

**Bredgar Parish Council**  
**Minutes of the AGM**  
**Held by Zoom due to Coronavirus Restrictions**  
**On Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 7.30pm**

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

**Clerk:** Teresa Hudson

**In Attendance:** SBC Monique Bonney.

**Members of the Public:** Two members of the public attended the meeting.

Chair, Cllr. B. Clarke, circulated the Annual Chairman's Report by email. It is now available on the Parish website.

**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 2 1/2 hours.

**4. Election of Officers**

Nominations were put forward by email prior to the meeting for the positions of Chair and Joint Vice Chair. Candidates were elected to the following roles:

Chair: Cllr. Brian Clarke-	Proposed by Cllr. S. Parfitt Seconded by Cllr. D. Priestley
Co-Vice Chair: Cllr. Penny Twaites-	Proposed by Cllr. B. Clarke Seconded by Cllr. D. Priestley
Co-Vice Chair: Cllr. Jane Ingram-	Proposed by Cllr. B. Clarke Seconded by Cllr. P. Twaites

**5. Elect Councillors to Roles**

Cllr. Brian Clarke	Chair: KALC, GDPR, IT
Cllr. Penny Twaites	Co-Vice Chair: Response to Planning
Cllr. Jane Ingram	Co-Vice Chair: Post Office Support, Village Hall Representative
Cllr. David Priestley	Pond Warden, Pest Control, Heritage
Cllr. Beverley McCourt	KCC Highways, Thatcher & Eleemosary Charities Representative
Cllr. Stephen Parfitt	Parks & Gardens
Cllr. Michael Day	Footpaths, Parks & Gardens, Pest Control

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**6. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The Minutes of the previous PC meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 were read and formally approved by the Parish Council. They are now available on the Parish website. Proposed by Cllr. J. Ingram, seconded by Cllr. M. Day.

**Matters Arising**

The Bexon Lane road sign has been re-installed.

**7. PCSO Report**

PCSO Lorraine Holmes submitted a report by email. There have been some incidents of anti-social behaviour in the village in Silver Street, Gore Road and Primrose Lane. Motorbikes were seen riding in the field adjacent to the recreation ground, with spectators watching. A car registration was noted and the incident reported. A horse was seen several times being ridden on the recreation ground. Notices have been put up prohibiting the activity, as it could be dangerous for children playing there. Fishing has been observed at the pond, contrary to the regulations; the clerk has moved people on, as has a councillor on a separate occasion. Parishioners who may witness any incidents are advised to note a registration number and any useful descriptions without putting themselves in danger. Report using 101 or the Live Chat facility on the Kent Police website.

**8. Ten Minutes Representation by the Public**

No matters to report.

**9. Authorisation of Accounts**

**Payments**

26/02/21 Cllr. B. Clarke	Zoom Fee	14.39
01/03/21 Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	150.00
07/03/21 SBC	Grass Cutting	2936.69
07/03/21 T. Hudson	Postage/Ink	90.29
08/03/21 T. Hudson	Honorarium	375.00
16/03/21 SSE	Pond Electricity	62.24

**Receipts**

24/03/21 Bredgar Cricket Club	Rec Grd Rent	50.00
01/01/21 NSI	Savings Interest	51.68

Cllr. Twaites asked if the Precept had been received? The clerk replied that it had just been received.

**10. Annual Accounts for the Year Ending 31/03/2021**

The Annual Accounts were circulated prior to the meeting.

**a. Finance Policy Review**

Councillors did not propose any changes to the current Finance Policy. All councillors agreed to the Finance Policy.

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**b/c. Consideration and approval of the Statement of Internal Control by the PC**

No changes were proposed. Proposed by Cllr. B. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. D. Priestley.

**d/e. Consideration and approval of Audit Exemption Certificate**

The criteria for submitting the Exemption Certificate has been met.

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

The certificate will be submitted to PKF Littlejohn by email.

**f. Consideration and approval of Internal Auditor Report**

All councillors approved the Internal Auditor report.

Proposed by Cllr. B. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. D. Priestley.

Councillors thanked the Internal Auditor, Mr. Scott.

**g. Consideration of the Annual Governance Statement**

The Chair read out the statements on the AGS. All councillors agreed with the statements.

**h. Approval of the Annual Governance Statement resolution**

All councillors approved the AGS. Proposed by Cllr. B. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. S. Parfitt.

**i. Consideration of the Annual Accounting Statements by the PC**

The Annual Accounting Statements were shown on screen.

**j. Approval of the Annual Accounting Statements by resolution**

All councillors approved the Annual Accounts. Proposed by Cllr. B. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. P. Twaites.

**k. Signing of the Accounting Statements by the Clerk/RFO and Chair.**

The documents were signed by the Chair and Clerk the following day.

The documents are now available on the Parish website.

**11. Reports from Councillors**

**Cllr. David Priestley**

The ducks on Bredgar pond dice with danger on the road daily. One other visiting duck was rescued by a local wildlife charity. One duck with a limp was seen by the RSPCA but has been left to recover, as it would not have been returned had it been removed due to wildlife regulations.

**Cllr. Stephen Parfitt**

The vandalized post box on Primrose Lane has been replaced by Royal Mail.

There have been 7 fly tipping instances since the previous PC meeting.

The recreation ground has had a patch of grass burnt away due to a barbecue. The vandal has not been identified.

The Neighbourhood Watch group is fully manned with 12 representatives covering Bredgar.

Bredgar Railway is having an Open Day on Sunday following closure due to the Covid pandemic.

The burnt out car in Bexon Lane has been removed.

The Chair thanked Cllr. Parfitt for his continued time and effort chasing all the issues to conclusion.

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**Cllr. Mike Day**

Cllr. Day has walked most of the more accessible local footpaths and concluded that Bexon Lane is the most dangerous road in Bredgar, and that none are safe without footpaths. Some footpaths across fields disappear at this time of year due to crops being planted so are not available to walk. Some footpaths at Deans Bottom have not been marked since the field was ploughed, however, Cllr. Clarke has reported it and spoken to the KCC PROW team. They may mention it to the landowner, although marking of footpaths following ploughing/sowing is not strongly enforced if the signposted route is clear. Bashford Barn Lane is unsafe due to the ditches either side of the road and the flint surface. Blind Marys corner floods in the heavy rain.

**Cllr. Jane Ingram**

The Post Office continues to operate without interruption.

The Farmshop has been busy and the tearoom has reopened for outside trade with a garden to sit in for coffees etc.

The village hall is quiet as it is yet to reopen.

**Cllr. Beverley McCourt**

The Highways Improvement Plan has been circulated by email prior to the meeting. Councillors can confirm the plans and add other items if required. Projects will then be scrutinised for viability by KCC and costs calculated. Parish Councils will be expected to contribute to costs.

Cllr. Bonney advised putting it on the agenda for the next Swale Joint Transport Board meeting and involve the new KCC Councillor.

Some local lanes in Borden have been designated as Quiet Streets where the speed limit is 20mph. Tunstall and Rodmersham are also interested in adopting Quiet Lanes in their villages so perhaps all can collude to bring about a positive result.

The creation of a path next to the pond was put forward by a parishioner for discussion so may be included in the plan. Cllr. McCourt proposed to work with KCC and to discuss the proposals with other Parish Councils. Cllr. Clarke seconded the proposal.

**Cllr. Penny Twaites**

Cllr. Twaites informed the meeting that she would be standing down as a Bredgar School Governor at the end of the academic year. Cllr. Twaites has been a volunteer for ten years and feels the nature of the role has changed, becoming more cumbersome and onerous with no say in the running of the school. It has been a tradition for a Parish Councillor to be involved with the school and Cllr. Twaites is happy to continue to communicate between the school and PC. It is felt that an unofficial liaison may be more productive than a formal representative.

Cllr. Twaites has commented diligently for the PC on many everyday planning applications as well as Highsted Park and the Local Plan.

**Cllr. Brian Clarke**

The white paint on the decking has yet to be redone; Cllr. Clarke is to follow this up. Two kissing gate stiles have now replaced the wooden ones opposite the village hall. KCC PROW team may be considering a slight diversion for the other footpath to avoid entry into the new paddock/field with the landowner.

The brown bin, for use in the recreation ground, has been labeled and a lock installed. It is frustrating that the grass put in by the cricket club became hot and stuck in the bottom of the bin.

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Discussions with the owner of Bush House and the cricket club took place concerning the maintenance of the boundary. All parties agreed to collaborate to clear the hedge and erect a new fence.

A visiting driver in Bush Close managed to destroy a wall in the Jubilee Garden. Unfortunately no contact details were left. The PC is obtaining quotes for repair. The website renewal fee is due in June – approximately £12.

Councillors are to look at the Parish records held by Bill Best to ascertain whether they are worth archiving.

**12. Donation to Bredgar School**

The PC usually donates £160 pounds to Bredgar School for the use of a room for the meetings. Due to Covid restrictions, the PC has been unable to meet face to face during the past 15 months. Councillors felt that parishioners may still not be comfortable meeting in a relatively small room when the next meeting is due in August, therefore proposed to book the village hall for that occasion.

Cllr. Twaites is to enquire with the school whether future meetings there will be possible.

**13. Pond Risk Assessment**

Cllrs. Priestley and McCourt, along with Paul Charman, produced a comprehensive Risk Assessment for Bredgar pond following the sad demise of a dog when it fell through the ice. Several safety options were investigated including a throw bag at £560, an emergency pole at £1908 or both at £2258. A cabinet and keypad locking would also have to be purchased to safeguard the items with the Fire Service being custodians of the keypad code. Cllr. Priestley informed the meeting that prior to the incident of the dog, there had been no incidences for over 200 years at the pond. Following discussions, councillors resolved not to purchase the products but to consider restricting access to the decking if the pond is iced over.

New signs will be produced to reflect the restrictions at the pond, which Cllr. Bonney will also purchase for use in Rodmersham. Councillors felt it was a good exercise to complete the assessment and thanked the councillors and Mr. Charman for their time.

**14. 5Parishes Update**

A 5Parishes meeting has been held with Cllrs. Clarke and Twaites attending. They took the view that the 5Parishes would support the Draft Local Plan.

**15. Planning Matters**

**Local Plan Update**

The PC have submitted a positive response in support of the Draft Local Plan but also made detailed comments on items which applied to Bredgar.

**Landscape Assessment**

The PC has engaged a consultant to prepare an assessment of Bredgar as agreed at the previous meeting. A comprehensive tour of the village was undertaken with Cllrs Clarke, Priestley and Parfitt in attendance. The result will be reported when received.

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**Clearance of One Acre Site**

An urgent site visit is planned by SBC as the site has yet to be cleared and another caravan has appeared.

Cllr. Bonney informed the meeting that KCC are carrying out a review on enforcement but as it is a non-statutory function there is no obligation to deliver even though councillors recognise it as important.

**16. Village Matters**

**Litter Picking**

The Great British Spring Clean 2021 is scheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> May to 13<sup>th</sup> June, but councillors are minded to carry out the Bredgar litter pick in September. Cllr. Bonney confirmed that SBC would collect all bags of rubbish whenever asked. The risk assessment from last year can be used again.

Cllr. Parfitt noted that many public litterbins are too small and regularly overflow. SBC may be able to swap the small bins for larger ones, or may collect more frequently. Cllr. Parfitt is to contact SBC Kelly Upson to discuss the matter.

**17. 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.

**18. Any Other Business**

Speedwatch is returning to the village. Cllr. Parfitt has completed the online training to assist the current volunteers. Paul Charman is recruiting if anyone else wants to join this worthwhile action group to slow the traffic through the village.

Chair, Cllr. Clarke, spoke of the sadness of the people of this country following the death of the Duke of Edinburgh. He was keen to have measures in place for parishioners to show their collective sympathy when the time comes for our Queen to be remembered in the same way.

There is a certain protocol to follow which will be adhered to and the PC will be prepared when the time comes.

**19. Date of the next meeting**

**The next PC meeting will be on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> August at 7.30pm.**