

Minutes of the Meeting of Brewham Parish Council held at The Old Red Lion, North Brewham on Tuesday, 11th January 2022

Present: David Dabinett (Chair), Eddie Harper & Robert Jackson.

In attendance: Anna Groskop (County Councillor), Sue Price (Clerk) & six members of the public.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **Apologies for Absence:**

Apologies for absence had been received from Richard Hiscock, Patricia Stainton, Robin Bastable (District Councillor) & PCSO Tim Russell.

2. **Declarations of Interest:**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th November 2021:**

The minutes of the 9th November 2021 meeting were unanimously approved and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

4. **Matters Arising:**

There were no matters arising that would not be dealt with elsewhere.

5. **Financial Business:**

i. **Financial transactions:**

The Clerk reported that since the last meeting there had been income of £50.01p being the quarterly interest on the HSBC Saving account and the burial fee for the late Mrs Cook.

As agreed at the November meeting payments, as below, had been made to Michael Gardner for additional work related to the Burial Ground, the Information Commissioner's annual fee, Christopher Saxton for work to tidying and clearing near the entrance to the Burial Ground and cleaning the War Memorial, the hire of the Church for the November meeting and Holly Pepper for her work cleaning the graffiti on Tower Road bridge. The HSBC Community account had ceased to exist and the money transferred to a Business account for which there are now monthly charges of £8 + £1 for each transaction.

Income of £160 had been received for a cremated remains plot and burial fee and cheques for the Somerset Association of Local Councils annual subscription and the wreaths for Remembrance Day have yet to be cashed.

The financial transactions for the period 9th November 2021-10th January 2022 were as follows:

Bank balances brought forward at 9 th November 2021	£5,184.86
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Income:

Quarterly interest on HSBC Savings a/c	0.01
Burial fee for the late Mrs Cook	50.00
Purchase of two burial plots – the Garrett Family	280.00

Expenditure:

Michael Gardiner for additional work and mower repair	£59.00
Information Commissioner's Office annual fee	40.00
Parochial Church Council for hire of Church for November meeting	10.00
Christopher Saxton tidying, clearing and cleaning around War Memorial	102.50
Holly Pepper – book token for cleaning graffiti from Tower Road bridge	20.00
Bank charges	12.00

The Fund balances at 10th January 2022 were therefore:

General Fund	£3,485.89
Burial Ground Fund	285.48
Reserve Fund	1,500.00

Represented by Bank a/cs:

National Savings Bank Investment a/c	£851.55
HSBC Savings a/c	241.39
HSBC Community a/c	4,178.43

Total £5,271.37

Creditors

Burial fee and cremated remains plot for the late Mr Rayner	160.00
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Debtors

Somerset Assn of Local Councils – annual subscription	120.92
Royal British Legion – Remembrance Day wreaths	40.00

Bank balances to include creditors & debtors £5,270.45

Bank balances carried forward at 10th January 2022 £5,271.37

- ii. The Clerk requested approval for the following payment to be made:
Meeting Room Hire for January & March – The Old Red Lion - £20.

This was unanimously agreed and it was also unanimously agreed later in the meeting to give a donation of £100 to the Village Hall Restoration Fund and for Christopher Saxton to be asked to fix the bench in the closed Churchyard and clear the worst of the growth on the Burial Ground wall up to a maximum of £200. Councillors authorised that Christopher Saxton could be paid if his invoice was received before the March meeting.

- iii. Budget & Precept for the financial year 2022-2023:

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.

The Reserve Fund:

The Reserve Fund ended the year 2020/21 with a balance of £1,000 and in May 2021 it was agreed to add a further £500 to the Reserve Fund to bring it up to £1,500 – this being the amount previously held in this Fund before money was taken out to pay part of the Burial Ground wall repairs. The sum of £1,500 is therefore currently held in the Reserve Fund at the time of the January 2022 meeting and it is hoped this will also be the figure at year-end.

The Burial Ground Fund:

The Burial Ground Fund ended the year 2020/21 with a balance of £522.40.

£500 of the precept was allocated to the Burial Ground Fund for the current year and to date further income of £942 has been received. This is a very much higher figure than

in the average year due mainly to the sale of four burial plots and one cremated remains one.

This year the expenditure for mowing and maintaining the Burial Ground was £1,409, (higher than budgeted due to Clive Thorman having to cease mowing early in the season), water rates were £82.42 and cleaning and tidying around the war memorial and the adjacent wall £102.50.

The balance in the Burial Ground Fund at the time of the January meeting is £445.48 (to include £160 yet to show in the bank). It was agreed in the meeting that Christopher Saxton should be asked to remove some of the worst undergrowth from the Burial Ground wall and so the year-end balance is likely to be in the region of £300.

The Clerk recommended that the precept for the coming year for the Burial Ground Fund should be set at £1,000.

The General Fund:

Expenditure for everything else comes from the General Fund. The balance in the General Fund at the end of the year 2020/21 was £1,530.76.

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 £2,250.82 and at the time of the January meeting the balance in the General Fund is £3,485.89. The cost of fixing the bench was already agreed and there will also be website charges. Unless there is any other unforeseen expenditure the year is likely to end with a balance of just over £2,000.

The total held in the three funds/bank accounts at year-end will therefore be about £4,000.

The Clerk noted that although this figure appears to be quite high it should be borne in mind that the budget estimates for the coming year are higher than in previous years with printing Below the Tower likely to cost in the region of £600+, Parish Council elections are being brought forward a year to May 2022 and are likely to cost in the region of £250 and it will be necessary to pay someone to mow the Common Land at the top of Charcroft Hill in the coming year which is likely to be in the region of £300.

The effect of the proposed budget for the year 2022/2023 would be a net expenditure of just under £5,000.

The Clerk recommended that if the balance in the General Fund at year-end is around £2,000 the precept for the coming year could again be set at £3,000 and thus the total precept for the year would remain at £4,000. She further noted that there will be a new Chairman for the year 2022/23 and possibly other new Councillors and thus it might be best to keep the precept the same for the coming year and for the new Chairman and Councillors to decide whether to increase the precept the following year.

The budget was confirmed and it was unanimously agreed not to increase the precept for the year 2022/2023 because £1,500 is held in the Reserve Fund and some of this could be used should there be any unforeseen expenditure.

It was unanimously agreed that the precept for the year 2022/2023 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 2022/2023 requesting that the precept be set at £4,000.

6. **Planning Applications:**

(i) Decisions on applications already considered by the Parish Council:

- a. 21/00632/HOU. Two storey extension at the back of the house with room in the roof, single storey side extension and side and back canopy to create a gallery around the house. Treetops House, Druley Hill, Brewham, BA10 0JS. Application approved.
- b. 21/02556/LBC. The conversion of garage into a home office, replace timber garage doors with mild steel and glazed doors, new black metal flue in rear roof and internal alterations. Cockeymoor Farmhouse, Tile Hill, Brewham, BA10 0JF. Application approved.
- c. 21/01217/LBC. The erection a porch on the front and rear of the property. Shave Farm, Shave Lane, Brewham, Bruton BA10 0LG & 1/01209/HOU. The erection a porch on the front and rear of the property. Shave Farm, Shave Lane, Brewham BA10 0LG. Decision awaited.

(ii) Applications received since the Parish Council's last meeting and discussed by email:

- a. 21/03176/HOU & 21/03177/LBC - Canwood House, Canwood Lane, BA10 0JN. The erection of a conservatory and pergola, construction of a courtyard, relocation of tennis court and associated landscaping. Decision awaited.
- b. 21/03282/FUL – Dreamers Farm, Strap Lane, Brewham, BA10 0JW. Demolition of existing dwelling and agricultural buildings, including one with prior approval to convert to two dwellings, redevelopment of site by the erection of three dwellings and replacement agricultural building and associated landscaping and revised access arrangements. Decision awaited.

(iii) New applications for consideration:

No new applications had been received.

7. **Burial Ground & Churchyard:**

It was agreed that the Clerk should ask Christopher Saxton to fix the new bench in the closed Churchyard having discussed the siting with Mr & Mrs Nye and remove the worst of the undergrowth on the Burial Ground wall up to a maximum cost of £200 in total.

8. **Roads:**

a. Outstanding matters:

The Clerk had reported the matters raised at the November meeting but nothing had been done and she will continue to pursue these.

b. New matters:

The drains in Hassocks Lane are blocked. The potholes by the tree outside Hookgate Farm are getting worse and on the left-hand side of the road just past the entrance to Tower View Cottage and almost opposite Leaside has hardly any verge between a deep ditch and the road raising the possibility of an accident if it is icy or someone is coming at speed from the opposite direction.

9. **Footpaths & Bridleways:**

a. Outstanding matters:

There has still been no progress on the blocked footpath at Swanton Farm or the broken stiles on other footpaths. The Clerk had been in touch with Eve Wynn but she had still not responded. It was noted that it is now nearly six years that the Parish Council has been trying to get the Swanton Farm footpath unblocked and that the broken stiles on other footpaths are dangerous.

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

In Patricia Stainton's absence, James Coward reported that work on Phase Two of the Village Hall restoration is going well and the progress is on schedule. The budget for this phase was £252,000 and £242,000 has already been raised. Cath Coward had written to the Clerk asking whether the Parish Council would support a further application £10,000 being made to South Somerset District Council. The application had been submitted and the Council had indicated that a small donation from the Parish Council would be helpful in securing the money. **It was unanimously agreed** that a donation of £100 be made to the Village Hall Restoration Fund. James Coward thanked the Parish Council and confirmed that this would be the last donation needed for the completion of Phase Two.

It is hoped that the Hall will be open and fully functioning again sometime in the Spring.

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

PCSO Russell had given his apologies but had not sent a report.

12. **Correspondence Received:**

- a. Councillor Groskop's December & January briefings.
- b. Somerset County Council Covid-19 updates.
- c. New Somerset Council Local Community Networks briefing.
- d. Somerset Waste December briefing.
- e. SALC December briefing.
- f. Letter advising about elections for May 2022.
- g. Get SuSSed December newsletter.

13. **Dates of future meetings:**

The final meeting of the financial year will be held at The Old Red Lion on Tuesday, 8th March 2022.

Proposed meeting dates for the financial year 2022/2023 – Tuesdays, 10th May (following Annual Meeting), 12th July, 13th September & 8th November 2022 and Tuesdays, 10th January & 14th March 2023.

14. **Open Forum:**

The Parish Council elections will be held on Thursday, 5th May 2022.

Mary Macdonald Watson thanked the members of the Parish Council for keeping the precept at £4,000 for the coming financial year.

Ann Saxton asked if the Clerk could contact the Post Office about reinstating the post box opposite the village hall.

There were no further questions or matters anyone wished to raise and there being no further business the meeting closed at 8.10pm.

These minutes were unanimously agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record at the 8th March 2022 Parish Council Meeting.