

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BROOK PARISH COUNCIL
ON 19th MAY 2022 HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllr Tomkins (Chair) Cllr Betts
Cllr Betty Cllr Finn
Cllr Jessop

In attendance: 2 members of the public and the Clerk

		To be actioned by
1.	Election of the Chairman and any Vice-Chairman for the Council year 2022-23	
	Cllr Finn proposed Cllr Tomkins to stand as Chairman, Cllr Jessop seconded this. All were in favour, Cllr Tomkins took the Chair. Cllr Jessop proposed Cllr Betty to stand as Vice-Chairman, Cllr Betts seconded this. All were in favour	
2.	Completion of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office Form by Chairman	
	Cllr Tomkins signed the declaration of acceptance of office form.	
3.	To receive and approve apologies for absence.	
	Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Medhurst.	
4.	To receive declarations of interest (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests). The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared.	
	There were no declarations of interest to be declared.	
5.	To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 28th April 2022	
	The minutes were signed as a true record.	
6.	To discuss matters arising from the above minutes not covered by the agenda.	
	The Clerk had contacted the Village Hall Committee with regard to purchasing a defibrillator for the Village Hall. The Parish Council agreed to offer £150 towards this. The Clerk will also request funding from Cllrs Howard and Bell to also assist financially.	
7.	Public session: To receive questions and comments from the public on any agenda item.	
	A member of the public reported that the Save the Honest Miller Group will soon be having a meeting with regard to the recent activation of the interim moratorium period for the Asset of Community Value. PCSO Adam Brooks attended the meeting. He explained that Kent Police are undertaken a spending review as they need to save £7 million. At the moment there are 5 operational PCSOs but there is no knowledge of what will happen to PCSOs in the future. PCSO Brad Hobbs will be covering Brook supported by PC Pringle.	

8.	Financial matters:					
	<p>a) To approve the following financial documents:</p> <p>i. To consider the findings of the Review of Effectiveness of the System of Internal Controls</p> <p>The Parish Council reviewed the System of Internal Controls and this was approved.</p> <p>ii. To complete the certificate of exemption on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return - To be completed only by smaller authorities where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less, that meet the qualifying criteria, and that wish to certify themselves as exempt from a limited assurance review</p> <p>The Certificate of Exemption was approved and signed by the Chairman.</p> <p>iii. To receive the end of year accounts</p> <p>The end of year accounts were received and accepted.</p> <p>iv. To receive the report from the Internal Auditor</p> <p>The report from the Internal Auditor was received</p> <p>v. To approve the Annual Governance Statement 2021/22, section 1 of the AGAR for the year ending 31 March 22</p> <p>The Annual Governance Statement was approved, completed and signed by the Chairman.</p> <p>vi. To consider the Accounting Statements 2021/22 and approve the Accounting Statements 2021/22, section 2 of the AGAR for the year ending 31 March 2022 and the supporting Bank Reconciliation as at 31st March 2022 and the explanation of significant variance from 2020-21 to 2021-22. To ensure the Accounting Statements 2021/22 are signed and dated by the person presiding at the meeting</p> <p>The Accounting Statement was approved, signed and dated by the Chairman. This was supported by the Bank Reconciliation and explanation of significant variance.</p> <p>b) To note/authorise the following:</p> <p>i. To note the Parish Council's financial position.</p> <p>The current financial position was noted as £9842.97</p> <p>ii. To authorise any payments</p> <p>The payments to be made were approved as follows:</p> <table><tr><td>S Lister – Internal Audit</td><td>£ 60.00</td></tr><tr><td>Village Caretaker – Initial Payment</td><td>£ 1345.00</td></tr></table> <p>The Parish Council is not going to replace the bench at this time and instead will look at a forward plan to replace some of the play equipment as well as other initiatives.</p>	S Lister – Internal Audit	£ 60.00	Village Caretaker – Initial Payment	£ 1345.00	
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9.	To review Financial Regulations, Standing Orders, Asset Register and the Risk Assessment, and confirm arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks					
	The Financial Regulations, Standing Orders, Asset Register and the Risk Assessment were all reviewed and approved; the Parish Council confirms arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks. Covered by the Parish Council insurance policy through BHIB Ltd.					
10.	Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies i.e. KALC					
	The Parish Council approved subscription to KALC.					
11.	Review of the Council's complaints procedure					

	This procedure was reviewed and accepted.	
12.	Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information (see also standing orders 11, 20 and 21)	
	This procedure was reviewed and accepted.	
13.	Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media	
	This procedure was reviewed and accepted.	
14.	Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures	
	This procedure was reviewed and accepted.	
15.	To consider any changes to the Risk Assessment.	
	<p>There are no changes to the Risk Assessment.</p> <p>A tree has fallen over at the rear of the Village Hall; this is a medium sized tree that is blocking the exit of one of the properties. This was a natural event. Cllr Tomkins to visit the resident affected.</p>	
16.	Planning matters: to approve the responses to any recent planning applications.	
	An application has been received for Merrick, Stonebridge. The Parish Council raises no objection to this application.	
17.	To finalise the Queen's Jubilee Celebrations.	
	The plans for the beacon lighting and the Street Party are all in hand.	
18.	To receive the KALC report.	
	<p>Cllr Betty attended the meeting which was held at Ashford Borough Council Civic Centre. It is considered that the following topics of discussion are relevant to Brook.</p> <p>1. The meeting was attended by Chief Inspector Sparkes of Ashford Police who reported that crime figures in the borough were returning to pre Covid normality, but there had been an overall decrease in violent crime and theft from vehicles, with no rise in burglary levels. There was a slight increase in theft such as shoplifting which no doubt reflected the current economic issues. Policing is still focussed on the town centre with the priority being on fraud and the safety of women and girls. "My Community Voice" is still the preferred means of interactive communication with the police. The Kent PCSO taskforce has been parachuted into Stanhope which had on the whole been well received. A review of neighbourhood policing is underway and some PCSOs are now transferring to become full constables and others have left the force. Budgets are therefore under review.</p> <p>2. The meeting was attended by Simon Cole (SC), Head of Planning at ABC who answered various questions on planning matters. With regards the ABC policy of removing comments from the planning portal after a period of 6 weeks, he mentioned that a report on "data issues" will be submitted to cabinet to cover issues such as GDPR, planning requirements etc and what ABC can actually do.</p> <p>On the question of publishing pre-application advice on the portal, SC said that where advice had been provided on a site for the same scheme for which the application had been made, he believes the pre-app advice should be published where there is a direct link with the application.</p> <p>The new software for the planning portal upgrade is currently being tested by ABC with positive feedback from users. Some of the larger parish councils will be asked to be "guinea pigs" to test the system before it goes live.</p> <p>Stodmarsh is still a major issue which is also delaying the initial preparation of the new draft local plan. Until this is resolved matters cannot move forward. In order to mitigate the effects, ABC is looking to acquire areas of land to develop into wetlands. One site will be the proposed Brompton factory but several others will be required.</p>	

	<p>SC said there had been a staffing problem leading to delays in decisions, but despite a huge turnover of staff the situation had been improving over the last 6 months and he hopes the team will be back to strength by the end of the calendar year.</p> <p>3. The Land Mapping Commission working groups are looking at the returned questionnaires and “mapability” i.e. what data is to be shown on the maps. These are still likely to be relevant despite the change in the Government policy on planning and the information could still be used to create an interactive map that could assist with the new local plan.</p> <p>The next meeting will be held on 6th July 2022 at 7pm.</p>							
19.	To receive any updates on Highways/Environment.							
	<p>Cllr Tomkins and the Clerk had contacted Kent Highways Services regarding the imminent road closures. Kent Highways have put in place a diversion that does not require travellers to use Bockham Lane therefore, there is no requirement for them to undertake any further works to make good the roads used for the diversion.</p>							
20.	To receive a Caretaker Report.							
	<p>The Chairman had no further information to report.</p>							
21.	Any Other Business (for information purposes only):							
	<p>The Parish Council is to organise a Village Clean up at 10am on 11th June.</p> <p>The Parish Council had received a communication from a resident of Willesborough. The Clerk is to respond to the communication noting that the fabric of the Church and the land formerly rented as a cricket field are outside the scope of the Parish Council.</p> <p>It was noted that a new Head Teacher has been interviewed.</p> <p>The Parish Council discussed the idea of electric vehicle charging points being placed at the Recreation Ground. The recreation ground is not a destination that requires such a charging point and the expense of installation could not be justified. It was also considered that bike racks were a similar issue. It is hoped that the seed/plant exchanges will be a success.</p> <p>There is to be a Parish Council generic email address set up to allow the circulation of the newsletter in an electronic format. The Clerk will set this up and email addresses will be collated. The Parish Council will ensure it is registered with the Information Commissioners Office ahead of this.</p>							
22.	Date of next meeting – 21st July 2022 <table><tr><td>21st July 2022</td><td>15th September 2022</td></tr><tr><td>17th November 2022</td><td>19th January 2023</td></tr><tr><td>16th March 2023</td><td>18th May 2023</td></tr></table>	21 st July 2022	15 th September 2022	17 th November 2022	19 th January 2023	16 th March 2023	18 th May 2023	
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	<p>The meeting closed at 6.40pm</p>							

Signed:

Date: