

**Minutes of the Meeting of Brewham Parish Council
held at Brewham Village Hall on Tuesday, 13th May 2025**

Present: Robert Jackson (Chair), Richard Hiscock, Mark Perry & Patricia Stainton,

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

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular Mark Perry who, together with Nick Mann, has recently joined the Parish Council following the two resignations in March.

1. **Apologies for Absence:**
Apologies for absence had been received from Nick Mann and Councillor Lucy Trimnell.
2. **Declarations of Interest:**
Richard Hiscock declared an interest in the planning applications at 8ii b & 8iii a and Mark Perry an interest in the planning application at 8iv a.
3. **Election of Chairman of Brewham Parish Council for the year 2025/26:**
Richard Hiscock proposed that Robert Jackson be elected Chairman of Brewham Parish Council for the year 2025/2026. This was seconded by Patricia Stainton and agreed unanimously. Robert Jackson then signed the declaration of acceptance of office.
4. **Election of Vice-Chairman of Brewham Parish Council for the year 2025/26:**
Robert Jackson proposed that Richard Hiscock be elected Vice-Chairman of Brewham Parish Council for the year 2025/26. This was seconded by Patricia Stainton and agreed unanimously. Richard Hiscock then signed the declaration of acceptance of office.
5. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th March 2025:**
The minutes of the meeting held on 11th March 2025 were unanimously approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
6. **Matters Arising:**
There were no matters arising that would not be dealt with elsewhere.
7. **Financial Business:**
 - i. **Financial transactions:**
The Clerk advised that since the last meeting there had been income of £13,050.00 and expenditure of £1,142.41.

The financial transactions for the period 12th March-12th May 2025 were as follows:

Bank balances brought forward on 12 th March 2025	£5,018.09
<u>Income</u>	
Donation from the Saxton family in memory of the late John Saxton	£8,150.00
Precept for the year 1 st April 2025-31 st March 2026	4,900.00
<u>Expenditure:</u>	
Mrs Price & HMRC - Clerk's annual salary & PAYE	1,000.00
Lloyds Bank – Service charges March	5.25
Water2Business – Churchyard tap	132.91
Lloyds Bank – Service charges April	4.25

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The Fund balances on 12th May 2025 were therefore:

General Fund	£4,874.16
Burial Ground Fund	1,651.52
Burial Ground Wall Repair Fund	8,400.00
Reserve Fund	2,000.00

Represented by Bank a/cs:

National Savings Bank Investment a/c	£859.03
Lloyds Bank Treasurers a/c	16,066.65

Bank balances at 12th May 2025 £16,925.68

Bank balances carried forward on 12th May 2025 £16,925.68

It was agreed that the sum currently held in the Burial Ground Wall Repair Fund should be invested in a savings account and that a 90 day notice account should be fine because if the wall needs repairs it will take some time for quotations to be obtained, a proposal to be accepted and the work to commence. The Clerk had done some research and the best account specifically for Parish Councils appears to be the Hinkley & Rugby Building Society which is currently paying 3.4% on a 90-day notice account, although this is likely to reduce with interest rates coming down. Councillor Power had not heard of anyone using this account and it was agreed that the Clerk would do further research to ensure it accepts deposits from any Parish Council, is covered by the financial services compensation scheme, etc. The Clerk will update Councillors by email and if everything is all right it was unanimously agreed to put £8,400 in a 90-day notice savings account.

ii. Payment of invoices:

The Clerk requested authorisation to pay the following invoices – Gallagher - £439.01 for the annual insurance premium; Nigel Payne - £500.00 for the first mowing of the Burial Ground and Brewham Village Hall Committee - £54.00 for the hire of the Village Hall for the year's meetings. **It was unanimously agreed** that these should be paid.

The invoice for the subscription to the Somerset Association of Local Councils had been received in the sum of £206.42 which was a considerable increase on last year (blamed on the problems that Somerset Council is currently experiencing with its finances). Discussion took place on whether to continue with this subscription. The Clerk said that she had found the information provided particularly useful when first in post but has not used the website very much in recent years and it was unanimously agreed to discontinue for the coming year as the Parish Council can rejoin at any time in the future. The Clerk will let SALC know that Brewham Parish Council wishes to cancel its subscription.

iii. Review of Risk Assessment:

The Clerk had updated the risk assessment for the current year for approval by Councillors. **It was agreed** that the risk assessment was adequate and it was re-adopted unanimously.

iv. Certificate of Exemption for the year ended 31st March 2025

Because the annual income/expenditure is less than £25,000 the accounts do not have to be externally audited unless we wish to pay for this. It was again agreed that because the accounts are still prepared in the normal way as if they were to be submitted, are internally audited, posted on the website and everything is available for anyone to scrutinise for at least 30 working days, that this was not a necessary expense. **It was agreed** that unless there were any queries or requests an external audit was not a necessary expenditure. **It was unanimously agreed that the Chairman should sign the Certificate of Exemption for the year ended 31st March 2025 and the Clerk submit it to PKF Littlejohn.**

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v. Renewal of Insurance:

The Clerk had obtained quotes for insurance and the current cover provided by Hiscox Insurance, via Gallagher, was the best and in fact the cost is .08p less than last year at £439.01. **It was unanimously agreed** that the insurance provided by Hiscox Insurance, via Gallagher, be renewed.

vi. Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31st March 2025:

The Chairman took members through the Annual Governance Statement and **it was agreed** that the Council could answer 'Yes' to each of the statements contained in this statement apart from the reference to the Council as the sole trustee of a trust fund or assets as this statement is not applicable. **The Governance Statement for 2024/25 was approved unanimously and signed by the Chairman.**

vii. Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2025:

Copies of the accounts had been circulated. They had once again been internally audited by Ric Roger to whom the Parish Council are extremely grateful. He had noted two points which the Clerk has taken on Board and will ensure are actioned in the future

There were no queries and the **Accounting Statements for 2024/25 were approved unanimously and signed by the Chairman.**

8. **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 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. 24/02267/LBC – Charcroft Farm, South Brewham, BA10 0LG – replacement of windows and doors on all elevations of dwellinghouse. Application approved.
- d. 25/00485/FUL - Border Farm, Border Lane, Brewham, Bruton, BA10 0JQ – replace stable building with artist studio and bat roost. Decision awaited.
- e. 25/00503/FUL - Batts Farm, Hutchins Lane, Brewham, Bruton, BA10 0QN - Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of replacement self-build dwelling, associated landscaping and formation of access. Decision awaited.

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

- a. 25/00658/FUL - Acorn Lodge, South Brewham, Bruton, BA10 0J - Erect replacement dwelling (demolish existing dwelling and stables). Councillors had had no objections and were happy to support this application. Decision awaited.
- b. 25/00181/FUL - Hillcombe Farm, Kingsettle Hill, Brewham, Bruton, BA10 0LB – erection of a Dwelling, as an alternative design and siting for consented and commenced replacement dwelling 20/01836/FUL. Councillors had had no objections and were happy to support this application. Decision awaited.

iii. **Application received and not yet discussed:**

- a. 25/01034/PAMB - Land At Coach Road Farm, Barrow Water Lane, Brewham, Bruton, BA10 0LP – Prior approval from agricultural to dwellings. Although this was a notification only, this application was discussed. Having declared an interest, Richard Hiscock stood down before any discussion took place. The application is being put forward under a Q Class application. Charlie Lane noted that there are four barns on the site which had been extensively refurbished in February to April this year. The foundations of the two barns covered by this application had been excavated to a considerable depth and concrete laid and the existing columns had been extended in length and sunk into these concrete foundations. When the work was completed in April large straw bales had been

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placed inside the barns only to be removed shortly afterwards and replaced with a layer of dirty loose hay/straw covering the newly laid concrete. **It was agreed** that the Clerk would write to Nick Toop, the planning officer in charge of the application, to query whether the proposal falls within the Class Q Planning Conversion given that the barns have been used for storage and the work has only very recently been carried out. If the application is successful it could set a precedent for anyone with a barn or agricultural building to say it was no longer needed for agricultural purposes, refurbish it, lay concrete foundations and then make a Class Q application.

iv. **New application to be considered:**

- a. 25/00971/HOU – Goodhaven, Bruton Road, Brewham, Bruton, BA10 0JF – conversion of existing detached bungalow into a 1.5 storey house to include demolition of existing conservatory, erection of a single storey extension to rear and internal refurbishment. Mark Perry stepped down from the meeting having declared an interest in this application. The remaining members of the Parish Council then discussed it and had no objections and were happy to support the application.

v. **Any new applications received:**

No new applications had been received.

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

There was no report from Mr Nye regarding the closed Churchyard but earlier in the year the sheep were put in to graze and tidy up any long grass and there had been some very pretty flowers earlier in the spring.

Various events have taken place in the Village Hall, including a successful curry evening, and the regular Coffee & Chat and Brewham Hub continue to be well-supported.

8. **Roads:**

a. **Outstanding matters:**

Potholes continue to appear throughout the parish and there are a number which have already been marked for repair as well as some blocked drains to be jetted.

b. **New matters:**

There were reports of some new potholes and the Clerk will report these.

Richard Hiscock queried whether individuals could mend potholes if the Council do not repair them. It was noted that a licence is needed to carry out such work and this would probably cost in the region of £1,500.

John Nicholson has now left the Highways Department and his replacement is Tracy Harris.

9. **Footpaths & Bridleways:**

Outstanding matters:

The Clerk had nothing to update about outstanding problems on footpaths throughout the parish and will continue to press for work to be done.

10. **Report from County Councillors:**

Tom Power had recently circulated his May report.

The Planning Department is not working well at the moment and on the whole applications are taking a long time to be reviewed.

The Highways Department are working hard to repair potholes and he encouraged people to go on to the Council's website to report any potholes they are concerned about.

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The Boundary Commission are still to make their recommendations for the new divisions and the public consultation on these recommendations is due to start on 3rd June.

Somerset Council is working together with Somerset Activity and Sports Partnership (SASP) and school communities to look into ways to reduce congestion and improve the safety of children outside the school gates. The School Street at Bruton Primary School launched on Monday 13th January 2025 and feedback is now being sought on the trial scheme.

On behalf of the Parish Council the Chairman thanked him and Lucy Trimnell for their input during the year, for the work they do and the support they give to Brewham and other parishes in the area.

11. **Dates of future meetings:**

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 8th July 2025. Subsequent meetings for the year 2025/2026 will be held on Tuesdays, 9th September, 11th November 2025 and 6th January and 10th March 2026.

12. **Open Forum:**

Mary MacDonald-Watson noted that the hedge at the top of Hassocks Lane needs cutting back as it is dangerous because it is extremely difficult to turn onto the Bruton-Frome road, especially in a small car. Mark Perry agreed that he would go and talk to the landowner to ask if this hedge could be cut back to improve the visibility.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 8.22pm.

Signed RL Jackson Date.....8th July 2025.....