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 Policy and Management Committee of Brenchley and Matfield Parish Council held on Wednesday 14th October 2026 at 10.00am at Matfield Pavilion, The Green, Matfield, TN12 7JU

Present: Cllrs J. Buttery (Chair), C. Anderson, J. Reynolds

In attendance: C. Brooks (Clerk)

1. To accept apologies for absence
The Committee accepted Cllrs Dewdney's apologies for this meeting.

2. To review the Minutes of the last meeting
The Committee reviewed the Minutes of the meeting of 22nd April and noted that the Emergency and Resilience Plan is nearing completion. These Minutes had been approved as an accurate record and duly signed by the Chair at the Annual meeting of the Council on 5th May 2026.

3. To record Declarations of Interest on any item on the Agenda
None

4. New Policies to consider

1. Training Policy
The Committee considered the adoption of a Training Policy as is good practice but felt that this was unwarranted given the structure and activities of the Council.

It was agreed that the Clerk/RFO would continue to circulate training opportunities and Cllrs would be able to select those of interest, for which a budget is allocated.

Staff are also able to access training and the Clerk is undertaking CiLCA currently, the RFO will undertake FiLCA in due course and this was felt sufficient to ensure staff had up to date knowledge.

5. Policies for Biennial Review
Note: a comment concerning the Meetings with Developers Policy was raised by a resident, the policy was considered by the Clerk in the light of comments and no changes were suggested.

1. Section 106 Funding Policy
The Clerk outlined that at present we have only a very small amount remaining in the S.106 funds from the Fernham development, these will be used in the current financial year on small repairs to the Playgrounds and Pavilion. This policy was previously adopted to provide a process for community groups to apply for use of the funds and there are few circumstances when this is appropriate because the drawdown must comply with the developer contribution text, which is usually quite specific.

The Committee agreed that there seems to be no reason to amend or rescind the policy and it could be left in place and, on receipt of S.106 in future, the policy could be reviewed then.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Council re-adopts the Section 106 Funding Policy unamended

2. Scheme of Delegation
Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows a local council to pass its powers and functions to committees, sub-committees, or individual officers (such as the Parish Clerk). https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/section/101 . Its general purpose is to speed up routine choices and urgent operational actions without waiting for the next full council meeting.

The Committee noted that does not delegate any actions to its Committees however the Scheme of Delegation is a useful tool so that it can take some decisions outside of a PC meeting, where timeframes need to be met. Councils often delegate day-to-day administrative, financial, and emergency decision-making to the Clerk or Proper Officer to keep business running smoothly and BMPC uses this effectively.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Council re-adopts the Scheme of Delegation unamended

3. Procedure for Co-Option
There is no prescribed procedure for Co-Option outside of the transparency and eligibility requirements for Parish Councillors and the Council's current policy has proved adequate.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Council re-adopts the Procedure for Co-Option unamended

4. Environment, Sustainability and Climate Emergency Policy and new Biodiversity Policy
The Clerk advised the Committee that the Council has statutory duties under the Environment Act and under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 to have regard to conserving biodiversity as part of their policy or decision making. The Committee noted the text of template policies and a section would be added to the current Environment, Sustainability, Climate Emergency Policy to cover biodiversity.

Where resolutions are reached with reference to biodiversity the Clerk would specifically note these in the Minutes to provide an auditable record of this duty.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Council adopts the Environment, Sustainability, Climate Emergency and Biodiversity Policy as amended

5. Complaints Policy and Procedure
This is a required policy and there were no suggested amendments.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Council re-adopts the Complaints Policy and Procedure unamended

6. Protocol for Engaging with Local Organisations
The Committee discussed the eventuality where a Councillor holds a significant role in the Local Organisation and would attend a meeting on its behalf rather than the Parish Councill, and made a small alteration to the policy to clarify this eventuality.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Council adopts the Protocol for Engaging with Local Organisations as amended

7. Disciplinary Policy
This policy was reviewed, no amendments were considered necessary.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Council re-adopts the Disciplinary Policy unamended

8. Grievance Policy and Procedure
This policy was reviewed, no amendments were considered necessary.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Council re-adopts the Grievance Policy and Procedure unamended

9. Vexatious Complainants Policy

This policy was reviewed, no amendments were considered necessary.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Council re-adopts the Vexatious Complainants Policy unamended

10. Memorials, Plaques, Benches and Trees and Policy

Small amendments were made to the policy and it was noted that for areas other than the Matfield and Brenchley Conservation Areas, a more robust/rustic type of bench would be considered.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Council adopts the Memorials, Plaques, Benches and Trees Policy as amended

6. Risk Management

1. Risk Management Policy and Schedule

The Clerk reiterated that Martyn's Law: The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 is expected to come into force in spring 2027, and the Home Office and SIA guidance gives councils a clear preparation route now. Standard-tier premises are those where 200 to 799 people may be present so we do not have any issues of that nature. It was noted that a re-scoring of the risks after mitigations were put in place is good practice but the Committee did not feel necessary.

One small amendment was made reducing the impact of failure of the play equipment at Brenchley from 3 to 2, in line with the same risk at Porters Play area.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Council adopts the Risk Management Policy and Schedule as amended

2. Finance and Governance Risk Assessment

The Committee considered recent events and a small amendment was made regarding litigation for contract disputes.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Council adopts the Finance and Governance Risk Assessment as amended

7. Council Management

The Committee briefly considered Council Management issues including the additional hours for the RFO from April 2027.

No recommendations were made.

8. Date of next meeting: Spring 2027, Matfield Pavilion