

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BRENCHLEY PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 5th NOVEMBER 2007 IN MATFIELD VILLAGE HALL

Present

Chairman M Mackenzie presided, Vice Chairman J Barsley, B Stanley, D Jolley, A Lee, P Randall and Mrs M A Edmeads. M Powell, Clerk. Three members of the public.

Apologies for absence

None Received

Pecuniary and Personal Interests.

Members were reminded to declare any interest, as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct, on any matter appearing on the agenda or advise the Council of any interest before speaking on any subject that may be raised.

Confirm minutes of previous meeting

The minutes were duly approved and signed by the Chairman.

Public question time.

The Council was advised that the Government had so far failed to commit to a referendum on the acceptance or otherwise of the proposed Treaty of Europe. It was also advised that if a minimum of six people of the Parish were to request in writing a parish meeting the Council would be obliged to hold one and if ten or more people at that meeting voted to require a local referendum on the subject, the Parish Council must request one be held at its expense from the Borough Council. The Council was asked if it be prepared to publicise the fact. The consensus was that whilst the Parish Council was strictly non-political it was prepared to do so.

Planning Applications.

Cllr Lee presented the planning applications. He expressed concern that a breakdown in the process of passing applications amongst the duty Councillors for planning had occurred which meant that none of the others had had opportunity to view them. It was considered better that Cllr Jolley were to get the applications first and that Cllr Mrs Edmeads would step in whenever a problem arose with other members of the sub-committee being unable to find the time.

TW/07/03577/FUL/BSI

Chestnut Cottage Foxhole Lane Matfield

Retrospective pool house and home office

Recommendation-Refusal

Within the AONB and the Kent Special Landscape Area and outside the LBD. Recommended to committee as approval would set a dangerous precedent for development outside the LBD and within the AONB.

TW/07/03613/FUL/SJM

4 Sophurst Wood Lane Matfield

Single and 2 storey rear extension

Recommendation-Approval

TW/07/03611/FUL/ARJ

Bassetts Cottage Maidstone Road Matfield

2 additional velux windows on garage and workshop

Recommendation-Approval

TW/0703575/FUL/SJM

3 Broad Oak Close Brenchley

Internal and external alterations to fenestrations

Recommendation-Approval

TW/07/03644/FUL/CLC

Little Swingle Goshen Farm Matfield

Part change of use, erection of double carport, two stables and ancillary storage for tractor etc

Recommendation-Refusal

Refusal for the same reasons as the previous application. It is within the AONB and Kent Special Landscape Area and outside the LBD. It is not considered modest and lends itself to future sub-division. The change of curtilage is acceptable but only with the proviso that no buildings or structures are placed within it.

TW/07/03693/FUL/CLC

The

Willows, Foxhole Lane Matfield

Replace existing garage with oak framed garage with room over

Recommendation-Approval

Decisions Taken by TWBC**TW/07/02843/FUL/TW2**

Bus Shelter Maidstone Road Matfield

Recommendation-Approval Decision-Refusal

The Council expressed its surprise at this decision and asked the Clerk to contact planning to request a site meeting.

TW/07/03028/FUL/CT2 Cinder Hill Wood Gypsy site

Refurbishment

Recommendation-Approval Decision-Approval

Withdrawn Applications**TW/07/03310/FUL/CLC**

Poulhurst Bungalow, Furnace Lane Brenchley

Alterations to ridge height

Appeals**TW/07/01252/FUL** The Platters High St, Brenchley

Replacement dwelling

Decisions taken by the Clerk out of meeting

The agreed purchase of the new Playground equipment has been postponed due to the grant application hearing being delayed until November. The grant is not available for retrospective projects.

Meetings attended

The Clerk met with the Chairman of the newly formed Matfield Allotment Association. They now belong to the British Allotment Association. They have some requests viz.: -

They would like to install a poly-tunnel in the south west corner for communal use for the cultivation of seeds etc approx 5' high, 15' long and 12' wide. It will not be used for growing soft fruits for commercial sale.

They would like to install 3 extra taps around the site and be able to water with a hose but no sprinklers. The water company has advised them that as a horticultural area this is permissible even with a drought order in place. They will undertake to pay for all the above and any additional water costs over and above the average consumption shown on the last few bills.

They have meetings every 2 months and rather than an AGM they suggest representatives of the PC attend one of these. The Council agreed in principle that all this was acceptable subject to the Association confirming in writing that they would accept responsibility for any additional water charges. The Council also needed confirmation that the poly-tunnel would not require planning permission. Further clarification was required on public liability insurance and who would cover the tunnel. The Clerk advised that the Allotment Association has agreed verbally to insure the tunnel and was asked to attend the next meeting of theirs, to clarify matters and produce a letter of commitment for the Association to sign.

Matters arising**Trees**

It had been noticed that a resident in Foxhole Lane had cut down about six mature trees. The Clerk has contacted the Tree Officer of TWBC who advised that permission was not required. The PC asked the Clerk to contact the tree Officer and try to obtain a set of rules governing tree felling.

Meeting Dates

The Clerk circulated a possible list of dates and subject to modification of some venues were agreed as acceptable.

Oil Tanks

The Clerk was asked to enquire if the property immediately to the east of Brenchley Garage was still in public ownership as bunding would be required if it were. He was advised it was not.

Gateway

The Clerk was asked to enquire if a planning desk would be available at the new Gateway in Tunbridge Wells. TWBC were unable to provide this information until closer to the time of opening.

Correspondence**CAB**

A letter of thanks from CAB for our donation

RAF

An invitation to attend a Royal Air Force Civic Reception at the Spa Hotel Tunbridge Wells from 7pm on Wednesday 28th November. Several Councillors wanted to attend and agreed to advise the Clerk to book places.

BTCV

An acknowledgement and thanks for our donation of £100 to Kent Tree Warden Scheme.

Mayors Charity

An invitation had been received to attend the Mayors Charity Triv Quiz event. No volunteers were forthcoming.

Hollybank

It was reported that the posts had now been re-erected but further damage to the bank was evident. It was proposed that the Clerk ask Highways if it were possible to narrow the entrance to the road to deter heavy or long vehicles using it.

Residents

A copy of a letter to KCC regarding the poor condition of the footpath from Matfield to Sophurst Wood lane.

Accounts for Payment

Roundabout	2008 Advert	£165.00
Namesco	Retention of domain name	£29.36

Other Matters as maybe Notified**Web Site**

The Chairman proposed that if the PC should look seriously at developing a Parish web site to promote the commercial vitality of the area and the PC should consider setting aside a budget to do so. He considered that £1000 to £1500 should be enough to sponsor the setting up in the first year and a much smaller amount on its maintenance. A web site will be necessary for a quality council in the future. It may be practical for the team at Roundabout to update information as received or it may be necessary to user an outside supplier. It was felt that a specification of such a site should be explored first and the Chairman urged other Councillors to view local parish sites. The Council agreed to consider the issue and the Clerk agreed to do some research on the costs.

CHW

Cllr Jolley with a colleague had visited the woodland and cleared several trees, which were blocking footpaths. Some had fallen and it appeared some had been deliberately felled. The Clerk was asked to contact the MDRA to enquire if they had any knowledge on the subject and Cllr Jolley agreed to monitor the situation. The Clerk was also asked to contact KHWP who manage the site.

It was also apparent that the football pitch was being damaged by motorcycles and that horses were still being tethered on the old Southern Water Site. The Clerk was asked to write to TWBC and advise them of this.

Jack Verrall Garden

A resident has volunteered to cut the hedge alongside the Old Palace but a gardener needed to be employed. The Clerk was asked to research local gardeners who may be able to offer this service.

Finance

The next meeting of the Finance sub committee in December will be looking at the accounts and considering next year's precept. Councillors were asked that if they had any specific projects in mind to advise everyone as soon as possible.

Date of next meeting.

The next meeting is Tuesday 20th November in Matfield Village Hall to discuss planning issues. The Clerk apologised but would be absent on this occasion due to family commitments.