

BREDHURST PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held in Blacksmiths Barn
on Wednesday 13 December 2023 at 6.30pm**



Present:

Cllr Vanessa Jones (Chair), Cllr Steve Bowring (Vice Chair), Cllr Richard Collins, Cllr Sue Harwood and Cllr Claire Sharp,
Clerk and RFO – Mrs Wendy Licence
Public- none

870. Apologies of Absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Lee Gooda (work) and Cllr Dan Fifield (work); apologies accepted.

871. Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

872. Minutes of 8 November 2023 Parish Council Meeting

a) To consider the minutes of the previous meeting and, if in order, sign as a true record.

The minutes were **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** by Councillors and signed by Cllr Jones as a true record.

b) Matters arising from the minutes.

Action Points	Actions	Clerk or Cllr	Completed or agenda item 13.12.23
AP1	Submit planning responses	Clerk	Completed
AP2	Check if repairs to play equipment have been completed	Cllr Jones	Completed
AP3	Instruct contractor- planter	Cllr Jones	Completed
AP4	Submit notice board policy to Maidstone Borough Council (MBC)	Clerk	Completed

Public Participation Time

No members of the public were present.

873. Visitors

a) Police: to receive the monthly crime report and any other Police updates.

There was nothing to report for Bredhurst.

b) Borough Councillors: to receive report.

Borough Cllr Jones arranged for MBC to remove the fly tipping outside St Peter's Church.

She attended a Boxley Cluster Group Meeting at which Police Inspector Steve Kent explained PC Jacob Troth will be Boxley Ward's new beat officer. MBCllr Jones met with him on 9 December and gave him a tour of the area. In Bredhurst, PC Troth will focus attention on vehicles illegally accessing Bredhurst Woods and speed traps in the village.

At a meeting of MBC's Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Policy Advisory Committee (PIED PAC) at which MBC's response to the Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan was discussed, MBCllr Jones challenged the inclusion of a walking and cycle route from the proposed development at Lidsing to Maidstone Town Centre. MBCllr Jones explained that the proposal was ridiculous and suggested MBCllr Cooper (Con), Deputy Leader of MBC and Cabinet Member for PIED should try walking up Boxley Hill. He declined and, although he agreed with the points made by MBCllr Jones, he stated the route will remain in the Infrastructure Plan.

A resident contacted MBCllr Jones concerned about the number of HGVs using Lidsing Road en route to the development off Westfield Sole Road and the excessive amount of mud on the road left by lorries. MBC Planning confirmed no conditions is in place to restrict the movement of vehicles accessing the site and excessive mud should be reported on the KCC portal.

No reports have been received from Borough Councillors Heidi Bryant or Bob Hinder.

- c) County Councillor: to receive report.

No report had been received from County Councillor Paul Carter.

874. Planning

- a) To receive an update regarding MBC's Local Plan Review / Lidsing Garden Development.

MBC expects the Planning Inspector's decision regarding the Local Plan Review before MBC's Full Council meeting in February.

- b) Ref: 23/504973/FULL

Address: 2 Yew Tree Place The Street Bredhurst Kent ME7 3LJ

Proposal: Conversion of garage and block up existing garage door and insert new window.

Councillors considered the application and **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to support the proposal.

ACTION 1: Clerk to submit response.

875. Playing Field

- a) To consider quotations for monthly play area inspections.

Four contractors were approached for quotations; one declined due to conflict if they made the repairs; one declined due to high workload; two quoted were received.

Councillors considered the quotations and **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the quotation of £55 per month from Safeplay PS Ltd.

ACTION 2: Clerk to accept quotation.

- b) To consider quotation for annual play area inspection.

The inspection was due and TMI (current contractor) was instructed at a cost of £235; the inspection will be carried out mid- January.

- c) To consider quotations for repairs to junior swings.

Three contractors were approached for quotations; one declined as they would not carry out repairs and two companies quoted. It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the quotation of £695 from Playfix Ltd.

ACTION 3: Clerk to accept quotation.

- d) To consider annual visual tree inspection report.

Deferred to January

Councillors **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the quotation of £250 from Lucanus to remove ivy from the trees.

ACTION 4: Cllr Jones to accept quotation.

876. Blacksmiths Barn

- a) To receive an update on the gardening arrangements

Councillors reviewed the gardening arrangements for Blacksmiths Barn and other areas in the village including the Parish Council's planters outside Pickwicks and two areas in Hurstwood Road. Councillors **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to pay Rachel Ford, a trusted and fully qualified contractor, £27.50 per hour.

- b) To consider deposits from hirers.

Councillors **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** that there be no changes to the current terms and conditions and that occasional hirers pay the £100 deposit taken at time of booking for an occasional hire.

877. Village Maintenance

- a) To receive an update on highway matters.
There was no feedback from KCC Highways.
- b) Village notice board
Councillors **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept £525 grant from MBC towards a recycled plastic notice board.
ACTION 5: Cllr Jones to send dimensions to the Clerk.
ACTION 6: Clerk to obtain notice board quotes.
- c) Other village maintenance matters.
There are bad potholes on Lidsing Road. KCC Highways plans to conduct repairs in early January.

878. Finance

- a) To receive financial statement and bank reconciliation
Deferred to next month
- b) Payment's list: Payments made out of meeting.

Ref	Details	Amount	VAT	Total
119	Bytes	8.77	1.75	10.52
120	OneComm SVS Ltd- 888169	33.70	6.74	40.44

Payment's list: to consider invoices for payment.

Ref	Details	Amount	VAT	Total
121	Every Little Nook- October cleaning	84.00		84.00
122	Mrs W Licence- salary/ office	-		-
123	HMRC- PAYE	-		-
124	Safeplay - Play Area Maintenance *	2,930.00	586.00	3,516.00
125	Lucanus- tree clearance	100.00		100.00
126	Lucanus- tree report	250.00		250.00
127	Mike Searley- Barn grass cutting	200.00		200.00
128	Ecotricity- Sept/ Oct/ Dec	614.37	32.34	646.71
129	Rachel Ford- gardening 10hrs	250.00		250.00
130	Rachel Ford- plants	23.94		23.94
131	Mrs W Licence- expenses	10.83	2.17	13.00
132	Every Little Nook- November cleaning	59.00		59.00

* cheque 300003 not cashed due to change of signatories

- c) Half year internal audit 2023/24.
The half yearly internal audit for 2023/24 took place via a Teams meeting on 5th December. An in-person visit will take place tomorrow.
- d) Budget 2024/25.
Councillors **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to set the budget for 2024/25 at £31,261. As it has not been necessary to spend the £5,000 transferred from the Blacksmiths Barn budget to the Lidsing budget in June 2022, Councillors **AGREE UNANIMOUSLY** to transfer the funds back to the Blacksmith Barn budget.
Councillors requested the Clerk to check the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) subscription and the internal audit fee for 2023/24.
ACTION 7: Clerk to check CPRE membership.
ACTION 8: Clerk to check audit fee.

- e) Precept 2024/25.
Council Tax Base figure not yet available
- f) Any other financial matters
Changes to the banking mandate have been implemented; Cllr Jones may now raise but not authorise payments. Cllr Harwood may authorise but not raise payments. Cllr Collins still unable to access the account which he is resolving with the bank. The NEST mandate relating to the Clerk's pension was signed.

879. Report from Parish Councillors

Cllr Bowring had attended the KALC Maidstone Area Committee meeting, the Cluster meetings were discussed.

880. Correspondence

Nothing to note.

881. Closed session- Staffing Update

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 it was resolved that, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of staffing matters

Update given.

Date of Next Meeting: 10 January 2024

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.13pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman

Date: 10 January 2024