**Brent Pelham and Meesden Parish Council**

**MINUTES OF**

**BRENT PELHAM & MEESDEN PARISH COUNCIL**

**Thursday 21st November 2024**

**At Meesden Village Hall**

**PRESENT:**

Trevor Hughes Councillor and Chairman

Steve Murphy Councillor

Sarah Wotton-Ramsay Councillor

Wilf Dimsdale Councillor

Ted Barclay Councillor and Vice Chairman

Cllr Geoff Williamson – Little Hadham & The Pelhams Ward

**In Attendance:** Ken Newstead – Clerk

**APOLOGIES**: Cllr Chris Dodds -Approved

**Minute Item Action**

**Year.Month.Item**

**24.11.01 Welcome and Apologies**

The Chairman welcomed District Cllr Geoff Williamson to this meeting.

**24.11.02 Declaration of Interests**

Cllr Barclay declared his interest in one of the planning applications.

**24.11.03 To approve Minutes from the September 2024 Parish Council meeting**

**Resolved** - proposed Cllr Wotton-Ramsay, seconded Cllr Murphy that the minutes were a true and accurate record of proceedings, and they were duly signed by Cllr Hughes as Chairman. Unanimous decision.

**24.11.04 Public Issues/Participation**

District Cllr Geoff Williamson opened the discussion in response to emails received from our Parish Councillors in relation to East Herts Planning team’s recent refusal of any new housing development in our Parish. Geoff confirmed that this was a general policy in all Group 3 villages and only a few applications from Group 3 villages have been approved. He recognised that this is a harsh rule that he personally did not support but noted that reviews to the District plan had just started and there was the possibility that this rule could change over the coming years. In the meantime, it would mean that any rejected plans that are sent for appeal would need to prove sustainability.

The Parish Councillors questioned why Solar Panels are not compulsory on new developments, but Cllr Williamson could not answer this.

Frustration was expressed regarding the apparent lack of any restrictions on Traveller Sites flaunting all planning rules. Cllr Williamson confirmed that the Council would be taking legal action against the most recent site on the A10 at Puckeridge but offered no reassurance that this would be successful.

**24.11.05 Finance – Annual Accounts and Proposals for Payment**

The Clerk presented a summary of all expenditure this period and gave a breakdown of the spend versus budgetdetailed on the accounts. The accounts for YTD were approved and the Bank Statements were checked and verified against it as a true record of accounts.

The **proposals for payment** outlined on the agenda were Proposed and Seconded without any objections.

The Clerk presented his **2024/25 Forecast** including the analysis by category and Forecast comments. It was noted that our Brent Pelham & Meesden Parish Council has one of the lowest Precepts and one of the lowest costs per resident. The Councillors all agreed that the precept needed to be increased in-line with inflation and an increase of £180 (4.96%) was proposed and seconded with all in agreement. The **2025/26 Precept Upon Billing Authority** was signed at the meeting for the Clerk to submit to the District Council. **KN**

Cllr Wotton-Ramsay informed the Council that the previously approved erection of a commemorative “Tommy” soldier in Brent Pelham village had met with significant objection from some residents in the village and financial support from others. Cllr Wotton-Ramsay is to seek support from the vicar of the church to find a possible way forward. **SWR**

**24.11.06 Planning Applications**

The applications or requests for consultation received since last meeting were detailed on the agenda. All submissions reviewed without objection.

**24.11.07 Highways**

Following advice from Cllr Jeff Jones saying *“If you believe the gullies are blocked you need to report them precisely on the fault reporting portal on the HCC website”* Cllr Wotton-Ramsay agreed to liaise with Cllr Barclay and produce a map of Brent Pelham village showing all known drainage gulleys that the Highways team seem to be unaware of. Cllr Hughes is to report several potholes that exist in Meesden village. **SWR**

**24.11.08 Village Defibrillators and Emergency Telephone System**

No issues this period. Routine serviceable items completed.

**24.11.09 Repairs and Maintenance**

Cllr Murphy is to check the recently cleared drain in Meesden and to speak with resident Mike West regarding the damaged sewer pipe at Puddles Barn to establish if this could be the cause of recent blockages. **SM**

Cllr Barclay is to resolve the loose support for the Brent Pelham village noticeboard.

**24.11.10 AOB**

A recent email from HAPTC has caused some confusion regarding the Councils Insurance policy cover for non-employees. Clerk to investigate **KN**

**24.11.16 Date of Next Meetings**

The next Parish Council meetings are to be held on:

**Thursday 13th February 2025 – at Brent Pelham Village Hall**

**Thursday 15th June 2025 – at Meesden Village Hall**

**The meeting concluded at 8:45 pm**

Minutes approved by Chairperson: .............................................................

Signed: .......................................................................................

Date: ...........................................