

Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting
Held at Bredgar School
On Wednesday 12th February 2020 at 7.30pm

Present: Chair Cllr. Brian Clarke;
Joint Vice Chair Cllr. Penny Twaites; Joint Vice Chair Cllr. Jane Ingram;
Cllr. Mike Day; Cllr. Beverley McCourt and Cllr. David Priestley.

Clerk: Teresa Hudson

Members of the Public: Four members of the public attended the meeting.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received and approved from KCC Cllr. Andrew Bowles.

2. Declaration of Members' Personal and Prejudicial Interest

No Interests were declared.

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

No declaration of intent was made.

The duration of the meeting was two hours and five minutes.

4. Resignation of Cllr. Charman

The resignation of Cllr. Carole Charman was accepted by the PC.

The vacancy is currently being advertised for 14 days in accordance with regulations.

5. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the previous PC meeting held on 13th November 2019 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. J. Ingram.

They were signed by the Chair at the end of the meeting.

Matters Arising

Letter to Local Landowners

The Chair proposed to write the agreed letter to local landowners asking for support in keeping footpaths clear in a few weeks when crops start growing.

Encroaching gate

It has been reported that the owners of the property at the rear of Westfield have installed a wooden gate, which swings open and encroaches onto the highway. This could be a potential hazard to passing traffic, particularly at night. The clerk is to report it to KCC.

Purple Leaf Plum Tree

The stake has been replaced on the plum tree just in time before the storm winds arrived.

Fallen branch

The fallen branch in the recreation ground has been removed.

Cemetery Regulations

The cemetery regulations have been updated with the revised costs in line with SBC.

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Housing Needs Survey

The Chair reported that the Housing Needs Survey would probably take about 18 months from the initial request, which was last September, to be realised.

Recreation Ground Fencing

The fencing on the north boundary of the recreation ground has been completed. Councillors are pleased with the work.

The local landowner has agreed to replant the border with a bare root hedge to compliment the fencing but it has yet to be started.

6. PCSO Report

There is to be a PCSO session in the Farmshop tomorrow, 13th February, for parishioners to voice any concerns they may have. Another session is planned for 10th March at 11.00am until 12.00pm.

7. Ten Minutes Representation by the Public

Two members of the public attended to ask the PC to collaborate with a view to setting up a party to carry out a litter pick in Bredgar. The residents are concerned with the amount of litter in the surrounding area and would like to coordinate a campaign in line with the national Keep Britain Tidy campaign. The PC was very receptive to the proposal and agreed to meet with the two parishioners to take the idea forward. The Chair thanked them for coming forward and proposing the initiative.

8. Authorisation of Accounts

Payments

26/10/19	KCC Commercial Services	Grass cutting	£639.49
01/11/19	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	£150.00
04/11/19	Cllr. Clarke	Plants	£15.97
04/11/19	AKS Electrical Kent LTD	Pond lights Inspection	£144.00
05/11/19	Ask A Gardener	Village Maintenance	£132.00
13/11/19	Mark Pullen	Rec Grd Maintenance	£40.00
29/11/19	T. Hudson	Honorarium/Training	£507.50
01/12/19	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	£150.00
06/12/19	KCC	Grass Cutting	£247.55
07/12/19	T. Hudson	Accounts Ledger	£13.82
10/12/19	M. Belsom & Son LTD	Rec Grd Fencing	£4416.00
10/12/19	Bartholomew	Xmas Tree	£40.00
12/12/19	SSE	Pond Electricity	£40.20
01/01/20	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	£150.00
08/01/20	Ask A Gardener	Village Maintenance	£66.00
08/01/20	Mutts Butts	Dog Waste Bags	£157.25
08/01/20	Cllr. Clarke	Xmas Gifts	£27.00

Receipts

02/12/19	KCC	Grant for Fencing	£1000.00
24/12/19	Bredgar Cricket Club	Rent	£50.00
16/01/20	Bredgar Cricket Club	Grass Cutting donation	£687.62

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Councillors were pleased the recreation ground fencing costs were in line with the quote.

Proposed by Cllr. J. Ingram, seconded by Cllr. P. Twaites.

9. Financial Review

Financial Review

The Financial Review document was circulated to councilors by email prior to the meeting. There were no questions.

Precept Increase Confirmation

Councillors discussed at the previous meeting whether to increase the Precept and unanimously decided on a modest increase based on the rate of inflation, 1.5%. SBC have confirmed the increase by email.

Internal Auditor Confirmation

The clerk informed the meeting that Mr. Keith Scott has agreed to continue as Internal Auditor. Cllr. Clarke will continue to review the accounts on a quarterly basis as an additional safeguard. The Chair thanked Mr. Scott for his ongoing support.

10. Document Review – Decisions only (Policy/Procedures/Regulations)

Computer Backup Procedure

It was proposed that a change from monthly backup to quarterly backup would be more manageable.

New Councillor Induction Procedure

The PC will supply guidance in the form of a book and recommend training: Induction and Dynamic Councillor sessions provided by KALC.

Equality and Diversity Policy

It was confirmed that the PC has no employees.

Data Protection Policy

The PC proposed to monitor data protection in view of the transition period of exiting the European Union.

Safeguarding Policy

To be reviewed at the next meeting.

Information Security and Information Technology (IT) Policy

The PC recommends a dedicated email address for all councillors.

Data Protection Management Procedure

No amendments required.

All amendments were unanimously agreed by the PC.

11. Reports from Councillors

Cllr. B. McCourt

Nothing to report.

Cllr. P. Twaites

The second Governing Body meeting of Bredgar and Borden schools combined has taken place. All is progressing satisfactorily.

The 5Parishes meeting discussed the proposed air quality testing; costs are to be confirmed.

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There is a plea from CPRE for people to register wildlife sightings of protected and unusual species and log them on a specific website; the Chair is to circulate the details of the website.

The PC response to the Landscape Sensitivity Designation has had limited modest success.

There is a Local Plan meeting on 25th February at 7pm at SBC.

Cllr. D. Priestley

No rats have been sighted at the pond, and no bait taken. Cllr. Priestley is to refrain from laying more bait until a rat has been sighted to protect other wildlife.

The willow on the island requires pruning.

A working party is required to investigate and repair the slight sinking of Duck Island before the ducks choose to nest on it and hopefully lay eggs.

The Heritage Consultation has been submitted to KCC and is published on the PC website.

Cllr. J. Ingram

Nothing to report on the village hall.

The Farmshop is under offer. Once the new owners are installed, improvements are planned to enhance the shopping experience. The PC will negotiate a new lease with the new owners.

Cllr. M. Day

Faster broadband for Swanton Street is a step closer with a survey being carried out recently by BT.

Cllr. B. Clarke

Footpaths are not pleasant at the moment due to the very wet weather. The KCC PROW link on the website shows registered footpaths and offers advice and regulations for farmers when ploughing etc. The Chair proposed that the PC carry out a survey of the footpaths during the coming year to check signage, stiles, etc. KHS have requested confirmation of continued allocation of works to the current contractor, Blenwood.

Drainage issues have been chased today.

12. Planning Matters

Swiss Cottage

The PC made a number of comments regarding the proposed replacement property but the application was rejected by SBC. Since then, the owner has been keen to support any suggestions made. Councillors discussed the proposals and agreed to support the new proposal provided the neighbours have no strong objections.

Planning Appeal – One Acre Blind Mary's Lane

A decision was reached today dismissing the appeal on the Blind Mary's Site. There is now no permission for residence for either site. Enforcement will now be sought to clear the site.

13. Village Matters

Swanton Street Footpath

No progress yet

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Highway Improvement Plan

Councillors agreed to monitor the progress of Borden PC improvement plan.

VE Day Celebrations

The celebrations planned so far include the ringing of the Church bells and the Sun will arrange a band and raise a glass.

Renewal of Farmshop Lease

The PC is ready to renegotiate a lease for the Post Office with the new owners of the Farmshop.

14. Project List

Selection of project(s) for 2020

The Chair circulated a list of proposed projects to councillors.

Councillors agreed to obtain a quote for all the cemetery boundary work and to carry out the work at the pond.

A tree warden is to be consulted.

15. 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.

16. Any Other Business

Councillors were pleased with the work carried out by a resident at the War Memorial to tidy up the plants.

Incidents of fly-tipping are on the increase.

17. Dates of future meetings

Parish Council AGM - Wednesday 13th May 2020

Parish (Open) Meeting – Wednesday 20th May 2020

Parish Council Meeting – Wednesday 19th August 2020

Parish Council Meeting – Wednesday 25th November 2020

Parish Council Meeting – Wednesday 3rd March 2021