

**Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the
Parish Meeting 7pm
and
Annual Parish Meeting
Held at Bredgar Village Hall
On Wednesday 15th May 2024 at 7.30pm**

PARISH MEETING

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

Members of the Public: Four members of the public attended the Parish meeting.
PC James Tancock also attended the Parish Meeting.

Chair, Cllr. Clarke, read out the Chairman's report. A copy is filed with these Minutes.
The Chair then opened the meeting to the members of the public.

Question:

The vegetation bordering Wrens Road either side of the motorway bridge is very overgrown. Could it be reported?

Answer:

The clerk will report.

Question:

The road in Bicknor Lane just before Placketts Hole has dropped. Could it be reported?

Answer:

The clerk will report it.

Question:

Following the increase in traffic recently due to the roadworks on the A249, traffic through the village has increased and appears to be faster. Bexon Lane, being quite narrow and winding, has a speed limit of 60mph dropping to 30mph when approaching Bredgar School. Could the 30mph limit be extended along Bexon Lane to slow traffic before it reaches the school?

Answer:

It can certainly be added to the Highways Improvement Plan. Over the previous years, several traffic calming measures have been attempted but due to Kent Highways regulations, and costs, many have failed to be implemented. Some years ago, the Parish Council succeeded in some traffic calming narrowing of the main through road and two flashing speed signs, which has helped. Traffic calming measures require lighting which the Parish Council would have to fund. Hollingbourne has similar issues and Bredgar PC have worked with Hollingbourne PC to overcome some of the problems.

The 20mph through the village which is in the HIP will be reviewed and Speedwatch, which was active a few years ago, could be restarted if a new volunteer coordinator can be found.

**Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the
Parish Meeting 7pm
and
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On Wednesday 15th May 2024 at 7.30pm**

Question:

Has Bredgar got a Local Plan?

Answer:

Bredgar does not have a Neighbourhood Plan. Implementing a Neighbourhood Plan takes many hours of work to research and implement as well as approximately £120k to £200K. Grants and support from the planning authority are available but the work involved is prohibitive to a small council run by volunteers. Bredgar is covered by the Swale Local Plan adopted in 2017, a five-year local plan review is now overdue but has been postponed pending clarification of government policy in the NPPF. Background work to update the local plan is continuing and a new timetable will be published once the review resumes.

The members of the public left at 7.45pm following the Parish Meeting.

BREDGAR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

1. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from SBC Cllr. Monique Bonney, KCC 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.

No declaration of intent was made.

4. Election of Officers

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

Chair:	Cllr. Brian Clarke -	Proposed by Cllr. David Priestley Seconded by Cllr. Hilary Whitnell
Vice Chair:	Cllr. Nigel Osmer -	Proposed by Cllr. Brian Clarke Seconded by Cllr. Stephen Parfitt

Resignation

Cllr. Hilary Whitnell informed the meeting that, with regret, she would be offering her resignation due to personal reasons. She will attend the charity meeting next week as planned and will continue to walk the footpaths and report

**Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the
Parish Meeting 7pm
and
Annual Parish Meeting
Held at Bredgar Village Hall
On Wednesday 15th May 2024 at 7.30pm**

any issues. Councillors thanked Cllr Whitnell for her valued contribution over the past two years.

Following Cllr. Twaites stepping back as Vice Chair, Councillors thanked Cllr. Twaites for her valued contribution over the years.

Councillors also thanked Cllr. Clarke for the extensive work he has done for the Council this year.

5. Elect Councillors to Roles

Cllr. Brian Clarke	Chair, KALC, GDPR, IT, Website
Cllr. Nigel Osmer	Post Office Liaison, KCC Highways
Cllr. Penny Twaites	Response to Planning
Cllr. Mike Day	KCC Highways, Parks and Gardens, Pest Control
Cllr. Stephen Parfitt	Parks and Gardens
Cllr. David Priestley	Heritage, Pond Warden, Pest Control
Cllr. Hilary Whitnell	Footpaths, Thatcher & Eleemosary Charities Representative, School Liaison
Teresa Hudson	Clerk, Website

Chair, Cllr, Clarke proposed that Cllr. Osmer take on the role of Post Office Liaison along with KCC Highways responsibility. Cllr. Osmer accepted the role.

6. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 6th March 2024 were read and approved by the Parish Council. They are now available on the parish website. Proposed by Cllr. B. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. P. Twaites.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

7. Police Report

PC Kirsten Jones was unavailable, so PC James Tancock attended the meeting. PC Jones had prepared a report which was emailed to the PC prior to the meeting. PC Tancock read the report to the meeting. A copy is filed with these Minutes.

PC Jones will attend two surgeries; Rodmersham Coffee Shop on Monday 3rd June at 11.00am and Bredgar Farmshop on Friday 21st June at 12 noon.

One crime was reported: theft of a lawn mower and tools in Rodmersham.

Three incidents of anti-social behaviour were reported at Tunstall, Bapchild and Rodmersham of nuisance bikes.

**Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the
Parish Meeting 7pm
and
Annual Parish Meeting
Held at Bredgar Village Hall
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PC Tancock encouraged residents to always report incidents so that a picture can be built up and actions taken.

8. Authorisation of Accounts

PAYMENTS

01/03/24	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	200.00
01/03/24	EDF	Pond Electricity	17.00
07/03/24	Comm Ser Ltd KCC	Grds Maint	460.73
07/03/24	T. Hudson	Honorarium	433.00
13/03/24	SBC	Grds Maint	3513.61
13/03/24	T. Hudson	Postage/ink	148.52
19/03/24	SBC	Bredgar Bk Printing	498.00
25/03/24	TPJones LLP	Accountant	85.92
31/03/24	Unity Trust	Service Charge	3.96
01/04/24	Bredgar Farmshop	PO Rent	200.00
01/04/24	EDF	Pond Electricity	17.00
02/04/24	Ask A Gardener	Village Maint	150.00
03/04/24	Eventbright	Training	52.04
09/04/24	Hugofox	Website Subs 3 yrs	647.68
12/04/24	KALC	Subs	338.16

RECEIPTS

20/03/24	EDF	Refund	122.71
25/03/24	Bredgar Cricket Club	Rec Grd Rent	50.00
11/04/24	NSI	Compensation	75.00

Comments:

The income from the book sales was reported at the previous meeting; SBC then requested payment for the printing costs in March.

The training on Transport Issues was attended by Cllr. Parfitt.

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

9. Finance

Banking Update

The new bank account with Unity Trust is working well. The electronic authorisation is easier, quicker and safer than cheque payments. The standing order and direct debits are managed from Unity Trust.

Councillors agreed that a corporate card would be desirable for purchases made online etc, the clerk is to apply for one card.

**Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the
Parish Meeting 7pm
and
Annual Parish Meeting
Held at Bredgar Village Hall
On Wednesday 15th May 2024 at 7.30pm**

Proposed by Cllr. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. Twaites.
The Barclays account will be closed.

A savings account with Shawbrook Bank is to be applied for with a view to investing £25K in a one-year bond. These funds are earmarked for new play equipment once the new cricket pavilion has been built.

Proposed by Cllr. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. Osmer. All councillors agreed.

Insurance Renewal

The annual council insurance is on year three of a three-year contract. The cost this year is £700.35.

Annual Accounts for the year ending 31/03/2024:

10. Financial Regulations Review and approval.

The Council considered and approved the Finance Regulations. The regulations were updated to cover the new banking system.

Proposed by Cllr. B. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. M. Day. All councillors agreed.

11. Review the effectiveness of the System of Internal Control and consideration of the Statement of Internal Control (SIC) in support of the Annual Governance Statement.

The Council considered and approved the SIC for the year ending 31st March 2024.

The Chair and Clerk signed the Statement on behalf of the Council. Proposed by Cllr. B. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. S. Parfitt. All councillors agreed.

12.

• **Approval of the Annual Governance Statement for 2023-2024**

The Council considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for 2023-2024.

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

• **Section 1 of the AGAR for the year ending 31st March 2024.**

The Council considered and approved Section 1 of the AGAR for the year ending 31st March 2024. Proposed by Cllr. Clarke, Seconded by Cllr. Osmer. All councillors agreed.

• **The Chair of the meeting and the clerk to sign and date.**

The Chair and Clerk signed and dated the Statement and Section 1 of the AGAR on behalf of the Council.

**Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the
Parish Meeting 7pm
and
Annual Parish Meeting
Held at Bredgar Village Hall
On Wednesday 15th May 2024 at 7.30pm**

- **Confirm or not that the Council has published the required Transparency Code information on the Council's website and is up to date.**
The Clerk confirmed the Transparency Code requirements have been kept up to date and posted to the Council's website.

13.

- **Approval of the Accounting Statements for 2023-2024**
The Council considered and approved the Accounting Statements and supporting documents as provided by the Responsible Financial Officer.
- **Internal Auditor Statement**
The Council considered and approved the Internal Auditor Statement. All councillors agreed.
- **Section 2 of the AGAR for the year ending 31st March 2024**
The Clerk, prior to the meeting, signed and dated section 2 of the AGAR for 2023-2024. The Chair signed and dated the Accounting Statements on behalf of the Council. Proposed by Cllr. Clarke seconded by Cllr. Twaites. All councillors agreed.
- **Supporting Bank Reconciliation as of 31st March 2024**
The Council considered and approved the supporting bank reconciliation ending 31st March 2024. Proposed by Cllr. Clarke, Seconded by Cllr. Twaites. All councillors agreed.
- **Explanation of the significant variations from last year (2022-2023) to this year (2023-2024).**
The Council considered and approved the explanation of the significant variances from the year ending 31st March 2024.
- **The chair of the meeting to sign and date plus minute reference. (Clerk has signed after preparing the Statement)**
The Chair signed and dated the Statement at the end of the meeting.

14.

Consideration that the Council does not meet the criteria for exemption for 2023-2024 and cannot certify itself exempt from the 'limited assurance review'. Therefore, the AGAR must be submitted to the external auditors, Mazars, and published on the website.

The Council considered the criteria for the Exemption Certificate and agreed that this year, Bredgar PC does not meet the criteria due to increased income and therefore must submit the AGAR to the external auditors, Mazars. The Clerk will submit the documents. All councillors agreed.

15. Note the proposed dates for the Exercise of Public Rights.

The Council noted the period for the Exercise of Public Rights from Monday 1st July to Wednesday 31st July 2024.

Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the
Parish Meeting 7pm
and
Annual Parish Meeting
Held at Bredgar Village Hall
On Wednesday 15th May 2024 at 7.30pm

16. Planning Matters
Highsted Park

The Chair has been in contact with SBC Cllr. Bonney over the recent months concerning the proposed Highsted Park development.
SBC has requested further environmental reports from the developer.
No decision on the development has been made yet.

Bredgar House

The Parish Council is concerned about the state of the building regarding conservation regulations. SBC is to be consulted.

17. Cemetery
Cemetery Fees Review

SBC has raised the costs of burial services and Bredgar PC usually follows suit. However, this year councillors decided to keep costs the same as last year. This will be reviewed on an annual basis.
Proposed by Cllr. Priestley, seconded by Cllr. Whitnell. All councillors agreed.

18. Reports from Councillors

Cllr. B. Clarke

Cllr. Clarke requested a quote from Sittibuilders to repair broken tiles on the cemetery shed roof and to repair the walls of the walled Coronation Garden in Gore Road. The quote is £80 for the tiles and £1410 for the walled garden.
Proposed by Cllr. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. Parfitt. All councillors agreed.

Cllr. D. Priestley

Cllr. Priestley has investigated costs for cleaning the War Memorial. SBC planning conditions Officer has cleared the proposed work. The quote from Burslem is £1200 + VAT.

Gardener, Adrian Martin has been engaged to carry out regular maintenance on Bredgar pond.

Cllr. S. Parfitt

The decking planks have been repaired by Onbuilding. The white edging will be either painted or covered to highlight the edge of the decking.

Drains have been cleared along Primrose Lane near the motorway bridge and kerbs swept.

A sign at Grove End was demolished in a road accident. It has been replaced.

Cllr. Parfitt attended a transport training session. Parishioners in Bridport organised a bus which is self-financing and uses volunteer drivers. Faversham have a 12-seater bus which goes to Oare and Doddington. However, due to lack of funding, Bredgar still has no buses.

**Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the
Parish Meeting 7pm
and
Annual Parish Meeting
Held at Bredgar Village Hall
On Wednesday 15th May 2024 at 7.30pm**

Biffa refuse men complained that the new dog waste bin was at the wrong height. This has now been resolved.

Cllr. M. Day

Residents at Swanton Street have, again, suffered flooding. Cllr. Clarke advised the residents to contact KCC Cllr. Rich Lehman. Cllr. Clarke has also contacted Cllr. Lehman and Cllr. Bonney about the ongoing problem.

Cllr. P. Twaites

The application to move the footpath ZR166 at Blind Marys Lane was received. Councillors are minded not to object but with a proviso that it will be reinstated if the orchard is replanted.

The stile at Silver Street is unsuitable for dogs and will be reported again.

Cllr. N. Osmer

There is a pole for a sign in The Street but with no sign on it. Cllr. Osmer is to contact Highways to ask if a sign is forthcoming.

Cllr. H. Whitnell

The footpaths in Bredgar are passable and in a better condition than Tunstall and Borden.

19. 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.

20. Any Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

The meeting finished at 9.45pm.

21. Date of the next meeting – 14th August 2024.