

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BROOK PARISH COUNCIL
ON 17th SEPTEMBER 2026 HELD IN BROOK AND HINXHILL VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Cllr S Betty (Chair) Cllr A Betty
Cllr R Masters Cllr P Penberthy
Cllr A Wood
The Clerk

		To be actioned by
1.	To receive and approve apologies for absence.	
	Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr V Redfern.	
2.	To receive declarations of interest (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests). The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared.	
	Cllr Penberthy declared an interest in point 11 as a governor of the school.	
3.	To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 16th July 2026	
	The minutes were signed as a true record.	
4.	To discuss matters arising from the above minutes not covered by the agenda.	
	The bank account signatories need to be added and the old Councillors will need to be removed. Cllr Penberthy will authorise the removal of the previous Councillors. We need to order defibrillator pads and battery for October.	
5.	To receive the report from the Borough/County Councillor.	
	The Borough Councillor Ward Member report had been circulated. Cllr Betty reported that LGR has been paused. Local Council elections will take place for Ashford Borough Council in May 2027. Cllr Betty updated the Council on his report. Cllr Masters highlighted that the Wards might be redrawn as far as the LGR plans are concerned. The Water consultation was undertaken over the summer.	
6.	Public Session: To receive questions and comments from the public on any agenda item.	
	There were no public in attendance.	
7.	To consider Recreation Ground Matters including the Play area and parking.	
	The RoSPA report was noted and the slide is cause is for concern. There was a proposal to take the slide out. Cllr Wood is to check whether the slide part could be repurposed. There was a discussion regarding the removal of the slide. RESOLVED: The Clerk will obtain costs for removing the slide. The potential for S106 funds from the development of the former laboratory site in Wye was highlighted, as this is potentially being brought forward for 2030. There is a grant application that Cllr Redfern is to write. It was noted that a bank account is probably required so Cllr Wood will take this forward. Regarding Disabled Parking Bay - RESOLVED: The Clerk will arrange for this to be painted.	
8.	To discuss the Brook sign/noticeboard.	
	The Parish Council are due to have a working party on Saturday 19 th September 2026.	
9.	To approve the Open Spaces Policy	

	RESOLVED: The Open Spaces Policy was approved.													
10.	Financial matters:													
	To approve the following financial documents: To note the Parish Council’s financial position for 31st August 2026: The Parish Council noted it had £9,492.65 in the bank account. To authorise any payments: <table><tr><td>Payee</td><td>Amount</td></tr><tr><td>Clerk</td><td>£452.82</td></tr><tr><td>Clerk</td><td>£429.32</td></tr><tr><td>Bank charges</td><td>£14.00</td></tr><tr><td>HMRC</td><td>£15.26</td></tr><tr><td>HMRC</td><td>£5.07</td></tr></table>	Payee	Amount	Clerk	£452.82	Clerk	£429.32	Bank charges	£14.00	HMRC	£15.26	HMRC	£5.07	
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11.	To receive any correspondence													
	<p>The Clerk has received communication from Brook Primary School stating:</p> <p>“..I am a teacher at Brook Primary School. I wanted to ask if it is possible to apply for some funding from yourselves for some new play equipment for the children at school? Funding is difficult for schools as I’m sure you know, and in a previous school our local parish council kindly gifted us a writing shed for the children, worth £1500 with resources and I would love to try and find some funding for some outdoor play equipment/similar?”</p> <p>The Parish Council no longer has the General Power of Competence nor does it have a grant policy. The Parish Council is therefore unable to assist, the school previously had funds from a cash collection at a beacon lighting which was not directly from our bank account. If Brook School had a PTA, the school could apply for a Ward Members Grant from ABC.</p>													
12.	To consider any changes to the Risk Assessment.													
	There were no changes to be made to the Risk Assessment.													
13.	Planning matters: to authorise a response to any application(s) and to note any recent planning decisions by Ashford Borough Council or any correspondence on planning matters													
	<p>The Parish Council is aware of the proposed Solar Farm in Brabourne.</p> <p>There was an application for the Old Post House, the PC supported the application. This needs to go to Planning Committee as Cllr Betty is the ward member.</p> <p>There is an application for 2 Padel Courts at Bromley Farm on Blackwall Lane. The PC was concerned about traffic and noise.</p> <p>Cllr Wood left the meeting.</p>													
14.	To receive an update on the Local Plan													
	<p>The Borough Council are progressing under a new Local Plan. The PC completed a response initially and it is suggested that we resubmit this again. Further sites are coming forward, although nothing further has come forward in the parish. It is hoped that the Reg 18 consultation will come forward in November.</p> <p>It is noted that the new NPPF came into force on 17th August, this means that the Local Plan will have to follow the new NPPF. This means that under Policy S5 overrides HOU5 and all settlements are affected by Policy S5. Brook remains protected by the National Landscape.</p>													
15.	To receive any updates on Highways/Environment.													
	Cllr Masters had no update on Hudson’s Field.													

	<p>Footpath by the brook is in hand with KCC.</p> <p>The school has undertaken a petition. The school needs an up to date Travel plan.</p> <p>RESOLVED: The Clerk is to contact the Head Teacher to explain the need for a Travel Plan and how to take forward the request for signage. The PC is happy to assist with this by a Highways Improvement Plan.</p>	
16.	To receive a Caretaker Report.	
	<p>The annual Committee meeting was undertaken in July. The purpose was to undertake a full annual appraisal of the caretaker. Based on 2023/24, his workload was split and the costs are proportioned at this rate. He is to check this is still appropriate. The Museum and Smeeth School have declined from being part of the Caretaker group. The Committee are looking at other funding opportunities.</p> <p>This means there will be an increase of the 2027/28 budget of 4%.</p> <p>Cllr Masters asked about the hedge on Spelders Hill the caretaker cuts he undertakes twice a year; this is to cut the top and roadside in order to keep the pavement clear towards the school.</p> <p>The Caretaker discussed the number of people who speak to him and some are in poor mental health. He signposts them to MIND and it was suggested that the NHS be reached out to.</p> <p>All the feedback was very positive.</p>	
17.	To receive the KALC Report.	
	Cllr S Betty provided a brief update following circulation of his report. The Parish Forum will take place on 9 th November. The feedback from attendees in previous years has been positive.	
18.	Any Other Business (for information purposes only).	
	<p>Cllr Masters noticed that there is much work going on in Brook Wood because spruce beetle requires a fire break as Spruce is being removed. An access road is being built and Forest School is not taking place and while the work is being undertaken to this private woods.</p> <p>The former Brook footpath group used to walk the permissive paths through Brook wood but the permissive paths have now been withdrawn for this wood by the landowner.</p> <p>Ashford Borough Council have officially confirmed that Stonebridge Green has been registered as an Asset of Community Value.</p>	
19.	Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.	
	<div>19th November 2026</div> <div>18th March 2027</div>	<div>21st January 2027</div> <div>20th May 2027</div>

The meeting closed at 19:00.

Signed:

Date: