

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BROOK PARISH COUNCIL  
ON 17th NOVEMBER 2022 HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL**

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

In attendance: The Clerk

To be actioned by

<b>1.</b>	<b>To receive and approve apologies for absence.</b>	
	There were no apologies for absence.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>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.</b>	
	There were no declarations of interest.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 29th September 2022</b>	
	The minutes were approved and signed as a true record.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>To discuss matters arising from the above minutes not covered by the agenda.</b>	
	There was nothing to report.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Public session: To receive questions and comments from the public on any agenda item.</b>	
	There were no public in attendance.	
<b>6.</b>	<b>To receive a Report on the Caretaker Scheme</b>	
	<p>A meeting of the caretaker committee took place on 18th October via zoom where all parishes in the cluster were represented, to discuss the best way to establish the proportion of the Caretaker budget for each of the parishes for 2023/2024.</p> <p>In May 2023 the parish boundaries of Mersham will be redefined. New houses in Finberry, currently in the parish of Mersham will transfer to Sevington, which inevitably will have an impact on Mersham's precept income.</p> <p>Originally the caretaker budget was aligned with the number of households in each Parish, but it was now clear it would be fairer to have regard to Paul's workload split between each Parish in the cluster. Paul's timesheets showed that not each Parish benefits to the same extent from his work and a fairer system would be to have regard to work actually done by Paul in each Parish and time spent by him in each Parish.</p> <p>It was the view of the Caretaker cluster that to have regard to Paul's workload split would be fair for each Parish in the cluster.</p> <p>Under this system it would mean that the revised contribution from Brook for 2023/2024 would be £4,154.40.</p>	

	<p>Accordingly, I recommend this proposal to the Parish council for their consideration.</p> <p><b>Cllr Tomkins proposed an increase to £4154 in 2023/24</b>  <b>Cllr Betty seconded this proposal</b>  <b>All were in favour.</b></p>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>To receive the Clerk's report on the Recreation Ground</b>	
	<p>SUMMARY:  This report has been compiled to aid a decision on how to take forward plans for the Recreation Ground.</p> <p>REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION.  As the landowner responsible for the maintenance of the recreation area in Brook, the Council has a duty of care to ensure that the area is safe for all users.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATIONS:  1. To receive and note Report BrookPC 22/01  2. To create a Questionnaire for circulation to the residents of Brook asking for their opinion on the Play Area so that a plan can be made having consulted the residents.</p> <p>A consultation questionnaire should be delivered by hand to all of the properties in Brook in December 2022 requesting a response by 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2022.  It should be noted that the play area was installed at the turn of the century and the Parish Council has undertaken the regular maintenance of the area since then.</p> <p>The questionnaire will ascertain what the residents of Brook would like to see at the Recreation Ground and what they would not like to see.</p> <p>NEXT STEPS:  The Parish Council needs to consider what it wishes to do with the recreation area and how it can incorporate the views of the residents. Clearly there is a requirement to undertake works on the site because the RoSPA Report is highlighting issues with the play equipment. The equipment cannot continue to be repaired as the items required are no longer available due to the passing of time. It should be noted that independent repairs cannot be undertaken because these would not meet existing RoSPA standards.</p> <p>The surface of the play equipment needs to be carefully considered because play bark is expensive to replace and needs regular additions.</p> <p>OPTIONS:  CONTACT OFFICER AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS.</p> <p>If you have any queries about this report please contact the Responsible Financial Officer of the Council Tel: 01233 750415 or email: <a href="mailto:clerk.brookpc@gmail.com">clerk.brookpc@gmail.com</a> prior to the November meeting.</p> <p>Suggested questions for the Questionnaire:</p> <p>What are your thoughts on the current condition/facilities provided at Brook recreation ground?</p>	

	<p>What would you like to see at the recreation ground?</p> <p>What would you not like to see at the recreation ground?</p> <p><b>Additional questions were suggested:</b>  <b>How important do you think the recreation ground is?</b>  <b>Are you willing to be part of a working party to assist the Parish Council?</b></p> <p><b>The questionnaires are to be circulated to the residents, the school children, the toddler group and Wye Under 5s.</b></p> <p><b>Cllrs Medhurst and Tomkins are to head up the working party.</b></p>	
<b>8.</b>	<b>To receive the report from the KALC Representative</b>	
	<p>Cllr Betty attended the above meetings which were held at Ashford Borough Council Civic Centre. The September meeting was rescheduled to 5th October having been postponed because of the death of the Queen. It is considered that the following topics of discussion are relevant to Brook.</p> <p>1. The meetings were attended by Chief Inspectors Vanessa Foster (Divisional Commander) and Johnson of Ashford Police who reported that policing is still focussed on the town centre with the priority being on the safety of women and girls. The police are working with partners to divert youngsters away from crime through education and other schemes but section 34 Dispersal Notices are being used to break up gangs of unruly individuals. There has been a reduction in violent crime in the town centre because of an increase in resources. The largest increase is in car theft where thieves are targeting vehicles with keyless access systems. This is a nationwide problem. Although there has been a drop in burglary, the continuing targeting of farm equipment and machinery is a problem but a special constable and a PCSO have been allocated to tackle this. The results of the policing review will be received shortly and parish clerks should have been updated with regards PCSO notifications. However the police will have to be smarter with PCSO allocation given that numbers have dropped.</p> <p>2. The October meeting was attended by Simon Cole, Head of Planning at ABC who said that they would be having a “lessons learnt” session regarding the roll out of the new online planning portal and will be writing to parishes for feedback. While there is guidance on the portal on how to use the system, a training session for clerks and parish councillors would be held on 7 th November. Further feedback and training sessions are to be provided.</p> <p>3. The Land Mapping Commission is being wound down but everything is up in the air in view of the changes in government policy on planning. The final report will be finalised and discussed in December. The work is still likely to be relevant despite the change in government policy on planning because the information could still be used to assist with the new local plan.</p> <p>4. The November meeting had a presentation from the ABC Climate Action Team who will be working with parish councils and community forums to achieve a borough wide target of net zero carbon by 2050. The parishes are likely to be used for targeted messages through community engagement in order to produce climate action</p>	

	<p>charters or statements of interest to set up localised projects like EV charging points for example. Community asset bonds would be used to fund the greening of community assets as appropriate.</p> <p>5. The November meeting also received a presentation from ABC on the Rural England Prosperity Fund which is a government initiative. Through the fund, ABC will receive almost £600,000 from the government for use on 11 interventions that have been published for rural businesses and communities.</p> <p>The next meeting will be held on 4th January 2023 at 7pm.</p>							
9.	<p><b>Financial matters:</b></p> <p>a) To note/authorise the following:</p> <p><b>i. To note the Parish Council's financial position.</b> The current financial position was noted as £9887.16 in the bank.</p> <p><b>ii. To authorise any payments</b> The payments to be made were approved as follows:</p> <table><tr><td>Village Caretaker Account</td><td>£1345.00</td></tr><tr><td>Tracey Block</td><td>£637.37</td></tr><tr><td>Tracey Block</td><td>£54.35</td></tr></table> <p>Cllr Betts presented the Parish Council with an invoice for £480 to pay for the installation of the defibrillator. The Clerk is to contact the Village Hall Committee regarding this as it was not considered an expense that should be the responsibility of the Parish Council.</p> <p><b>iii. To approve the budget for 2023/24</b> The Parish Council discussed the options put forward by the Clerk regarding budgets for 2023/24. The Parish Council voted on the options and there was 1 vote for Option B and 4 for Option C, Option C was carried. There ensued a discussion about the work that the Caretaker undertakes.</p> <p><b>iv. To agree the precept for 2023/24</b> The Parish Council agreed to precept £12,500 for 2023/24.</p>	Village Caretaker Account	£1345.00	Tracey Block	£637.37	Tracey Block	£54.35	
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10.	<p><b>To receive the Planning Report</b></p> <p>A Planning Report had been received and circulated to all the Councillors. The application for Beynon Cottage – the Parish Council had raised no objection. A new application had been received earlier today for Sunhaven.</p>							
11.	<p><b>To receive any updates on Highways/Environment.</b></p> <p>Cllr Tomkins expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of repairs to the edges of roads. Spelders Hill has been resurfaced. Cllr Betts reported 2 streetlights not working in Brook.</p>							
12.	<p><b>To receive any update regarding the Village Hall</b></p> <p>The water leak at the Village Hall had cost in excess of £1,000. It is hoped that this can be reclaimed. Disability access is being looked at.</p>							

	There is to be an AGM on 22/11 at 7pm.	
<b>13.</b>	<b>To receive any updates on the newsletter</b>	
	The next newsletter will be in the Spring.	
<b>14.</b>	<b>To consider any changes to the Risk Assessment</b>	
	There were no changes to the Risk Assessment.	
<b>15.</b>	<b>Any Other Business (for information purposes only):</b>	
	There are to be lights erected at the Church, if agreeable with Brook Church. The Oak Tree that Cllr Jessop is holding is to be planted by the Caretaker. Logs have been sold for £60. The defibrillator is in place. The Chairman's Allowance expenditure was approved.	
<b>16.</b>	<b>Date of next meeting</b>	
	Date of the next meeting – 19th January 2023 16th March 2023 18th May 2023	

The meeting closed at 6.20pm

Signed: .....

Date: .....