



BRENCHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BRENCHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12th NOVEMBER 2025, AT 10.00am AT MATFIELD PAVILION

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

In attendance: C. Brooks (Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence

None.

2. Declarations of interest on any item on the Agenda

No declarations of interest were received.

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

Minutes of the meeting of 26th March were noted, these had been received by the Full Council on 7th April 2025.

4. Audits

The Interim Internal Audit was on 4th November and the report will be noted by the Full Council when received and reviewed by the Finance Committee at the Spring meeting.

4.1 Year End 31 March 2025 External Audit Report

This has already been received and noted by Full Council on 6th October 2025. No points were raised.

4.2 Review of 24-25 Year End Internal Audit Report

This has already been received and noted by the Full Council on 2nd June 2025, the only point mentioned was a missing signed bank reconciliation, processes tightened up so that Cllr Dewdney can sign these, including all pages of the bank statements.

5. Finance and Governance Risk Register

The RFO had made some suggested amendments together with comments from Cllr Buttery. The Fidelity guarantee levels had been reviewed and deemed adequate and the Clerk has confirmed that the Flotek (Microshade) Servers are located in the UK (Plymouth).

RECOMMENDATION: That the Council adopts the Finance and Governance Risk Register as amended.

6. Review of s.106 funds available for drawdown

The Committee noted that there is currently £7649.09 remaining from the Fernham s.106 with work on the playgrounds already instructed in the sum of £2200. £5449.09 will therefore remain.

7. Contracts

7.1 Update on Contracts and suppliers

The Committee noted the schedule of current contracts in particular:

Mowing – Landscape Services 3-year contract confirmed by Council on 3rd November

Pond ILG Richard Groves – it was agreed at the Full Council Meeting on 3rd November 2025 to terminate and replace with Underdown Landscapes, which will include the work previously undertaken by volunteers at the annual Pond Clear up, and with British Aquacare for the water health.

Toilet Cleaning – still TBC, awaiting prices from Churchills. The RFO will update when appropriate figures are received, three quotes will be sought given the level of the contract and our Financial Regulations.
Streetlights – agreed way forward by Council on 3rd November for the maintenance element, the Clerk has requested a contract for signature, as yet not received.

7.2 Update on Utilities

The Committee noted current suppliers and contracts in place. The RFO would continue to seek refunds for estimated readings which were incorrect.

8. Review of Direct Debits/Standing Orders

The Committee reviewed the List of current Direct Debit and Standing Orders.

9. Bank Accounts

9.1 Unity

The Committee noted the two accounts in operation, with current balances as at 5th November 2025:

Current £11,556.99

Instant Access £76,765.69

FCA guarantee limit of £85k recognised and reviewed by the RFO.

All Cllrs, including Cllr Race, are now on the bank mandate for authorisations.

9.2 CCLA

CCLA Current balance £114,297

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

10. Income

The Committee noted the draft Budget for current and anticipated income in 2025-26 and the RFO confirmed following advice from the auditor that income received from sale of Cooksfield should only be spent on Capital projects and earmarked (currently in separate income cost centre).

The Finance Committee agreed to transfer £50,000 into CCLA, on the understanding we may need to transfer some of this sum back into Unity in the next 3 months.

Action : RFO

11. Fees and Licences

11.1 Matfield Pavilion regular users

The Committee noted the following fees in place for this financial year:

Licence: Matfield Green Cricket Club: £300 pa

Regular users: Table Tennis fee for repeat 2 hour session (year round) £25
Croquet only use the Green and toilets £15 per session

Free use of Pavilion Currently for: Love Matfield Society, Tunbridge Wells area Committee of KALC and Paddock Wood Community Advice Centre and Warm Spaces initiative.

11.2 Pavilion Hire fee

Meetings/events inc. beverages only

May to Sept inclusive: up to 2 hours £25
3 hours £35

Subsequent hours £10

Oct to April inclusive: up to 2 hours £30
3 hours £42.50

Subsequent hours £12.50

Parties including food and beverages

May to Sept inclusive:	3 hours	£60
	4 hours	£70
	Subsequent hours £10	
Oct to April inclusive:	3 hours	£70
	4 hours	£80
	Subsequent hours £12.50	

11.3 Allotment Fees

Currently 60p per sqm per annum including water. The Committee noted that the tenancy fees covered certain aspects of the cost for the allotments and that this year the cost of the roadside allotment hedge work was borne by the Council's reserves. A surcharge for no water butts had already been approved by the Council.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Council approves that the Allotment Fees and Pavilion license and hire fees remain unchanged for the 2026-27 financial year.

12. Budget Monitoring

The Committee noted the comparison on 2025-26 budget to current levels of actual spend with an anticipated overspend for War Memorials due to the delay in the work being carried out from 18 months ago and Cinderhill (Ash dieback) which had received specific approval by the Council. The Mowing contract under spend was also noted at £3350.

13. Draft Budget and Precept 2026/27

The Committee noted draft budget which had been updated to reflect decisions taken and spending forecasts. Mulberry advised that the level of y/e reserves was within an acceptable range. Traffic budget has been increased following HIP meeting, to a total of £12000, comprised of £3500 precept and £8500 from reserves. Toilet cleaning contract costs are yet to be finalised. These are to be circulated when available. An adjustment was noted to make the precept a round figure.

The Tax base is awaited however the anticipated increase in precept is currently 2.4%.

Action : RFO

RECOMMENDATION: That the Council approves the net budget for 2026-27 of £173.182 and precept requirement of £149,00

14. Date of next Meeting: Spring 2026