

BREDHURST PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held via Microsoft Teams, on Friday 17th April 2020 at 6.30pm

Present: Cllr Vanessa Jones (Chair), Cllr Nichola Carr (Vice-Chair), Cllr Steve Bowring, Cllr John Merrick, Cllr Miriam Noble, Cllr Claire Sharp, Cllr David Till, Bex Ratchford (Clerk)

Public: 1

168. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence received.

169. Declarations of interests

Cllrs had no interests to declare.

170. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4th March 2020

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

171. Scheme of delegation

In the event of council meetings being cancelled due to impracticality or illness due to the COVID-19 outbreak and under S101 of the Local Government Act 1972, it was **agreed** to discharge the functions of the council to the clerk, according to the Terms of Reference.

Action 1: Clerk to publish Terms of Reference.

172. Coronavirus outbreak

Cllrs expressed gratitude for the way the community has come together at this time. BPC has delivered letters and response forms to all households in the village and is maintaining a list of volunteers and vulnerable residents. A Facebook group specifically for residents or those with close links to the village has been set up and currently has 150 members. Another 50 have asked to join but have not answered the questions so the requests have not been approved. A village WhatsApp group has also been set up and has 31 members. These groups have been sharing food and ideas to help others. Residents have also come out of their houses to pay respects at two local funerals. The Bell supplied food boxes which were delivered by BPC and is organising baking competitions. BPC has had discussions with a local chemist and a supermarket who are both looking at schemes for assisting those in the village identified as vulnerable. Although some residents have been litter picking and were thanked for their efforts, it was noted that there should not be any organised litter picks. If an individual wishes to pick up litter whilst out exercising, they should follow government guidelines. There should not be any requests for waste collection as the service is already under pressure. Dog walking has increased and residents and visitors were requested to use the waste bins provided in the village. The police have been regularly patrolling the village and woods. They asked BPC to put up signs to discourage people driving to the village for exercise as, due to the volume of people and narrow widths of paths and lanes, it has been difficult for social distancing guidelines to be followed. They also asked that the village hall car park be closed. MBC has been notified about the systems put in place by BPC. KCC has set up a helpline for the vulnerable – details are on the BPC website, which is being updated regularly.

173. Blacksmiths, Bredhurst Community Barn

The CCTV and alarm system have been installed and are fully operational. Cllr Merrick will wall mount the monitor. **Action 2: Cllr Merrick to wall mount monitor.** The resident who supplied the system was thanked for his generosity. **Action 3: Clerk to send letter of thanks.** The Barn has been deep cleaned and is now closed to hirers due to lockdown. It was **agreed** to have the outside of the windows cleaned once a month during lockdown at a cost of £15 per clean. **Action 4: Cllr Jones to inform Mona Cleaning.** The gardener will continue to visit and the grass cutting will also continue during lockdown. The grass is very patchy and needs reseeding and ideally rolling. The contractor had quoted £80 to reseed and add topsoil but it was felt that lawn feed and extra topsoil around the car park area was also necessary. It was **agreed** to ask the contractor to do the extra work up to a cost of £150. **Action 5: Cllr Jones to inform contractor.** The water bill had been received at £76.90 for the period from 10th October. It was **agreed** to pay the full amount. Funding of £3000 is available from Old Chalk New Downs (via Kent Downs AONB Unit) to provide information and display boards and a wall map for the Barn which will focus on Bredhurst Woods and its importance for wildlife. It was **agreed** to accept the funding and that Cllr Jones would liaise with Kent Downs AONB Unit. **Action 6: Cllr Jones to liaise with Kent Downs AONB Unit.**

174. Community field

It was **agreed** to erect two closeboard gates, at the pedestrian access, to match the fence, each approximately 3' wide and 5-6' high, with a post at either side to secure them open, but with the facility of being closed and locked if necessary, with Cllrs Jones, Carr, Bowring, Noble, Sharp and Till in favour and Cllr Merrick abstaining. Due to lack of available suppliers at the current time, the initial quote has increased. The urgency of the work was questioned, but it was felt important to be able to close the official entrances to the field. It was **agreed** to engage Lucanus Services to do the work up to a limit of £900, with Cllrs Jones, Carr, Bowring, Noble, Sharp and Till in favour and Cllr Merrick abstaining. **Action 7: Cllr Jones to inform contractor.** It was **agreed** that any future decision taken to close the field (other than for routine maintenance) could be taken by email.

175. Allotments

Further information had been received regarding the ponds, and the remaining two allotment holders had raised no objection. It was **agreed** to allow the installation of two wildlife ponds on two allotments. It was **agreed** to erect a warning sign if the tenants felt it necessary. **Action 8: Clerk to inform allotment holders.**

176. MBC Dog Control PSPO review

It was **agreed** to respond to the review in favour of all measures except Measure 2 (exclusion of dogs from all play areas) due to some play areas being within open fields. It was also **agreed** to suggest expanding Measure 5 (dogs to be kept on leads in Maidstone Cemetery) to include all MBC run cemeteries and closed churchyards. **Action 9: Clerk to respond to consultation.**

177. Finance

a. The financial statement and bank reconciliation were reviewed and accepted.

Account	Balance as of 31/03/20
Unity Account	23,618.47

- b. Future ongoing regular payments including, but not limited to, the clerk's salary and expenses, Barge (grounds maintenance), Mike Searley (Barn grass cutting), Mona Cleaning (Barn window cleaning), Rachel Ford (Barn gardener) were **agreed**.
- c. It was **agreed** to pay future Barn electricity bills by direct debit. **Action 10: Clerk to sign up for D/D payments.**
- d. Payments were **agreed** to be paid by BACS and authorised as follows:

No.	Details	Amount	VAT*	Total	Auth
1	Clerk – wages and office rental				SB, JM
2	Barge – grounds maintenance (Mar)	237.08	47.42	284.50	SB, JM
3	Bates – remainder of Barn furniture	813.00	162.60	975.60	SB, JM
4	Savills – field rental	112.50	-	112.50	SB, JM
5	Mike Searley – Barn grass cutting	15.00	-	15.00	SB, JM
6	Mona Cleaning – Barn standard clean and deep clean	45.00	-	45.00	SB, JM
7	Ecotricity – Barn electric	231.72	11.59	243.31	SB, JM
8	Lucanus Services - VTA	tbc	-	tbc	SB, JM
9	Southern Water – Barn water	76.90	-	76.90	SB, JM

* VAT to be reclaimed.

178. Close of meeting

The meeting closed at 7.59pm.

Date of next meeting to be confirmed.

Signed.....

Date.....