

BREDHURST PARISH COUNCIL



**Minutes of the Annual Parish Council (incorporating the Annual Parish Meeting)
held at Blacksmiths Barn,
on Wednesday 19 May 2021 at 6.30pm**

Present: Cllr Vanessa Jones (Chair), Cllr Nichola Carr (Vice-Chair), Cllr Steve Bowring, Cllr Dan Fifield, Cllr Chantelle Goodwin-Sword, Cllr Warren Salter, Cllr Claire Sharp, Cllr Anne Brindle (MBC) and Melanie Fooks (Clerk)

Public: 0

392. Apologies for absence

Borough Cllrs Bob Hinder, Heidi Bryant – apologies accepted.

393. Election of Chair and declaration of acceptance of office.

Cllr Carr nominated Cllr Jones to continue as Chair, Cllr Bowring seconded with all in favour. There were no other nominations.

394a. Election of Vice-Chair and declaration of acceptance of office.

Cllr Jones nominated Cllr Carr, Cllr Salter seconded, with all in favour. There were no other nominations.

394b. Election of Personnel Committee

Cllrs unanimously agreed the membership remains with Cllrs, Carr, Jones, Salter and Sharp.

394c. Election of Staff Management Committee

Cllrs unanimously agreed the membership remains with Cllrs Carr, Jones, Salter and Sharp.

394d. Election of Blacksmith Barn Working Group

Membership to consist of Cllrs Bowring, Carr, Jones and Salter.

394e. Election of Representatives of External Organisations

Maidstone KALC – Cllrs Bowring and Carr.

Police Forum – Cllr Bowring.

395. Representations from residents, clubs and societies.

The annual report for St Peter's Church had been received and will be circulated to residents with the draft minutes. Cllr Carr gave an update on the Village Show which will not be taking place this year. However, if anyone in the village would like to get involved for next year to contact her.

396. Declarations of interests

Members were reminded they needed to sign their declaration of acceptance of office as newly elected councillors. DPI and Election Expenses forms should be completed and signed and passed to the Clerk to forward to MBC. Cllr Fifield declared a pecuniary interest in item 402 and left the room when this item was considered.

397. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7th April 2021.

The minutes were **agreed** as an accurate record of the meeting and were duly signed by the Chair.

The meeting was not adjourned for a public session.

398. Police Briefing

There were no crimes reported during the month. The CRAG report and Rural Matters had been received and circulated.

399. Matters arising (for information only)

Action Points from meeting held on 07-04-21:

AP1:	Payment of £15.00 ground rent for Blacksmith Barn to Swift Property Management	Actioned
AP2:	Installation of hand sanitiser units in Blacksmith Barn.	Actioned
AP3:	Quotation for installing Air Conditioning in Blacksmith Barn	See Item 401(b)
AP4:	Hedging Plants at Blacksmith Barn – Currently out of stock. Will be planted once in stock.	Part Actioned
AP5:	Obtain further quote for community playing field access path	See Item 402
AP6:	Lucanus to remove excess growth from base of lime tree in community playing field.	Actioned
AP7:	To agree final stages of recruitment process	Deferred
AP8:	Report of options and costs for backing up PC files and Clerks emails	Actioned
AP9:	Circulate date of publication of uncontested election results to Cllrs.	See Item 404
AP10:	Invitation to clubs, groups and societies for the Annual Meeting of the Parish	Actioned
AP11:	To circulate link to Cllrs for government consultation on remote meetings and any updates on this matter.	Actioned
AP12:	Clerk to contact applicant and neighbours re planning application 21/501483/Full. Cllrs to respond by 16 April	Actioned
AP13:	Village Maintenance to forward areas to the clerk to circulate to residents.	Actioned
AP14:	Fire Hydrant Report to be circulated to Cllrs.	Not Actioned
AP15:	Bank Mandates for Cllrs Fifield, Goodwin-Sword and Salter have been completed and confirmed by UTB.	Actioned
AP16:	End of Year Accounts – Have been completed by the Clerk and a date from Internal Auditor Martin Thomas to inspect is awaited.	Part Actioned

Action Points from meetings prior to 07-04-21:

N/A	19/20 Internal Auditors report – contact internal Auditor and KALC	Actioned
N/A	Passwords – Breach of Data.	Not Actioned
N/A	HMRC – Submission.	Not Actioned
N/A	To contact Bytes to cancel, Microsoft 365 subscription. This is no longer necessary.	Not Actioned
N/A	Clerk to provide report on feedback of play equipment from Manufacturer.	Actioned
N/A	Remaining items for Blacksmith Barn will be purchased when appropriate to do so.	Ongoing
N/A	Lidsing Working Group – Maintain pressure on MBC.	Ongoing

400. Review of Policies and Procedures

Covid 19 Delegated Powers – Cllr Jones recommended that this is extended for a further 6 months with all Cllrs voting in favour

401. Blacksmiths Barn

- a. Cllrs agreed that the opening date for the barn would be 21st June in line with the lifting of Covid restrictions. It would be reviewed again at the next meeting to consider any new government advice. **AP1 Clerk to include in June agenda.**
- b. Cllrs considered the air conditioning quotes. The consensus was that the costs were reasonable. It was agreed that further quotes should be obtained. However, prior to obtaining these, permission from the Landlord and checking if planning permission is required was necessary. **AP2 Clerk to contact Landlord and MBC.**
- c. Cllrs considered a replacement tree for the felled (dead) Beech Tree. The planning conditions stated that either a Hornbeam, Oak or Beech should replace the felled tree. After taking advice Cllr Jones proposed, Cllr Carr seconded with all in favour to put aside £500.00 for the purchase of a Hornbeam to be planted in the autumn by Lucanus the PC's tree surgeon. **AP3 Clerk to contact Lucanus.**

402. Playing field access path

- a. Extension to the footpath at the entrance of the community field. Cllrs had received 3 quotations ranging from £1650.00 - £2650.00. Cllr Jones proposed, Cllr Sharp seconded, with 6 in favour of proceeding with Lucanus quote for £1650.00. **AP4 Clerk to contact Lucanus.**

403. Council Email Accounts

The Clerk confirmed the domain name had been purchased from TEEC for the email addresses, however some councillors have had issues setting them up. The Clerk has raised a ticket with TEEC to address the issues. **AP5 Clerk to contact TEEC and Cllrs.**

404. Data and Email Security

The Clerk confirmed that Parish Council files on the Clerk's laptop have been transferred over to OneDrive and are backed up to the cloud via the Microsoft 365 subscription. The emails will be backed up via TEEC and Stuart Edwards, an independent IT consultant who has previously worked with BPC, has advised that these will also be backed up to the laptop. The Clerk also confirmed that his fees were £30.00ph for remote access and £50.00ph on site access. Cllr Sharp proposed, seconded by Cllr Goodwin- Sword with all in favour to employ the services of Stuart Edwards, IT Consultant on an as and when basis. **AP6 Clerk to notify IT Consultant.**

405. Planning

There were no planning applications to consider.

Other planning matters.

There were none.

406. Public Rights of Way – Stile on KH55

The Parish Council has been notified that a kissing gate has been accepted by the Landowner in place of the stile on KH55. Cllr Sharp proposed, seconded by Cllr Goodwin-Sword with all in favour to set aside £200.00 for the installation of the kissing gate that will be provided by PRoW. The Parish Council would like to thank both the Landowner and PRoW. **AP7 Clerk to liaise with PRoW.**

407. Personnel Issues

- a. Cllr Jones gave an update on the recruitment process of the new Clerk & RFO, 19 expressions of interest from Facebook and 12 CV's have been submitted, with the closing date on Friday 21 May. The personnel committee will be responsible for shortlisting the candidates and Cllr Carr will be responsible for sending a series of tests by email to be returned within an hour. Once all tests have taken place the candidates will be interviewed. The interview panel will consist of Cllrs Jones and Carr and the Locum Clerk, if available, as the note taker. Date of interviews to be confirmed.
- b. Other Personnel updates – The independently investigated formal grievance complaint against the Parish Council brought by BPC's ex-clerk, has now been concluded in full and no action was taken against BPC. Of the nine allegations, one was partially upheld because the Parish Council withheld a salary payment due to the refusal to return Parish Council equipment. The Parish Council should have informed the ex-clerk the payment was being withheld. The investigation took over 54 hours and cost the Parish Council in excess of £5,000.
A letter of complaint has been sent to last year's Independent Internal Auditor and copied to the CEO of KALC questioning various aspects of last year's audit. The Parish Council has asked for a written apology and a refund of £300, the fee charged for the report.
It was agreed that an ex-Cllr would be contacted asking for assistance and information regarding a possible breach of GDPR.

408. Reports from Parish Councillors

Cllr Sharp had attended a zoom course on affordable neighbourhood development. Discussions took place on the value of neighbourhood plans particularly with the new national planning process that is currently going through parliament. Cllr Jones asked for this to be placed on the next agenda for further discussion. **AP8 Clerk to place on agenda.**

409. Reports from Borough and County Councillors (if present)

Borough Cllr Anne Brindle confirmed that MBC's annual meeting was being held at the Detling Showground. Cllr Jones asked if there was any update on the Regulation 18b of the Local Plan and the proposed Lidsing Development. Cllr Brindle confirmed that at a recent SPI meeting she had asked for a detailed analysis of the 1750 objections to be published. She reported the duty to cooperate with cross border authorities is taking place. She reiterated that the PC should continue to maintain pressure on MBC.

410. Correspondence

Cllrs **received** and **noted** the correspondence.
Cllr Jones highlighted that the NALC newsletter included information for possible funding towards electric charging ports. **AP9 Clerk to place on the June Agenda**

411. Finance

- a. The financial statement and bank reconciliation were **received** and **accepted**.

Account	Balance as of 30/04/21
Unity Account	55,624.46

- b. Cllrs received a quote from Came & Co. Since circulating these quotes a revised quote had been received which was more favourable. The Clerk also confirmed that she had asked the broker that Boxley PC use to see if they can offer a competitive quote. Cllr Jones proposed to accept the 3-year LTU from Hiscox at a cost of £731.97 should there not be a better quote

offered. This was seconded by Cllr Bowring with all in favour. **AP10 Clerk to liaise with insurance brokers.**

c. The following payments were **agreed** and authorised as follows:

Payments authorised out of meeting

Ref	Details	Amount	VAT*	Total	Auth
4	Southern Water - Barn	9.75		9.75	VJ, NC
5	Mona Cleaning	15.00		15.00	VJ, NC
6	Not needed	-	-	-	VJ,NC
7	Swift Property Management	15.00	-	15.00	VJ/NC
8	Clerk's Salary + Office Rental – April	-	-	-	VJ/NC
9	HMRC -PAYE	140.00	-	140.00	VJ/NC
10	ACRK – Annual Subscription (21-22)	55.00	-	55	VJ/NC
11	Rachel Ford Gardener (5.5 hrs April)	110.00	-	110.00	CGS, CS
12	HR Services (Invoice 12698 CN 12851)	730.00	146.00	876.00	CGS, CS

* VAT to be reclaimed.

Payments for authorising at meeting

Ref	Details	Amount	VAT*	Total
13	TEEC Ltd Domain name purchase www.bredhurstpc.org.uk	5.99	1.20	7.19
14	Mike Searley – Grass Cutting Barn (April)	35.00	-	35.00
15	HR Services – Grievance Advice	tbc	tbc	tbc
16	Alan Carroll – Gutter clearing, installing Hand sanitisers, fixing first Aid box to wall	50.00	-	50.00
17	CPRE – Annual Subscription	36.00		36.00
D/D	Onecom Barn Internet (April)	24.14	4.83	28.97
D/D	Bytes Microsoft 365 subscription (April)	8.82	1.76	10.58
D/D	Business Stream – Allotment Water Bill	34.12	-	34.12

Cllrs Fifield & Salter **agreed** to authorise the payments from the meeting.

The meeting was not adjourned for a public session.

412. Close of meeting

The meeting closed 8.06pm.

413. Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 9th June 2021 at 6.30pm at Blacksmith Barn.

Signed..... Date.....