

Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting
Held at Bredgar School
On Wednesday 13th January 2016 at 7.30pm.

Present: Chair Cllr. Mrs. P. Twaites; Vice Chair Cllr. Mr. B. Clarke; Cllr. Mr. D. Clack; Cllr. Mrs. S. Hickman; Cllr. Mr. G. Kite; Cllr. Mr. D. Priestley and Cllr. Mr. M. Pullen.

Clerk: Mrs. T. Hudson.

In Attendance: Tunstall Parish Cllr. Edward Senior, Mr. Jon Barrett and Mr. Dudley Cramp.

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

1. Apologies

No apologies were received.

2. Declaration of Members' Personal & Prejudicial Interests

Declarations were made by the Clerk in respect of the Post Office and Cllr. Pullen in respect of the Recreation Ground.

3. Declaration of any intent to record or film the PC meeting by any member of the Council or member of the public

No declarations of intent to record or film were made.

4. Traffic Calming

Tunstall Parish Cllr. Edward Senior was invited by Bredgar PC to talk to councillors and parishioners about a new local initiative. Tunstall Parish Council have decided to tackle speeding motorists through their village by setting up Speedwatch where a group of parishioners are trained to operate portable speed cameras with a view to slowing down the traffic. The parishes of Doddington, Rodmersham, Borden, Iwade, Bobbing and Tunstall have already decided to join the local scheme, so Bredgar is the missing link in completing a ring around Sittingbourne, to the East, South and West. Given the frequent high speed of traffic travelling through Bredgar, it might be beneficial for our residents to join forces with the others.

Speedwatch is not a Police operation as such and does not penalize motorists; it works by educational pressure, and the Kent coordinator works alongside the Police. A team of three persons is required to operate the equipment by the roadside, which tells the motorist their speed. The data is then recorded, for vehicles travelling at speeds excessively over limit. In those cases, an advisory police letter is sent to the motorist advising them to slow down. The statistics from villages running the scheme for some time indicate that less than 20% of those who receive a letter reoffend with a drop to almost zero, for those who receive a second letter.

Teams must be trained and must set up in an approved site. Training is free and takes about one and a half hours – in Tunstall, 18 people volunteered and trained. A team of three would go out about once every couple of weeks. It is likely that the first training session would be in Late January, or early February.

Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting
Held at Bredgar School

On Wednesday 13th January 2016 at 7.30pm.

Tunstall PC has purchased the equipment with funding from 3 local councillors and KCC, and would share it between the councils. An article will be placed in the Parish Magazine requesting volunteers to operate the equipment.

5. Ten minutes representation by the public

In light of BPC's possible commissioning of a replica of the 'Bredgar Die, parishioner Jon Barrett gave a short talk on metal detecting. He has been detecting for about 7 years and has found many interesting artifacts around Bredgar including the Die (which is the oldest die discovered in this country). The Celtic die was made of bronze and was probably a template for producing coins although no coins of that design have been found. It is speculated that the die could have been lost before any coins were made from it.

Mr. Barrett also showed councillors some other gold and silver coins and roman pieces that he has found. Councillors thanked Mr. Barrett for his very interesting and informative talk.

Dudley Cramp arrived at 8.15pm.

A parishioner informed the meeting that dog mess around the village is a nuisance; could the PC put signs up reminding dog owners to clear up after their dogs? The clerk is to investigate costs of signs. Also, could another wild fowl sign be put up as ducks are getting run over? The Chair felt cost might be an issue with KHS but it would be looked into.

The drains outside the Farmshop are blocked causing mud on the road. The clerk is to report the matter to KHS.

Mr. Barrett and the member of the public left the meeting at 8.25pm.

6. Report from PCSO

PCSO Sheron Reece did not attend the meeting.

Several shed burglaries have occurred in Bredgar. A resident of Primrose Lane asked if anything could be done to prevent burglars from accessing properties from across fields. Councillors sympathised but felt it was the responsibility of residents to secure their boundaries.

7. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the previous PC meeting held on 29th October 2015 were read and formally approved by the Parish Council. They are now available on the Parish website. Proposed by Cllr. S. Hickman, seconded by Cllr. D. Clack.

They were signed by the Chair at the end of the meeting.

Matters Arising

Any matters arising are covered by the agenda.

Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting
Held at Bredgar School

On Wednesday 13th January 2016 at 7.30pm.

8. Authorisation of Accounts

The PC approved the accounts as set out in the meeting's agenda.
Proposed by Cllr. M. Pullen, seconded by Cllr. S. Hickman.

9. Finance Matters

Recreation Ground purchase update

Mr. Cramp attended the meeting to explain the current situation regarding the purchase of the recreation ground. A report and letter have been circulated by e-mail to councillors prior to the meeting, with relevant documents sent to the clerk for approval.

Mr. Cramp reported that a footpath runs through the recreation ground and a sewage pipe and water pipe run underneath the land, but nothing onerous had emerged from the searches. Discussions have taken place between the two solicitors regarding recreational provisions.

A proposal for the PC to move forward and sign the contract and transfer the sum of £40 000.00 for the purchase of the recreation ground was approved unanimously; proposed by Cllr. Twaites, seconded by Cllr. Clarke.

A proposal to authorise signing the contract was proposed by Cllr. Hickman, seconded by Cllr. Clarke.

A proposal to authorise the signing of the contract by two signatories unless Parish rules dictate otherwise was proposed by Cllr. Clack, seconded by Cllr. Kite.

Financial Review

Documents showing the current financial position and annual recurring costs was circulated by e-mail prior to the meeting. Councillors were satisfied and had no questions. Cllrs agreed to keep an ongoing reserve of £5000 - £6000 at the very least.

Precept 2016/2017

Following approval from councillors by e-mail, the clerk informed SBC that the precept for Bredgar would remain at £9500.00 for the coming year. This equates to a band D rate of £33.08 compared to £33.31 in 2015/16. The figure is based on the number of band D properties in the area and also takes into account any discounts claimed such as single person discount.

Clerk Pension & Auto Enrolment

Following new legislation from central Government, employers are required to provide a pension scheme for employees. However, the PC is not liable to provide a pension for the clerk, as the circumstances do not apply in this case.

KCC Grass Cutting Contract

The PC has yet to receive a reply from SBC regarding the areas covered by the existing contract.

10. Reports from Councillors

Cllr. G. Kite

Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting
Held at Bredgar School

On Wednesday 13th January 2016 at 7.30pm.

The holly tree along the pathway at Travers Gardens has been cut back along with other overhanging foliage.

Cllr. D. Clack

The path ZR171 has been inspected and added to the maintenance plan at KCC.

The matter of proposed bollards outside the PO is ongoing.

Cllr. D. Priestley

Rat activity at the pond is low; bait near the decking was taken in November but not since.

Cllr. S. Hickman

Cllr. Hickman attended the charity meeting where monetary gifts were given to needy residents of Bredgar. Flowers were also given to two residents who had suffered illness.

Cllr. M. Pullen

The village pantomime was a great success and thoroughly enjoyed by all who went.

Community spirit was much in evidence.

Cllr. B. Clarke

Cllr. Clarke is to attend the Swale Rural Forum meeting.

Cllr. P. Twaites

The Chair received a letter from the Head Teacher requesting a donation towards high quality resources for the outside learning environment. The letter will be circulated by e-mail after which a decision will be made.

The school has requested that the PC consider marking the parking area opposite the school to define the spaces for parking.

Councillors discussed the issue but felt it would be difficult due to the gravel surface. Costs for tarmac would be outside the council resources at present. The Chair is to inform the Head Teacher of the PC's decision.

11. Planning Matters

Blind Marys Lane

A log cabin has been erected on one of the sites. Graham Thomas of SBC is to investigate, as this may be contrary to planning regulations.

The planning appeal on the other site was presented three weeks ago; there is likely to be a Hearing to determine the outcome. Since the previous Hearing, legislation has changed therefore it is more likely that SBC will succeed in having the Appeal dismissed.

Dukes Shaw

The outcome of this planning application is pending due to several changes of personnel dealing with the case.

Kent Science Park update

The KSP site has now been sold. It is not known if the proposed plans remain the same. The PC has been informed that fees for the

Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting
Held at Bredgar School

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current plans are still outstanding and that therefore the application is not yet 'live'.

5Parishes Opposition Group

SBC Cllr. Monique Bonney has requested donations from Parish Councils towards 5POG funds for possible future needs. Cllrs discussed the request and, although supportive of the 5POG aims, would prefer to await the planning application becoming live. However, this could be at any time, therefore Cllrs voted in favour of the principle of a donation of £300 to the 5POG fund with conditions. The Chair is to write to Cllr. Bonney.

12. Highways

Swanton Street Gateway

There has been no progress on the matter. The Chair is to follow it up.

13. Cemetery Regulations Review

Due to pressure of time, the Cemetery Regulations review will be discussed at the AGM in May.

14. Proposed Bollards outside P.O.

Cllr. Clack is looking into the matter and will bring information to the next meeting.

15. Pond/Pond Decking Repairs

Following the discovery of damage to the decking at the pond, a temporary repair has been carried out for the safety of parishioners who enjoy the facility. Cllr. Clack brought samples of a composite material to show councillors, which, because it is made of a synthetic material, will not rot. It is estimated that replacement of the whole decking with struts into the water would be approximately £4000. It is hoped that a grant will be forthcoming to assist with costs; Cllr Clarke is to investigate funding.

16. Broadband update

Super-fast broadband is now available for many residents in Bredgar. A new cabinet has been installed in the village opposite the church and fibre has been run from Sittingbourne, providing upgrade capability for properties connected to the existing BT cabinet nearby. This enables broadband upgrades to be purchased for approximately 54% of the lines in the parish (those that connect to the cabinet by the church). The actual performance improvement will be dependent on the length of the copper line from that cabinet to each property.

The PC is now working to address the remaining connections. Some may fall under Phase 2 of KCC's Make Kent Quicker programme. Others may need to be delivered through means such as, [Community Fibre Partnership](#) or by residents purchasing

Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting
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direct.

17. Swanton Street Pathway

The Chair informed the meeting that a document would be required to grant an Easement for the land where the footpath would be situated. It is estimated that the legal work for the proposed footpath would cost approximately £500. There would be no additional insurance costs. Cllr. Kite is to ask a local tradesman to quote for the removal of hedges at either end of the proposed footpath and leveling of the ground.

18. Bredgar Die

An article on the Bredgar Die has been posted on the Bredgar website which may be of interest to parishioners. The earliest ever Die, used to make coins, was found in Bredgar by a local metal detectorist. Cllr. Priestley is carrying out ongoing research into the subject and will report on further investigations at future PC meetings.

19. Cllr/Clerk Training Opportunities

Kent Association Of Local Councils (KALC) provides excellent opportunities for Councillor and clerk training and is frequently accessed by the PC.

Future subjects include the Chairman's Conference in February, which the Chair will be attending, Cemetery Regulations and Finance, among others. Councillors are encouraged to participate, as it is very worthwhile.

20. Any Other Business

Following the completion of the purchase of the Recreation Ground, Cllr. Pullen is to facilitate arrangements for a ceremony to unveil plaques thanking the various donors.

21. Next meeting

The PC Open Meeting will take place on TUESDAY 22nd March at 7.30pm.