

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BRENCHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.30PM ON MONDAY 7TH FEBRUARY 2020 AT MATFIELD PAVILION

Present: Councillors L. Butler (Chair) presided, J. Buttery (Deputy Chair), C. Churchill, G. Warner, J. Spencer, A. Stout, E Akenhead, C. Brooks (Clerk)

In attendance: Cllr Alan McDermott (TWBC), Cllr S. Hamilton (KCC)

1. To accept apologies for absence

The Council accepted apologies from Cllr Wells who was on holiday and Cllr Miconnet who was unwell.

2. To approve the Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes of the meeting of 10th January 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.

None.

5. Borough and County Councillor – update

Cllr McDermott provided an update on the number of members of the Borough Council beginning in 2024 and that there would likely be a change in the parishes allocated to each Borough Councillor.

6. Planning

1. Planning Applications

Application	Details
21/03642/FULL Hoppers Cottage, Mile Oak Road, Brenchley, Kent, TN12 6NF	Conversion of Existing garage into a study/garden room with two Velux roof lights RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE The PC wishes to highlight the well-used Public Bridleway WT315 which is the access route to the garage building at Hoppers Cottage. The Bridleway must be kept clear at all times and not be obstructed during construction/conversion of the garage building.
21/04109/FULL Herrings Mill House, Bramble Reed Lane, Matfield, TN12 7ET	Erection of single storey front extension and walkway canopy RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE the PC is concerned about the number of roof lights proposed in this extension building and would like to see a reduction in the number from the 5 windows shown on the plans. This is to prevent light spillage and preserve the intrinsically dark skies in the AONB.
21/04164/FULL and 21/04165/LBC Chapel Cottage, Brenchley Road, Matfield, Tonbridge, TN12 7PH	Conversion of Chapel into ancillary annexe accommodation, insertion of rooflights and construction of glazed link to connect the cottage and Chapel RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: NEUTRAL

	The PC is concerned about the parking arrangements for what would become a 4-bedroom house. The plans show "gravel drive" but the front of the cottage driveway is mainly edged grass. The space to the south of the cottage appears insufficient for 2 cars parking in tandem and the turning of vehicles could be difficult. It would also be impossible with a 3rd vehicle in the turning space. Reversing into or out of Brenchley Road in this position close to a blind bend should not be an option and a turning space should be kept clear at all times. The PC feels the parking bay in front of the entrance door to the chapel cannot be genuinely considered, except possibly for the smallest of vehicles, and again the effect on other traffic on the Brenchley Road while vehicles manoeuvre into the space needs to be considered. The PC is concerned about the impact of the proposed conversion on the historic fabric of the chapel. The PC has been in contact with Mark Stephenson, Conservation Officer, and will respect his comments. It is noted there is an extension of time on the LBC application as additional information has been requested from the applicant on items of historic interest and to provide an improved heritage statement. It is noted that items of historic feature include a Dias, an immersion baptismal which remains under the floor and the original outside noticeboard which now hangs internally. The PC is also concerned about the lack of information concerning how the proposed mezzanines would affect the unusual and interesting part-stained glass, triangular topped, windows and the extent to which these would be obscured. If this application is approved the PC would like to see a condition that the converted chapel remains ancillary to the cottage and does not become a separate dwelling.
22/00179/AGRIC Land At Gate House Farm Fairmans Lane, Brenchley	Agricultural Notification; Erection of a steel framed building with green metal cladding to roof and walls. RESOLVED TO CONTACT PLANNING OFFICER: The PC requests that this application is reviewed under 4.8 d category (Y) of the Tunbridge Wells Agreement 2020. The PC requests that the Principal Planning Officer determines that Prior Approval (Option 2 of email dated 31st January '22) is required on this application due to the siting of the proposed 9m x 6m steel framed barn. The site is located just past a blind bend travelling from south to east, and immediately adjacent to the public footpath which forms part of the High Weald AONB Landscape Trail. The site is therefore highly sensitive in terms of its landscape character. The PC questions how the new access to the building from the footpath will be cut into the existing high bank and landscaped. The PC feels that this agricultural notification application is without merit in that the applicant has stated in application 20/02274/FULL that the three existing, structurally sound, agriculture buildings very close to the application site are redundant. The granting of permission by TWBC to convert two

	redundant farm buildings and demolish a third to form one detached dwelling and associated curtilage cannot be implemented. The PC is informed that the applicant does not benefit from the right of access for a residential dwelling. No work has taken place in the 15 months since the granting of permission and all three farm buildings continue to stand empty.
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2. Planning Notifications – to consider delegation to respond

The Council discussed the difficulty in responding to notifications, such as the AGRI above, that require a response at times when the Council is unable to meet.

RESOLVED that the Planning Committee, with a quorum of three members, be delegated responsibility to respond on behalf of the Council to planning notifications which could not otherwise be responded to within the 21-day period.

3. Community Benefits from the Local Plan Proposed Development Site AL/BM2- update

Cllr Butler provided an update on the site meeting with Cllr Butler, Cllr Akenhead, Members of the NPSG/Matfield Village Hall Committee and James Moysey (TWBC Planning Officer) on 25th January which discussed the community benefits if the allocated site is developed.

7. Highways issues

1. Amendment of Speed Limit Order on Maidstone Road, Matfield – to consider response

This Council discussed the consultation on changes to the speed limit at the top of Geddes Hill just before Pralls Lane, the deadline for responses being 21st February.

RESOLVED that the Clerk respond in support of the proposal to amend the speed limit on Maidstone Road in Matfield from 50mph to 30mph.

2. Section 278 Pedestrian Crossing

Cllr Butler advised that the Parish Council's response to the alterations in the scheme, which had been circulated to Councillors by email, had been provided to TWBC and that these had been passed to Fernham homes and KCC for comment. Comments on the pedestrian barrier and signage and the surface water drainage had been made.

At the site meeting LB was concerned about the safety of pedestrians but KCC didn't raise this in their safety audit. Once the work has been done there will be another safety audit. Cllr Butler had also raised the issue of the cutting the Yew trees on the Thorn Barn boundary as it impacts on the safety of that corner of Brenchley Road. The owners of Thorn House have agreed to liaise with the Parish Council rather than KCC having to undertake a formal procedure. The Parish Council had advised Fernham and KCC that that any work undertaken on the Yew tree is done after consultation with the owners and with their approval.

3. Diversion of traffic from A21 via Cuckoo Lane – to discuss

Correspondence, photos and film footage received from a resident showing the impact of A21 road closures on lanes around the parish was discussed.

It was agreed that this area of concern would be discussed by the Road Safety Initiative Working Party, meeting tomorrow 8th February, being attended by the parish PSCO Tom Costin.

Cllr Hamilton agreed to raise the issue with Paul Barrington-King to obtain information on the County Council strategy generally when the main A21 has diversions through the Parish.

8. Platinum Jubilee Events and Beacon – to discuss

Cllr Butler outlined some actions in progress to prepare for the Jubilee event on Thursday 2nd June, which is a Parish Council event following the programme dictated by the government and HM Pageant Master, including the piper, bugler, choir, and lighting of the beacon.

Repairs to superficial damage to the beacon were not considered necessary at this time.

It was agreed that the three plaques commemorating previous occasions when the beacon had been lit would be added and that, shortly after the 2nd June event, a further plaque would be added.

Cllr Warner, in her capacity as a member of the Brenchley Jubilee Committee, outlined some of the arrangements being put in place for the Big Jubilee Lunch event on Sunday 5th June, including 200 free places at tables along Brenchley High Street. A road closure application was in progress. An area of private land alongside a PROW from Matfield to Brenchley had been identified where five trees would be planted with a "HM The Queen's Green Canopy" plaque.

The Council discussed requests from Teresa Wickham (Brenchley) and Bev Barsley (Matfield) for a contribution towards the Big Jubilee Lunch events on 5th June.

RESOLVED that purchases up to a value of £500 each would be made by the Parish Council for the Jubilee events in Brenchley and Matfield on 5th June 2022

It was agreed that an amount up to £250 would be allocated for any events being held in Petteridge on receipt of a request.

9. Annual Parish Meeting – to discuss

The Council discussed the continued concerns about holding large scale events indoors and agreed that it would not hold an Annual Parish Meeting in 2022.

10. Policy for Memorial Plaques, Benches and Trees – to approve

A revised version of this policy was discussed.

RESOLVED to adopt the Policy for Memorial Plaques, Benches and Trees

11. Consultation on TWBC Electoral Arrangements and Ward Boundaries – to consider response

Following her attendance at a meeting with TWBC on 20th January, Cllr Akenhead had provided information on the impact of possible changes in proposals to ward boundaries in the Borough. The proposals would revert for further consultation after the initial comments. The deadline is 21st March.

It was agreed that Cllr Akenhead, Cllr Butler, Cllr Spencer and invited members of the community would compile a response for the PC to consider at the meeting of 7th March.

12. Toilet Management Contract – update

Cllr Buttery advised that there is a delay in a response from TWBC on the option to take over management of both toilet blocks from 1st April. The current cleaners had provided a very reasonable quote to continue with their contract, under the Parish Council rather than TWBC, Cllr McDermott agreed to progress a response from TWBC at an early opportunity.

It was agreed that Cllr Buttery would clarify the options on receipt of confirmation from TWBC, at a meeting of the Parish Council before the end of the current contract on 31st March.

13. Cooksfield - update

Cllr Butler confirmed that dates for the clearance of the area by a working party had been advertised, 11am-3pm on Sundays 20th and 27th February.

At a future meeting, Cllr Butler would outline the background and recent information on options for the use or disposal of the land, including quotations she had obtained for fencing on the left boundary.

14. Clerk's and RFO's Report

1. Electricity charges

Information on increased charges for both mains electricity at the Pavilion and for streetlights were discussed, variations in the quoted charges would be investigated by the RFO. The Clerk had requested information regarding the timings that streetlights are lit so that this could be discussed further and would enquire about the Council's financial responsibility for these lights.

RESOLVED to enter a 2 year fixed contract with EDF for the provision of electricity at Matfield Pavilion

2. Change of Bank Account Name

The Council discussed the updated of the Parish Council's bank account and it was agreed that the RFO would endeavour to change this to B&MPC or BMPC.

3. New Savings Account

Cllr Buttery confirmed that whilst the Council had previously resolved to open an account with Triodos, they were not currently offering new accounts and he had made an alternative suggestion of Handelsbanken. The Council noted that the current account balance was in the region of £115k and that therefore Cllr Buttery would discuss options further with the RFO to bring forward an alternative as soon as possible.

4. Accounts payable –

2124	HMRC	Tax and NI January 2022	£624.64
2125	C. Brooks	Mileage, January Salary Balance	
		Expenses: Curry's laptop, Amazon office supplies	£543.98
2126	K. Twyman	January Cleaning of Pavilion (6th and 20th January)	£52.00
2127	Wasteway	Clear fly tipping Cinderhill	£127.50
2128	Wasteway	October clearance of Litter bins Rec	£38.40
2129	Wasteway	December clearance of litter bins Rec	£19.20
2130	Wasteway	November clearance of litter bins Rec	£38.40
2131	SCEC	Mat Pavilion: Replacement wall heater, light fitting, timer for external lights	£774.00
2132	Managed Technology	Photocopy charges August	£1.10
2133	Managed Technology	Photocopy charges November	£46.63
2134	KCC	Contribution for Cinderhill	£3500.00
2135	CVD	Installation of new phone line	£45.59
2136	ACRK	Annual membership	£90.00
2137	Scrapco	Skip for Matfield Green	£228.00
2138	British Aquacare	Siltex for Pond	£980.00
2139	Ian Soady	Signs for Allotments	£395.00
2157	Lloyds Credit Card	Clearance of balance to enable new purchases prior to DD date of 16th February	£489.11

Credit Card Payments made

2140	Kalc	Planning Training Cllrs Butler, Akenhead, Warner	£180.00
2141	Kalc	Climate Change Course - Councillor Wells	£60.00
2142	Lloyds Bank Fees	Monthly Fee December	£3.00
2143	Lights4fun	Christmas lights	£138.00
2144	Kalc	Dynamic Councillor Training Councillor Buttery	£60.00
2145	Kalc	Info Security training Councillor Buttery	£16.80
2146	KALC	Data Protection training Councillor Buttery	16.80
2147	KALC	Intro to planning training Cllrs Churchill, Wells	£33.60

2148	WHSmith	Stationery	£28.92
2149	Amazon	Bankers Boxes	£14.99

Standing Orders and Direct Debits

2150	SO C. Brooks	Salary January 2022	£1806.47
2151	SO Panetta Horn	Salary January 2022	£519.82
2152	DD Smart Pension	January 2022 Pension Payment	£325.39
2153	DD EDF Energy	Pavilion Electricity January 2022	£86.00
2154	DD Microshade	Monthly data and application service	£124.30
2155	DD Business Stream	January 22 Pavilion water and waste	£8.00
2156	DD Tower (CVD)	Phone Equipment Leasing January 2022 36-month agreement ending December 2024	£30.02

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

15. Meetings attended and reports by Councillors

Cllr Butler and Buttery, together with the Clerk, attended a session on Risk Management, via Zoom, with TWBC on 2nd February.

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

17. Date of next meeting:

Full Council Meeting Tuesday 22nd February 2022, 7.30pm, Matfield Pavilion

Full Council Meeting Monday 7th March 2022, 7.30pm, Matfield Pavilion