

BRENCHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL  
SUMMARY OF CONTINUING ACTIVITY AND RECORD OF ONLINE TRANSACTIONS  
TO 27<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2020  
MADE IN LIEU OF MEETING SCHEDULED FOR 6<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2020

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These notes are provided as a record of Parish Council activity after the date of 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020 following emergency measures related to the Covid -19 pandemic. The Accounts payable list is provided with invoices for scrutiny.

**1. Suspension of Parish Council election**

- a. It was confirmed that the government will enact legislation postponing all elections until May 2021. The life of the present Council would thus be extended for one year.
- b. Four members – Cllrs. Batty, Grant, Wickham, and Mrs. Warner - indicated that they would retire from the Council. Subsequently, Cllr. Mrs. Warner indicated that she wished to remain a councillor, in the interim.
- c. As of Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020, Brenchley and Matfield Parish Council is comprised of the following members: Cllr. Christopher Woodley (Chairman), Cllr. Mrs. Lynne Butler, Cllr. Tony de Guingand, Cllr. Kevin Sparkhall, Cllr., Graeme Stevenson and Cllr. Mrs. Georgie Warner. There is no statutory requirement for a Vice-Chairman to be appointed.
- d. The decision as to whether the Council shall wish to co-opt further members shall be considered at a later date and at present the Council is quorate.

**2. Scheme of Delegation**

- a. The advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the government advice on living and working, has created a need to establish an acceptable working practice for the Parish Council and its Proper Officers such that where possible, all issues relating to the operation of the Council be agreed by consensus.
- b. Following advice from KALC, and in liaison with the Chairman, the Clerk issued a note outlining how it was intended that the Council would continue to operate, in the interim. Subsequent guidance from KALC, SLCC and other bodies, and the on-going and daily changes to government advice has resulted in all Parish Councils instigating methods of working that best suit their circumstances.
- c. **A Scheme of Delegation** (attached) has been drafted by the Clerk and shall be published and recorded as the Council's method of working until it is rescinded by the Council.
- d. **A Record of Actions and Matters Arising** (pro forma attached) shall be maintained by the Clerk, and this shall create the audit trail for the purposes of scrutiny. The record shall be signed by the Chairman at the first fully convened meeting of the Council.

**Recommendation from the Clerk and Chairman: That the Scheme of Delegation on the continuing activity of the Council be adopted by Brenchley and Matfield Parish Council from Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020.**

**Please respond to this recommendation by 5pm on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March.**

3. Chairman's Announcements: the following information was made available to the local community via the website and/or on noticeboards.
  - a. Coronavirus: A Statement from the Chairman.
  - b. Suspension of the parish election.
  - c. Cancellation of VE Day 75 Celebrations.
  - d. The closure of Matfield Pavilion.
  - e. An article submitted to Roundabout.
4. Planning and Development
  - a. NDP: a number of replies from landowners, regarding the proposed designation of Local Green Spaces. A member of the Steering Group will be contacting the relevant officer at TWBC, to address the issues raised. The Council would then respond to the landowners.
  - b. The Steering Group, working remotely, will be assessing the comments received during the recent preview of the DNP, and making amendments to the document prior to making arrangements for the formal Pre-Regulation 14 Consultation.

- c. Planning Applications: recommendations for the Council's comments shall be provided by the Planning Lead per the deadlines. A recommendation regarding the composition of the Planning Committee shall be circulated.
  - d. Response to TWBC Consultation: Local Connection Test for the Self-Build Register (to follow).
5. Clerk's Report
- a. **S.106 funding: funds to be released by TWBC**  
The sum of £16, 048.89 has been received. Of this a sum of £7,844 is due to the passed to the Scouts for their approved project. The RFO shall progress this.
  - b. **Precept**  
The Clerk had contacted Cllr. McDermott to ascertain the security of the precept payment to the Parish Council. William Benson, the Chief Executive, has responded: *"I want to reassure Parish and Town Councils that they will receive the full amount of precept for 2020/21 that they were expecting and this will be paid as usual in April and September. Parish Precepts are accounted for in the Council's General Fund and are not dependent on the amount of Council Tax received.*  
  
*Whilst this is great news for parishes please be aware that precepts from KCC, Police, Fire and ourselves are accounted for through the Collection Fund and are based on what is actually received. If Council Tax collection is substantially impacted by COVID-19 then all these public bodies will have less funds with which to provide vital local services."*
  - c. **Coronavirus meeting at The Star**  
The Clerk and Cllr. de Guingand had attended a meeting of residents outside at the Star on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> March, which was intended, to pull together a relief effort for the vulnerable residents of the Parish and also share avenues for support to the general public. The Clerk outlined to those present that the PC would be in receipt of information on such vulnerable residents from TWBC and that she would create a data-set, this would include all areas of the Parish. The volunteer effort, to provide groceries, prescription collections, telephone friendship and other support would be managed by other members of the community, most specifically Jay Trievenor at the Star. A similar group is formulating in Brenchley by Christine Churchill and Jo Burn.
  - d. **Insurance query**  
The Clerk had contacted the Council's insurers to ascertain that the Council would maintain its liability cover given the difficulties in communications. It was pointed out that Councillors are responsible for responding and contributing to the management of the Council and that the Clerk is not covered personally by the same level of cover as Councillors are in performing their duties. The Scheme of Delegation will assist in providing the audit trail required for matters usually covered by insurance.
  - e. **Bank Mandate**  
The RFO is progressing the removal from the bank mandate those Councillors who have resigned.
  - f. **Cinderhill**  
Following concerns raised by walkers that a sign had been erected on the barrier, the Clerk confirmed with TWBC that they would erect a clear sign outlining that cars are not to be taken to the area, and that groups are not to congregate, as this was becoming difficult particularly near to the entrance of the traveller site. Information has been posted on social media.
  - g. **Allotments**  
The Government has confirmed that allotment sites do not need to be closed, though congregating must be avoided – this has been passed to the Tenants Association Facebook page.
  - h. **The Refuse and Recycling plants**  
TWBC have halted the Amenity Vehicle service, and KCC have closed access to the refuse and recycling sites – kerbside collections will continue. This has been posted on social media.
  - i. **Public Conveniences**  
TWBC have confirmed that the public conveniences are open, the time locks will apply. If there is a closure we shall be notified.
  - j. **Mowing**  
CPC have provided information on their working practices and I have requested that, as far as they are able to, they continue to mow the Recreation Ground field, Porters Field and the areas around the Green. I have also asked Commercial Services to continue to mow the Green – they are doing this until prohibited from doing so. Other than these areas may not be

mowed. With the advent of garden waste collections being suspended it is possible that fly-tipping may occur.

**k. Matfield Pavilion**

The Pavilion had been closed from Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March and all users notified, a notice has been affixed to the shutters. Cllr. Stevenson is the contact for **emergencies**; however, given that he may be unable to attend, the RFO has been asked to assume a responsibility for this in the interim.

**l. Finance Committee**

With two of the members of the Finance Committee having left the Council, leaving only Cllr. Woodley and Cllr. de Guingand, a recommendation for this Committee membership shall shortly be circulated.

**m. Annual Accounts**

The External Auditors PFK Littlejohn have advised that there will be a delay in the process for Year-End Accounting and Governance Returns. The Clerk shall provide bank reconciliations and reports as and when possible within these constraints.

**n. Matfield Fete**

A formal notification has been received from Ian Woods that Matfield Fete has been cancelled this year. In this event the sum for £1,000 budgeted as a donation to the Horticultural Society for their marquee shall not be paid. Further recommendations for donation expenditure shall be circulated.

**6. Accounts Payable**

a. A list of payments, set out below, is provided by the RFO, with invoices for scrutiny. If no disagreement is raised before Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March these payments are to be authorized by Cllr. Mrs. Butler and Cllr. Woodley on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020.

|                                |                                   |         |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------|
| 1622 C. Brooks                 | Part Salary March 2020            | £702.30 |
| 1623 HMRC                      | Tax and NI March 2020             | £586.74 |
| 1624 P. Horn                   | Salary March 2020                 | £486.24 |
| 1625 Streetlights              | Repairs for Streetlights          | £439.50 |
| 1626 Fence Guru                | Hardwood posts on Green           | £235.00 |
| 1627 James Beach Garden Barber | Strimming Allotments              | £120.00 |
| 1628 Business Stream           | Waste Water MatPav Dec 19-Mar 20  | £25.27  |
| 1629 Castle Water              | MatPav water 1/1 to 30/6/2020     | £45.53  |
| 1630 EJP                       | Annual service fire extinguishers | £74.40  |
| 1631 Rialtas                   | End of Year shut down             | £432.00 |
| 1632 Besure                    | Annual Main Mat Pav Fire Alarms   | £247.20 |

**Credit Card Payment**

|             |   |        |
|-------------|---|--------|
| CC1633 Asda | Refreshments for Cllr event 5 <sup>th</sup> Mar | £32.87 |
|-------------|---|--------|

**Standing Orders and Direct Debits**

|                      |                                     |          |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| SO C Brooks          | Part Salary February 2020           | £1000.00 |
| SO Capel Ground Care | Mowing Contract Jan 2019-Dec 2021   | £796.00  |
| DD Smart Pension     | Pension February 2020               | £180.32  |
| DD GRENKE            | Copier leasing 1 /4 to 30/6/2020    | £122.40  |
| DD ICO               | Annual Data Protection to 13.3.2021 | £40.00   |

- b. As part of the Scheme of Delegation it is anticipated that Accounts payable in future months shall be authorised, in rotation, as follows:
- Cllr. Woodley and Cllr. Mrs. Butler
  - Cllr. Sparkhall and Cllr. Mrs Warner
  - Cllr. Stevenson and Cllr. de Guingand

If any Councillor has difficulty in accessing the bank account online please immediately inform the Clerk and RFO.