

**Bredgar Parish Council
Minutes of the AGM
Wednesday 7th May 2025
Bredgar Village Hall**

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: No members of the public were present.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies to be made.

2. Declaration of Members' personal and prejudicial interests

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

The duration of the meeting will be two hours. Any business not completed within that period will be carried over to the next meeting.

There were no intentions to record or film the meeting by anyone present.

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. Nigel Osmer

Seconded by Cllr. David Priestley.

Vice Chair: Cllr. Nigel Osmer – Proposed by Cllr. Brian Clarke

Seconded by: Cllr. Penny Twaites.

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 & Eleemosyary Charities Representative, School Liaison

Teresa Hudson

Clerk, Website

Councillors were offered the opportunity to change roles but were content to remain as last year.

6. Approval of Minutes:

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 5th March 2025 were read and approved by the Parish Council. They are now available on the parish website.

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Proposed by Cllr. B. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. H. Whitnell. All councillors agreed.

Matters Arising

The new dog bin has been installed in Primrose Lane North of the Motorway.

7. Police Report

PC Richard Divers attended the Annual Parish Meeting from 7.25pm until 7.53pm and gave valuable advice to parishioners. This is reported in the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting.

8. Authorisation of Accounts

Payments

24/02/25	T. Hudson	Honorarium	533.80
24/02/25	5PG	Fighting Fund	500.00
28/02/25	UT	Service Charge	6.00
03/03/25	EDF	Pond Electricity	69.53
03/03/25	Bredgar F/shop	PO Rent	200.00
07/03/25	Hubble Aqua	Pond Work	700.00
12/03/25	Lloyds	Service Charge	3.00
14/03/25	SBC	Grounds Maint	3749.03
14/03/25	T. Hudson	Ink & Postage	76.78
20/03/25	TP Jones LLP	Accountant	85.92
20/03/25	Spyder Creative	H Park Banner	72.00
01/04/25	Lloyds	Service Charge	6.00
01/04/25	EDF	Pond Electricity	69.53
01/04/25	Bredgar F/Shop	PO Rent	200.00
02/04/25	Mazars	External Auditor	252.00
03/04/25	Ask a Gardener	Village Maint	75.00
09/04/25	Lloyds	Corporate Card	220.99
14/04/25	KALC	Subscriptions	368.58

Receipts

25/02/25	Bredgar Book x2	Sales	30.00
04/03/25	Family Funeral	Burial of ashes	1000.00
12/03/25	Bredgar Book	Sales	15.00
13/03/25	S. Matthews	Cemetery Plot	200.00
13/03/25	Bournes Funeral	Burial of Ashes	669.70
31/03/25	Bredgar C Club	Rec Grd Rent	50.00

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9. Finance

EDF

The clerk informed the meeting that EDF have written to reduce the monthly direct debit for pond electricity from £69.53 to £54.62.

Insurance Renewal

The three-year agreement for insurance with Clear Group has ended; the renewal offer from the company was £750 + tax of £90.11 + £50 admin fee.

The clerk investigated other insurance companies and Zurich offered insurance at £500. The only difference in cover was in play equipment, however, councillors felt it was still a better deal.

Proposal to accept the deal from Zurich was proposed by Cllr. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. Parfitt. All councillors agreed.

Review Budget and Project List

The Chair circulated the budget and project list prior to the meeting.

The Chair stated that an analysis of the budget was carried out and there will probably be a shortfall of approximately £10 000 each year. Therefore, as the income from the cemetery cannot be relied upon, it will be necessary to dip into the savings account to cover the essential outgoings. Services provided may need to reviewed or the precept increased in future years.

The projects that are priority for the coming year are:

- Highsted Park backstop
- Pond LED flood lights
- Pond subsidence repairs
- Jubilee bench

It is proposed that the £100 legacy left to the PC be put towards the Jubilee bench which is in a poor state. All councillors agreed.

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS for the year ending 31.03.2025

10.

- **Approval of the Annual Governance Statement for 2024-2025**

The PC approved the Governance Statement for 2024-2025

- **Section 1 of the AGAR for the year ending 31st March 2025.**

Section 1 of the AGAR was approved by all councillors.

- **The Chair of the meeting and the clerk to sign and date**

The Chair and clerk signed all documents in the AGAR.

- **Confirm or not that the Council has published the required Transparency Code information on the Council's website and is up to date.**

All documents necessary to comply with the Transparency Code have been published on the PC website.

- **Approval of the Accounting Statements for 2024-2025**

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Councillors all approved the Accounting Statements.

Proposed by Cllr. Clarke, seconded by Cllr. Osmer.

- **Section 2 of the AGAR for the year ending 31st March 20245**
Section 2 of the AGAR was approved by all councillors.
 - **Supporting Bank Reconciliation as of 31st March 2025**
The supporting bank reconciliation was approved by all councillors.
 - **Explanation of the significant variations from last year (2023-2024) to this year (2024-2025).**
All councillors agreed the significant variations from last year.
 - **The chair of the meeting to sign and date plus minute reference.**
The Chair signed all documents, Minute reference 10.
 - **(Clerk has signed after preparing the Statement)**
- 11. Consideration that the Council does not meet the criteria for exemption for 24-2025 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 accounts have exceeded the threshold of £25 000 this year, therefore the PC is not exempt from the Limited Assurance Review and must submit all documents by email to the external auditor, Mazars.

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

The proposed date for the Public Rights is 1st July 2025 until 11th August 2025.

13. Policy Review

Standing Orders

The Standing Orders have been reviewed. No changes are proposed.

14. Planning Matters

Highsted Park

5 Parishes Group has done an incredible amount of work across an enormous number of documents connected to Highsted Park. Highlighting numerous issues, errors and inconsistencies in the applicants proposals.

Fundraising has progressed, with over £40 000 being raised so far for barrister and expert witness fees. More is still required for consultant fees, so various fund-raising activities are ongoing.

Blind Marys Site

There are two sites at Blind Marys Lane. The site furthest from the road has applied for a Certificate of Lawful Development.

The site nearest to the road has recently taken delivery of another caravan.

Bredgar PC has informed SBC and are awaiting action to carry out the Enforcement Notice which was granted in 2018.

Solar Farm Vigo Lane

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An appeal has been registered to this application. Bredgar PC have noted the minor changes, and while these are positive, their view remains materially the same as in 2023.

15. Cemetery

Bredgar PC usually follow SBC costs for cemetery usage but last year did not raise the burial costs in the cemetery. This year, due to inflationary costs rising for maintenance in the village, Councillors decided to raise burial costs in line with Swale. Costs for those residing outside of Bredgar remain at double the costs for residents at the discretion of Bredgar PC.

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

16. Village Matters

Gore Road Access Issue

An issue has arisen in Gore Road whereby parking access to two properties crossed a grass verge owned by SBC and causes unsightly wheel ruts. The owners of the properties want to surface the grass verges but could not agree arrangements with SBC. The PC suggested a solution of cellular paving which would be suitable for driving across to SBC. SBC is expected to contact the householders but has not replied to BPC yet.

Recreation Ground Grass Cutting Contract

Following a steep rise in costs for the grass cutting contract for the recreation ground, Bredgar Cricket Club have taken over responsibility for engaging a contractor. Bredgar PC will contribute to costs for cutting the play area grass. Costs for applying weedkiller to the Bexon Lane car park area were prohibitive for the amount of work carried out. A resident has kindly offered to apply weedkiller this season.

Footpath ZR141

The stile installed at the end of the footpath between Hearts Delight Road and Primrose Lane remains despite the landowner agreeing to replace it with a kissing gate. The clerk has reminded PROW that it is waiting to be completed.

Silver Street

Three stiles installed on a footpath leading towards Deans Hill are rendering the path unusable by some local residents with limited mobility, it has been reported. The stiles are allegedly the responsibility of three separate landowners. At least one landowner is sympathetic and amenable to 'his' stile being changed to a kissing gate despite that being less appropriate for stock management but does not expect to fund the work. Cllr. Twaites is to contact PROW.

A property in Silver Street has laid hard core for parking purposes. A Councillor has had a conversation with the landowner and is assured it is a legitimate use of land.

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17. Reports from Councillors

Cllr. Nigel Osmer

Cllr. Osmer has received a response from Jenny Watson, KCC, concerning the missing sign “Unsuitable for HGVs’ at the junction of Bexon Lane and The Street. She has passed it on to the contractors to carry out the work.

Cllr. Stephen Parfitt

Highways have replaced two local road signs that had fallen due to rust. The bollard in Wrens Road by the cemetery was dislodged by a tractor and has been replaced. The accidental damage to the bollard and curb on the Primrose Lane motorway bridge has been repaired and car debris removed. The new hedge at the recreation ground has taken well.

The fly tipping clear up rate is improving with sites generally cleared within two weeks. Cllr. Parfitt asks that sites are not disturbed as evidence can be contaminated.

Cllr. David Priestley

The pond area is to be tidied this week.

The side of the pond next to the road requires reconstruction, Cllr. Priestley is to follow this up.

Cllr. Penny Twaites

Nothing to report

Cllr. Mike Day

Nothing to report

Cllr. Hilary Whitnell

Bredgar School is doing well; they are liaising with Bredgar Village Hall to raise funds for an outside area for the pupils.

Footpaths across farmland are clear, generally providing good access.

Pantomime rehearsals begin this week.

Cllr. Brian Clarke

Nothing to report

18. 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.

19. Any Other Business

There is a large pothole outside the village hall, Cllr. Osmer is to report it to KCC.

20. Date of the next meeting

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

The next PC meeting will be Wednesday 13th August 2025.