

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BRENCHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT 7.30PM ON
MONDAY 5th JULY 2021, at BRENCHLEY MEMORIAL HALL**

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

In attendance: Cllr Alan McDermott (TWBC), Cllr Sarah Hamilton (KCC), 1 member of the public John Barsley

1. To accept apologies for absence

None.

2. To approve the Minutes of the last meeting

Cllr Akenhead requested a small amendment to the minutes of the meeting of 22nd June 2021 which was agreed. The minutes were approved, as amended, as an accurate record and were duly signed by the Chair.

3. To record declarations of interest in any item on the Agenda

Cllr Warner declared an interest in the planning application at Parsonage Farm.

Cllr Akenhead declared an interest in the planning applications at Parsonage Farm and Kings Barn.

4. To adjourn to allow public participation

John Barsley spoke to thank Councillors for standing for election to the Parish Council and wished them well in their roles. He would contribute to the Agenda item on EV Charging points.

5. Announcements from the Chair

None.

6. Borough and County Councillors – to receive information

Cllr McDermott (TWBC) advised that he had stood down as leader of the Borough Council in May however is still portfolio holder for Planning and Transport.

Cllr Butler asked to what extent at the officers of TWBC were working full time as contact is still difficult. Cllr McDermott responded that the Town Hall was not currently being used but that personnel would be returning soon, with any meetings with officers, other than public meetings, still held online.

In response to a query from Cllr Akenhead, Cllr McDermott advised that for the recent second consultation on the Draft Local Plan there had been approximately 900 people responding with about 2000 queries. It is still anticipated that the Plan will be going to the inspector at the end of July.

7. Planning

1. Meeting with TWBC regarding Matfield Village Hall site – update and information

Cllr Butler outlined content of a meeting, with Deborah Dixon, James Moysey and Nicolah Watters (The new Planning Policy Manager for TWBC) which discussed items for community use, such as an open area and a playground, to be included in the plans for the proposed development site. It was noted that a response to the Draft NDP had been received from Clarendon Homes, the developer of the proposed sit at MVH.

2. Planning Applications

21/01576 Parsonage Farm, Brenchley Road, Brenchley, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7PA	Demolition of redundant farm building and conversion of cold store to a dwelling RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: NEUTRAL The proposed building is outside both the current LBD in Brenchley and the new LBD proposed for Market Heath in the Pre-Submission Local Plan. The site close to the northern boundary of the HWAONB, although TWBC deemed the principle of development to be acceptable in a 2018 planning application for an adjacent site.
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	<p>The Parish Council is concerned about the lack of detail in the Design and Access statement, which provides no information on the elements of sustainable design in the converted building. Details such as insulation, energy efficiency and the use of sustainable energy sources are not provided. A plant room is shown on the ground floor in Plan 851/05 but no information on whether a preferred renewable energy source is proposed, such as a ground source heat pump.</p> <p>The Block/Site Plan Plan 851/09 is confusing, as it omits the other large agricultural buildings adjacent to the site and it would have been helpful if the original pole-barn and lean-to that will be demolished could have been more clearly identified.</p> <p>The PC supports the conversion rather than the demolition of the existing redundant cold store, with the retention of the existing steel frame. The grassing over of concrete areas and the introduction of a wildflower boundaries will contribute towards the biodiversity of the site, although further planting of hedging, shrubs and trees would improve biodiversity gain. Although the ecology survey concluded that there was no threat to bats, badgers, hazel dormice and great crested newts, only a small number of measures have been suggested to increase the bio-diversity gain. It is felt that greater provision could be made for nesting birds, owls, bats and ground based animals rather than the proposed single items.</p> <p>The design incorporates features of agricultural buildings, such as timber cladding in vertical and horizontal orientations and a slate roof. The Parish Council is surprised and concerned to see the large amount of fenestration included in the design of the building, which appears to be a feature not normally permitted in the conversion of agricultural buildings. Planning approvals in the parish in recent years, such as conversions of the redundant Apple Store at Gatehouse Farm, agricultural buildings at Burrs Hill and Lymons Bank Barn, have restricted fenestration to preserve a utilitarian appearance suitable in terms of the character of the building. There is concern over the large two-storey glass panels in the South and North elevations and the eight full length glass panels in the South-East corner of the proposed design. The parish lies in a Dark Skies area and such a large area of illuminated fenestration would produce a significant level of light spillage. Artificial lighting has been shown to have an adverse effect on native wildlife, particularly on those species that have evolved to be nocturnally active. Lighting details, if planning permission is given, should be secured by conditions and the ecology report recommends a scheme that is not detrimental to roosting, foraging or commuting bats.</p>
<p>21/01363 Kings Barn, Geddes Hill, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7EA</p>	<p>Demolition of existing dwelling; erection of replacement dwelling with associated hard and soft landscaping</p> <p>RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE</p>

21/01980 2 Chill Mill Cottages, Fairmans Lane, Brenchley, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7JA	Proposed first floor and ground floor rear extension RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE
21/02053 1 Moatlands Farm, Watermans Lane, Paddock Wood, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 6ND	Single storey extension RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: NEUTRAL the PC notes the Conservation Officer's comments especially "the large expanse of multi-paned glazing on the east elevation to be overly domesticated in appearance".
21/01816 The Castle Inn, Crook Road, Brenchley, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7BN	Change of use and conversion of Public House A4 use (at ground floor) into Residential C3 Use to create a single dwelling with the residential unit above RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: REFUSE The Parish Council notes there are inaccuracies within the landlord's statement, and it has not been sufficiently demonstrated that: a) This facility is not commercially viable, or unlikely to ever become commercially viable. b) It has not been the subject of appropriate marketing at a realistic price for at least 12/18months. c) Consideration has not been given to alternative commercial uses. The PC notes comments of objection from neighbours.

8. Platinum Jubilee – to consider events

The Council discussed correspondence received from Christopher Woodley and information from KALC on events planned for the anniversary of The Queen's 70-year reign. This is officially in February 2022 and celebrations are planned throughout the year. A four-day bank holiday weekend will run from Thursday 2 June to Sunday 5 June 2022. During this central weekend, Platinum Jubilee beacons will be lit across the UK at 9.15pm on Thursday July 2nd and communities will take part in the Big Jubilee Lunch with street parties being held throughout the country on Sunday 5th June.

Cllr Warner commented that she had spoken to a resident who is keen to co-ordinate events in Brenchley and Cllr Spencer advised that if residents were keen, a street party would be organised in Petheridge. Others would no doubt come forward for other areas, such as Matfield Green as well as local businesses.

It was agreed that the PC would light the beacon and that Cllr Churchill would seek to book a piper for the event on the 2nd June 2022.

It was agreed that the Council would discuss the matter again later in the autumn.

9. EV Charging points – update and information

Cllr Wells provided a report on the status of the registration of interest for the current KCC funding stream for EV Charging points, at the location near to Matfield Pavilion. Correspondence from local residents expressing concerns had been previously circulated and was discussed. There was a general discussion on whether the Council would provide match funding to benefit the application, and on concerns related to the designation of Matfield Green as a Village Green/Common Land, no decisions were reached on these points. It was noted that the area in front of Matfield Toilets, on land owned by TWBC, might be suitable but that the PC could not apply via this project funding on their behalf. Cllr Butler advised that she would compile a map showing residences close to the Pavilion to demonstrate how many did not have driveways, to further underpin consideration of need.

RESOLVED that a survey of residents would be undertaken to establish the present and future need for electric charging points among parishioners and their views on provision.

10. Allotments

1. Draft Allotment tenancy agreement

The RFO had provided a draft new Tenancy Agreement which the Council broadly discussed. Cllr Miconnet advised that she had visited the site with Cllr Butler and that a number of issues needed to be addressed, most of which were incorporated into the tenancy agreement review for consultation. Other site management issues, as a PC land asset, would be considered further.

It was agreed that Cllrs would provide any comments on the draft Tenancy Agreement to the Clerk by 12th July after which a meeting would be held with allotment tenants to discuss the changes proposed.

Following this a "final" draft would be provided for the Council to approve, to include a revised fee structure which awaits information on the water charges for the summer. Tenants would then be provided with the full documentation by December so that there would be 3 months before the beginning of the new season on 1st April 2022.

2. Contravention of Allotment Rules

The Council discussed concerns raised by tenants relating to the potential sale of produce being grown at the allotments, for commercial gain, in contravention of the Allotment Rules. Anecdotal evidence was discussed.

It was agreed that the matter would be monitored and, should clear evidence be obtained, the Council would consider it again.

11. Clerk's report

1. Mowing Schedule

The Clerk advised that the Parish Council mowing schedule, one of its largest expenditures, was due for renewal from January 2022. The Council briefly discussed the possibility of reducing the frequency of mowing certain areas to reduce costs but maintain a sufficiently acceptable look, with more areas being left with longer grass or wildflower areas.

It was agreed that the matter would be reviewed at the next meeting and that Councillors would consider the frequencies in advance so that these could be agreed and the tender document issued.

2. Works update – for information

The Clerk provided an update on works completed in the parish:

- Viewpoint – quotes have been requested to replace the broken slats and connectors on the long bench and for a full replacement of all slats (leaving the concrete pillars in place).
- The closer on the gate at the recreation ground has been repaired
- 2 posts around Matfield Green have been replaced as well as 2 removable bollards, locked with padlocks for access onto the front of the Green
- The bin collection at the Recreation Ground has been changed to a new contractor
- The concrete post behind the Pavilion has been removed

12. RFO's report

1. Accounts payable

1960 PW Computer Solutions	Email Set up for Cllr Churchill	£30.00
1961 Capel Groundcare	Bollards on Matfield Green	£357.98
1962 David Izzard	May/June JV Gardening	£50.00
1963 KALC	Chairman Networking day	£60.00
1964 TWBC	Non Domestic Rates for 2021/22	£439.40

Standing Orders and Direct Debits

1965 Grenke	Photocopier Lease fees July-Sept 2021	£122.40
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RESOLVED that the RFO having provided invoices for scrutiny, the accounts be approved for payment and authorised by Cllr Warner and Cllr Butler

13. Meetings attended, and reports by Councillors

Cllr Churchill advised that she had attended the Weald PCN meeting on behalf of the Parish Council.

14. To be advised of urgent Business as may be previously notified

None.

15. Date of next meeting

Provisional Meeting, 20th July 2021, 7.30pm, Matfield Pavilion

Full Council Meeting, 6th September 2021, 7.30pm, Matfield Pavilion