

Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting
Held at Bredgar Village Hall
On Thursday 2nd December 2021 at 7.30pm

Present: Chair Cllr. Brian Clarke; Joint Vice Chair Cllr. Penny Twaites; Cllr. Mike Day; Cllr. Stephen Parfitt and Cllr. David Priestley.

Clerk: Teresa Hudson

In Attendance: SBC Cllr. Richard Lehman and PCSO Lorraine Holmes.

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

1. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Jane Ingram, Cllr. Beverley McCourt and SBC Cllr. Monique Bonney.

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 18th August 2021 were read and formally approved by the Parish Council. They are now available on the Parish website. Proposed by Cllr. D. Priestley, seconded by Cllr. M. Day. The Minutes were signed by the Chair at the end of the meeting.

Matters Arising

- The Remembrance service took place this year with three councillors taking part. Councillors were grateful to Julie Harris for ensuring a fitting flower display around the Memorial.
- The PC will not be taking forward the installation of an electric car charging point in Bexon Lane car park as the village hall committee propose to apply for one to be installed in the hall car park.

5. PCSO Report

PCSO Lorraine Holmes reported that from August through to 1st December there had been instances of poaching on 25th September at Deans Hill Rd; officers attended but the culprits had dispersed by then. On 6th October, there were reports of criminal damage where rocks were thrown off the motorway bridge at Ruins Barn Rd. Patrols were increased along that stretch of road. On 7th October a burglary took place in Swanton St; tools valued at £5K were stolen. A suspect was identified by DNA but was already in prison so Police were waiting until his release to interview him. On 15th October thefts from motor vehicles took place in Gore Rd and Primrose Grove; again the suspect was in prison and will be interviewed on release.

A surgery is scheduled for 3rd December in the Farmshop.

This will be the last surgery for PCSO Lorraine as she is moving to another area. Bredgar will be allocated PCSO Katie Jordan.

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Cllr. Parfitt asked if anyone was charged with the damage at Yew Tree Farm earlier this year? PCSO Lorraine replied that it was not on her list and may not have been reported at the time.

Councillors expressed disappointment that no conviction has taken place for the serial criminal attacking properties in Gore Rd and Primrose Grove.

Cllr. Parfitt informed the meeting that members of the public are able to join 'My Community Voice', an online information site for updates on police activity in the community.

Councillors thanked PCSO Lorraine; she then left the meeting at 7.40pm to continue her shift.

6. Ten Minutes Representation by the Public

Three members of the Bredgar Amateur Dramatics Society, (BAD), attended to offer views on their plans for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations next year. It was proposed that a marquee be erected in the recreation ground for the weekend of celebrations. Parking on site is to be determined at a later date. BAD asked if the event could incorporate a fundraiser for the pantomime next Christmas; councillors had no objection and were pleased to assist.

A previous request for parking in the recreation ground for a separate event next year was discussed and reasons for the decision explained. Councillors agreed to have further discussions in due course.

A parishioner asked if the defibrillator at the village hall was in working order, as it appeared to have a fault when used on 19th November 2020? The defibrillator is the responsibility of the village hall committee who stated that it is due for a service.

Three parishioners left at 8pm.

7. Authorisation of Accounts

Payments

16/08/21	R. Clack	Pond Repairs	214.58
18/08/21	Mutts Butts	Dog Waste Bags	98.70
01/09/21	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	150.00
01/09/21	EDF	Pond Electricity	34.00
04/09/21	Ask A Gardener	Village Maintenance	140.00
06/09/21	T. Hudson	Honorarium	375.00
07/09/21	Royal British Legion	Poppy Wreath	20.00
27/09/21	Sittibuilders	Wall Repair/ Jubilee Garden	576.00
01/10/21	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	150.00
01/10/21	EDF	Pond Electricity	34.00
04/10/21	Ask A Gardener	Village Maintenance	140.00
06/10/21	SBC	Highsted Park Flyers	14.50
31/10/21	KCC	Grass Cutting	525.23
01/11/21	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	150.00
01/11/21	EDF	Pond Electricity	34.00

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02/11/21	Ask A Gardener	Village Maintenance	140.00
08/11/21	R. Clack	Pond Xmas Tree Lights	32.00
09/11/21	Bredgar Village Hall Meetings		42.50

Receipts

20/08/21	Jarmans Solicitor	Re Ashes of Pankhurst	609.00
24/09/21	Bredgar Cricket C	Rec Grd Rent	50.00
24/09/21	SBC	Precept	5136.50
04/10/21	Julian Hadlow	Cemetery Plot Purchase	150.00

There were no questions on the accounts.

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

8. Financial Matters

Financial Review

The Financial Review was circulated by email by the clerk prior to the meeting. There were no questions. Proposed by Cllr. B. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. P. Twaites.

Precept Review for 2022

The Chair has reviewed the financial position taking into consideration the current inflation rate (cpi rate for October was 3.8%). Bredgar chose not to increase the precept last year but may need to this year as our basic services costs have increased. Cllr. Lehman informed the meeting that all Parish Council meetings he has attended recently have increased their precept, as well as KCC, which imposed an increase of 1.99% last year. It is thought inflation may continue to rise significantly in comparison to previous years. Cllr. Twaites proposed an increase of 4%, which, on a band D property equates to 16p per household. Cllr. Priestley seconded the proposal. Two councillors agreed to the proposal, with one abstention.

9. Policy Reviews

Recreation Ground Policy

The Recreation Ground Policy was circulated prior to the meeting by email. Proposed by Cllr. D. Priestley, seconded by Cllr. S. Parfitt. All councillors agreed the policy.

A parishioner has enquired whether he can practice inflation of a 'wing' for the sport of Para motoring in the recreation ground. He will not be airborne and will not apply power. Councillors agreed to the request providing the insurance company agree.

GDPR Policy

The clerk received a query from a parishioner regarding the ability to opt out of cookies on the PC Hugofox website. The Chair contacted Hugofox who explained that only essential cookies were used on the website therefore they

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felt there was no need to offer an option to choose. Hugofox may look at changing this decision in the future. The Chair informed the parishioner. For a small fee, Canterbury University offer an accessibility check assessment on the website which may be requested.

10. Reports from Councillors

Cllr. Mike Day

Repairs have been carried out on some footpath signs but others are still to be done. The footpath sign opposite the school has yet to be replaced, along with one near the crossroads in Bexon Lane and another two between Manns Place and the motorway bridge in Wrens Rd. Cllr. Clarke will carry out an inspection and report his findings on the online portal.

On a positive note, potholes in Bashford Barn Lane have been repaired and the sides of the road improved for passing vehicles.

Cllr. Stephen Parfitt

The recreation Ground hedge alongside the road has had an annual cutback aiding the safety of people leaving the park. Nettles have been cut back near the play area. The Chair thanked Cllr. Parfitt for leading a successful litter pick in September. Work continues to challenge the numerous fly tippers; some sites have been cleared recently but it continues to occur on a regular basis. Help has been welcomed from Maidstone and Swale on some occasions. Councillors expressed their appreciation for the continued efforts of Cllr. Parfitt.

The public telephone box outside the Church has been used approximately 20 times in the past year, however, BT have stated that it needs to be used 52 times a year. This is difficult as it currently only works for 0800 numbers – the card facility does not work. The box is in a conservation area, which helps the case for keeping it.

Cllr. Penny Twaites

There is no news from Bredgar School.

Cllr. David Priestley

The recent pond clearance was successful, despite the rain. Further work will be carried out in the spring to finish it. There appears to be more ducks than ever on the pond. No one is quite sure where some of them have come from. Some ducklings were nurtured by a villager and relocated to the pond on maturity but others have arrived since. The pond warden stated that the Animal Welfare Act 2006 advises against this practice and it should be actively discouraged, as it could deter wild ducks and other wildlife from using the pond.

The Bredgar Christmas tree will be erected on Monday.

Cllr. Beverley McCourt (by email)

The Thatcher Trust continues to gift £20 to the same five elderly folk in the village at Christmas time. The Trustees also agreed to give flowers/planters to anyone who has suffered a loss or have had a struggle/illness during the year. They came up with five people to give to this year. A £50 donation was also given to the food bank at the Church.

Cllr. Brian Clarke

The white lines on the pond decking, indicating the edge, have yet to be repainted. The Chair has emailed Royal Mail to request a post box for Silver Street. There was one years ago, which was damaged and removed. Parishioners would like it replaced.

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The brown bin in the recreation ground, for grass cuttings from the cricket club, is working better now the weather is cooler.

Cllr. Clarke attended the Western Area Committee meeting where he successfully lobbied for a brown tourist sign for Bredgar Railway; however, it is on hold until the railway is ready to advertise, as they have been very busy.

11. Village Matters

Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations and Memorial Update

Celebrations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee are in hand.

Councillors discussed a Memorial for the event and decided on a hedgerow or tree in the Jubilee Garden, and a plaque. Cllr. Clarke is to look at the practicalities.

Proposed by Cllr. B. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. P. Twaites. All councillors agreed.

Cemetery Water Supply

A request to SE Water has been made for a water supply to be fitted in Bredgar cemetery. The cost for a quote is £81.00.

Cemetery Regulations

The fees for burials in the cemetery are currently the same as last year.

Cemetery Railings Repairs

The blacksmith engaged to replace part of the cemetery railings has indicated a delivery date of January 2022.

12. Planning Matters

Conservation Area Review

At the Western Area Meeting with support from Cllr Mike Baldock and Cllr Monique Bonney, Cllr. Clarke has acquired funding for a review of the Conservation Area. It may take some time to come to fruition due limited resources available at SBC.

Landscape Assessment

The PC is still awaiting the Landscape Assessment, carried out by Emma Rouse of Wyvern Heritage.

Highsted Park Planning Application

Cllr. Twaites praised Cllr. Clarke for the phenomenal amount of work he has carried out, along with other councillors, concerning the proposed Highsted Park development, as well as the Swale Local Plan. Bredgar, along with three other parishes – Rodmersham, Milsted and Bapchild – have engaged a company called Cerda to create a joint response to the application with payment split four ways. Bredgar PC has also submitted its own response as a supplementary response with a level of local detail.

Councillors unanimously agreed to approve the engagement of Cerda, proposed by Cllr. B. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. P. Twaites.

Local Plan Review – Regulation 18 Consultation

Councillors were also keen to submit a good response for the draft Local Plan and again engaged Cerda, in conjunction with Rodmersham and Milsted. The document has been submitted with appropriate answers to the 42 questions.

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Proposed by Cllr. B. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. D. Priestley. All councillors agreed.

Cllr. Clarke enquired of SBC whether additional comments could be submitted following the PC meeting tonight. SBC agreed to the request as an amplified response of local angles. Cllr. Clarke asked councillors if there were any other comments they wished to raise.

13. Highways Improvement Plan

Talks with Tunstall, Rodmersham and Borden continue to try to improve highways and to stop large vehicles from coming up Bexon Lane. Progress is slow as so much time has been spent on the planning applications recently.

14. 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.

15. Any Other Business

Christmas Gifts

Cllr. Clarke proposed to continue to purchase small Christmas gifts for the parishioners who assist the village throughout the year as a thank you. All councillors agreed.

16. Date of the next meetings:

Proposed dates for 2021:

**Wednesday 2nd March, Wednesday 4th May, Wednesday 17th August,
Wednesday 23rd November**

The meeting concluded at 9.40pm.