

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BROOK PARISH COUNCIL
ON 16th SEPTEMBER 2021 HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL**

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

In attendance: The Clerk

		To be actioned by
1.	To receive and approve apologies for absence.	
	Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Tomkins and Medhurst.	
2.	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 by the Parish Councillors.	
3.	To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 22nd July and 7th September 2021	
	The minutes of the previous 2 meetings were signed as a true copy.	
4.	To discuss matters arising from the above minutes not covered by the agenda	
	The trees beside the Village Hall had been inspected by UK Power Networks. It is not their policy to cut these back unless they are thick branches that could damage the power lines. UK Power Networks are to provide a report to the Clerk.	
5.	To co-opt a new Councillor to fill the vacancy	
	Cllr Betts was co-opted to the Council and completed the relevant forms.	
6.	Public session: To receive questions and comments from the public on any agenda item.	
	There were no public in attendance.	
7.	Financial matters:	
	To note/authorise the following: i. To note the Parish Council's financial position The Parish Council has £3723.54 in the bank with a few outstanding payments. ii. To authorise any payments There were no further payments to be made.	
8.	To receive the planning report	
	The Planning report had been circulated. The proposed newt ponds at Forstal Farm had caused concern but, following a site visit and discussion with the land owner, the Parish Council withdrew its objection and a no objection was submitted instead. A draft response to the planning application at the Honest Miller was circulated, comments to be returned to Cllr Betty.	
9.	To receive the wildlife report/adopt the wildlife statement	
	There was no wildlife report but Cllr Betty had written a Wildlife Policy which was read to the meeting and was adopted, a copy to be placed on the website.	
10.	To receive the report from the KALC representative	
	Cllr Betty had written a report that had been circulated. Cllr Betty attended the meeting which was held via Zoom and lasted some 3 hours. Despite the length of the meeting, it is considered that only the following items that were discussed are relevant to Brook. 1. The meeting was attended by Chief Inspector Sparkes of Ashford Police who reported that local police engagement with parishes has been incorporated into a policy document. Parish Councils should therefore receive monthly updates from their PCSOs, or a PCSO should attend a parish council meeting	

	<p>every three months. There is a move towards such updates being provided by Twitter or Facebook feeds. CI Sparkes also reported that the recruitment of Special Constables in Ashford had gone well and the numbers had increased from 1 to 14 which should free up the time of full time officers and PCSOs to deal with more serious matters. It was requested, if possible, that when PCSOs attend parish council meetings they could be asked to provide their report at the beginning of the meeting to enable them to return to their duties without delay.</p> <p>2. It was reported that ABC remove comments from their planning portal after a period of 6 weeks which means that if an application was withdrawn and resubmitted in substantially the same form fresh comments would need to be submitted. The meeting was attended by Tracey Kerly, the CEO of ABC, who suggested that each re-submitted application needs to be reassessed as a matter of course irrespective of the fact the scheme has been re-submitted in substantially the same format and treated as a new application.</p> <p>3. The Local Government Association (LGA) paper on joint working was discussed at length. The paper suggests ways in which there could be more devolution of services from second tier authorities to third tier councils such as parish councils. The attendees from other representative parishes were reluctant to take on more responsibility with the associated increase in precept which could be construed an element of double charging in addition to council tax. It was agreed that most of Ashford's parishes are likely to be too small compared with the national level to take on more devolved responsibility unless there was the possibility to obtain benefit by forming clusters with other parishes e.g. the village caretaker scheme. It is therefore unlikely that Brook would be capable of taking on any more devolved responsibility or would gain any benefit from doing so.</p>
11.	To receive any updates on Highways/Environment
	There had been no updates received.
12.	To receive an update regarding the Village Hall
	Cllr Jessop had attended the recent Village Hall meeting. There had been discussion surrounding the toddler group. A home-schooling group and the drama group. A talk about some lighting that is proposed to be attached to the ceiling is to be provided in due course.
13.	To receive an update regarding the Newsletter
	There is no update as yet.
14.	To receive a Caretaker Report
	No report had been received.
15.	To note the condition of the Village Sign and agree any remedial work
	Following an email regarding the state of the sign, Cllr Betty had inspected the sign and agreed that it would benefit from a wash but, no further remedial work was required, the oak post is aging and requires no treatment. Cllr Betty is to clean the sign.
16.	To consider any changes to the Risk Assessment
	There were no changes to be considered.
17.	Any Other Business (for information purposes only):
	<p>Cllr Betty had attended the Local Council Forum meeting. This will be run quarterly, the one in December will cover planning, this one was about green issues. Under the Queen's Green Canopy Project, Ashford Borough Council is looking to plant 135,000 trees across the borough. Aspire are taking the lead on this. Parishes are asked to look for areas that they can plant trees, land-owners are also sought to come forward. Applications are to be made in December 2021 for the saplings and will be planted in 2023.</p> <p>There was some discussion regarding Ashford t0o Zero, the carbon neutral plan for 2030, Parish Councils are to consider their carbon neutral plans. Ashford Borough Council is re-negotiating their waste contract and intends to remain with BIFFA.</p>

	<p>A member of the public is to collect some logs; payment will be arranged with Cllr Betty.</p> <p>Cllr Jessop explained that the drama group would need to find some storage for their equipment. A shed on the recreation ground is to be considered.</p> <p>The Clerk reminded Councillors that she had circulated some information about the plans for the Queens Jubilee next year. Hiring a beacon is to be considered.</p>						
18.	<p>Date of next meeting – 14th October at 5.00pm</p> <table data-bbox="175 392 1484 481"> <tr> <td>18th November 2021</td> <td>16th December 2021</td> <td>17th February 2022</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17th March 2022</td> <td>21st April 2022</td> <td>9th May 2022</td> </tr> </table>	18 th November 2021	16 th December 2021	17 th February 2022	17 th March 2022	21 st April 2022	9 th May 2022
18 th November 2021	16 th December 2021	17 th February 2022					
17 th March 2022	21 st April 2022	9 th May 2022					
	<p>The meeting closed at 6.10pm</p>						

Signed:

Date: