

Minutes of the Meeting of Brewham Parish Council held at Brewham Village Hall on Tuesday, 14th March 2023

Present: Robert Jackson (Chair), Eddie Harper, Christopher Saxton & Patricia Stainton

In attendance: Sue Price (Clerk), County Councillor Tom Power & five members of the public.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **Apologies for Absence:**

Apologies for absence had been received from Richard Hiscock, County Councillor Lucy Trimnell and District Councillor Robin Bastable.

2. **Declarations of Interest:**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 10th January 2023:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th January 2023 were unanimously approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. **Matters Arising:**

There were no matters arising that would not be dealt with elsewhere.

5. **Financial Business:**

i. **Financial transactions:**

The Clerk reported that since the last meeting interest of 79p had been received on the NS&I Investment account and there had been further income of £92 for an additional inscription to a gravestone and the purchase of two cremated remains plots.

All the payments made in January had now been cleared through Lloyds bank and she was able to confirm that the two HSBC accounts had been closed in early January.

The financial transactions for the period 10th January-13th March 2023 were as follows:

Bank balances brought forward at 10th January 2023 £4,600.12

Income:

Interest on National Savings Bank Investment account	.79
Purchase of two cremated remains plots for the Castle family	80.00
Inscription for the late Mr & Mrs Mott's gravestone	12.00

Expenditure:

Somerset Association of Local Councils annual subscription	£118.65
Information Commissioner's Office annual fee	40.00
Donation to Brewham Village Hall for maintenance of defibrillator	50.00
Royal British Legion – two wreaths for Remembrance Sunday	40.00

The Fund balances at 13th March 2023 were therefore:

General Fund	£2,749.52
Burial Ground Fund	194.74
Reserve Fund	1,500.00

<u>Represented by Bank a/cs:</u>	
National Savings Bank Investment a/c	£852.43
Lloyds Bank Treasurers a/c	3,591.83
<u>Total</u>	£4,444.26
Bank balances carried forward at 13 th March 2023	£4,444.26

- ii. The Clerk requested payment of the following:
Stuart Turnbull – website hosting and domain renewal for 2 years as not invoiced in 2022 - £111.86 and the Clerk’s annual salary of £1,000. It was unanimously agreed that these should be paid.

The Clerk advised that Mr Maistrello had said that he would not be submitting an invoice for the work on the yew trees until the next financial year and it was agreed that when the invoice is received the Clerk will send a copy by email and Councillors will approve by email. Similarly any invoice received from Mr Baker for his work involving the yew trees.

- iii. Charlie Lane had completed three years as internal auditor in at the end of the 2021/22 financial year. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact Karen Perry to see if she would be happy to do the internal audit for the current financial year. If not the Clerk would ask Marlene Critchley.

6. **Planning Applications:**

i. **Decisions on applications already considered by the Parish Council:**

- a. 22/01688/FUL - Land OS 0006, Gladwill Farm, North Brewham, BA10 0JS – Application for change of use of agricultural hard standing to allow for siting of mobile showman’s wagon trailer conversion for holiday let accommodation. Decision awaited.
- b. 22/02676/FUL - Land at Cannwood House, Cannwood Lane, Brewham BA10 0JN - Installation of ground mounted solar array. Application approved.
- c. 22/03355/OUT – Hillcrest, Charcroft Hill, Brewham, BA10 0LE – Outline application for the erection of a detached dwelling with all matters reserved (renewal of planning consent 19/02837?OUT, permission granted 18th February 2020). Decision awaited.
- d. 22/03415/FUL – The Bull Inn, Hardway, BA10 0LN - Erection of extension to the kitchen, insertion of roof lights and fitting roof lanterns on the existing and proposed flat roofs. Application approved.

ii. **Applications received since the January meeting and considered by email:**

- a. 23/00184/COL - application for a Lawful Certificate for the existing use of an Artist Studio on Land adjacent to Border Lodge, Hammer Street North Brewham. The Clerk had written to the Planning Department to say that while Councillors were happy to support the continuing use of this barn as an artist’s studio they wished to note that it was originally an agricultural building designated for agricultural use and that they would strongly object should at any time in the future any application be made to use it for anything other than agricultural purposes or an artist’s studio.
- b. 22/03514/FUL - Jerrards Farm, Hammer Street, Brewham, BA10 0JG – to cover an existing concrete yard used feed loading area for dairy cattle. Decision awaited.

iii. **New applications for consideration:**

No new applications had been received.

The Clerk reported that she had asked the Planning Department about Swanton Farm. An application for change of use has been submitted to be validated by the Council but further information has been requested before this application can be

validated and when it has the Clerk will be updated and the Parish Council will be consulted on the application.

7. **Burial Ground, Churchyard, Common Land and Village Amenities:**

Mr Nye was not present to report on the Closed Churchyard but it was noted that there had been a lot of snowdrops this year, the sheep having done a very good job clearing the grass.

Two further quotations had been received for the work to the two yew trees, both of which were higher than that supplied by Mr Maistrello and Councillors had agreed to proceed with his quotation in the sum of £750. They had further agreed that Mr Baker should be asked to supervise the start of this work to ensure that the correct amount was trimmed from each tree and Mr Baker estimated that this would cost no more than £50 and so his total invoice should be £100 to include the work done submitting the application to do the work.

No-one else had come forward offering to mow the Burial Ground and the Common Land on Charcroft Hill and Councillors had agreed that Graham Kimber and David Dabinett be asked to continue the mowing for the coming season. Both have agreed to do the work for £1,500 and £300 respectively.

Regarding the ownership of the Burial Ground, Mr Sunderland, who is working for the Diocese to register Church land, had been in touch with Ric Rogers and they had agreed that they would meet on site as Ric Rogers knows which bits of land belong to whom and where the boundaries are. There is a bit of land at the far end which was gifted to the Parish Council by Mr White and some land towards the front which also belongs to the Parish Council which was purchased by donations from parishioners many years ago. Mrs Dabinett had in fact met Mr Sunderland on site and he had produced a map of the area. The Clerk had asked the solicitor holding the paperwork regarding Mr White's gift to send her copies but nothing had yet been received. It was agreed that this would be discussed further outside the meeting and then a decision should be made about whether to register the land belonging to the Parish Council which will cost in the region of £50.

Eddie Harper had very kindly removed the rubbish which had been overflowing from the waste bin near the Village Hall wall for a long time. It was agreed that as no-one wants to accept responsibility for emptying this bin that it should be removed and people should be expected to take any rubbish or bags of dog waste home rather than dump it there. Robert Jackson agreed to remove the bin and dispose of it. The bench also by the Village Hall wall has a broken slat and having looked at it Christopher Saxton removed the broken slat and it was decided that it will need further repair in due course but that it is fine for the time being.

Eddie Harper advised that there had been a problem with the defibrillator recently when someone had tried to use it but thought that the box was locked. It was agreed that this should never be locked and always accessible to everyone. On checking it was found that it then needed a new battery, at a cost of about £400, and when the replacement battery was inserted it indicated that it was due to be serviced. This he arranged but it is likely to take up to 8 weeks before it is returned although he is in touch with the supplier to see if a replacement can be sent. In the meantime there is a map and list of the nearest defibrillators in the area pinned to the empty box. In due course the current machine will need replacing (currently these cost about £1,000) and discussion took place about who should be responsible for this. It was agreed that this should in future be the responsibility of the Parish Council and when a replacement is needed donations could be sought or a fundraising event could be held and if further money was needed then this would probably have to be added to the precept. It was agreed that there would be sufficient funds in the coming financial year if any expenditure was needed and that future costs would be discussed when setting the budget for 2024/25. When the defibrillator is back Eddie Harper will arrange for someone to come and give a demonstration about how to use it,

what sounds will be heard, etc. especially as there are so many newcomers who may not even know there is one in the village or its location although this is detailed in Below The Tower. It was further agreed that when a date has been set a note will be delivered to all properties in the Parish so that everyone has the opportunity to attend.

8. **Roads:**

a. **Outstanding matters:**

The Highways Department continue to mend potholes throughout the Parish. Following calls from Mr Harvey about further fly tipping by the entrance to the railway line on Pinkwood Lane which the Clerk reported it is not known if this has been cleared and further rubbish dumped straightaway afterwards as another parishioner has also reported further rubbish being dumped and provided the number plate of a van she saw there on 3rd March. This has been forwarded to the relevant department and it is hoped all the rubbish will be removed but it is thought that unless a camera is installed the problem will continue.

The Chairman had arranged to cut the hedge at Little Orchard on Hardway that had been reported about needing to be cut back.

Drains continue to be blocked although this has been reported.

b. **New matters:**

Eddie Harper has received calls from several people about the bright light at the Old Red Lion which is meant to shine in the car park but is also shining on to the road which is dangerous as it blinds drivers along that stretch of road. It was agreed that the Clerk would speak to Tom O'Toole about this and Christopher Saxton would be happy to follow up to see if he could fit something that would prevent the light shining towards the road.

Liza Greaves asked whether anything could be done about the street light by the Church wall as the bulb is unnecessarily bright. The Clerk will contact the Highways Department to see if this can be changed to something less bright. She also asked if the grit bins could be refilled as the one by the Village Hall is nearly empty. The Clerk advised that both Robert Jackson and Richard Hiscock had filled some bins this year with some of their own supplies as although the Council should have done this in the autumn they did not appear to have done so.

Zena Dabinett reported that the culvert near Swanton Farm is blocked and the Clerk will report this.

Robert Gulliford asked about the large lorries going up and down Hassocks Lane and whether anything could be done to stop them using such a small road as they are causing quite a bit of damage to the edges making it dangerous for cars. Eddie Harper agreed to speak to the firm involved on behalf of the Parish Council.

9. **Footpaths & Bridleways:**

a. **Outstanding matters:**

There has been no progress on outstanding matters. The Clerk, having heard nothing from the Footpaths Officer in particular about the blocked footpath at Swanton Farm which was first reported in May 2016, had contacted the info email at Somerset County Council following which the Footpaths Officer, from whom nothing had been heard since May 2022, to say that she had previously said she would update when she had any further information but has made attempts to contact the current landowner without success so will call in when she is next in the area. Despite the long time the path has been blocked there is no concern that there would be a case not to re-open it but the owner could apply for it to be diverted. She will inform the Clerk as and when any progress has been made. The Clerk had thanked her for her reply and advised that she would send another email regarding other outstanding problems in the Parish.

10. **Report from County Councillors:**

Tom Power had sent a report which the Clerk will forward to all Councillors. He particularly noted the following:

Council Tax – Council Tax notices are being delivered and he wanted to highlight that there is help for people who are struggling to pay and anyone eligible will be notified but also that anyone can contact the Council for help and guidance.

The transfer to the new Unitary Council will take place on 1st April with new branding, etc. and the last District and County Council meetings are currently being held with a civic service to mark the move to Unitary in Wells Cathedral on March 12th.

Debate Not Hate – the new Council has signed up to the Local Government Association's (LGA) Debate Not Hate campaign. A recent census revealed that seven in ten councillors reported experiencing abuse and intimidation within the last 12 months while one in ten experienced abuse frequently. Councillors will work together on a cross-party basis to set an example of healthy debate and denounced abusive or threatening behaviour from anyone within the community on social media and in-person.

Step Up to Social Work - This offers an opportunity to train for a career in social work and receive a tax-free bursary of almost £20,000. Recruitment for the programme is open now, with assessments scheduled for June and July 2023 for a January 2024 study start date.

Domestic Abuse – The helpline took 301 calls from young people aged between 16 to 20 years since April last year, compared to 128 in 2021/22 – a nearly three times increase. Proportionately young people experience the highest rates of domestic abuse of any age group. It is estimated that 1 in 5 children are exposed to domestic abuse.

Schools - Figures show that 4,785 secondary school applications were received this year compared to 4,866 in 2022. In total, 92.8% (down from 94.8% last year) of children received a place at their first preference school, with 98.12% (down from 98.35% last year) offered one of their top three choices. It is likely that demand for places will go up in coming years.

From April there will be no District Councillors but Tom Power assured the meeting that he and Lucy Trimnell will be doing their best to represent everyone in the area and are always happy to be contacted about any problem or for any advice.

The Planning Department will still be located in Yeovil and there will be a gradual transfer to the Unitary authority.

Councillors thanked him for this helpful update.

11. **Report from the Police:**

The Clerk had received a report from Louise Perry for the Brewham area for February 2023. It was unclear from the report about recent crimes but it appeared from the chart there had been two, one of which was thought to be theft from an agricultural smallholding on Tower Road. Patrols continue and the benefits of a Neighbourhood Watch were highlighted. .

12. **Dates of future meetings:**

The next meeting of will be held on Tuesday, 9th May (following the Annual Meeting), Meetings for the remainder of the financial year will be held on Tuesdays, 11th July, 12th September & 14th November 2023 and Tuesdays, 9th January & 12th March 2024.

13. **Open Forum:**

Robin Bastable had sent his apologies and thanked everyone for their support and hoped that he had been of some help during his time as our District Councillor. The Clerk had replied thanking him.

Mr Gulliford queried whether planning permission had been sought for what appear to be commercial buildings which have been constructed at Gladwill Farm. It was agreed that the Clerk will query this with the Planning Department on behalf of the Parish Council.

Liza Greaves advised that a Coronation picnic is being organised similar to the one held for last year's Jubilee and the Village Hall Committee are also hoping to arrange an event which will happen on a different day over the holiday weekend and she asked everyone to let her know if they had any suggestions.

There were no further questions or matters anyone wished to raise and there being no further business the meeting closed at 8.50pm.

These minutes were unanimously approved and signed as a correct record by the Chairman at the meeting of Brewham Parish Council on Tuesday, 9th May 2023.