

Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting
Held at Bredgar Village Hall
On Wednesday 14th August 2024 at 7.30pm

Present: Chair Cllr. Brian Clarke; Vice Chair Cllr. Nigel Osmer;
Cllr. Mike Day; Cllr. Stephen Parfitt and Cllr. Penny Twaites.
Clerk: Teresa Hudson.

Members of the Public: One member of the public was present.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. David Priestley, Cllr. Hilary Whitnell, SBC Cllr. Richard Lehman and PC Kirsten Jones.

2. Declaration of Members' Personal and Prejudicial Interest

There were no interests to declare.

3. Declaration of any intention to record or film the PC meeting by any member of the Council or member of the public.

There were no intentions to record or film the meeting by anyone present.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the previous PC meeting held on 15th May 2024 were read and formally approved by the Parish Council. They are now available on the Parish website. Proposed by Cllr. B. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. P. Twaites, all councillors agreed.

The Minutes were signed by the Chair at the end of the meeting.

Matters arising

The Parish Council is pleased to confirm that Cllr. Hilary Whitnell is able to continue as a Parish Councillor following the report at the last meeting that she was to stand down for personal reasons.

5. NHW/Police Report

PC Kirsten Jones reported by email that the only point to raise continues to be the nuisance vehicles in and around the area. Police have been collating information for some months and have targeted days of action with varying success. They will continue to provide updates.

Cllr. Parfitt has been contacted by 4 parishioners concerned about the nuisance vehicles and will continue to keep them informed.

There are no planned police surgeries in Bredgar at present.

6. Ten Minutes Representation by the Public

Nothing to report.

7. Authorisation of Accounts

PAYMENTS

01/05/24	Bredgar Farmshop PO Rent	200.00
01/05/24	Ask A Gardener Village Maint.	150.00
03/05/24	Hippo Bag Waste for cemetery	189.98

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16/05/24	Clear Councils	Insurance	700.35
20/05/24	OnBuilding Ltd	Decking Repairs	296.70
21/05/24	EDF	Pond Electricity	48.28
03/06/24	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	200.00
03/06/24	EDF	Pond Electricity	63.00
04/06/24	Mutts Butts	Dog Waste Bags	76.02
04/06/24	Ask A Gardener	Village Maint.	225.00
04/06/24	T. Hudson	Honorarium	450.32
14/06/24	Adrian Martin	Pond Work	180.00
21/06/24	CPRE	Subs	36.00
26/06/24	SBC	Leaflet Printing-Highsted Park	23.05
30/06/24	Unity Trust	Service Charge	18.00
01/07/24	EDF	Pond Electricity	63.00
01/07/24	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	200.00
03/07/24	Cllr. Clarke	Domain Renewal	14.39
04/07/24	Ask A Gardener	Village Maint.	150.00
04/07/24	Cllr. Clarke	Int Auditor Gift	16.00
09/07/24	Unity Trust	Multipay Card Setup Fee	50.00
12/07/24	ICO	Data Protection Fee	35.00
12/07/24	SBC	Cemetery Brown Bin	59.00
14/07/24	ROSPA	Rec Grd Inspection	98.40
24/07/24	A. Martin	Pond Work	180.00
27/07/24	Sittibuilders	Repair work/Garden/Cemetery	1788.00

RECEIPTS

25/04/24	NSI	Compensation	50.00
26/04/24	SBC	Precept	6172.00
10/05/24	Dr J Aylett	Burial of Mr Aylett	819.70
23/05/24	Bredgar Book	Sales	260.00
06/06/24	H & Watson Sol.	Bequest from J. M. Evans	100.00
13/06/24	Jan Mair	Purchase of Grave Space	300.00
25/06/24	Bredgar Cricket C.	Rec Grd Rent	50.00

8. Financial Matters

Financial Review

The Financial Review was circulated by the clerk by email prior to the meeting. Since then, the PC has been notified of 3 burials of ashes which will take place in the next few weeks.

The fees for the two consultations by Cerda and Red Kite for the proposed Highsted Park development are unknown as yet.

The external auditors, Mazars, have agreed the annual audit for 2023-2024 with no recommendations to implement. The cost for the external audit is £210.00

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Banking Update

The remaining funds in the Barclays account will be transferred to the Unity Trust account and the Barclays account will be closed.

The PC has acquired a Corporate Card with Unity Trust. The statements will be brought to each PC meeting by the Clerk/RFO and will be signed off by two councillors.

9. Reports from Councillors

Cllr. Clarke

Cllr. Clarke attended the Vigo Solar farm meeting. Concerns including loss of high-grade agricultural land have led to the planning application being refused. The hedge between Gore Road and the recreation ground is not in a good condition. Councillors agreed that it would be scrubbed out and replaced with mixed native hedge. Cllr. Osmer is to obtain quotes. The costs for the project will be approved by email to enable prompt action in the autumn.

The Coronation walled flowerbed in Bush Close and the cemetery shed roof have been repaired by Sittibuilders as agreed.

Landscape Services will cut back the nettles at the rear of the cricket pavilion and spray with weedkiller. Councillors will then spread wildflower seeds on the area.

SBC Cllr. Monique Bonney arrived at 8.15pm.

The gate post at the recreation ground has been repaired.

The brambles opposite Bush House have been cut back.

KCC have requested the annual grass cutting H&S and insurance certificates from SBC and the PC.

Report From Cllr. Priestley given by Cllr. Clark

Cllr. Priestley invited Pond Warden David Clary to visit Bredgar pond. Mr. Clary thought Bredgar pond was in a good condition and well looked after. The main problem is the number of fish. A reduction is to be organised.

The concrete cassons behind the bus stop area are dropping away from the edge and will require repair.

A quote has been agreed for the cleaning of the War Memorial.

Cllr. Day

The potholes and crumbling roads around the village are a constant concern to all residents. The water leaks in Swanton Street are still not resolved. Cllr.

Clarke is to contact SBC Cllr Lehman to assist in pushing for a resolution.

Cllr. Parfitt

The anonymous letter regarding waste disposal at Saywell Farm has been passed to Maidstone authority who are looking into it.

Gordon Dennis will paint the decking edge and bench.

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A village litter pick is arranged for 22nd September.

The ROSPA report, at first glance, appears to ignore remedial work carried out during the last year on the recreation ground play equipment. The latest report gives clearer details and photos of the areas concerned, e.g. bolt ends needing cutting off etc. which gives councillors a clearer idea of the repairs required. Cllrs Clarke and Parfitt will go through the report and arrange for the remaining issues to be addressed.

The Bicknor Lane subsidence has been rectified.

Kent Carriers charges have increased and services amended. There is still no news of a Bredgar bus service being reinstated.

Cllr. Osmer

The erroneous pole erected in The Street has been investigated. KCC will organise the required signage.

A request has been made by a parishioner to assess whether it would be viable to remove the front lawns of the housing association bungalows opposite the Church and replace with parking. A site meeting will be held.

Cllr. Twaites

Footpath application ZR166: The PC have made the suggestion that the applicant withdraw the application and use signage instead. The PC is waiting for a response from KCC.

After a lull in planning applications, there appears to be quite a few coming along in recent weeks. Most are not controversial, and councillors have no objections.

A couple of points were raised concerning the Workshops application, Any comments made are collated by Cllr. Twaites and submitted to SBC Planning.

10. Planning Matters

Highsted Park

A number of consultees on the application have requested additional information. SBC will consult on the readiness of the requested documents prior to a members' meeting on 10th September; an extraordinary planning meeting is scheduled on 23rd September at which it is hoped that the local parishes and /or their consultants (Cerde and Red Kite) will have an opportunity to be heard.

The report from Cerde has been received and commented on by Bredgar councillors; the report from Red Kite is due soon. These comprehensive reports cover the environmental, ecological and landscape issues to be flagged.

Local Plan

A SBC meeting has been held to determine how local development should be spread around the borough. Until a Local Plan is achieved, the council is quite vulnerable to intervention from central government.

Waste Issues

Since SBC awarded the waste contract to Suez, there have been serious issues across Swale with regard to bins not being emptied. Swale councillors have met with Suez officials and have voiced their concern in no uncertain terms. The commercial contract has the correct controls and checks in place, but the

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problem has been implementing it. Suez have fully admitted they let down rural rounds and will need to rework some rounds.

There is to be a summer plan for street cleaning.

11. Village Matters

Bredgar House Update

Remedial work continues at Bredgar House. As a listed building, parishioners are concerned that a significant amount of uncontrolled work is being carried out. An enforcement letter has been sent but it appears an enforcement officer has yet to obtain entry to the site. Cllr. Bonney is to follow up.

Rospa Report

Post Office

A sub committee of Cllr. Osmer, Cllr. Clarke and Cllr. Parfitt along with Postmaster Teresa Hudson met to discuss the future of Bredgar Post Office and what, if anything, needs to be put in place to preserve the facility for the village. It is hoped that the Post Office will continue for many years to come but conditions change and viability may be compromised.

It was agreed that a letter be sent to Post Office Ltd with copies to MP Helen Whately and the Post Office Minister, asking for Central Government's view on the future of Post Offices.

Proposed by Cllr. Osmer, seconded by Cllr. Clarke.

Remembrance Sunday preparations

Councillors agreed that they would carry out the usual routine on Remembrance Sunday. The Chair expressed an interest in an environmentally friendly wreath this year. Costs will be investigated.

12. Highways Improvement Plan

Councillors recognise that parishioners are keen for a lower speed on the roads in and around Bredgar, particularly Bexon Lane. The KCC Highways/PC Annual Review is approaching, and the PC subcommittee will discuss the issue with KCC. The PC understand that any changes to the speed limit will entail costs for the PC.

The subcommittee will review and update the HIP.

13. Community Assets

Designating a local amenity as a Community Asset safeguards the first option to purchase should an owner decide to sell.

Councillors agreed to revisit Community Assets on a three-monthly basis.

14. Any Other Business

Health & Safety Policy

The health & Safety policy is to be reviewed, and updated if necessary.

Tree Preservation

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Cllr. Bonney informed the meeting that if a person or body owned several trees in the conservation area, it is preferable to submit a tree preservation application to SBC if any works are required within 10 years as a collective order

on the same plan. Once approved, it then requires only 5 days notice to carry out work on a particular tree in that application.

15. Dates of Future Meetings

Wednesday 13th November 2024 at 7.30pm.

The meeting concluded at 9.45pm.