The Parish Council requests that if the application is approved it should be subject to a condition restricting the lighting of the outside terrace to opening hours only.
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2. Planning Applications

Application	Detail
22/02354/FULL Matfield Gate, Sophurst Lane, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7LH	Demolition of ground floor extensions, Demolition of existing garage, Erection of single storey rear and side extension, Erection of new detached garage, Replacement of Pebbledash Render, Replacement of existing white timber sash windows, Remedial works to existing tile hanging and roof tiles with conversion of flat roof dormer to pitched roof RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE The Council recommend that the multi-use space should not be sub-divided and should remain ancillary to the main house.

3. Community benefits at proposed development site in Matfield – update on meeting 25.7.22

Notes from the above meeting were received, it was noted that James Chapman of Clarendon had not responded to requests for confirmation that they accord with his recollections.

4. Receipt of S.106 funds re Fernham Development

The Council noted that the Developer Contribution relating to the Fernham Homes development, totalling £78,134.33, has been released to the Borough Council. Projects for using these funds would be considered and may include children's play areas and Matfield Pavilion, which were specified on the S.106 document. It was noted that enquiries would be made with TWBC to ascertain which other projects might be funded from this money.

5. Horsmonden NDP Regulation 16 Consultation – to confirm response

The Chair confirmed that the Council had submitted a response to the Horsmonden NDP as follows:

Brenchley and Matfield Parish Council congratulates Horsmonden Parish Council on all the careful work that has evidently gone into producing this very comprehensive draft plan and confirms that BMPC has no objection to any of the proposed policies.

9. Electoral Boundary Consultation – to consider further response

The Chair advised that The Local Government Boundary Commission has published its draft recommendations for Tunbridge Wells Borough Warding, which will be effective from May 2024. The Parish Council had responded at the earlier stage of consultation in February.

The Council discussed concerns about the wide area that the new ward would cover and that this would impact detrimentally on the attention on each parish in the ward, even with an increased number of Borough Councillors.

It was agreed that Cllr Buttery would contact Horsmonden and Lamberhurst Parish Councils to ascertain their perspective, given that Goudhurst Parish had already submitted an extensive comment. Cllr Buttery would then draft a response for discussion for by the PC to approve as its submission before 10th October.

10. Staff Appraisals – to receive and note from the Employment panel

1. Clerk

The Council received the Employment Panel report. It was noted that there would be no increase in salary scale however the NALC pay award was yet to be confirmed, which would be backdated to 1st April.

RESOLVED that the Council's Employer contribution for the Clerk's pension would be increased to 7%.

2. RFO

The Council received and noted the Employment Panel report.

11. Finance Committee – to receive minutes and consider recommendations

Minutes of the meeting of 12th July were approved as an accurate record and were signed by the Chair of the Finance Committee Cllr Wells.

It was noted that an internal budget-setting meeting would be held on 6th September and an initial draft budget will be presented to full Parish Council at the October meeting, with a Finance Committee meeting to confirm second draft on 11th October. The Council's final Budget is anticipated to be approved at the December meeting of the Council.

Cllr Wells outlined reasons for a change in the accounting administration package.

RESOLVED that the Council switches from Receipts and Payments to Income and Expenditure for its accounting package at a one off cost of £350.

12. Appointment of Internal Auditor for 2022-23

The Council considered a quote for Audit Services from Mulberry, as the Council's current internal auditor David Buckett is retiring. The annual amount of time on Audit is approximately 4 hours and this can be split into an interim (Autumn 2022) and final audit or just a final year end audit.

RESOLVED to contract Mulberry Ltd for Internal Audit services for the 2022-23 financial year including an interim audit in Autumn 2022.

13. Traffic

1. Update on second Speed Indicator Device and data retrieval

Cllr Churchill advised that the existing SID was at Market Heath facing Matfield to 22 July and at MVH facing Standing Cross to 22 Aug and some data had been circulated. This SID is now being sent for retro-fitting the Bluetooth. She commented that residents had noticed a difference

A quote for maintenance, moving and data retrieval of the SIDs was discussed given the organisation and co-ordination required in this process, which has become significant.

RESOLVED to contract Capel GroundCare to provide services related to the movement, battery charging and data retrieval for the SIDs, at an annual cost of £1584.96, commencing October 2022.

2. Highways Improvement Plan – review prior to meeting with KCC

Cllr Churchill confirmed that a meeting would be held with KCC to discuss the Parish HIP in October, the list of priorities was unchanged. KCC would only consider the first item on this list.

3. Parking on Windmill Hill in relation to HIP and Pixot Hill crossroads

The replacement of signage was considered vitally important for the Pixot Hill crossroads, including signage further down Pixot Hill to deter HGVs approaching the junction.

4. HGV traffic through Brenchley

Cllr Churchill is also considering issues around Spout Lane and photographic evidence is required to address the HGV issues throughout the Parish.

5. SID and SpeedWatch Co-ordination

Cllr Churchill confirmed that information from the SID had given a better idea of when and where to run a Speedwatch session which is going very well, thanks to volunteers, more were being sought.

14. Matfield Pond

Cllr Stout had provided a report on background on the project to maintain the pond, which had been considered by the Council on several occasions in the last few years. It was agreed that the pond is an important asset and that many elements including the fish, the trees, weeds and island, drainage and depth of the pond all need to be considered, once the fish had been removed.

The Council discussed at some length the difficulties of ensuring that residents did not turn the tap on without permission, given that the cost of the water which was over £1,000, was under the control of the Council who are responsible for public money.

RESOLVED to appoint Sean Miller as the volunteer Pond Warden, reporting to the Parish Council

RESOLVED to remove all fish from Matfield Pond as soon as possible.

It was agreed that a meeting of Parish Councillors and the Pond Warden would be arranged to discuss long term options including possible funding streams.

Comments made on social media by residents were noted however there were a number of misconceptions and it was agreed that communications on activities and arrangements would be publicised more frequently.

It was noted that Sean Miller had confirmed that the GoFundMe donation would be passed to the Council to fund the removal of the fish and other items, to add to the Parish Council budgeting.

15. Cinderhill

1. To agree Service Level Agreement with Kent High Weald Partnership to 31.3.2023

The Council considered the draft SLA for work at Cinderhill, as agreed with KHWP which is the first such document listing what will be achieved for the funding. A new SLA for 2023-24 will be discussed in the New Year. New items to add to budget for next year. An amendment was agreed relating to surveys of reptiles and dormice,

RESOLVED for the Clerk to sign the Service Level Agreement with Kent High Weald Partnership for the provision of works at Cinderhill to 31.3.23

2. To consider costs of tree work required

Cllr Akenhead outlined the quote for essential tree work identified on a tree survey of trees at Cinderhill. The Council discussed the impact on the budget considering these works were unbudgeted but felt that the safety of the area was paramount. Trees requiring work identified as being on land retained by TWBC had been advised to the relevant department
Quote attached from Landscape Services.

RESOLVED to instruct LandScape Services to undertake urgent unbudgeted work to trees at Cinderhill totalling £1980 plus VAT.

16. Clerk's and RFO's Report

1. Update on summer works and other matters

The Clerk outlined work that had been achieved over the summer Council recess including ditching work by the allotments, repairs at the Pavilion and Brenchley playground, a replacement bench and posts on Matfield Green, essential tree work around the Parish and a request for replacement bins on Green progressing with TWBC.

2. Mowing contract

The Council discussed the detail of the annual mowing contract including the frequency of mowing particular areas.

It was agreed that all areas would remain the same but that the Drying Ground would not be fully mowed, and that a 2m margin along the pavement and a path through to the footpath would be mown. The contract terms would be circulated to contractors for quotes to be provided by the end of October.

3. Correspondence for information

The Council noted correspondence and the Council's replies on Cooksfield and Bockingfold Solar Farm.

4. Accounts paid by exception since the last meeting – for information

2318	HMRC	Tax and NI July 2022	£673.09
2319	C. Brooks	Salary Balance July £73.52 and June £71.98 underpayment and July Mileage	£145.50
2320	P.Horn	Salary Balance July £9.10 and June underpayment £9.10	£18.20
2321	K.Twyman	Cleaning of Pavilion (23/6 and 7/7)	£30.00
2322	Wasteway	June Bin emptying Brenchley Rec	£38.40
2323	Rialtas	Annual Support and Maintenance	£214.80
2324	Lynne Butler	Reimbursements of NDP expenses	£136.73
2338	Parish Online	Annual subscription for mapping service	£180.00
2339	David Izzard	July Visit to JVG £25 Strimming and weeding Brenchley playground £20	£45.00
2340	David Buckett	Year End Audit	£352.00
2341	James Beach	Clearance of Raised beds on Plot 19	£175.00
2342	Landscape Services	3 months mowing contract April-July 2022	£4,276.61
2343	Liam Davies	Repairs to the Pavilion	£97.50

Credit Card Payments made

2325	Lloyds Bank Fees	Monthly Fee June	£3.00
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Interim Payment Made Due to Enforcement by KCC

2326	KCC	Drainage works to Brenchley Road	£2,478.74
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Standing Orders and Direct Debits

2327	SO C. Brooks	Salary July 2022	£1806.47
2328	SO Panetta Horn	Salary July 2022	£519.82
2329	DD Smart Pension	July 2022 Pension Payment	£330.34
2330	DD EDF Energy	Pavilion Electricity 9/6-9/7 2022	£218.00
2331	DD Microshade	July data and application service	£124.30
2332	DD Business Stream	July 22 Pavilion water and waste	£7.00
2333	DD Tower	Phone Equipment Leasing July 2022 36 month agreement ending December 2024	£30.02
2334	DD Smart Pension	July 2022 Pension admin fee	£18.00
2335	DD Npower	Streetlight electricity July 2022	£68.85
2336	SO Churchill	July Toilet Cleaning services	£677.32
2337	SO Capel Grndcare	Playground Inspection July – Dec 22 Monthly premium	£54.00

5. Accounts payable

2344	HMRC	Tax and NI August 2022	£643.07
2345	C. Brooks	Salary Balance Aug £30.02 and Aug Mileage £57.60	£87.62

2346	Kalc	March Dynamic Councillor Course (Buttery)	£60.00
2347	K.Twyman	Cleaning of Pavilion (21/7 4/8)	£30.00
2348	Wasteway	July Bin emptying Brenchley Rec	£76.80
2349	JP Miles	Reinstate bollards to edge of road at Brenchley memorial	£60.00
2350	JP Miles	Flail Mowing carried out in Feb Cinderhill	£90.00
2351	JP Miles	Hedge Cutting at Allotments roadside	£216.00
2352	Capel Groundcare	Replace Stepping log at Rec Playground	£292.20
2353	Capel Groundcare	Adjust Playground Gate at Rec	£81.60
2354	Capel Groundcare	Cut hedge at Rec Playground	£552.00
2355	Business Stream	Pond water May to July 2022	£798.75
2356	Wealden Benches	Replacement Bench Matfield Green	£594.95
2357	Churchill	Replacement of rejected payment for Toilet Cleaning for one month	£677.32
2358	CVD	Phone Line rental / Broadband August	£58.19
2359	Managed Tech	Photocopy charges 12/5/22 -16/822	£88.00
2360	Weald Tree Services	Removal of Broken branch Matfield Green	£150.00
2361	Fence Guru	Replacement of 4 posts Mat Green	£160.00
2362	Handier Handyman	2 hours maintenance at Mat Pav	£65.00
2380	SLCC	Membership Fee for Clerk	£234.00

Interim Payments made

2326	Charity Bank	Transfer of £50K to deposit account	£50000
2363	KCC	Drainage works in Brenchley Road (already authorised)	£2478.74

Credit Card Payments made

2364	Lloyds Bank Fees	Monthly Fee July	£3.00
2365	Amazon	Tap Lock for pond	£18.23
2366	KALC	Clerks Conference	£72.00
2367	KALC	Dynamic Councillor (Stout)	£60.00
2368	B&Q	Light Tubes for Mat Pav	£18.00

Standing Orders and Direct Debits

2369	SO C. Brooks	Salary August 2022	£1843.99
2370	SO Panetta Horn	Salary August 2022	£528.92
2371	DD Smart Pension	August 2022 Pension Payment	£330.34
2372	DD EDF Energy	Pavilion Electricity 9/7-9/8 2022	£218.00
2373	DD Microshade	August data and application service	£124.30
2374	DD Business Stream	August 22 Pavilion water and waste	£7.00
2375	DD Tower	Phone Equipment Leasing August 2022	
		36 month agreement ending December 2024	£30.02
2376	DD Smart Pension	August 2022 Pension admin fee	£18.00
2377	DD Npower	Streetlight electricity August 2022	£61.72
2378	SO Churchill	August Toilet Cleaning services	£677.32
2379	SO Capel Grdcare	Playground Inspection July – Dec 22 Monthly premium	£54.00

RESOLVED that the RFO having provided invoices for scrutiny the accounts were approved for payment and would be authorised by Cllr Wells and Cllr Churchill

17. Meetings attended and reports by Councillors

None

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

None

19. Date of next meetings:

Provisional Full Council Meeting 7pm, Tuesday 21st September

Full Council Meeting 7pm, Monday 3rd October

Finance Committee Meeting 10.30am, Tuesday 11th October