

Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting
Held at Bredgar School
On Wednesday 22nd November 2023 at 7.30pm

Present: Chair Cllr. Brian Clarke; Vice Chair Cllr. Penny Twaites;
Cllr. Mike Day; Cllr. Nigel Osmer; Cllr. Stephen Parfitt; Cllr. David Priestley and Cllr. Hilary Whitnell.

Clerk: Teresa Hudson

In Attendance: PC Gary Morris.

Members of the Public: One member of the public attended the meeting.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from SBC Cllr. Richard Lehman and PCSO 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 23rd August 2023 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. M. Day, all councillors agreed.

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

Matters Arising

The PC arranged for flyers to be printed at a cost of £24.00 which were delivered throughout the village by the councillors. The flyers promoted the litter pick, speed watch and the pond tidy. Unfortunately, residents did not volunteer for speed watch or the pond tidy (apart from one family member of a councillor) but the litter pick was well supported with numerous bags of rubbish collected along with old carpet and bed springs.

The Chair thanked councillors for their help at the pond tidy, litter pick and the Remembrance service.

A councillor asked for clarification of the hippo bags which are used in the cemetery. The Chair informed the meeting that following expenditure to tidy the cemetery, the PC now pays to have the spoil from burials removed in a hippo bag. This has proved successful in keeping the excess soil from being deposited around the perimeter of the cemetery.

5. PCSO/NHW Report

The Chair welcomed PC Morris to the meeting.

PC Morris stated that during the month of November one crime was reported: a neighbour dispute.

The clerk informed the meeting that a member of the public had asked for a police surgery in the village. PC Morris said he would pass the request to PCSO Jones who would arrange a meeting.

Cllr. Parfitt stated that he now has around 40 residents on the emailing list for updates and reports for Neighbourhood Watch (NHW). He informed the meeting of several incidents that have occurred in Bredgar but noted that if they were not reported to the police they were not

**Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting
Held at Bredgar School
On Wednesday 22nd November 2023 at 7.30pm**

investigated. The police take note of patterns of incidents to build a picture in order to target areas.

Cllr. Parfitt attended a NHW meeting in London which was very informative.

PC Morris left at 7.45pm.

6. Ten Minutes Representation by the Public

The member of the public had no pressing issues to discuss.

The clerk took the opportunity to inform the councillors of the process the PC is obliged to complete when a burial takes place. This year, unusually, there have been 8 funerals in Bredgar cemetery. The clerk took councillors through the process of purchasing a grave space, the method of registering the death and recording the details of the deceased. Bredgar cemetery was purchased in 1926 when the Churchyard became full. There have been 357 burials in the cemetery to date.

7. Authorisation of Accounts

PAYMENTS

02/08/23	Hiblow UK	Pump Filter	24.20
02/08/23	Cllr. Clarke	Security Starpin	4.69
15/08/23	Comm Services KCC	Grass Cutting	565.37
15/08/23	Hippo Bag	Cemetery spoil	201.48
01/09/23	EDF	Pond Electricity	62.00
01/09/23	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	150.00
05/09/23	Ask a Gardener	Village Maint x2	300.00
06/08/23	T. Hudson	Honorarium	433.00
08/09/23	T. Hudson	Hippo Bag Collection	166.49
08/09/23	Maypole Bells	Rec Grd Repairs	150.00
21/09/23	Cllr. Clarke	Bulk Waste Bags	32.76
21/09/23	SBC	Leaflet Printing	24.00
22/09/23	Hippo Bag	Cemetery Spoil	189.98
24/09/23	Royal British Legion	Poppy Wreath	20.99
01/10/23	EDF	Pond Electricity	62.00
01/10/23	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	150.00
04/10/23	Ask a Gardener	Village Maint	150.00
14/10/23	Ask a Gardener	Cemetery maint	350.00
09/10/23	SBC	Election Costs	134.60
18/10/23	Hippo bag	Cemetery Spoil	189.98
01/11/23	EDF	Pond Electricity	17.00
01/11/23	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	150.00
01/11/23	Comm Services (KCC)	Grass Cutting	122.90

RECEIPTS

09/08/23	KCC	Village Maint	272.75
06/09/23	Bournes Funerals	Burial	2500.00
25/09/23	W. Whitmey Funerals	Purchase of Grave Space	200.00
25/09/23	W. Whitmey Funerals	Burial	2500.00
25/09/23	Bredgar Cricket Club	Rec Grd Rent	50.00
03/10/23	SBC	Precept	5935.00
12/10/23	Tim Ford	Purchase of Grave Space	150.00

Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting
Held at Bredgar School
On Wednesday 22nd November 2023 at 7.30pm

01/11/23 **Dignity Funerals** **Burial of A. Boskovic** **1000.00**

It was noted that income from burials has increased this year. A councillor asked if this increase affected the audit process. The clerk replied that if either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeds £25000.00 the PC must complete form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of the financial year. The accounts were proposed by Cllr. Clarke and seconded by Cllr. Priestley. All councillors agreed.

8. Financial Matters

Financial Review

It was noted that the PC had not carried out any significantly large projects this year and with the higher number of burials, the bank balance is higher than usual at £27282.00. Councillors discussed whether to increase the precept for next year in line with inflation. Councillors noted that funds are going to be required to replace the play equipment when the new cricket pavilion has been built, therefore the increase was agreed at 4% for the coming year. Proposed by Cllr. Twaites, seconded by Cllr. Priestley, all councillors agreed.

Update on banking signatures

The clerk explained to the meeting the problems the PC were experiencing in trying to add a signature to the mandate for banking. It was noted that many other parish councils were also experiencing problems with Barclays. The clerk proposed changing to Unity Trust bank. The Chair has investigated the process and informed the meeting that it would enable the PC to process payments digitally. The PC could also have a corporate purchasing card.

The Chair proposed switching to Unity Trust in principle after discussions with UT, seconded by Cllr. Twaites. All councillors agreed.

9. Planning Matters

Vigo Solar Farm Response

Further enquiries have been made by KCC Environmental dept concerning the proposed solar farm in Borden. This follows a response from Bredgar PC which is echoed by Borden PC. The response can be found on Bredgar PC website. The application has not yet gained approval.

Bredgar PC will respond thanking the company for their reply and will monitor their actions.

Conservation Review

Cllrs. Clarke, Day and Priestley attended the meeting where the conservation review was discussed. It is hoped to be approved by the end of this year.

Solar Panel Planning Applications

Councillors discussed whether to implement a Solar Panel Planning Policy but decided unanimously to review each application as it arose on its own merit.

Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting
Held at Bredgar School
On Wednesday 22nd November 2023 at 7.30pm

10. Highways Improvement Plan

Councillors Clarke, Day and Osmer met with KCC to discuss the Highways Improvement Plan. KCC agreed to replace the gates at Swanton Street as a one-off but maintenance will revert to the Parish Council for all gates going forward.

Discussions concerning diverting HGVs away from Bredgar were not entirely successful. KCC agreed to placing signs on Ruins Barn Road near the Science Park directing HGVs to the A2/M2 but BPC would prefer signs saying the route to Bexon Lane was unsuitable for large vehicles. Traffic will be monitored after installation of the signs.

11. Recreation Ground

Maintenance of Boundary with Bush House

The boundary of the recreation ground with Bush House has become overgrown with weeds. Cllr. Clarke showed photographs which explained what is required and has contacted Landscape Services for a quote to clear and maintain the area.

12. Village Matters

SE Water Proposals

Bredgar PC wrote to SE Water complaining about the lack of meaningful action to repair/replace drainage in Swanton Street. The reply has been published on the website stating they have a maintenance scheme.

Hugofox Contract

The parish website will no longer be offered free by Hugo Fox. From next April councillors agreed to sign up to the Silver subscription for £647.68 for a three year contract at a discount of 25%. This maintains all the current advantages we enjoy.

Pond Maintenance

The recent pond maintenance carried out by councillors and family has become onerous and needs a more structured approach. The pond warden, Cllr. Priestley, proposed seeking quotes from local gardeners to regularly maintain the foliage around the pond. All councillors agreed.

Councillors also agreed to seek quotes to remove a dead branch from the tree in Jubilee Gardens.

Dog Bins

Two new dog waste bins have been installed: one in the recreation ground to replace the broken one and one at Primrose Grove next to the litter bin. The clerk will inform SBC that they will require emptying along with the other bins.

Bredgar WI Book

Stephen Palmer has edited the Bredgar WI history book, and it is ready for printing. Councillors agreed to initially publish 50 copies for sale at Bredgar Post Office. Proposed by Cllr. Whitnell, seconded by Cllr. Osmer.

Christmas Tree

Bredgar and Wormshill Railway have, again, kindly agreed to pass their Christmas tree to the PC for display at Bredgar pond on 13th December.

Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting
Held at Bredgar School
On Wednesday 22nd November 2023 at 7.30pm

13. Cemetery

Review costs for non-residents

Nonresidents are required to pay double the costs for burial at Bredgar cemetery. The clerk asked councillors to review this practice as costs have risen. Councillors agreed not to change the policy as the clerk has discretion when an applicant has connections to the village and complete outsiders asking to be buried here are rare.

Proposal for new bench

A resident has requested permission to place a bench in the cemetery. Councillors agreed to the design and materials to be used.

Sedgewicks Boundary

The resident at Sedgewicks proposes to remove the hedge at the boundary with the cemetery to replace their wall. Councillors agreed to the proposal.

14. Reports from Councillors

Cllr. P. Twaites

Nothing to report.

Cllr. H. Whitnell

Farmers are reinstalling footpaths after ploughing.

Cllr. N. Osmer

A sign post at the junction of Ruins Barn Road and Bexon Lane has been reported as damaged. The PC has declined to install a hedge at the boundary of the recreation ground and farmland due to the expense.

KCC are offering specimen trees for planting; suggestions are sought for sites in the village.

Cllr. S. Parfitt

Cllr. Parfitt proposed to plant a suitable shrub in the gap of the hedge at the recreation ground. Councillors agreed to source a replacement.

Maintenance suggested by the recent ROSPA inspection of the play equipment has been carried out. Councillors thanked Cllr. Parfitt for arranging it.

The shrubbery on the bank at the corner of Silver Street and Gore Road will be cut this week. Cllr. Parfitt replied to the complainant of the issue when a driver delivered a bouncy castle at Smiths Orchard.

There is no foreseeable funding for buses in Bredgar at present. Faversham have secured funding for a community bus but it is not a feasible option for Bredgar due to lack of drivers, training and maintenance etc.

Cllr. D. Priestley

Nothing to report.

Cllr. M. Day

Bashford Barn Road has been resurfaced.

Cllr. B. Clarke

The stone has been chosen for the Queen's Jubilee plaque and will be installed in the coming weeks.

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.

**Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting
Held at Bredgar School
On Wednesday 22nd November 2023 at 7.30pm**

16. Any Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

17. Dates of the next meetings.

The next meetings are proposed for:

Wednesday 6th March 2024

Parish Meeting and AGM Wednesday 15th May 2024

Wednesday 14th August 2024

Wednesday 13th November 2024.