

Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting
Held at Bredgar Village Hall
On Wednesday 23rd August 2023 at 7.30pm

Present: Chair Cllr. Brian Clarke.

Cllr. Mike Day; Cllr. Nigel Osmer; Cllr. Stephen Parfitt; and Cllr. Hilary Stowell.

Clerk: Teresa Hudson

Members of the Public: No members of the public were present.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Twaites, Cllr. Priestley and KCC Cllr. Lehman.

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 17th May 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

There were no matters arising.

5. NHW Report

Cllr. Parfitt has succeeded in recruiting over 50 parishioners to receive online updates on crime reports and guidance from the community police dept.

Cllr. Parfitt reported four instances of local crime since the previous PC meeting:

- A break in at Primrose Corner where an intruder entered a property while the resident was present; the police followed this up.
- In Silver Street a full tank of domestic oil was stolen.
- Cars and a commercial property were damaged in The Street.
- An attempt was made to access sheds at Deans Hill, property was stolen.

6. Ten Minutes Representation by the Public

Chair, Cllr. Clarke presented the Chairman's Report. It is now available on the Parish website.

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7. Authorisation of Accounts

PAYMENTS

29/04/23	Cllr. Clarke	Coronation Plaque/bunting	305.85
01/05/23	EDF	Pond Electricity	62.00
01/05/23	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	150.00
04/05/23	T. Hudson	Hippo Megabag	201.48
04/05/23	Ask A Gardener	Village Maint.	150.00
05/05/23	KALC	Training - Cllr. Osmer	72.00
08/05/23	Sian Davies	Coronation Seeds	162.93
17/05/23	CPRE	Annual Subscription	36.00
27/05/23	Wybone	2x Dog Bins	601.76
27/05/23	Bredgar V. Hall	4x PC Meetings	200.00
01/06/23	EDF	Pond Electricity	62.00
01/06/23	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	150.00
05/06/23	123 Reg	Domain Name	14.39
05/06/23	Ask A Gardener	Village Maint.	150.00
07/06/23	Cllr. Clarke	Int. Auditor Gift	10.00
07/06/23	T. Hudson	Honorarium	433.00
22/06/23	T. Hudson	Hippo Megabag	235.98
01/07/23	EDF	Pond Electricity	62.00
01/07/23	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	150.00
03/07/23	Gordon Denniss	Pigeon Spikes/Decking Paint	550.00
03/07/23	McVeigh Parker	Wooden Post/Cemetery	58.04
03/07/23	Ask A Gardener	Village Maint.	150.00
04/07/23	SBC	Cemetery Brown Bin	55.00
11/07/23	Mutts Butts	Dog Waste Bags	76.02
01/08/23	EDF	Pond Electricity	62.00
01/08/23	Bredgar Farmshop	Po Rent	150.00
01/08/23	ROSPA	Rec Grd Inspection	94.20

RECEIPTS

01/06/23	E. Lee-Frost	Purchase Grave Space	425.00
26/06/23	B. Cricket Club	Rec Grd Rent	50.00
26/06/23	Mr & Mrs Kite	Purchase of Grave Space	150.00
26/06/23	Ford	Burial Of G. Ford	816.00
26/06/23	John Weir Funerals	Burial of Ashes/ S. Birdi	669.70
04/07/23	Bournes Funerals	Burial/ K. Hadlow	1000.00

There were no queries to report.

Councillors agreed the accounts as presented, proposed by Cllr. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. Parfitt.

8. Reports from Councillors

Cllr. Parfitt

Cllrs. Parfitt and Clarke have requested a quote to install the two new dog waste bins which will be placed in the recreation ground and at Primrose Grove near the existing litter bin.

The annual ROSPA inspection report on the recreation ground play equipment shows some minor areas to bring it in to line with current regulations but nothing major to be concerned about. Councillors will be addressing some of the issues but are looking forward to a major replacement project once the new cricket pavilion is erected.

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The spikes on top of the swings are succeeding in keeping the pigeons away and the swings cleaner.

The telephone box outside the Church remains safe for the time being. Cllr. Parfitt cleans it and continues to make enough use of it to satisfy BT that it is needed in the village.

Cllr. Parfitt reported that a proposed Faversham community bus may travel to areas such as Conyer and Chilham but will not reach Bredgar. Correspondence from Steven Pay of Kent Transport, Aylesford, has acknowledged a suggestion from Cllr. Parfitt to allow the Iwade bus to visit the village on perhaps one day a week. Negotiations are ongoing. There is a NALC Transport Development meeting in March which may bring hope.

Land at Rookery Close has been sold and is safe from development.

Another pocket of land on the opposite side of the road has also been sold to a different unknown buyer.

There will be a village litter pick on Sunday 17th September, volunteers are asked to contact Cllr. Parfitt.

Cllr. Day

Numerous underground water leaks continue to frustrate parishioners and through traffic along Swanton Street. As soon as one is repaired another erupts. The Chair is to write to SE Water to ask what their plan to resolve this is and the time scale. Proposed by Cllr. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. Whitnell.

Cllr. Osmer

The proposed hedging at the boundary of the recreation ground has proven more complicated to deliver than expected. A grant application for funding has been refused and the cost of preparing the ground and planting will be significant. The land is not owned by the PC making it difficult to justify the cost.

Cllr. Clarke noted that the poplars are growing back anyway.

Cllr. Whitnell

There are no evident issues with local highways and pathways. Paths in Gore Rd, Bush Close and Silver Street have been resurfaced.

No horses have been seen on pathways recently.

The recent sold piece of land opposite Rookery Close has a PROW across it; it is possible it may be moved in the future. Councillors will monitor this and ensure access is not compromised.

Bredgar School is in good hands. There are only 8 new starters for September and ways are being investigated to attract more pupils. HT Ms. Joanna Heath is considering focusing on reading with a view to obtaining specialist equipment to assist pupils and therefore becoming a hub for other local schools to access help.

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Cllr. Clarke

Speedwatch Coordinator, Paul Charman will be standing down as coordinator, although will continue to participate with speedwatch activity. A request for a new coordinator to step up will be published in the Parish magazine and other places. Cllr. Whitnell is to ask HT Jo; in case any parents of the school children may wish to volunteer.

Cllr. Clarke attended the Swale & AONB Footpaths meeting where the new footpaths maps were produced. Copies are available in Bredgar Post Office, Sittingbourne library and from SBC.

There is also a map of Swale Circular Walks available from SBC.

The PC website, Hugofox, has been free to the PC until now. Unfortunately, they are now going to make a charge. There are three levels of access; Councillors propose to access the silver level at £19.99 per month. This will give everyone access to the same items currently available. Proposed by Cllr. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. Whitnell.

A parishioner has noticed that a tree in the Jubilee Gardens has a dead branch. The clerk is to ask Jonathan Gardner for a quote to lop it off. The clerk will also give Jonathan the go ahead to trim the five overgrown shrubs in the cemetery following an acceptable quote.

The Queen's plaque will be mounted onto a large rock and placed by the oak tree in commemoration.

The pond pump filter has been replaced.

The broken cemetery post has been replaced.

Cllr. Priestley

Cllr. Clarke reported for Cllr. Priestley:
Cllr. Priestley has suggested a pond tidy-up in the Autumn. Flyers will be produced requesting volunteers.

Cllr. Whitnell left the meeting.

9. Financial Matters

Audit

The PC Annual Accounts were submitted within the permitted timescale and acknowledged by the audit officials.

Financial Review

The Financial Review was circulated to councillors by email prior to the meeting. It shows the PC to be in a healthy financial position, partly due to several burials this year.

Proposed by Cllr. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. Parfitt.

Banking Signatures

Councillors previously agreed to add another signatory for cheques as a reserve in case one was not available. This is proving more difficult than anticipated due to Barclays closing the Sittingbourne branch and the application being done online. The clerk is persevering though and hopes to succeed before the next meeting.

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10. Planning Matters

Conservation Review Update

The PC has submitted a response to the Conservation Review. Councillors are pleased with the work carried out by SBC Planning and Peter Bell. The Review will be on the agenda at the next Western Area meeting on 31st August which will be attended by three Bredgar councillors.

CA Solar Panel Planning Policy

Cllr. Clarke proposed to delay the update until the next meeting when Cllr. Twaites and Cllr. Priestley will be in attendance.

Vigo Solar Farm Response

BPC responded to the application which is not yet decided. KCC Ecology Dept has requested more information before making a response.

Swanton Farm Application

The application refers to a proposed 19 industrial units at Paynes Farm, Bicknor.

Kent Highways have requested a holding objection, more speed surveys and are disputing various reports from the application.

BPC have objected to the proposal.

11. Highways Improvement Plan

Cllrs, Clarke, Day and Osmer reviewed the Highways Improvement Plan and then submitted it to KHS. Re-engineering of Swanton Street road surface is now our top priority.

It is published on the Parish website.

A meeting to discuss the plan will take place with Jenny Watson from KHS on 7th September.

12. Recreation Ground

Cricket Pavilion Update

There has been no progress since the last parish meeting.

ROSPA Report

This is covered in Cllr. Parfitt's report.

13. Village Matters

Bredgar Book Update

Stephen Palmer is progressing with the planned Bredgar book. Some additional pages may be added before it goes to the publishers with a possible release date of early December 2023.

Proposed Hedge at Boundary of Recreation Ground

This covered in Cllr. Osmer's report.

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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

A parishioner has requested permission to trim a tree on the bank at Primrose Grove. Councillors gave permission.
Five large shrubs in the cemetery will be trimmed in the autumn.

16. Date of the next meeting

The next PC meeting will be on Wednesday 22nd November at 7.30pm in Bredgar Village Hall.

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