

MINUTES OF AN EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING OF BRENCHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

HELD VIA REMOTE SESSION ON TUESDAY 9th JUNE 2020 AT 7.30pm

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

In attendance: Cllr. Alan McDermott (TWBC), Cllr. J. March (TWBC)

1. Election of a Chairman of the Parish Council and Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Following the resignation of the Chairman on 2nd June 2020, the Clerk invited Cllr Butler to preside and she requested nominations for Chairman.

Cllr Butler nominated Cllr de Guingand as Chairman and Cllr Sparkhall seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations.

Cllr de Guingand was unanimously elected as Chairman of the Parish Council.

The Clerk advised that a Declaration of Acceptance of Office must be signed by Cllr de Guingand at the next opportunity.

2. Election of a Vice or Deputy Chairman of the Parish Council and Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Butler nominated Cllr Sparkhall as Vice Chairman and Councillor Warner seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations.

Cllr Sparkhall was unanimously elected as Vice Chairman of the Parish Council.

The Clerk advised that a Declaration of Acceptance of Office must be signed by Cllr Sparkhall at the next opportunity.

Cllr. de Guingand outlined that, whilst the above elections had been effected, no Councillor wished to assume the Chairmanship on a permanent basis and that a rotating Chairmanship and Vice-Chairmanship was preferred by all current Councillors.

The Clerk outlined some issues for the Council to consider with this approach:

1. There is no provision in the LGA for a rotating Chairmanship and no Chairman can be forced to resign. As such, a rotation arrangement may only be informal.
2. Given that the Council had, at its last meeting, agreed to publicise four casual vacancies for co-option it may be that new members do not agree with the proposal. All Councillors have the same standing in law and therefore the "original" 5 Cllrs cannot pre-elect a Chair from only themselves.
3. A Chairman may only be elected to the full term (until 5 May 2021). and must still resign formally if they wish to stand down before this date, with a further formal election to elect a replacement.
4. The roles and responsibilities of a Parish Council Chairman had been circulated to the Council in preparation for this meeting and on accepting the office the Chairman would declare their acceptance of all the expectations of the role.
5. In the event of co-options of all four casual vacancies, six of the nine Parish Councillors would be unelected. This would be a considerable percentage of the Council with new members being without the benefit of guidance and training from a permanent Chairman.
6. All Committees of the Council must be quorate in order to meet and the Chairman in particular Chairs committees whose terms of reference cover staff management and Finance, these would be difficult to achieve with a rotating Chairmanship.

3. Date of next meeting

Monday 6th July 2020, 7.30pm, by remote session