

Brook Parish Council
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Held on Thursday 21st November 2024 at 5.15pm at the Village Hall

Present: Cllr S Betty (Chairman) Cllr A Betty
Cllr Wood

3 members of the public and The Clerk

To be actioned by

1.	To receive any Apologies for absence	
	Cllrs F and P Penberthy had both sent their apologies for absence, these were for unforeseen circumstances and were approved.	
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	
	No declarations of interest were made.	
3.	To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 19th September 2024	
	Resolved: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 19th September 2024 be approved and confirmed as a true record. The minutes were duly signed.	
4.	To discuss any Matters Arising	
	The litterpick was undertaken, 9 people took part. Cllr S Betty reported that he had attended the Parish Forum which was a very successful event.	
5.	To receive a request regarding the discharging of water in to the water course on Parish Council owned land.	
	2 members of the public had attended the meeting to request the discharge of a water course on to PC owned land, this is desirable as the private land regularly floods. The land owner has spoken to a parishioner who advised them to write to the Environment Agency (EA), the River Stour Independent Drainage Board and Kent County Council (KCC). The land owner had spoken to KCC who had sent out a drainage engineer to discuss the issue, the engineer had suggested 2 outfalls for the water. However, further investigation had realised that the brook is designated as a river and is the responsibility of the EA. The EA have to provide the discharge permit. The Chairman of the PC recommends that once the EA permit to discharge is received, the PC would be mindful to approve this, however the PC is conscious that the problem does not want to be displaced to another property. The EA would need to advise that this is not likely to occur.	
6.	To receive the Borough Councillor's Report	
	Cllr S Betty had provided a report that had been circulated. Cllr Betty highlighted that a company was being set up between Ashford Borough Council and Canterbury City Council and they will sell nutrient credits to developers. This is based on the South Norfolk District Council model that does the same. The subsidiary company is called Stour Environmental Credits Ltd and will allow development in the Stodmarsh catchment to begin again. There will be free parking in Ashford and Tenterden at the weekends leading up to Christmas.	
7.	Public session: To receive questions and comments from the public on any agenda item.	
	The member of public attended the meeting to ask will the play ground replacement happen and whether a 20 mph speed limit through the village might be possible. The next agenda item will deal with the play area. A discussion ensued regarding compliance of speed limits and accident data as well as HADAMS data that records speed from mobile phones.	
8.	To receive an update regarding the Recreation Ground to include: a) an update on the Play Area and b) to receive an update on discussions about the use of the Recreation ground	
	Cllr Wood provided some drawings on the play area that Mr Hanton had created and these will be taken	

	to the Village Open Christmas event to discuss them with the residents. Grant applications will also be submitted to see what can be achieved. Cllr S Betty will follow up the issue regarding Village Hall bookings with the Village Hall Committee.																															
9.	To receive a KALC report																															
	The KALC report was circulated.																															
10.	To agree the website/email change following the directive for gov.uk addresses																															
	To be AGAR compliant, Parish Councils need to have gov.uk addresses for website and emails. A discussion was had regarding the need for these and it was agreed to have generic email addresses and website addresses through the HugoFox provider.																															
11.	Financial Matters																															
	<p>To note the Financial Position of the Parish Council There is currently £15,457.98 in the bank.</p> <p>To agree payments in accordance with the Budget Payments were agreed against the budget over expenditure and the payment schedule. The payments schedule was initialled.</p> <p>To agree the budget for 2025/26 The Parish Council agreed the budget for 2025/26.</p> <p>To agree the precept for 2025/26 The precept for 2025/26 was approved for £14,000.</p> <p>The Clerk’s salary is to remain at SCP 17 for 2025/26 with no scale increase.</p> <p>The Clerk had been asked about the increase in funding for the Caretaker. As was discussed in previous meetings, this had been approved by the Parish Council because the original split of Paul’s workload had been on a per capita basis and Brook made up 12% of that figure, for 2023/24, 12% was £2690. Paul worked out his actual time and it resulted in 18% of his time being spent in Brook which lead to an additional increase so the contribution for 2024/25 is £4580.</p> <p>The full workings are as follows:</p> <table><tr><td></td><td colspan="2">2023/24</td><td colspan="2">2024/25</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>%</td><td>£</td><td>%</td><td>£</td></tr><tr><td>Brabourne</td><td>35</td><td>8740</td><td>36</td><td>9150</td></tr><tr><td>Brook</td><td>12</td><td>2690</td><td>18</td><td>4580</td></tr><tr><td>Mersham</td><td>38</td><td>9350</td><td>36</td><td>9150</td></tr><tr><td>Smeeth</td><td>15</td><td>2550</td><td>10</td><td>2600</td></tr></table> <p>The increase percentage over the years of the Clerk’s salary was discussed as this fluctuated rather. This was because the Clerk had qualified for her Certificate in Local Council Administration which provides (as a National Agreement) a 2 scale point increase. The Clerk’s salary also needs to be in line with that of other Councils of a comparable size and volume of work/responsibility.</p>		2023/24		2024/25			%	£	%	£	Brabourne	35	8740	36	9150	Brook	12	2690	18	4580	Mersham	38	9350	36	9150	Smeeth	15	2550	10	2600	
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12.	To consider any changes to the Risk Assessment																															
	There were no changes to be made.																															
13.	To receive the Planning Report																															
	A planning note had been circulated by Cllr P Penberthy. There are not outstanding applications.																															
14.	To receive any updates on Highways/Environment																															
	There was no update to be received.																															
15.	To agree whether to create a Highways Improvement Plan																															
	It was agreed that a Highways Improvement Plan should be created for discussion with Kent Highways. This would include gateways to be installed at either end of the village, hazards lines by the school and School speed caution approach signs.																															

16.	To receive a Caretaker report	
	The Caretaker committee met and discussed contingency options with Aspire. Costs have been received from Aspire and will be updated annually in order that contingency planning is in place for the Caretaker.	
17.	Any Other Business	
	There was no other business to discuss.	
18.	Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council	
	16 th January 2025 20 th March 2025 15 th May 2025	