



BRECHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
Matfield Pavilion, The Green, Matfield, Kent, TN12 7JU
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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BRECHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 6th OCTOBER 2025 AT 7PM AT MATFIELD PAVILION

Present: Councillors J. Buttery (Chair), E. Akenhead, A. Dewdney, A. Stout, C. Churchill, J. Reynolds, C. Anderson

In attendance: Cllr Mark Munday (Kent County Council (KCC)), 2 members of the public

1. To accept apologies for absence

The Council accepted apologies from Cllr Thompson who could not attend for personal reasons. In the absence of the Clerk, who was unwell, Cllr Anderson took the minutes of the meeting.

2. To approve the Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes of the meeting of 1st September 2025 were approved as an accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair.

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Akenhead and Cllr Reynolds declared a perception of bias interest in Agenda item 7.1 due to connections to the School.

4. To adjourn to allow public participation.

The applicant on planning application 25/02005 spoke in favour of the application.

5. Borough and County Councillors

Cllr Munday advised that there was a lack of progress on the Badsell Road improvements.

6. Chair's Announcements

- Pond Clearup is Sunday 2nd November, 9.30am
- Cooksfield sale is progressing, sellers information has been provided

7. Traffic

1. School Crossing Survey – update

Cllr Reynolds outlined the results of the survey into a crossing outside Brenchley School. There had been overwhelming support for the proposals outlined although some contrary perspectives had been raised. Cllr Reynolds would obtain quotes for a scoping survey and if the PC were approached for a contribution this would be accompanied by further clarity on all views on the proposals.

Action Cllr Reynolds

8. Planning

1. Planning Applications

25/01570/FULL Spring Farm, Horsmonden Road, Brenchley, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7AX

(Self-build) Proposed conversion of existing structure to one dwelling with extension & detached garage (Alternative to 23/00306/FULL & 23/02535/FULL)

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: NEUTRAL

Noting that the plan for a garage was withdrawn from the previously approved application 23/02535/FULL and that the addition of this garage, with its volume of approximately 116m³, would have pushed the overall increase in volume of that application to nearly 80% rather than the 49% which enabled that application to be approved by TWBC.

While the design of the proposed garage is acceptable, its situation close to the road and largely unscreened will make the landscape along this part of the Horsmonden Road outside the village appear more built-up, conflicting with Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies to conserve and enhance the High Weald National Landscape. If TWBC is minded to approve this application, the Parish Council therefore requests a condition requiring additional native trees or hedging to be planted between the garage and the boundary fence. The conditions attached to the previous applications should also be repeated as necessary, together with conditions concerning foul and surface water drainage. To comply with Policies D7 and D8 on the Neighbourhood Plan, the proposed discharge of surface water to an existing watercourse should not be acceptable, given the adjacent flood zone.

25/01889/FULL Bowmans Agricultural Storage Yard, Hastings Road, Matfield, TN12 7HE

Change of use of existing agricultural building to B8 storage use for the storage of tyres with associated highway & access improvements

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: REFUSE

Given the enforcement history on this site and the previously refused application for a tyre tracking facility, and as 12 parking spaces appear excessive for a storage site which will have no visitors, the Parish Council questions whether there is a genuine intention for this to be just a storage facility. Indeed the Transport Statement states at paragraph 2.22 "The proposal comprises the re-use of the existing building and site to provide vehicle servicing, tracking and tuning services".

The proposed access and exit on the B2160 is close to the roundabout, in an area where traffic approaching the roundabout from Matfield as it comes round the bend starts to divide into two narrow lanes. Large HGVs exiting the site would presumably need to swing across both lanes, further increasing the congestion that already occurs and that is due to increase massively with the thousands of new houses planned and being constructed at Paddock Wood/East Capel. The new access road from the B2160 would also seriously damage the amenity of the adjacent house.

However, if TWBC is minded to approve the application, the Parish Council supports the neighbour's requests that the ingress be changed to be only via the A21, leaving the junction with the B2160 to be exit only. The Parish Council also supports the neighbour's requests for soundproof barriers to reduce disturbance and for the restriction of operating hours. The Council also requests conditions concerning landscaping and exterior lighting in order to conserve the High Weald National Landscape and its dark skies. The Council supports the requests by National Highways for conditions requiring a Construction Management Plan, and for surface and foul drainage details.

25/01971/FULL Oaklands, Bramble Reed Lane, Matfield, Kent, TN12 7ET

Single-storey rear extension; roof alteration & extension; installation of rooflight; construction of terrace; alterations to external fenestration; replacement of garage

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE

However the Council requests that the conditions on planning application 24/01137/FULL are repeated with respect to the control of external lighting and restricting the use of the accommodation above the garage. As this house is in a rural position in the High Weald National Landscape, in view of the extensive fenestration proposed the Council also recommends an informative concerning blackout blinds or curtains (Policy LE8 Dark Skies of the Neighbourhood Development Plan).

25/01975/FULL Old Tong Farm, Tong Road, Brenchley, Kent

Erection of three-bay detached garage

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE

subject to any concerns that may be raised by the Conservation Officer concerning the effect on the curtilage of this grade II* listed house.

There should be a plan showing the replacement trees that have been planted as these are neither shown on the plans provided, nor listed in the Tree Survey schedule, and the Planning Officer will need to ascertain that the planting is satisfactory. The permission granted should also be conditional on the Annex permitted under 24/01952/FULL not being built.

25/02005/FULL 1 Knowle Hill Cottages, Knowle Road, Brenchley, Kent, TN12 7DL

Garden studio single-storey front & side extension

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE

This is a great improvement on the previous proposal.

The Parish Council recommends an informative on blackout blinds or curtains for the windows to the extensions, in accordance with Policy LE8 Dark Skies of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

25/02124/FULL High Leas, 11B Broad Oak, Brenchley, Kent, TN12 7NN

(Part Retrospective) Timber/mesh side extension. Replace existing conservatory with office extension, solar panels to rear and side elevations.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE

25/02138/FULL Pound House, Holly Bank, Brenchley, Kent, TN12 7PG

Replacing an existing lean-to greenhouse with a powder coated aluminium glasshouse.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE

With a condition that no lighting is to be installed to the replacement greenhouse

25/02139/LBC Middle Cottage, Brenchley Road, Matfield, Kent, TN12 7DT

Listed Building Consent - Bathroom window replacement with timber casement window

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE

Subject to the condition requested by the Conservation Officer concerning the joinery for the replacement window.

2. 25/01876/EIASCO Badsell Farm, Badsell Road, Five Oak Green – to confirm comments submitted under delegated powers

The Council noted the comments submitted on the application.

3. Clarendon Development at Matfield Village Hall - update

The Council noted exchanges of correspondence between Cllr Buttery and James Chapman/Clarendon, Phil Bilney (Matfield Village Hall) and our solicitor, and discussed a request from Mr Chapman for a meeting with the PC and other interested parties.

It was agreed that Cllr Buttery, Cllr Dewdney and Cllr Akenhead would attend a meeting, per the Council's Meeting with Developers Policy, and report back to the Council with any information. The Full Council would consider any decisions to be made subsequently.

9. Draft Budget 2026-27 – to consider

The Council considered the initial draft budget and noted that further detail will be added on the working tab with up to date figures on anticipated spend to make this more accurate. The Finance Committee will refine this at their meeting of 12th November and a "final" version will be made available to the Council in December – by this time the tax base should be known. Any final adjustments can be made at the January meeting if absolutely necessary as the deadline for submission to TWBC is late Jan/early Feb.

10. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) Notice of completion of 2024-25 External Audit - for information

The Council noted the External Audit report (including the Conclusion of the 2024-25 Audit Notice) which had been published on the website per the statutory requirements. No issues were raised.

In preparation for the additional Assertion 10 of the 2025-26 AGAR, the Clerk has identified the extra requirements for the Council to put in place, including a new IT Policy, and is progressing these with the RFO and the Chair (as GDPR Officer).

11. Local Government Re-organisation - update

Cllr Buttery updated the Council on developments in the LGR process. TWBC will be ratifying their comments on the preferred Unitary Authority layout at their Full Cabinet Extra Ordinary meeting on 17th November. The final submissions, from all the interested agencies (including KALC) will be by 28th November, with the new unitaries ultimately coming into power in April 2028.

Cllr Buttery and Cllr Dewdney would attend a further meeting on this issue on 8th October.

12. Projects Update - Jack Verrall Memorial Gardens

1. Planting and maintenance phase – to consider

All four volunteer sessions have now been completed as well as hedge and tree cutting. Chilstone have been to the site and agreed the position and base required for the planter they are donating to the project (worth £750).

The Council considered a new proposed planting scheme and costs for maintenance into the next financial year, with reference to the costs already expended and budget available.

RESOLVED to proceed with planting scheme at Jack Verrall Memorial Gardens to a maximum sum of £4182.88 and a regular maintenance programme in the sum of £2400

2. Memorial tree – to consider request

The Council considered a request for a memorial tree in the JVMG noting the Council's policy and also the preference for an acer to match the other tree in the vicinity. The cost of the tree and plaque would be covered by the donating family.

RESOLVED to agree the planting of a memorial tree with plaque in the Jack Verrall Memorial Gardens

13. Bus Stop Grant – to consider application

The Council considered photographs of the bus stop at the top of Petteridge Lane and noted that whilst there was no current budget for a refurbishment, the opportunity for a 50% match funded grant was time-limited and the Council had sufficient reserves. The Clerk would check that the work would include stabilising the building from recent damage from poor weather.

RESOLVED to instruct Gareth Till to refurbish the Petteridge Lane Bus Stop in the sum of £1325.36 and apply for a match funded grant for half of this sum

14. Triangle of land with Brenchley Oak – to consider responsibility

As part of the discussion around Local Government Re-organisation, TWBC and KCC had provided their asset lists per parish area. The Council discussed the area, which is unregistered land but maintained by KCC highways, outside All Saints, with the Turkey Oak, this tree does not have a TPO however there are some other items which may be listed, such as the trough and stone marker

It was agreed that the Clerk would make initial enquiries as to whether KCC would transfer ownership of the land, and seek an indication of costs.

Action Clerk

15. Allotment roadside hedge and access – to consider

The Council considered the access to the Allotments and, due to insufficient space inside the site did not feel a drive-in slot would be possible.

They further discussed, and reviewed photographs, concerns about sight lines when exiting the site. The Council noted the previously low height of the roadside hedge which had grown up over years and become both too high and too thick, protruding over the culvert. The Council noted the change in the vista of the area and that the allotment site would be visible from the neighbouring properties.

Two quotes had been obtained for two options to cut back this hedge and the Council noted that this would require spending over the current budget, but felt this was a safety issue.

RESOLVED to instruct Capel Groundcare to lower the roadside hedge at Whitethorn allotments to a height of 1.2m along the full boundary and cut back the roadside face, in the sum of £1420

16. Clerk's Report with works list

- IBC water tank grant application has been successful £850 being installed in the next few months.
- The application for s.106 for the posts has been approved for £16,905 leaving £7,649.09 to use
- A PC comment, not having been sought in advance of publication, was provided on the story on Kent Live about the Wheelwrights
- Anti-parking bollard requested for verge opposite Bass Orchard (KCC progressing)
- 5 x 25kg salt bags being delivered to the Pavilion – for use in emergencies around the parish
- There will be an ATC at Mile Oak Road from 11 November for a week
- Fencing and gate has been completed at Scout Hut some minor vandalism and graffiti reported
- Skinners School and Bennetts have responded that they do allow reflective coats and bags. Mascalls have been asked again.
- KCC have now painted the Brenchley Gateway (at Market Heath)
- Contact made with Freshlinc (copied to Mike Martin MP) requesting HGVs to avoid Petteridge Lane
- The annual inspection of knotweed around the Green and pond has been booked
- Extra opening in the chain along Maidstone Road agreed
- Refurbishment of the High Weald Landscape Trail fingerpost by Pavilion progressing

1. Donation request – to consider

The Council considered a request for a donation towards blinds for the Paddock Wood Advice Centre but this was declined due to the existing grant funding already made.

2. Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) – to consider funding

The Clerk outlined the benefits of the CiLCA qualification which may become more relevant with the LGR. They noted that the training budget would only just cover this expenditure in this financial year but that the start date of February 2026 necessitated this and provision could be made in next year's budget to recoup this. It was agreed that the Clerk would be able to use half a day per week, if needed, of work time to complete the qualification, which takes up to a year.

RESOLVED that the Council funds the CiLCA qualification for the Clerk

17. RFO's Report with budget monitoring

1. Accounts payable

3579	HMRC	Tax and NI Sept 25	£1042.18	£1,042.18
3580	C. Brooks	Sept 25 mileage	£52.20	Salary Balance £ plus 4 months back pay £524.60 see accounts payable list
				£576.80
3581	Sarah Castro-Edwards	Salary Balance plus 4 months back pay		£191.88
3582	WasteWay	Aug 25 bin collections at Porters Wood and Brenchley Rec		£153.60
3583	WasteWay	Cinderhill & Pavilion Clearance (Chairs and Bumpers)		£168.00
3584	ScrapCo	1x 8yard Skip for Matfield Pond Clearance		£372.00
3585	The Garden Barber	Plot Coverings at Allotments		£230.00

3586	Capel Groundcare	Playground Inspection Monthly premium Sept 25	£288.00
3587	Capel Groundcare	SIDs Monthly contract Sept 25	£182.22
3588	Capel Groundcare	Grounds Maintenance : Allotment Hedge (Autumn 25)	£53.53
3589	Microshade	Software support Sept 25	£209.29
3590	B&K Electrical	Electrical testing in Pavilion and both Toilet Blocks	£930.00
3591	Mulberry LA	AGAR Assertion 10 Training RFO	£18.00
3592	Elm Fencing	IR Scout Hut Fencing	£3,018.00
3593	Benjamins Trees	Tree Work at Jack Verrall Gardens	£936.00
3594	Brenchley Archive	Annual Grant	£1,000.00
3595	A Castro-Edwards	1 hr Cleaning MatPav Sept 25	£17.00
3596	Burslem	War memorial cleaning and stone repair	£2,634.00
3597	Joe Clark	JVMG concrete footing	£150.00
3598	Brenchley Scouts	Donation for Fencing Project	£1,460.42
3612	GardenProud	Materials for Paving at JVMG	£79.25

Payments by Credit Card Aug expenditure (total) DD £135.26

3599	Amazon	Sink drainer board for Pavilion £22.99
	Tesco /Rinkit	Cups and Saucers for Pavilion £86.97
	Tesco	Cleaning Products for Pavilion £22.30
	Lloyds Bank	Monthly Fee £3.00

Standing Orders and Direct Debits For Information

3600	SO C. Brooks	Salary Sept 25 (SO to be updated)	£1,979.75
3601	SO Sarah Castro-Edwds	Salary Sept 25 (SO to be updated)	£664.72
3602	DD Smart Pension	Aug 25 Pension Payment	£995.04
3603	DD EDF Energy	Pavilion Electricity Jul 25	£115.31
3604	DD EDF Energy	Electricity Brenchley Toilets Aug 25	£25.88
3605	DD EDF Energy	Electricity Matfield Toilets	£35.00
3606	DD Smart Pension	Aug 25 Pension admin fee	£26.40
3607	SO Churchill Group	Aug 25 Toilet Cleaning services	£927.65
3608	DD SSE	Streetlight electricity Aug 25	£73.20
3609	DD Everflow	Water Charges 22/10 - 21/11	£497.06
3610	DD First Com TecWorks	Monthly Phone and Broadband Service Oct 25	£197.73
3611	Unity Bank	Monthly Service Charge Sept 25	£11.00

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

18. Meetings attended and reports by Councillors

Cllr Churchill had attended the online KCC Parish Highways and Transportation seminar.

19. Date of next meeting: Monday 3rd November 2025, 7pm, Matfield Pavilion

20. Co-Option of a new Member of the Council – to consider application

Having noted the terms of the Co-Option Procedure and no members of the public being present the Chair invited Nicky Race to detail her skills, experience and interest in joining the Council.

The Council unanimously voted to appoint Nicky Race to the Council. Cllr Race would sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office and complete an induction at the earliest opportunity.