

BREDHURST PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting
Blacksmiths Barn
Wednesday 9th April 2025 at 7.00pm



Present: Cllr Vanessa Jones (Chair), Cllr Sue Harwood, Cllr Richard Collins, Cllr Claire Sharp, Cllr Toby Rowe and Borough Cllr Stephen Thompson
 Melanie Fooks – Clerk & RFO
 Public – 6

The Chair welcomed members of the public to the meeting and asked Cllrs to introduce themselves.

201/25 Apologies for Absence

Apologies **accepted** from Cllr Davis.

202/25 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Jones declared an interest in item 216 as she is Chair of Trustees of Bredhurst Village Hall.

203/25 Co-option of Parish Councillor

This item was deferred to the May meeting to allow the co-option policy to be updated. It will be circulated to Cllrs for approval and ratified at May's meeting.

AP1: Clerk to circulate updated policy.

204/25 Motion to exclude the press and public from the meeting for all items in the Closed Session.

Motion **agreed** by all Cllrs. Proposed Cllr Sharp, seconded Cllr Collins.

Cllr Harwood proposed, seconded by Cllr Collins to move item 216 to the closed session due to the discussion of legal matters. Motion **agreed** by all Cllrs.

205/25 Minutes of the 12th March 2025 Parish Council Meeting and Closed Session.

The minutes were **agreed** by Cllrs and signed by the Chair.

206/25 Matters Arising (for information only)

Action Points from 12-03-25

Action Points	Actions	Clerk or Cllr	Completed or Agenda Item on 09/04/25
AP1	Return equipment to GB Sports and purchase seat.	Clerk	Completed
AP2	Obtain a quote for replacing concrete base of picnic table and for cleaning the play equipment	Clerk	209c
AP3	Village clean-up day. Send date to Cllrs and residents	Clerk	Completed
AP4	Submit responses to MBC on planning applications	Clerk	Completed
AP5	Instruct TEEC to renew the bredhurstpc.org.uk domain for a further year	Clerk	Completed
AP6	Contact UTB to update list of signatories	Clerk	In progress
AP7	Email General Risk Assessment to Cllr Rowe to comment on the cyber security section and for Cllr Jones to upload to Website	Clerk	In progress

Public Open Session

The Chair explained the public session was for a maximum of 10 minutes with each person allowed to speak for up to 3 minutes. Comments relating to Bredhurst Village Hall would be taken into consideration by Cllrs when the item was discussed in the closed session. A member of the public spoke to express concerns regarding the past management of Bredhurst Village Hall, possible historic financial irregularities and why the hire rate for a previous hirer had been significantly less than for other hirers. The resident thanked the current BVH Trustees for addressing long-standing problems, for their diligence in dealing with legal matters and for the assistance of Bredhurst Parish Council.

207/25 Police

There were no crimes reported since the last meeting.

208/25 Kent County Council Elections

The election is on Thursday 1st May 2025. The Chair reminded everyone of the importance of voting, especially as this could be the last KCC election to be held. The Government is pressing for the abolition of KCC and all Borough Councils to be replaced with 3 or 4 Unitary Authorities across Kent. (The Chair moved item 217 forward to allow Borough Cllr Thompson to provide an update).

209/25 Community Playing Field

- a. Cllrs **received** and **noted** Safeplay's quarterly report and the Clerk's March inspection. Safeplay stated the chains on the aerial pendulum seat are wearing and need replacing. The Clerk will discuss with the inspector once a meeting date has been agreed.

The Clerk informed Cllrs that her inspection highlighted a few issues:

- Rubber matting under the junior swings is lifting. The Clerk will obtain a quote for repair.
- The playground signs are being updated.

- b. The Clerk reported that the field vehicle access gates have dropped. Quotes were obtained for both repair and replacement (double five bar and single pedestrian gates). Cllr Collins proposed, seconded by Cllr Sharp with all in favour to repair the gates at £80.00 + VAT.

AP2: Clerk to instruct Southern Fencing.

- c. The Clerk confirmed that quotes had been received for:

- Cleaning the toddlers' area and wooden play equipment at the far end of the field.
- Moving the picnic table away from the roots of the Ash tree and lay a new base.
- Repainting the play equipment.

The quotes were greater than the financial regulations threshold so further quotes are required for the cleaning and moving the picnic table. Cllrs decided to revisit painting the play equipment later in the year.

AP3: Clerk to obtain further quotes.

- d. The Clerk stated the Village Visual Tree Assessment was due. Cllr Rowe proposed, seconded by Cllr Sharp with all in favour to instruct Lucanus Services at £325.00.

AP4: Clerk to instruct Lucanus Services.

- e. The Clerk reported that 3 Counties, the new grounds maintenance contractors, had begun their contract and were very thorough. They will provide photos of work carried out after each visit.

210/25 Blacksmiths Barn

- a. Cllrs noted details of new Barn hirers.

- b. Cllrs agreed to delegate the decision to purchase a salt bin to the Clerk. Once a quote is received this will be circulated to Cllrs and, if agreed, ratified at the next meeting.

AP5: Clerk to contact Lucanus Services for a quote.**211/25 Village Maintenance**

- a. Nine people attended the Village Clean-up on Sunday 6th April, including two people from Lordswood and one from Boxley. 21 bags of litter were collected, and many areas were swept. The Parish Council would like to extend its thanks to everyone who helped and to the resident who bought the Parish Council a box of chocolates as a gesture of thanks.

212/25 Planning

- a. Cllrs Jones and Harwood attended a meeting of the Lidsing SPD Stakeholder Steering Group on 27th March. Feedback was given regarding the two recent public consultation events at Blacksmiths Barn. 130 people attended. 152 representations were made online and 2 were posted. Various comments included a cricket pitch, improved walking and equestrian access, maintaining established hedgerows and wildlife corridors. Questions were raised regarding the timescale for the implementation of infrastructure and the construction management plan detailing access of construction vehicles to the site. At the consultation events, details of traffic

calming measures for Bredhurst to mitigate the impact of increased traffic were on show. There were 4 potential road closure options for residents to choose from:

- Close the bridge at Forge Lane – 22 people opted for this.
- Close the bridge at The Street- 5 people opted for this.
- Close Dunn Street at the junction with Lidsing Road - 10 people for this.
- Close the bridge at Forge Lane and Dunn Street– 22 people opted for this.

As yet, none of the above options have been put to KCC Highways.

Cllrs Jones and Harwood fed back to the steering group that some of the questions in the questionnaire were unclear and different closing dates for comments were shown on different websites. Cllr Jones stated this was an informal consultation. It is anticipated that the next formal consultation will be held in June.

- b. [25/501269/LAWPRO](#) - Lawful Development Certificate for proposed erection of a garden room at The Birches Dunn Street Road Bredhurst. **Noted.**

213/25 IT/Website

- a. The Clerk reported that all email accounts had now been successfully transferred, with the exception of Cllr Sharp's account. Further advice will be sought from BCTec.

214/25 Finance

- a. The financial statement and bank reconciliation for P/E 31st March 2025 was **agreed** by all Cllrs and signed by the Chair.
- b. All payments made out of and at meeting were **agreed** by Cllrs. Cllrs Collins and Sharp were nominated to authorise forthcoming payments.

Payments made out of meeting.

Ref	Details	Amount	VAT*	Total	Auth
186	Business Stream Allotment Water Bill (Dec – Mar)	18.46		18.46	DD
187	Bytes March (FINAL) invoice 1478540	9.64	1.93	11.57	DD
188	GB Sports and Leisure Invoice 16926 Delivery Charge of Pendulum Seat	20.00	4.00	24.00	RC/SH
189	Online Playgrounds Inv. SIN064223 Pendulum Seat	67.00	13.40	80.40	RC/SH
190	Every Little Nook Inv. 00094 February	45.50	-	45.50	RC/SH
191	BCTec Invoice 29503 January	55.00	11.00	66.00	RC/SH
192	BCTec Invoice 29869 February	183.15	36.63	219.78	RC/SH
193	BCTec Invoice 29827 Clerk's Microsoft Subscription (Feb)	9.60	1.92	11.52	RC/SH
194	BCTec Invoice 29826 Councillors Microsoft Subscription (Feb)	18.60	3.72	22.32	RC/SH
195	OneCom March Invoice 7517140	36.36	7.27	43.63	RC/SH
196	(M Fooks) Clerk's Expenses Parcel Force return of Pendulum Seat + Toilet Rolls	18.61	2.51	29.08	RC/SH
197	Clerk's Salary + Office Rental (March)				RC/SH
198	HMRC - March deductions				RC/SH
199	UTB Service Charge (Monthly – February)	6.00		6.00	RC/SH
New Financial Year 2025/26					
01	Savills Q1 Playing Field Lease – Inv. 991436	137.50		137.50	RC/SH
02	KALC – Annual Subscription Inv. 9949	230.27	46.05	276.32	RC/SH
03	Clare Cavalli – Returned Hire Fee Cancelled bookings minus 30% admin Fee	42.00		42.00	RC/SH
04	Elizabeth Brown – Returned Barn Deposit Ref 107/-24/25	100.00		100.00	RC/SH

* VAT to be reclaimed.

Payments for authorising at meeting.

Ref	Details	Amount	VAT*	Total	Auth
05	SLCC Books Arnold Barker Local Council Administration + The Clerks' Manual books for CiLCA Qualification	192.38	1.58	193.96	RC/CS
06	BCTec Invoice 29876 Clerk & Councillor's Microsoft Subscription (March)	28.20	5.64	33.84	RC/CS
07	KALC CiLCA Training Inv. 9654	300.00	60.00	360.00	RC/CS

* VAT to be reclaimed.

- c. **Noted** receipts and payments for the period 01/03/2025 - 31/03/2025.
- d. Cllrs **received** Quarter 4 budget report. The Clerk reported that the year-end spend was less than predicted mainly due to lack of grounds maintenance being carried out during the year, savings being made on playground inspections and the VTA not being carried out in the financial year.
- e. Cllrs **received** and **agreed** the budget adjustments for 25/26 to include the addition of study hours and books required for the Clerk's professional CiLCA qualification.
- f. The Clerk confirmed the VAT claim for Quarter 4 for **£605.57** had been submitted to HMRC.

215/25 Policies and Procedures

- a. Financial Regulations. Deferred to May.
- b. Standing Orders. Deferred to May.

216/25 Future Management of Bredhurst Village Hall

This item was taken in the closed session. The minutes and public participations are detailed separately due to the sensitive legal nature of this item.

217/25 Reports from Parish, Borough, and County Councillors (if present)

Borough Cllr Stephen Thompson's verbal report was **received** and **noted**.

- Busy with fly tipping and waste crime reports across the Ward. Depending on the type of waste crime committed, this determines how quickly they get cleared. Some fly tipping has caused road closures, so these are given a high priority and cleared first.
- Usefulness of social media for reporting issues and knowing what is going on in your community.
- Importance of registering your vote for the forthcoming KCC Elections especially as devolution could be imminent and various tiers of Government authorities may no longer exist.

218/25 Correspondence

Cllrs **received** and **noted** the following correspondence:

- a. KALC Maidstone Committee Meeting – February Minutes.
- b. KALC Maidstone Committee Meeting – March Minutes.
- c. Various Temporary Road Closures.

219/25 Closed Session

Personnel matters – Details minuted separately.

Future management of Bredhurst Village Hall – Details minuted separately.

220/25 Close of Meeting

Meeting closed at 8.45 pm with no further business to discuss.

221/25 Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 14th May 2025 at 7.00pm (Annual Meeting of the Parish Council).

Signed..... Date.....