

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BRENCHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.30PM ON
MONDAY 4th OCTOBER 2021, at MATFIELD PAVILION**

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

In attendance: Cllr Sarah Hamilton (KCC), Cllr Alan McDermott (TWBC), 7 members of the public

1. To accept apologies for absence

The Council accepted apologies from Cllr Warner and Cllr Miconnet who were both unwell.

2. To approve the Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes of the meeting of 6th September 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

A resident spoke concerning the Tutty's Farm planning consultation.

5. Borough and County Councillors – to receive information

Cllr McDermott outlined some of the possible changes to the number of TWBC Councillors and boundaries of parish wards which was recently the subject of a consultation.

Cllr McDermott (TWBC) advised that he had been invited to a meeting organised by David Goodridge, a member of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, which will also be attended by Hilary Smith (TWBC Economic Development Manager). David Goodridge has arranged the meeting/walk with Jonathan Bibby and Kate Beswick of KCC to discuss an upgrade to the existing PROW between Pralls Lane and Brenchley, including a northern route to Mascalls School. David Goodridge will be accompanied by Cllrs. Akenhead and Butler.

Cllr Hamilton (KCC) will continue to seek clarity on the designation of a "village" in terms of speed limits at Petteridge.

6. Planning

1. Proposed Development adjacent to Matfield Village Hall

1. Discussion with Matfield Village Hall Trustees on the community area allocated on the development site

The Council discussed ownership of various parcels of land within the proposals for a planning application by Clarendon Homes. It was noted that the intended parking spaces, included on the area owned by the Parish Council, will be for public use and not limited to users of Matfield Village Hall.

RESOLVED to enter into negotiations with Matfield Village Hall Committee, landowners, Clarendon Homes and any other connected parties regarding Clarendon Home proposals for the area designated for community use on the development site, with a possible provision of an open green space, an equipped playground and associated parking spaces.

2. Correspondence from residents on the above

The Council had received correspondence from four residents on issues related to the proposals for the development at Matfield Village Hall including an offer to purchase the land currently owned by the Parish Council, adjacent to the public convenience block and forming part of the proposals by Clarendon Homes. Given the Council's resolution to negotiate on the proposals with interested parties to ensure the best outcome for community facilities at the site, a response to this specific approach was deferred until progress had been made on this aspect.

2. Neighbourhood Development Plan update

Cllr Butler advised that following meetings with TWBC and the NPSG, the Neighbourhood Plan and major supporting documents are soon to be finalised and it is intended that these shall be presented for the Parish Council's approval at the next full Meeting (November) so that the Plan can go to TWBC for the final public consultation.

3. Planning Applications

<p>21/02934 Kings Toll Farm, Maidstone Road, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7HA</p>	<p>Demolition of existing conservatory and replacement with new single storey extension at the rear. Minor internal alterations</p> <p>RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE</p> <p>Subject to conditions: This large extension to a listed building is probably mainly a matter for the Conservation Officer's professional assessment, which is not yet available on the planning portal. However, the parish council is concerned at the large amount of glazing and rooflights proposed, especially as the house stands high on Maidstone Road with Kings Toll land falling steeply away to the west. In order to protect the dark skies of the High Weald as far as possible the Parish Council would like to see a condition requiring some means of controlling light spillage from the additional glazing, such as blinds or shutters that operate with the light switches.</p>
<p>21/02847 Randalls, Cryals Road, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7HL</p>	<p>Rear single storey extension and front porch</p> <p>RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE</p>
<p>21/02710 Bowmans Agricultural Storage Yard, Hastings Road, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7HE</p>	<p>Change of use of agricultural storage building to tyre tracking facility</p> <p>RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: REFUSE</p> <p>Although the traffic generation statement says that the bus stop is positioned to the west of the access, the access to the site is in fact almost in the middle of the bus stop lay-by. Clearly any traffic entering the site would have to stop and wait on the A21 if there was a bus in the lay-by at the time. Traffic entering the site when there is no bus there may also slow down unexpectedly before turning, just when traffic behind it is expecting the vehicle to speed up after the Kippings Cross roundabout. Therefore any increase in traffic using this access could affect congestion and road safety on the A21 and could possibly also have repercussions for the traffic approaching the Kippings Cross roundabout along the B2160 from Matfield. The problems caused by traffic trying to avoid congestion on the A21 are a major concern for the residents of this parish. The Parish Council notes the response from National Highways and agrees that better information is required concerning trip generation and the effect on peak hour traffic.</p> <p>Presumably the proposed use would require prominent roadside signage/advertising and the car parking area would need to be marked out and lit. This would not enhance and protect the AONB landscape. The effect on the AONB landscape of the improved access arrangements requested by National Highways must also be fully considered.</p> <p>There is no information as to how foul sewage would be disposed of, though it would not connect to an existing system, and surface water drainage would be as existing. Presumably the staff and customers will require a WC, though none is shown on the plans. The parish council notes the recommendations of Mid Kent Environmental Protection concerning noise, contaminated land, sewage, asbestos and construction.</p> <p>If the Borough Council is minded to approve this application, the Parish Council would support the neighbour's request that in the interest of protecting amenity the opening hours should be reduced to 9 hours per day, 6 days per week.</p>

<p>21/02998 2 Moatlands Granary, Watermans Lane, Paddock Wood, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 6ND</p>	<p>Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of new single storey rear extension with roof lights</p> <p>RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE</p>
<p>21/02637 The Nurseries, Pralls Lane, Matfield, Tonbridge, TN12 7DX</p>	<p>Proposed conversion of former farm office and garage into a single dwelling, together with car parking provision and landscaping.</p> <p>RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: NEUTRAL</p> <p>The Parish Council notes that in 2020 TWBC refused an application for a new house at The Nurseries 20/00022. The applicant wished to demolish the outbuildings and erect a new dwelling on the disused tennis court. This was refused as being potentially harmful to local ecology and the plans conflicted with the requirements of policies CP4 and EN1.</p> <p>The Parish Council is concerned about the effect on The Nurseries, adjoining this disused farm office, which is a large house that underwent a single storey side extension and 2 storey rear extension in 2017 under a PDR LAWPRO application. The house will be left with two parking spaces which appears insufficient for a house of its size, and under this proposal it would also lose all the useful outbuildings. There is a significant amount of land which goes with The Nurseries and no information is provided on where its garden/land machinery would in future be stored.</p> <p>It is noted on the application form that package treatment plant will be used for foul waste and the drainage system is yet unknown. There are no facilities given for waste storage. There is also insufficient detail on proposed insulation.</p> <p>The Parish Council notes that while the application states that the site is within easy walking distance of Matfield's facilities, this would involve either walking in the grass along the roadside verge and then crossing the busy B2160 and then the Brenchley Road, or using the unsurfaced footpath WT268. The site's sustainability in transport terms is therefore questionable. If TWBC is minded to approve this application, it is requested that conditions are imposed requiring it to remain as ancillary accommodation to the main house and restricting the construction of new outbuildings.</p>
<p>21/02865 Far Far Away, Beech Lane, Matfield, Tonbridge, TN12 7HG</p>	<p>Change of use and conversion of a workshop building to a dwelling-house including the provision of a parking area and all associated landscaping.</p> <p>RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE</p> <p>Subject to conditions:</p> <p>While noting that this is a proposal for conversion of an existing building, the Parish Council is concerned at the amount of development that has taken place in this area a long way outside the LBD in the AONB countryside. Conditions should therefore be imposed restricting the provision of further ancillary buildings. The conversion should be required to meet the highest current building standards and there should also be conditions concerning surface water disposal and foul sewerage.</p>
<p>21/03029 Petteridge Oast, Petteridge Lane, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7LX</p>	<p>Conversion of existing garage to habitable space and construction of new detached garage including extended drive</p> <p>RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE</p> <p>Subject to condition:</p> <p>The Parish Council notes that the garage has for some years been used as a Granny annexe, and at some time it has had kitchen facilities added. The Council requests a condition that this building remains ancillary accommodation to Petteridge Oast.</p>

<p>21/02984 Tutty's Farm Land, Brenchley Road, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent</p>	<p>Construction of a new access on to Brenchley Road, including all associated operational development for the removal of a section of hedge, bunds and landscaping</p> <p>RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: REFUSE</p> <p>Please could this application be considered as an application under section "D" of 4.8 of the Tunbridge Wells Agreement – December 2020.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tutty's Farm has historically been situated off the Maidstone Road in Matfield. The entrance to the farm is accessed by suitably wide track with secure double farm gates situated between Tutty's Farm House and Tutty's Barn. There is no mention of this access in the application. 2. Application 20/03660/AGRI was granted permission in January 2021 with the consented access from Brenchley Road along footpath WT283. The D&A statement points out that the "owner does not have a right of access". The PC questions if the applicant served notice on the freeholder of the land to validate the application before it was granted? 3. The PC raises concerns about the proposed bellmouth on Brenchley Road being 16 metres wide, narrowing to 6m wide inside the site. It is noted that the single carriageway Brenchley Road is 6m wide. It is noted the applicant's Ecological study says the "the proposed access road will be 6m wide and a bit wider for visibility splay at the road junction, thus only a small section of hedgerow will be lost". The two conflicting statements cannot both be correct information. 4. This area of Brenchley Road is sunken, being a typical lane of the High Weald. The high bank is currently heavily vegetated and the PC is concerned about the substantial loss of a hedgerow protected under the Hedgerow Regulations and a major change in the landscape as viewed from Brenchley Road. The conditions requested by KCC Highways concerning visibility splay could also have a major detrimental effect on the landscape. 5. Potential impact upon Great Crested Newts is mentioned in the applicant's D&A Statement, but there is no mention of dormice. It is surely doubtful whether dormice would be able to cross such a wide gap of 16 plus metres in the hedgerow, and it appears that this protected species have been underestimated in this application. 6. There is a blind bend in Brenchley Road coming from Matfield towards this proposed entrance. Consideration should be given to the length of the farm machinery vehicles and fruit collection lorries being used at this farm building. Tractors with trailers and a combine harvester to be used on arable crops. This will be different from domestic cars using the ingress and egress of this proposed driveway. The Parish Council also notes the concerns raised by KCC Highways. 7. There has been significant recent flooding in Brenchley Road and the land falls away towards Walnut Tree cottages. It is pointed out in the D&A statement that the pear orchard behind the cottages is poor, wet land with an underground stream. The PC queries the lack of detail in flood and water management with this application. <p>The PC is concerned about the detrimental impact and harm on the AONB and believes this proposed new driveway would further erode the remaining perception of separation between the villages of Brenchley and Matfield</p>
<p>21/02694 Maynards, Geddes Hill, Matfield, Tonbridge, TN12 7DU</p>	<p>Construction of a family treehouse within the garden</p> <p>RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE</p> <p>Subject to condition:</p>

	As it is unclear what exactly the intended use of this large tree house will be, the Parish Council requests a condition that it shall not be used as a dwelling.
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7. Assets of Community Value – to consider

Cllr Butler outlined that whilst the Parish Council may nominate assets it cannot make specific bids, which must come from a community interest group with a legal structure such as a Charity or a Community Interest Company. An asset would remain on TWBC's register for at least five years. The owner must notify TWBC when the property is to be sold and a community organisation would have six weeks to decide whether it wishes to be considered as a potential bidder. The organisation would then be given six months to raise the money to buy the asset, although it was noted that there is no obligation on the owner to accept a bid. However, it may still demonstrate that there is perceived community value and this may be beneficial if there are subsequent planning applications. Confirmation that this designation would be welcomed by the current lessees would be sought in advance.

RESOLVED to nominate Terry's Butchers, Windmill Hill, Brenchley and The Brenchley Post Office, High Street, Brenchley, as Assets of Community Value

8. Traffic

1. Speed Indicator Device consultation letter and costs agreement

Cllr Churchill advised that there had been a positive level of feedback from the consultation on the location of the SIDs and the Council discussed the merits of the two available options.

RESOLVED to purchase the "advanced" style of Speed Indicator Device in the sum of £9005.93 (ex VAT)

2. Petteridge Speed limit

Cllr Akenhead advised that whilst KCC have agreed that Petteridge is suitable for a reduction in the speed limit, following the ATC undertaken in March 2021, they are not prepared to fund the relevant infrastructure for the scheme (which is approximately £8700). Cllr Hamilton (KCC) had been asked to obtain clarification on this given the Government advice and would be asked again to respond.

9. EV Charging-point Survey

Cllr Wells advised that an online survey and a survey on the homes within the villages that do not have off-street parking have been completed. The Council discussed different aspects of the scheme including locations of the bays. It was noted that the Parish Council could not apply for bays at Brenchley because the area (the car park by Market Heath Recreation Ground) belongs to Kent County Council. The deadline for the application for the current funding round is 15th October and the installation would be free. The Council did not agree to contribute funding to underpin the application.

RESOLVED to apply for 2 EV Charging-Point bays next to Matfield Pavilion

10. Social Media Policy – to consider revisions

Cllr Wells outlined some suggested changes to the Council's Social Media Policy which were discussed. It was agreed that a link to this policy should be listed on the Council's Facebook page.

RESOLVED to adopt the Social Media Policy as amended.

11. Insurance renewal – to approve

Cllr Buttery outlined that quotes for the Council's insurance had been received from the existing insurers Came and Co as brokers for Axa Insurance and from Zurich Municipal Insurance on a broadly like-for-like basis, the level of insurance for Matfield Pavilion having been updated to take account of latest prices for re-build. The Zurich quote is 10% cheaper and they are also offering a 3 year long term agreement that reduces the premium further.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council appoints Zurich Municipal as its insurers for the three years commencing 1st November 2021

12. Draft Budget for 2022-23 – to consider

Cllr Buttery presented an initial draft budget, compiled by the Finance Committee, showing anticipated spend for the current financial year and the movement of reserves or effect on the precept against planned items in the budget for 2022-23. The Council discussed various projects and some amendments were suggested. The Finance Committee will meet again in early November to finalise the draft Budget to be approved at the December meeting of the Parish Council.

13. Brenchley Playground

1. RoSPA report

Cllr Spencer commented on the recent playground inspection report which had been circulated and confirmed that bark had been ordered for delivery on 18th October which addresses the issue of safety levels around play equipment. The Council noted the advisory comment concerning the fixing on the netting and it was agreed that the Clerk would seek to obtain a quote to replace this.

2. Proposal for a Wildflower area

Cllr Spencer presented a report on a project to create a wildflower area on the land in front of the Scout Hut at Brenchley Recreation Ground, this would be useful to attract wildlife and pollinators and would require minimal maintenance. Two quotes had been received for this and the detail of the proposals were discussed.

RESOLVED to instruct VR Landscape Limited to create a wildflower meadow area at the Recreation Ground according to their quote in the sum of £1200

14. Christmas

Cllr Buttery advised that unfortunately KCC are failing to respond promptly to requests for the requisite license application form for the licence to put lights in the tree at Brenchley and this is delaying the ability to proceed with the order via Blachere Illuminations. The Council considered concerns about the time pressure getting near to Christmas and agreed that the long term siting of lights would continue to be a very important tradition for the parish to maintain. It was also agreed that alternative arrangements would be considered to ensure value for money on any installation of lights.

RESOLVED that Cllr Buttery would submit an application to KCC for lights in the Brenchley oak on a long term basis

15. Platinum Jubilee Event

The Council discussed the quote received for a piper to play Diu Regnare at 9.09pm, at the event on Thursday 2nd June 2022 at a cost of £275, before the beacon is lit.

RESOLVED that the piper would be booked to play a suitable session at the beacon lighting event on 2nd June 2022

It was agreed that the Clerk would register the Parish Council's involvement in the lighting of the beacon on Matfield Green at 9.15pm on Thursday 2nd June.

Cllr Butler outlined an offer received from TWBC asking parishes to submit requests for saplings and subsidised specimen trees for the Queen's Green Canopy before the end of October. Information on the scheme and a list of sample prices were considered and Mrs Teresa Wickham, who was present, agreed to contribute her consideration of the most appropriate plants. Cllr Butler would provide the Council a list of suggested plants and locations in due course.

16. Clerk's/RFO's report

1. Pavilion refurbishment project update

The Clerk outlined progress on the refurbishment of the Pavilion which includes the completion of the water test and risk assessment and an electrical installation certificate and PAT testing. Work to re-paint the front of the pavilion, and replace the Christmas lights in the process would be delayed until the Spring and a second quote for this work would be sought.

2. Accounts payable

2015 HMRC	Tax and NI September 2021	£645.16
2016 C. Brooks	Mileage/ OT and Pay increase	£137.79

2017	K.Twyman	September Cleaning of Pavilion	£84.00
2018	Complete Weed Control	Japanese knotweed treatment on MG	£300.00
2019	Garden Barber	Install Path at Allotments Plot 15	£120.00
2020	Playsafe	Annual Inspection of Play Area	£111.60
2021	David Izzard	Maintenance JV September	£25.00
2022	Tina Middleton	Reimbursement of NDP Survey	£384.00
2023	David Izzard	Maintenance JV July and Aug	£50.00
2024	Garden Barber	Mowing Allotments April 2021-22	£120.00
2025	Panetta Horn	Overtime and Pay increase	£80.18
2026	Corkers	Bark for Recreational Ground	£744.00
2027	PJF Littlejohn	External Auditors AGAR	£480.00
2028	KALC	Finance Conference for RFO	£60.00

Credit Card Payments made

2029	Lloyds Bank Fees	Monthly Fee September	£3.00
2030	ALCC	Clerk's Annual Subscription	£40.00

Standing Orders and Direct Debits

2031	SO C. Brooks	Salary September 2021	£1798.67
2032	SO Panetta Horn	Salary September 2021	£499.62
2033	SO Capel Ground Care	Mowing Contract Jan 2019- Dec 2021	£796.00
2034	DD Smart Pension	September Pension Payment	£331.92
2035	DD EDF Energy	Pavilion Electricity September 2021	£86.00
2036	DD Microshade	Monthly data and application service	£124.30
2037	DD Business Stream	September Pavilion water and waste	£8.00
2038	DD Business Stream	September Pond water	£3.00
2039	DD Business Stream	September Allotments Water	£3.00
2040	DD Grenke	Copier Lease – 1/10/21-31/12/21	£122.40

The RFO having provided invoices for scrutiny these accounts were approved for payment and would be authorised by Cllr Buttery and Cllr Wells.

17. Meetings attended, and reports by Councillors

Cllrs Butler and Churchill had attended a Teams meeting with National Highway (formerly Highways England) about the safety improvements on the A21.

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

19. Date of next meeting:

Provisional Planning Meeting Tuesday 19th October, 7.30pm
Full Council Meeting Monday 1st November, 7.30pm