



BRENCHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Matfield Pavilion, The Green, Matfield, Kent, TN12 7JU

Tel: 01892 723586 Web: www.brenchleyandmatfield-pc.gov.uk

MINUTES of a meeting of the Finance Committee of Brenchley and Matfield Parish Council held on Wednesday 18th March 2026 at 10.00am at Matfield Pavilion, The Green, Matfield, TN12 7JU

Present: Cllr A Dewdney (Chair); Cllr J. Buttery; Cllr N. Thompson; Cllr Andrew Stout; S. Castro-Edwards (RFO)

In attendance: C. Brooks (Clerk)

1. To accept apologies for absence

None received.

2. Review of the Minutes of the last meeting of this Committee

Minutes of the meeting of 12th November 2025 attached. These were approved and noted by the Full Council on 02 December 2025.

3. To note Declarations of Interest in any item on the Agenda

No declarations of interest were received.

4. Budget Monitoring and Accruals

The Year-end shutdown is on 13th April and AGAR and year-end Audit is on 13th May, this will include a Statement of Internal Controls.

The Committee reviewed the Council's financial position and noted the predicted year end reserves to be approx. £160,000. Income was increased due to sale of Cooksfield and s.106 funds being used for budgeted projects.

It was also noted that the toilet block expenditure was a significant proportion of our total budget (~10%) and it may be necessary to consider closing one block in the future. Employers NI was under budget by approx. £2750.

4.1 Comparison of 2025/26 budget to actual spend plus review of 2026/27 budget

The Committee reviewed the data and noted in particular:

- Flotek (formerly Microshade), 23 % increase from June 26 when our contract expires.
- Parish Signboards – £2029 Purchase of Oak Board for Brenchley from this year's budget of £2250
- Purchase of HWLT Sign £790 funded from this year's Seats & Signs budget and a £500 grant from KCC Cllr Mark Munday, cost to us £290.

4.2 Roll over of budget provision, accruals, creditors, prepayments or earmarking - to consider.

Proposed Creditors		
Computer & Software Support Fees	Feb/Mar Payments uncleared	185x2 £370
Allotment Fees (Debtors)	Income in advance – 33 fees still due	£1432.00
Insurance	Prepayment for 7/12	£1366.31
March Pension Admin	Uncleared payment 12 Apr	£27.00
March Pension	Uncleared payment 12 Apr	£363.56
March Toilet Cleaning	Uncleared Payment 8 Apr	£927.65

SIDS March	Uncleared Payment 8 Apr	£182.22
Playground inspections March	Uncleared Payment 8 Apr	£288.00
Streetlight Electricity Feb 25	Uncleared Payment	£130.78
Credit Card expenditure Feb 26	Uncleared Payments 16 Apr	£200.65
Fingerpost Sign	To be paid before end March	£712.80
Notice Board (Brenchley)	To be paid before end March	£2116.80
EDF Mat Pav Elec	Uncleared payment 3 April 26	£146.44
Everflow Water Bill	Uncleared payment 3 April 26	TBC
Tecwork Mar 26	Uncleared payment 3 April 26	197.73

The Committee noted these creditors and prepayments, which would be confirmed subject to the auditor's agreement in April.

5. Reappointment of the internal auditor – to consider

The Committee reviewed the terms of the contract for the Internal Auditor.

RECOMMENDATION to continue with Mulberry for the Council's Internal Audit for 3 year contract

6. Contracts – to note

The Committee reviewed the list of current contracts and noted:

- Review of Streetlighting maintenance with Streetlights, new contract signed
- Churchills Toilet Cleaning (reduction from 6 days to 5, £8625.69, which is £650 less per year, however they have just advised a 5.9% increase which is now £9134, totalling less than £150 a year reduction).
- New Streetlighting Electricity contract started in Nov 2025, still with SSE, £1200, 33% increase, budgeted.
- Flotek / Microshade 23% increase from Jun 26, £250 over budget for 2026/27.
- Wasteway (bin collections) recent notification of 29% increase (there were no increases for several years), taking us over budget by approx. £321 over both sites.

7. Direct Debits and Standing Orders – to note

The Committee noted the DD and SO lists.

8. Bank Accounts – to note

• **Unity**

Two accounts in operation current balances as at 11-03-26:

Current £9,021.99

Instant Access £12,511.13

Authorised signatories are : Cllrs: Akenhead, Buttery, Anderson, Churchill, Dewdney, Reynolds, Stout, Thompson, Race

• **CCLA**

CCLA Current balance as at 28-Feb-26 £166,190.76 (£25,000 subsequently withdrawn leaving £141,190.76)

Authorised signatories are: Cllrs: Buttery, Stout, Dewdney, Thompson

The Committee noted the high level of reserves at year end, and that opportunities for large projects to be costed in advance of the budget-setting in the autumn would be beneficial.

9. Asset Register – to note

It was agreed to query with Mulberry the items not currently included in the Asset Register, and check whether any should be reclassified. We still require an up to date valuation for Matfield Pavilion – Cllr Buttery to investigate other contacts. Lambert and Foster have not been responsive.

Action Cllr Buttery

10. Cooksfield funds expenditure – to consider

The Matfield Pond Drain Project (unbudgeted) would be classified as a capital project and therefore £23,306 available from Cooksfield sale which is limited to such projects as opposed to revenue expenditure. Drain project costs are likely to be in the region of £18,188 approx. Use of these funds has also been mentioned to Cllrs Race and Anderson for shade at Brenchley Rec.

RECOMMENDATION to use Cooksfield funds from General Reserves for the Matfield Drain project.

11. Review of s.106 funds available for drawdown – to note

There is currently £5208.78 (compared to £31,255.69 at this time last year) remaining from the Fernham s.106. The cost of minor work in the Pavilion has already been committed and deducted from this figure.

12. Allotment Fees – to consider

The Committee noted that for statutory allotment fees in England and Wales, local authorities are generally required to provide 12 months' notice of any rent increase. To comply with the Allotments Act 1950 (which amended the 1922 Act) the notice period requires changes to rent aligns with the 12-month notice period for terminating a tenancy. However we have previously provided 3 months' notice and indeed this is written in the Tenancy agreement which provides for an exception to the legislation. Again our tenancy agreement specifies the process for termination of tenancies, and this is shorter than 12 months.

The Committee therefore acknowledged that the Council's tenancy agreements complied with requirements for notice of increases in fees, of 3 months.

13. Payroll – to note

The Committee noted that there is an anticipated 4.2% increase, which is already included in the budget. National living wage increases are not relevant.

14. Date of next meeting: October 2026, Matfield Pavilion