

Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting
Held at Bredgar School
On Wednesday 29th August 2018 at 7.00pm

Present: Chair Cllr. Penny Twaites;
Joint Vice Chair Cllr. Brian Clarke; Joint Vice Chair Cllr. Jane Ingram;
Cllr. Dick Clack; Cllr. Susie Hickman and Cllr. David Priestley.

Clerk: Teresa Hudson

In Attendance: KCC Cllr. Andrew Bowles and David Clifford, Policy Manager for SBC.

Members of the Public: 10 members of the public were present.

Swale Borough Council Corporate Plan and how it affects Bredgar

Chair, Cllr. Twaites opened the meeting and welcomed KCC Cllr. Bowles and David Clifford as well as members of the public to the extraordinary part of the PC meeting. Cllr. Bowles and David Clifford were then invited to talk about the 'Vision for Swale'.

SBC are reviewing the Corporate Plan, which is available to view online, and have been seeking views from the public on the broad strategic direction to be taken over the next four years, which will influence rather than determine the direction taken. The top priority is the Regeneration of Sittingbourne. SBC is continuing to learn as the project progresses and the internal priorities such as air quality, housing, leisure and health are tackled whilst keeping within the financial constraints.

* **The PC** is worried that keeping the rural aspect will be sidelined and supports the extension of the AONB and maintaining green spaces.

- SBC is to take the concern back to the Local Plan team and the Cabinet Member. However, there is a rising population and it needs to be recognised and if the Government insists on setting higher targets then councillors have to address it. If the Council do not come up with the least worst option then they lose any direct influence on planning. The Secretary of State has set a new figure with a 36% increase for Swale saying the people are already here so more houses are required.

* **Could SBC** renovate existing properties and rent them out?

- Cllr. Bowles replied that Government finance and number of staff does not allow this as the costs would be horrendous

* **The PC** would like to see farmland and the AONB valued, how could that be reflected in the Corporate Plan?

- Cllr. Bowles stated that the quality of life is depreciating all the time and rural communities tend to get a second-class service with the urban viewpoint dominating decisions.

* **The general opinion** is that Bredgar suffers when huge tractors full of bales of straw use the village to get to local farms; and local road closures have affected the village badly recently.

- New housing requires new drainage, which historically has not been provided. Hedgerows have been taken out which adds to the problem of lack of drainage. Cllr. Bowles offered to write to Southern Water with the concerns of the parishioners. David Clifford stated that he would look to work with agencies on these issues.

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* **Provision of health facilities** is a concern for parishioners; will there be funding if new houses are built?

- Cllr. Bowles stated that he would try to put pressure on central Government to provide funding for GPs quicker when new housing is built but there is currently a huge problem recruiting GPs, with Swale being especially under resourced.

* **Cleanliness** in the area is a major concern; fly tipping and litter despoil the borough.

* **Lower speed** limits in all villages are a priority; traffic cutting through Bredgar at speed made the flooding worse for householders.

- Cllr. Bowles stated that SBC underfunds highways and he is pushing for more funds to be invested in the highways.

* **Transportation links** to London need improving with commuters regularly having to stand on the trains.

* **The local community has not got the infrastructure** to support events such as the County Show especially when lack of communication causes four local roads to all shut at the same time on the weekend of the Show.

- Cllr. Bowles agreed that KCC and Highways England need to have much better communication.

The consultation draft will be available from mid October and meanwhile all residents and parish councils are invite to submit their views.

The Chair thanked David Clifford for the informative talk and Cllr. Bowles for his valuable insight.

David Clifford left the meeting at 7.45pm.

The chair proceeded to formally open the PC meeting at 7.45pm.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Bev McCourt.

2. Declaration of Members' Personal and Prejudicial Interests

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.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the previous PC meeting held on 30th May 2018 were read and formally approved by the Parish Council. They are now available on the Parish website. Proposed by Cllr. D. Clack, seconded by Cllr. S. Hickman. They were signed by the Chair at the end of the meeting.

5. PCSO Report

PCSO Lorraine Holmes reported that surgeries continue to be held at the Farmshop, however, the surgery held on 28th August did not attract any parishioners. This could be seen as a good sign as there appear to be no

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pressing issues. PCSO Lorraine said she would continue to hold the surgeries periodically. Reminders will be published in the Parish Magazine with a note to check posters in the Farmshop for specific dates.

Speed checks are carried out regularly by Specials in the village. The rural team of Kent are aware of illegal fishing taking place, including in Bredgar pond. SBC are available during office hours to take reports; with environmental wardens and rural police at other times. Cllr. Bowles is to provide contact details.

The cricket pavilion may be vulnerable as there have been numerous break-ins of pavilions around Kent. Locals should be aware and vigilant.

The PCSO has been made aware of concerns regarding a banned driver in the village. Cllr. Bowles offered to take the matter up with the Community Safety Unit.

The PC thanked PCSO Lorraine for her continued hard work for the village. PCSO Lorraine left at 7.55pm.

6. Ten Minutes Representation by the Public

Parishioners asked if there could be cleaning vehicles in Bredgar as there hasn't been a good clean of the streets for a while. Cllr. Bowles said SBC are supposed to clean all the streets once a year but it doesn't always happen.

Calls to KCC are not always logged. Communication is poor between departments in Swale. Cllr. Clarke replied that if as many people as possible reported issues it would help to get things done.

Cllr. Bowles asked if he could be copied in to reports as well so that he could follow up if nothing was done.

Some footpaths across fields are still blocked by vegetation after being reported several times. Cllr. Bowles offered to look into the matter. The clerk is to forward details after the meeting.

The Swanton Street sink hole has been repaired, however, it is felt that the fence installed is inadequate to prevent animals from falling into the field as the drop is quite severe; and the level of the road is higher than outside Swanton Cottages which could lead to further flooding in a downpour such as happened on 29th May.

Cllr. Bowles has agreed to travel the route to see what may be done.

White road markings in Bredgar need to be improved; with perhaps a 'Stop' sign at the junction of Gore Road and Primrose Lane.

In conclusion, Cllr. Bowles requested that:

- * Parishioners use the KCC portal to report issues with Highways etc.
- * If problems persist, inform Cllr. Bowles
- * Work with Bredgar PC as we are fortunate to have a good Parish Council.

The Chair thanked Cllr. Bowles for his valued contribution.

Cllr. Bowles left the meeting at 9pm.

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7. Authorisation of Accounts

Proposed by Cllr. J. Ingram, seconded by Cllr. B. Clarke.

There were no comments on the accounts except for the Chair remarking that costs for Ask A Gardener were very reasonable for this period.

Payments

30/05/18	Bredgar School	Donation	£160.00
01/06/18	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	£150.00
08/06/18	Ask A Gardener	Village Maintenance	£132.00
08/06/18	T. Hudson	Honorarium	£350.00
12/06/18	Cllr. Clarke	Website Domain	£11.99
25/06/18	Cllr. Clack	Pond Pump	£41.99
25/06/18	SBC	Brown bin	£37.00
25/06/18	SSE	Pond Electricity	£48.28
01/07/18	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	£150.00
26/07/18	ICO	GDPR Registration	£35.00
27/07/18	Ask A Gardener	Village Maintenance	£66.00
24/07/18	ROSPA	Play Area Inspection	£84.00
24/07/18	Cllr. Clack	Pond Pump	£46.98
01/08/18	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	£150.00
06/08/18	KCC	Grass Cutting	£583.40
06/08/18	Ask A Gardener	Village Maintenance	£66.00

Receipts

25/06/18	Bredgar Cricket Club	Donation	£43.75
25/07/18	HMRC	VAT Refund	£998.14

8. Reports from Councillors

Cllr. Jane Ingram

Cllr. Ingram has contacted Optivo regarding Primrose Grove and is awaiting a response.

There are no issues with the Post Office. An Events Team is in place at the Farmshop, which organised a Farmers' Market on Saturday 25th August; it proved to be quite a good success for a first market with many people visiting from outside the village. A Christmas market is planned for 8th December.

Cllr. Susie Hickman

The plants around the War Memorial suffered in the prolonged heat wave, but the area will be replanted for the Remembrance Service.

Cllr. Dick Clack

Tradesmen are proving difficult to find for tasks around the village. The pond pump has yet to be fitted and new quotes will be sought for repairs to the cemetery railings as the previous quote is a year old and failed to deliver.

Cllr. David Priestley

Chris Logsden has provided a quote of £550 to carry out Seine Netting on the pond to reduce the huge number of fish. Councillors unanimously agreed to the quote.

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The new duck house is almost ready to launch; once the fish have been netted a launch event will be arranged.

Cllr. Priestley will also arrange a quote for coir rolls at the edge of the pond if required.

A working party to tackle the weeds around the pond is planned for October.

Cllr. Brian Clarke

Cllr. Clarke has contacted Highways regarding drainage, signs and white lines in the village. Parishioners have also been pursuing SBC and Highways concerning their own issues with damaged property following the floods of 29th May; however, the drainage problem in Primrose Lane outside Clematis House is still not resolved.

An opportunity to enhance broadband in Swanton Street has arisen; Cllr. Clarke has been liaising with residents of Swanton Street to further the project. The Community Response Plan is to be updated to address flooding issues.

Cllr. Clarke is to attend a training session in October.

Cllr. Penny Twaites

Long standing school governor, Miranda Rees, has stepped down, to be replaced by Sally Murray.

The new school year starts with a full reception class with all last term's 11plus candidates attaining the secondary school of their choice.

The new 30-year Cricket Club lease is reaching the conclusion of its negotiations and is expected to be submitted by the respective solicitors for signing in the near future. The Cricket Club will then be in a position to apply for funding to build a new pavilion.

9. '20 is Plenty' Speed update

Cllr. Clarke informed the meeting that the previous plan for a lower speed limit in Bredgar was turned down by Kent Highways. A meeting with surrounding parishes has produced a plan to look at changing the policies of KCC to encourage it to be friendlier to lower speed limits. Meetings will be held to facilitate changes in accordance with other areas nationally. Police will be encouraged to enforce lower speed limits through villages.

This is a more favourable approach as traffic calming measures can cause complaints.

10. Financial Review/Policies

Audit submitted online

The audit papers were submitted immediately following signing at the previous meeting. They are then scrutinised in strict order of receipt by the external auditors.

Financial update

The clerk circulated the latest figures by email prior to the meeting. There were no questions.

GDPR

Cllr, Clarke has advised councillors to have a separate email address solely for parish matters.

The parish computer has been encrypted.

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Policies are in place for the deletion of an individual's PC items should a councillor leave.

11. Village Matters

Swanton Street Footpath

Nicholas Reuttner has been negotiating with the local farmer; Cllr. Twaites will follow up progress on the footpath.

PO Planters

Work on the planters to be situated outside the Post Office is in hand. Cllr. Ingram is to follow up.

Play Area Inspection/Maintenance of Equipment

Following the inspection of the play area equipment, there are no urgent matters to deal with although there are a few recommendations. These will be dealt with at a later date when more information is available concerning the new cricket pavilion and where it is to be sited.

Outdoor Gym Proposal

The PC was informed that grants are available to install outdoor gym equipment for parishioners to use. After discussion on who might make use of it and where to site it, councillors decided to keep it in mind and will consider it further after the new pavilion is built.

Recreation Ground Clearance Progress Report

Work on the clearance of lumps of concrete from the recreation ground has commenced. The area behind the play equipment has been levelled and more weedkiller will be applied then grass seed will be spread.

Bush House Flooding Issue

Cllrs Twaites and Clarke will have a site meeting with KCC concerning lack of drainage in Silver Street which causes flooding at Bush House.

6 Bush Close Safety Proposition

Following a burglary at 6 Bush Close, the resident asked if they could make alterations to their boundary to secure it. The PC has informed the resident that the land is owned by Optivo therefore the PC cannot make a decision.

Pond – Fishing Policy Review

The PC reviewed the decision to forbid fishing in Bredgar Pond, and upheld the policy.

Duck House Update

The new duck house will be launched following the reduction in numbers of fish in the pond.

Remembrance Day Service

Councillors proposed to conduct a service similar to last year. Chair, Cllr. Twaites is to approach the vicar and arrange the service.

Christmas Tree

Cllr. Clack has agreed to erect the Christmas tree as usual. Bredgar Farmshop has agreed to supply the tree at half cost price.

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12. Planning Matters

Local Plan

The public consultation ended in June. Proposals for Garden Villages have been submitted to SBC. Cllr. Bowles stated that one or two large schemes are preferable to several small sites. Two favourable sites are Kent Science Park and Duchy of Cornwall in Faversham.

The Local Planning panel will meet and discuss the submissions next month with a decision due by 2021.

The Plan is expected to include a new M2 exit as well as one secondary school, three primary schools and a medical centre.

13. Any Other Business

Parishioners have requested a new rubbish bin to be situated near the Jubilee Garden. Councillors agreed to the request and the clerk will organise the purchase and installation.

One of the roses in the Jubilee Garden is to be replaced as it has perished.

The grass on the War Memorial site has suffered in the heat wave; councillors agreed to ask Jonathan Gardner to look at it.

14. Date of the next meeting

**The next Parish Council meeting will be held on
Wednesday 21st November 2018 at 7.30pm in Bredgar School.**