

## Minutes of the Meeting of Brewham Parish Council held at Brewham Village Hall on Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024

**Present:** Robert Jackson (Chair), Eddie Harper, Richard Hiscock, Christopher Saxton & Patricia Stainton.

**In attendance:** Sue Price (Clerk) and five members of the public.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **Apologies for Absence:**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Tom Power & Lucy Trimnell.

2. **Declarations of Interest:**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2023:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 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:**

Financial transactions:

The Clerk advised that since the last meeting there had been income of £140 for the purchase of a burial plot for Mr William Down and all the invoices which had been approved had been paid.

The financial transactions for the period 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023-8<sup>th</sup> January 2024 were as follows:

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Bank balances brought forward on 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2024 | £4,525.31 |
|---|-----------|

Income

|                                 |        |
|---------------------------------|--------|
| Burial plot for Mr William Down | 140.00 |
|---------------------------------|--------|

Expenditure:

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Royal British Legion – two wreaths for Remembrance Day | 40.00 |
|--|-------|

The Fund balances on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024 were therefore:

|                    |           |
|--------------------|-----------|
| General Fund       | £2,841.79 |
| Burial Ground Fund | 283.52    |
| Reserve Fund       | 1,500.00  |

Represented by Bank a/cs:

|                                      |          |
|--------------------------------------|----------|
| National Savings Bank Investment a/c | £852.43  |
| Lloyds Bank Treasurers a/c           | 3,772.88 |

Debtor

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Somerset Association of Local Councils – annual subscription | £122.99 |
|--|---------|

|                                 |           |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Bank balances to include debtor | £4,502.32 |
|---------------------------------|-----------|

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <u>Bank balances carried forward on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2024</u> | £4,625.31 |
|--|-----------|

The Clerk requested authorisation to pay the invoice for the website hosting and domain renewal (Stuart Turnbull) - £87.14. **It was unanimously agreed** that this invoice be paid.

In the following discussion re the budget and precept for the financial year 2024/25 Eddie Harper advised that he needed to purchase new pads for the defibrillator, the cost of which will be around £205, and **it was unanimously agreed** that the invoice for this be paid when received.

Budget & Precept for the financial year 2024/25:

The Clerk had circulated a draft budget statement and estimates. She explained that for the current year the precept had been set at £4,400.

The Reserve Fund:

The Reserve Fund started the current year with a balance of £1,500 and at the time of the January 2024 meeting this is the sum held in this Fund and it is hoped this will also be the figure at year-end.

The Burial Ground Fund:

The Burial Ground Fund started the current year with a balance of £194.74 and £1,400 of the precept was allocated to this Fund and to date further income of £215 has been received.

This year the expenditure for mowing and maintaining the Burial Ground was £1,500 and water rates were £126.22.

The balance in the Burial Ground Fund at the time of the January meeting is £283.52.

The Clerk recommended that the precept for the coming year for the Burial Ground Fund should again be set at £1,400 and if no income is received and there are any additional unbudgeted costs these could be paid from the General or Reserve Fund. **It was unanimously agreed** that the precept for the Burial Ground Fund should be set at £1,400 for the financial year 2024/25.

The General Fund:

Expenditure for everything else comes from the General Fund. The balance in the General Fund at the start of the current year was £1,637.66 and £3,000 of the precept was allocated to this Fund. The only other income expected during the year is the small amount of savings account interest which will be £2 or less.

Current confirmed expenditure for the year is £3,111 and at the time of the January meeting the balance in the General Fund is £2,841.79 (which is very similar to the balance in the Fund in January 2023).

Regarding the defibrillator, Eddie Harper advised that new pads need to be ordered for the defibrillator before year-end and the cost of this will be about £205. The battery will need replacing in 2027 (current cost about £350).

Stuart Turnbull has again not had time to do any work on the new website and it was agreed that the Clerk would put a notice on the Facebook page to see if anyone is interested in taking this on. The website hosting and domain renewal is £87.14 and this, the Clerk's salary and expenses and the cost of the defibrillator pads need to be paid before year-end and so, unless there is any other unforeseen expenditure, the year is likely to end with a deficit of just over £100.

There is still money in the current year budget for village amenities/donations and the Clerk recommended that if this money is not spent but carried forward to next year to be put towards the cost of printing hard copies of Below The Tower then the precept could probably be kept at £3,000 for the General Fund and therefore the total precept could be held at £4,400.

**It was unanimously agreed** that the precept for the General Fund should be set at £3,000 for the financial year 2024/25.

The total held in the three funds/bank accounts at year-end will therefore be about £3,340.

The effect of the proposed budget for the year 2024/25 would be a net expenditure of £4,500 (as attached). This figure assumes that the cost of mowing the Burial Ground and Common land remains at £1800, the cost of printing Below the Tower and any donations is £650 and the figure set aside for miscellaneous expenses is reduced to £150.

The budget was confirmed and **it was unanimously agreed** that the precept for the year 2024/2025 should be kept at £4,400, this being £1,400 for the Burial Ground Fund and £3,000 for the General Fund.

**It was unanimously agreed** that the Chairman should sign the Precept Notification Form for 2024/2025 requesting that the precept be set at £4,400.

**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 a mobile showman’s wagon trailer conversion for holiday let accommodation. Decision awaited.
- b. 3/00864/FUL - Lindum Farm, Bruton Road, Brewham, BA10 0JF - The erection of steel framed agricultural machinery storage shed. Decision awaited.
- c. 23/01518/COL – Lavender Bank, Street Lane, Brewham, BA10 0JS - Application for a Lawful Certificate for the proposed erection of a garden room workshop within the boundary of Lavender Bank. Decision awaited.
- d. 23/01410/FUL – Land opposite Jerrards Farm, Hammer Street, North Brewham. - the erection of a new dwelling for agricultural occupancy for a family member. Decision awaited.
- e. 23/01635/FUL – Land at Hardway, Brewham, BA10 OLR – siting for two safari tents for use as holiday accommodation. Decision awaited.
- f. 23/01741/FUL – Barn on land east of Border Lodge, North Brewham, BA10 0JQ – demolition of existing agricultural building and part derelict field shelter, change of use and erection of an Artist’s Studio. Application approved.
- g. 23/02613/LBC & 23/02612/HOU - Canwood House, Canwood Lane Brewham BA10 0JN - erection of conservatory and pergola; construction of courtyard; and associated landscaping. Application approved.
- h. 23/02787/FUL – Cards Farm, South Brewham, BA10 0LQ – construction of a slurry store, reception pit and associated works. Decision awaited.

No new applications had been received. It was noted that a number of the above applications have been awaiting a decision for a very long time.

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

Mr Nye was not present but it was noted the sheep will be put in to graze shortly.

Graham Kimber has said that he would be happy to continue mowing the Burial Ground for £1,500 for the season and the Clerk has told him that the Parish Council is seeking tenders for the work and that his application will be considered. Robert Jackson has spoken to a couple of people who might be interested in set.

As discussed above it was agreed that new pads would be purchased for the defibrillator and that the proposed village meeting to show residents where the defibrillator is located and how to use it would be held in the Spring. The Clerk will ask Dr Tamsyn Cowie if she could run this session.

8. **Roads:**

a. **Outstanding matters:**

The Highways Department continue to repair potholes throughout the parish but as soon as some are mended others appear elsewhere especially after the recent rain and cold weather and there is still a problem throughout the parish with blocked drains. The Clerk has just reported potholes near Swanton Farm.

b. **New matters:**

The Clerk advised that she had received an email from Michael Vaughan on behalf of the owners of Border Lodge asking about moving the 30mph limit to the other side of the crossroads. She had sent him a copy of the correspondence with the Council department from last year and he disagreed with their comments and asked if the Parish Council would consider having an external or professional "road assessment" that could be used to support dialogue with the Department. While it was agreed that the traffic along that part of the road goes very fast making it difficult to exit from Border, **it was unanimously agreed** that there were no funds to do this but that the Parish Council would support any conversations or applications that local residents might make regarding moving the 30mph speed limit. Chris Saxton suggested that it would help if the hedges were cut back and the erection of a mirror would help with visibility on to the main road.

The Clerk will report the problems mentioned in the meeting and continue to monitor new problems throughout the Parish.

9. **Footpaths & Bridleways:**

**Outstanding matters:**

The Clerk had contacted Eve Wynn re the blocked footpath at Swanton Farm who had replied that any agreed works on rights of way work is down to contractor availability, and they have this job on their work list and will get to it as soon as the ground conditions allow. However, with the Council's current financial situation the Rights of Way Officers have lost control of their own budgets and have to get anything over £100 approved in advance so that for the small jobs that they might have arranged contractors to do, such as broken stiles, fallen trees etc, they now have to identify the landowner and remind them of their responsibilities and they are under pressure to prioritise works on severity of health and safety, rather than carry out works that fall under the responsibility of the landowner. Having said that the work is with the contractor she also said that she is hoping that, with these works already agreed, it gets past the Spending Board Committee which seemed a contradiction of the work being with the contractor. The Clerk had written back asking about the legal position if landowners repair stiles and someone then falls and is injured and also why the landowner at Swanton Farm has not been asked to unblock the path. She will update as and when a reply is received.

10. **Report from County Councillors:**

Councillor Power had sent his apologies but will be circulating his report shortly and the Clerk will forward this on when received.

11. **Report from the Police:**

The Clerk had received a report from the Police. There has been one burglary in the area and their priorities remain the same and they are still encouraging the set up of Neighbourhood Watch schemes which can lead to reduced house insurance.

12. **Dates of future meetings:**

The final meeting of the financial year will be held on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

It was agreed that meetings would continue to be held bi-monthly on the second Tuesday. Meetings for the year 2024/25 will therefore be held on Tuesdays, 14<sup>th</sup> May, 9<sup>th</sup> July, 10<sup>th</sup> September, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and Tuesdays, 14<sup>th</sup> January and 11<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

13. **Open Forum:**  
There were no questions or comments.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 8.07pm.

These minutes were unanimously approved and signed as a correct record by the Chairman at the meeting of Brewham Parish Council on Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024.