

MINUTES OF A REMOTE MEETING OF BRENCHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 5th OCTOBER 2020 AT 7.30pm via Zoom

Present: Councillors K. Sparkhall (Chairman) presided, G. Warner (Vice Chair), L. Butler, A. de Guingand, G. Stevenson, C. Brooks (Clerk).

In attendance: Cllr S. Hamilton (KCC), Rory Mitchell (Non-Voting Member), Amanda Wells (Non-Voting Member), Ellie Izzard (Non-Voting Member), Rose Harrild (Non-Voting Member, 1 member of the public

1. To accept apologies for absence

None.

2. To approve the Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes of the Planning Meeting of 22nd September were approved as an accurate record and would be signed by the Chairman in person at the next opportunity.

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

None.

4. To adjourn to allow public participation

None.

5. Borough and County Councillors

Cllr Hamilton would contribute to the item on Traffic later in the Agenda.

6. Non-Voting Members – to confirm project briefs issued

Cllr Sparkhall confirmed that the three project briefs had been issued to the Non-Voting Members for projects on the pond, the allotments and on community engagement. Link Councillors were also confirmed to provide support in addition to the Clerk and RFO.

Rory Mitchell provided an update on progress on the pond project, a team of four residents plus himself had met and scoped the initial options. RM has also met with the Environment Agency and also with previous Parish Councillors for historical information, as well as Complete Weed Control. He was awaiting contact from Jeff Mashburn the TWBC Tree Specialist and from Mark Hardcastle the KCC Drainage Manager.

RM advised that contractors had been approached and that several were interested in the project but there would be a cost involved in obtaining a full survey, which was a vital component of the project. The Council agreed that on agreement of the scope of the survey this would be carried out, the Clerk to arrange payment.

The Clerk raised the issue of the annual pond cleanup, she had obtained a free skip already. It was agreed that this would take place on Saturday 14th November and the Clerk would circulate a call on social media with a view to two sessions being run, to ensure social distancing.

Ellie Izzard confirmed that she had commenced work on the allotment project and had requested some information from the Clerk.

7. Traffic – Highways Improvement Plan update

Councillor Stevenson had circulated correspondence received from KCC which was not wholly satisfactory, he would continue to press for responses concerning the routes taken by freight vehicles particularly around Mascalls and Watermans Lane.

It was agreed that Cllr Warner would liaise with Christine Churchill and contact Scrapco in particular to ascertain their lorry routes.

The Council discussed a letter from residents of Windmill Hill regarding traffic. It was agreed that the Highways Improvement Plan provides for a holistic approach to traffic movement in the parish and that concerns about individual roads would have to be considered in the wider context of the whole problem in the area, moving traffic from one area would merely exacerbate problems in another.

Cllr Hamilton advised that a meeting of the Joint Transportation Board (JTB) which encompasses KCC and TWBC traffic issues and discusses the HIPs generally is being held on 19th October. It was agreed that Cllr Stevenson would endeavour to attend to raise issues concerning the routes that lorries are able to take, where their freight yards are in the local area.

8. Grievance and Disciplinary Policies

Cllr Butler had circulated a draft Grievance Policy which was discussed.

RESOLVED to adopt the Grievance Policy as presented

A draft Disciplinary Policy would be provided when completed.

9. Brenchley Ready Call funding request

A report on the use of the previous donation from the Parish Council to Ready Call was discussed, with Christine Churchill expanding on some details such as the number of recipients of the meal service. She asked for 500-1000.

RESOLVED to donate £750 to Brenchley Ready Call to support their meals service until Christmas, when it would be reviewed

10. Brenchley Playground – to consider replacement bench

Cllr Butler advised that, further to the Council's decision not to repair the bench at the playground, which would not be cost-effective, a replacement bench, with a base, had been quoted. It was agreed that the bench should be as long as possible, preferably 2 metres, within a budget £700. The location to be agreed between Cllr Butler and the Clerk.

RESOLVED to install a new teak bench, with concrete base, at Brenchley Playground.

11. Planning and Development

11.1 Neighbourhood Development Plan update

Councillor Sparkhall provided a progress report and it was agreed that projected costs for the year would be provided to the Clerk and RFO to inform the budget.

11.2 Confirmation of Planning Reform Consultation response submitted

Councillor Butler had drafted circulated the Council's response which had been submitted on 1st Oct. The Clerk would publish this on the website.

11.3 Response to the Planning White Paper

Councillor Butler would co-ordinate the Council's response to this consultation to be submitted by 29th October, to be reported to the Council meeting on 2nd November.

11.4 Planning Applications

20/02202 Tong Farm , Marle Place Road, Brenchley, Tonbridge, TN12 7HS	Demolition of existing buildings, and the development of 5 dwellings, new accesses and associated landscaping. RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: REFUSE Extensive comments submitted, available on request from the Clerk.
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20/02102 Grove Cottage Farm, Maidstone Road, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7LF	Change of use of the land and the erection of 5 dwellings with associated hard and soft landscaping; Creation of new access onto Maidstone Road RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: REFUSE Extensive comments submitted, available on request from the Clerk.
20/02436 Birchett Wood Farm, Petheridge Lane, Matfield, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7NE	Proposed Agricultural Worker's Dwelling RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: REFUSE Extensive comments submitted, available on request from the Clerk.
20/01871 Marle Place, Marle Place Road, Brenchley, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7HS	Repairs and enlargement of to an antiquated existing swimming pool. RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: REFUSE Through lack of detailed plans and specifications, the Parish Council is unable to make comments or give a decision on this application.
20/02437 East Court , The Green, Matfield, Tonbridge, TN12 7JX	Proposed single storey rear extension RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE
20/02293 Marle Place Manor, Marle Place Road, Brenchley, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 7HS	Change of use of the west side of the property from office to residential; the addition of a single storey kitchen extension to the rear of the property; a covered porch and internal reconfiguration of the west of the property; revert the conservatory back to its original size; loft conversion; removal of 1 Edwardian chimney stack; consolidate fenestration on original section of property RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE The PC anticipates that The Conservation Officer will be involved with the major works taking place on this Grade II Listed building.

12. Completion of External Audit

The Clerk had circulated the accounts for the y/e 31 March 2020 which have been audited by PFK Littlejohn with no comments.

13. Christmas

The Clerk outlined that there is no longer a Councillor overseeing the Christmas events and that she had ascertained that some of the volunteers in Brenchley had agreed to help with Christmas decorations this year. It was agreed that the Clerk would liaise with volunteers and purchase replacement lights were necessary but that no further arrangements would be made for events at this stage.

With regard to Matfield, the Council discussed its previous decision to erect lights on the island in the pond. It was recognised that John Barsley had obtained some information on the costs of this last year and that this work was still desirable. However, given that there is soon to be an extensive project on the pond, which may include significant work on trees including on the island in question, the Council agreed not to progress the installation of lights on the island this year. The lights on the Avenue and at the Pavilion would be attended to as far as possible by the Clerk with volunteers.

Christmas would be discussed further at next meeting.

14. Clerk's Report

14.1 Matfield Pavilion

The Clerk confirmed that the Special Conditions of use for the Pavilion remain in effect, with some access possible for the Guides and other groups and that the QR poster has been put up.

The Minster Cleaning contract has now ended and an ad hoc cleaner is being sought by the RFO, hourly rates and frequency to be determined.

Retrospective fees have been agreed for the use of the Pavilion by MGCC @ £10 per session, they have been invoiced for this. The same will apply to the Guides if they wish to use the Pavilion.

14.2 Correspondence – Mr L Ames re hedges.

The Council discussed the issues raised by Mr Ames concerning hedges overhanging footpaths and roads. It was agreed that the Clerk to write to KCC to ask them to contact landowners to keep footpaths clear and to advise Mr Ames of this.

15. RFO's Report

15.1 Accounts payable for September invoices

1734 C. Brooks	Part Salary September 2020	£1029.98
1735 HMRC	Tax and NI August 2020	£730.49
1736 P. Horn	Salary August 2020	£566.79
1737 D. Izzard	JV maintenance Sept	£12.50
1738 James Roxburgh FLR	Brenchley noticeboard	£160.00
1739 Complete Weed Control	Weed Treatment Knotweed Matfield Green	£300.00
1740 Andrew Downes Weald Tree Services	Remove Broken branch Mat. Green	£120.00
1741 Barry Chapman Fence Guru	Posts on Matfield Green	£115.00
1742 KCC	Traffic Survey Petteridge Lane	£454.25
1743 Wealden Benches	Installations of benches of Matfield Green	£150
1744 Brenchley Memorial Hall	Brenchley Playground and Pavilion Hand Sanitizer	£49.20
1745 Lynne Butler	Reimbursement for NDP survey and posters	£220.04
1746 Weald Tree Services Andy Downes	Pruning trees in allotments	£380.00
1750 Wealden Benches	Benches for Matfield Green	£1320.00
1751 PKF	External Audit	£480.00
1753 Capel GroundCare	Repairs at Brenchley Playground	£756.36
Credit Card Payment		
1747 KCC	RFO Course	£60.00
1748 Muck Munchers	Toilet Cleaner	£30.85
1749 Royal British Legion	Wreaths	100.00

Standing Orders and Direct Debits		
1726 SO C Brooks	Part Salary September 2020	£1000.00
1727 SO Capel Ground Care	Mowing Contract Jan 2019-Dec 2021	£796.00
1728 DD Smart Pension	Pension September 2020	£357.95
1729 DD EDF Energy	Electricity September 2020	£77.00
1730 DD Castle Water	Pavilion Water	£4.00
1731 DD Castle Water	Pond Water	£4.00
1732 DD Castle Water	Allotment water	£6.00
1733 SO Microshade	Monthly application service	£124.30
1752 DD Grenke	Photocopier contract 1/10 -31/12/20	£122.40

The RFO having provided invoices for scrutiny, these accounts to be authorised by Cllr Warner and Cllr Stevenson.

16. Meetings attended, and reports by Councillors

None.

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

None

18. Date of next meeting

Finance Committee Meeting, via Zoom, 9.30am, Tuesday 13th October 2020
Provisional Planning Meeting, via Zoom, 7.30pm, Tuesday 20th October 2020
Full Council Meeting, via Zoom, 7.30pm, Monday 2nd November 2020