

## Minutes of the Meeting of Brewham Parish Council held on Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021, by Zoom Conference Meeting at 7.30pm

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

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

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **Apologies for Absence:**  
Apologies for absence had been received from Anna Groskop (County Councillor), Robin Bastable (District Councillor) & PCSO Tim Russell.
2. **Declarations of Interest:**  
There were no declarations of interest.
3. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020**  
The minutes of the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020 meeting were unanimously approved and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.
4. **Matters Arising:**  
There were no other matters arising that would not be dealt with elsewhere.
5. **Financial Business:**
  - i. **Financial transactions:**  
The Clerk reported that since the last meeting income of £50.01 had been received, this being the £50 burial fee for the late Mrs Jefferies and 01p interest on the HSBC savings account.

The payment of Annual Fee of £40 to the Information Commissioner's Office, approved at the November meeting, had been made.

The financial transactions for the 10th November 2020-11<sup>th</sup> January 2021 were therefore as follows:

Bank balances brought forward at 10 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	£4,385.05
<u>Income</u>	
Trotman Funeral Directors - Burial fee for the late Mrs Jefferies	50.00
Interest on HSBC Savings a/c	.01
<u>Expenditure</u>	
The Information Commissioner's Office – annual fee	40.00
<u>The Fund balances at 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021 were therefore:</u>	
General Fund	£2,999.66
Burial Ground Fund	395.40
Reserve Fund	1,000.00

<u>Represented by Bank a/cs:</u>	
National Savings Bank Investment a/c	£845.46
HSBC Savings a/c	241.35
HSBC Community a/c	3,308.25
<u>Total</u>	£4,395.06
Bank balances carried forward at 11 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	£4,395.06

- ii. The Clerk requested approval for payment of the following:  
Brewham Village Hall Committee - £50 for the maintenance of the defibrillator. **It was unanimously agreed** that this be paid.
- iii. Budget & Precept for the financial year 2021-2022:  
The Clerk had circulated a draft budget statement and estimates. She explained that for the current year the precept had been set at £4,000. There is no longer any Central Government Grant and if the precept were to be set at £4,000 once again this would be a resultant increase to the taxpayer of 0.07 pence.

**The Reserve Fund:**

The Reserve Fund ended the year 2019/2020 with a balance of £1,000 and this is the figure that is held in the Fund at the time of the January 2021 meeting.

**The Burial Ground Fund:**

The Burial Ground Fund ended the year 2019/2020 with a balance of £261.40.

£1,000 of the precept was allocated to the Burial Ground Fund for the current year and to date further income of £240 has been received.

This year the expenditure for mowing and maintaining the Burial Ground totalled £1,050, water rates were £81 and at the November meeting it was agreed that Clive Thorman be asked to clean the War Memorial and to invoice for the cost of this which will probably be in the region of £40-50.

The balance in the Burial Ground Fund at the time of the January meeting is £395.40 and, assuming there is no further income or expenditure apart from the cost of cleaning the War Memorial, the Burial Ground Fund is likely to end the year with a balance of about £350.

The Clerk recommended that the Parish Council should once again precept for £1,000 for the Burial Ground Fund.

**The General Fund:**

Expenditure for everything else comes from the General Fund. The balance in the General Fund at the end of the year 2019/2020 was £970.68.

The precept for the current year was £3,000 and the only other income expected during the year is the small amount of savings accounts interest which will be approximately £5.

Current confirmed expenditure for the year is £3,127.00. This figure does not include any further donations for which £500 has been budgeted. In addition the wooden board in the closed Churchyard has rotted and needs repair, the cost of which should be in the region of £40. Having reduced the reserves last year, 2019/2020, the Clerk recommended that consideration should be given to putting aside £200 from the General Fund towards about half the cost of printing Below the Tower in 2022, thus increasing the Reserve Fund to a year-end balance of £1,200.

At the time of the January meeting the balance in the General Fund is £2,999.66. If donations in the region of £550 (to include the agreed defibrillator maintenance) are made between now and year-end and there is no further income or expenditure, other than the Clerk's salary, the repair of the noticeboard in the closed Churchyard and the annual cost of the website, then the balance in the General Fund is likely to be in the region of £1,330 or £1,130 if £200 is transferred to the Reserve Fund to be used in 2022 towards the cost of Below The Tower.

Overall income for the year is likely to be around £4,245 and expenditure around £4,000 (this includes increasing the money in the reserve account to £1,200 to ensure there are sufficient funds to pay for the next edition of Below The Tower) which means there should be a year-end surplus of around £250.

The total held in the three funds/bank accounts will therefore be about £2,680.

The effect of the proposed budget for the year 2021/2022 would be a net expenditure of just under £4,000.

The budget was confirmed and it was agreed that it was not necessary to increase the precept for the year 2021/2022 but that if there was unforeseen expenditure and it proved necessary to use money held in the Reserve Fund during the year then consideration could be given to increasing this amount in the following year.

**It was unanimously agreed** that the precept for the year 2021/2022 should remain at £4,000, this being £1,000 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 2021/2022 requesting that the precept be set at £4,000.

#### Donations for the current year:

It was agreed to discuss donations from the Parish Council although payment will not be made until March in case there is any unexpected expenditure in the final months of the year.

There had been three 'asks' – the Village Hall Restoration Project, St John The Baptist Church and the CAT Bus. It was agreed that as it had not been possible to make any donations last year, apart from the commitment made in the previous year of £200 to the CAT Bus, that £500 should be made available this year. It was decided not to make a further donation to the CAT bus in the current year as it was thought that it was not being used by any members of the Parish due to the current Covid-19 pandemic. **It was unanimously agreed** that the money should therefore be donated equally (i.e. £250 each) to the Village Hall Restoration Fund and St. John The Baptist Church. Payments will be confirmed at the March 2021 meeting.

## 6. Planning Applications:

### i. **Applications already considered by the Parish Council:**

- a. 20/00640/FUL - Batts Farm Cottage, Hutchins Lane, Brewham, BA10 0QN – the demolition of existing two storey detached dwelling and construction of new proposed two storey replacement dwelling. Decision awaited. The Clerk reported that Robin Bastable has been contacted by the applicant asking about the long delay by the Planning Department in coming to a decision.
- b. 20/01034/DPO - Dreamers Farm, North Brewham, BA10 0JW - Application to discharge a section 106 agreement between South Somerset District Council and Mr Simon Joseph Giles Oakley attached to planning approval 07/04295/FUL dated 29th September 2008 in relation to an agricultural tie and non-fragmentation of the holding. Application permitted November 2020.
- c. 20/01836/FUL - Hillcombe Farm Kingsettle Hill, Brewham BA10 0LB –

The erection of a replacement dwelling (with replacement courtyard building) (Revised application). Application approved December 2020.

- d. 20/02155/HOU - Rose Cottage Bruton Road Brewham Bruton BA10 0JF – Erection of a single storey extension to side of dwelling and timber cladding to replace existing render. Application approved November 2020.

ii. **Applications received since the Parish Council's last meeting:**

No new applications have been received.

7. **Burial Ground & Churchyard:**

David Nye reported that the sheep had been left for longer than he would have wished and because they were fed hay near the gate it is a bit messy there. He has now taken down the fence and he thanked Robert Jackson for filling in the tomb which had sunk again. There is now a lot of earth on top and he may sow some seeds there. The snowdrops have not yet begun to appear.

The Clerk noted that the noticeboard just inside the Church gate has fallen over and it was agreed that this should be repaired.

8. **Roads:**

i. **Outstanding matters:**

Some of the potholes in the parish have been repaired but nothing has been done on the road at Border towards Cooks Farm where the subsidence on the left-hand side is getting considerably worse or similarly on the Bedlamgreen road. The potholes on Tower Road which were repaired last year are getting worse. **The Clerk** will urgently contact the Highways Department about all these.

9. **Footpaths & Bridleways:**

i. **Outstanding matters:**

Due to the ongoing pandemic and the Christmas holidays, the Footpath Officer has yet to look at the footpath at Swanton Farm and the stiles on the footpath leading from Hoofprints.

- ii. David Nye reported that in one of the fields on the footpath towards Hoofprints there is an electric fence near the stile which his wife had found to be live. David Dabinett said he had walked this path recently and although there is an electric fence there it was not switched on but he will check this with Clive Thorman.

10. **Update on the Village Hall Restoration Project & Parish Plan**

Patricia Stainton reported that due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic there was very little happening but a big effort is being made to obtain further large grants for the second and final phase of the Village Hall restoration and a submission has been made to Viridor once again.

Eddie Harper advised that letters have been sent to various people in the parish, particularly those with businesses, in the hope that they will be willing to make donations towards enabling this final phase work to be done.

David Dabinett had received a copy of a letter from Ian MacDonald Watson setting out his reasons for declining to make any further donations because he felt a more modest improvement would meet the needs of the Hall and parishioners. He suggested that instead of the proposed work the existing toilets be refurbished, the existing kitchen and boiler be renovated, a fire-resistant steel roller shutter system be fitted to the hall side of the existing peninsula of kitchen units, to form a division between the kitchen and the main hall, and that any change to the existing rear terrace would be a waste of money because, for the rare occasions when it might be used in good weather, the back door gives adequate access, with disabled access and egress being down the side of the

building and up the ramp. In his opinion too it is not necessary to create a new small 'multi-purpose' room as the same capability could be achieved by restoring the existing concertina partitions so that these can be closed to create a smaller space when needed.

David Dabinett agreed with all these points and confirmed that he was very happy with the very good work that had been done in the first phase but that he is not happy with the changing of the toilets, small reception and kitchen and that it is a lot of money to put a terrace out the back and to open up the end gable wall. A lot of people have spoken to him and others about it over the last couple of years and they agree that not all the proposed work is needed which is going to cost so much money.

Eddie Harper confirmed that there is nothing new in the proposed work and that the plans were available for everyone to see and comment on before they were approved by the Planning Department two years ago and nothing has been changed since.

David Dabinett said that anyone making donations would want to know what each part of this final phase was going to cost so that they would know what the money they are donating is going to be used for. Eddie Harper confirmed that everyone to whom the letter has been sent will know this.

Patricia Stainton reiterated that the plans went through the correct planning process at which time everyone had the opportunity to make their comments with the planners in the normal way. There were a lot of comments in support and there were also a few that did not support them. The plans have been shown on a number of occasions, including when the Hall was re-opened last March, and the plans have not been changed since they were approved.

Robert Jackson confirmed that he does not agree with the amount of work proposed for the final phase in the current plans. He queried the number of toilets and Eddie Harper confirmed that the number of toilets were as required by the planners.

Patricia Stainton thought that while some people do not agree with the plans, and have not since the beginning, there are a lot of people who do and a large number of people have put a lot of work and energy into raising funds and been involved and enthusiastically helped. The current disabled ramp at the back of the Hall does not comply with regulations because it is too steep. With regard to costings, quotations are currently being obtained and in a couple of weeks it will be known exactly what everything will cost. The Hall had got to such a state that work had to be done to make it sustainable for the future – the roof leaked, the pointing had gone and the boiler needs replacing.

Richard Hiscock asked about the estimated timescale and Patricia Stainton confirmed that funds need to be raised first. He asked whether the work on the terrace might be dropped if insufficient funds were raised. Patricia Stainton confirmed that they will try and raise funds for the whole scheme but if necessary consideration might have to be given to not going ahead with something. The exact amount of the costs will be available at the next meeting. The reason for asking for further donations now is because the Viridor grant once again requires match funding.

David Dabinett asked if there was a timescale for any grants that might be received. Patricia Stainton confirmed that there is for the Viridor grant but this funding would be used for the initial work needed and there would be a year to complete it. The application is again for £50,000 which includes VAT and it needs 10% match funding, i.e. £5,000, so the grant, if awarded, would be less this amount. This is the reason for Eddie Harper sending out the recent letters as the funding is needed before the next stage.

11. **Report from PCSO Tim Russell:**

PCSO Tim Russell was unable to attend the meeting and had not sent a report.. He had told the Clerk that he would be making regular patrols by Alfred's Tower during lockdown.

12. **Correspondence Received:**

The following correspondence had been received since the last meeting:

- (i) Get SuSSed newsletter.
- (ii) Census 2021 information.
- (iii) SSSDC Community Matters.
- (iv) Stronger Somerset letter.
- (v) Covid-19 Tier 4 Poster.

13. **Dates of future meetings:**

Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and then for the year 2021/2022 – Tuesdays, 11<sup>th</sup> May, 13<sup>th</sup> July, 14<sup>th</sup> September & 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 and Tuesdays, 11<sup>th</sup> January & 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

14. **Open Forum:**

The Clerk advised that the Census will be taking place on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

David Nye asked whether there have been any reports of Covid-19 in the village. There had been at the start of the pandemic but no-one had heard of any recent cases and some parishioners have already been invited to have vaccinations.

David Nye asked whether a decision had been made about the future of local government in Somerset. The proposals have been submitted to the Secretary of State and a decision is likely to be made by early summer this year with a view to having any new councils in place in 2023 when the next elections are due.

There were no questions or matters anyone wished to raise.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.17.