

BREDHURST PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting
Blacksmiths Barn
Wednesday 9th October 2024 at 7.00pm



Present: Cllr Vanessa Jones (Chair), Cllr Greg Davis (Vice Chair), Cllr Sue Harwood, Cllr Richard Collins, and Cllr Lee Gooda.
 Melanie Fooks – Clerk & RFO
 Public – 0

103/24 Apologies for Absence

Apologies noted from Cllrs Dan Fifield and Claire Sharp, Borough Cllr Stephen Thompson, County Cllr Paul Carter and PC Ben Cox.

104/24 Declarations of Interest

None.

105/24 Motion to exclude the press and public from the meeting for all items in the Closed Session.

Motion **agreed** by all Cllrs. Proposed Cllr Davis, seconded Cllr Gooda.

106/24 Minutes of the 11th September 2024 Parish Council Meeting and the Closed Session.

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

107/24 Matters Arising (for information only)

Action Points from 11-09-24

Action Points	Actions	Clerk or Cllr	Completed or Agenda Item on 09-10-24
AP1	Circulate 'My Community Voice' to residents	Clerk	Completed
AP2	Follow up meeting with Landscape Services	Clerk	109d
AP3	Contact Playfix to carry out repairs	Clerk	To be actioned
AP4	Contact hirer re payment for their hire	Clerk	Completed
AP5	Contact Amiga, Maidstone re CCTV quote	Clerk	110a
AP6	Contact Resident re fencing	Cllr Jones/Clerk	110d
AP7	Contact Fitzpatrick Woolmer re Noticeboard	Clerk	111a
AP8	Instruct contractor re allotment fencing	Clerk	111b
AP9	Submit response to MBC re planning application 21/502751/EIOUT	Clerk	Completed
AP10	Contact Bredhurst CofE School re yellow line additions to HIP	Clerk	114 To be actioned

108/24 Police

- a. There were no crimes reported since the last meeting.
- b. Any other Police updates.

Cllr Jones confirmed that PC Ben Cox is aware of a recent dog attack which resulted in the destruction of 15 sheep. PC Cox will keep the Parish Council updated with any developments. PC Cox also informed Cllr Jones that the police are aware of a motorcyclist who comes through the village every day driving recklessly. The same bike was stopped in Maidstone recently and the owner was issued with a Section 59. If caught driving carelessly again, the police can seize the bike.

109/24 Community Playing Field

- a. Replacement posts for the Playing Field information board were installed on 4th October. The information shown on the board needs updating.

AP1: Clerk to establish who designed and produced the original artwork.

- b. Cllrs **received** the Safeplay reports for September. The following low risk repairs need actioning.
- Missing cap and fixing on the junior multi-play equipment.
 - Produce a contact sign for the unfenced equipment at the far end of the field and update the sign at the fenced playground.
 - Repaint the gate in a contrasting colour to the rest of the fence.
 - Repair burn mark on Picnic table.

Cllr Jones proposed, seconded by Cllr Davis with all in favour for the repairs to be carried out.

AP2: Clerk to contact Playfix to carry out repairs.

- c. The Clerk met with Richard O’Connell, Landscape Services, to discuss their contract. It was agreed he would gather information for another meeting to clarify work schedules. To date, this has not happened despite a reminder on 27/9/24. Cllrs voiced their concerns that work is not being carried out as per the schedules. They asked if a penalty clause applied if the contract is terminated early.

AP3: Clerk to contact Landscape Services for an update and to establish notice period.

- d. Some slats are damaged, and a top rail is missing to the fence at the rear of the toddlers’ playground. Cllrs asked for a repair quote and why these issues were not in the Safeplay monthly inspection reports.

AP4: Clerk to ask Southern Fencing to provide a quote for fencing repairs.

AP5: Clerk to contact Safeplay regarding their inspection reports.

- e. Some lower tree branches in the toddlers’ play area need removing. Lucanus will deal with them free of charge when they install the notice board at the allotments.

110/24 Blacksmiths Barn

- a. The Clerk presented a CCTV quote from Amiga and further explanation from Wizard Systems, as the quotes were not like for like. Cllrs requested further investigation into alternative companies.

AP6: Clerk to investigate Ring Doorbell and Verisure.

- b. Proposed amendments to the Hire Conditions were accepted and **agreed**.

AP7: Clerk to update conditions and upload to the PC website.

- c. The Clerk approached Utility Aid, a utility broker recommended by NALC, to provide a cost comparison of energy providers for the barn. Utility Aid provided 3 quotes from EDF Energy.

Supplier	Unit Rate per kWh	Standing Charge per day
Ecotricity (current)	29.40p	79.78p
EDF Energy 1 year fixed	24.50p	60.00p
EDF Energy 2 year fixed	25.00p	60.00p
EDF Energy 3 year fixed	26.20p	60.00p

Cllr Jones proposed to sign with EDF Energy for 1 year, seconded by Cllr Collins with all in favour.

AP8: Clerk to inform Utility Aid.

- d. The Clerk received an email from the neighbours of The Barn stating they will not comply with BPC’s request to reinstate the boundary fencing back to its original condition. The Clerk replied to their email and sent a reminder on 4th October but has not received a reply. Cllrs **agreed** that the Clerk would contact the Parish Council’s insurers to seek their advice.

AP9: Clerk to contact Zurich Insurance.

- e. A petrol leak from a resident’s vehicle has stained the road surface at the entrance to Blacksmith’s Court. The road is the responsibility of BPC. The vehicle’s owner asked BPC to contact Audi direct.

AP10: Clerk to email Audi to establish when it will be cleaned.

- f. Cllrs asked for 3 quotes to re-decorate the walls and kitchen but not to include the woodwork, ceilings or toilet.

AP11: Clerk to obtain quotes.

111/24 Village Maintenance

- a. Cllrs **ratified** a decision to proceed with the quote from Fitzpatrick Woolmer for a replacement notice board for installation outside the allotments at **£1,726.00**. Lucanus Services will collect and install it for **£263.50**. The work will be funded from Sir Paul Carter’s KCC Member’s grant of **£1,231.97** and **£545.00** from MBC. The balance of **£212.53** will be allocated against BPC’s Village Maintenance budget. Proposed by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Gooda with all in favour.

AP12: Clerk to instruct Fitzpatrick Woolmer and Lucanus.

AP13: Clerk to send letter of thanks to Sir Paul Carter.

- b. Southern Fencing will be installing the new allotment fencing w/c 14 October at a cost of **£2333.33**. Monies received from SGN and the PCs insurers total **£1857.00**. The balance of **£476.33** will be allocated against BPC’s Village Maintenance budget.
- c. The bench outside Green Court is damaged beyond repair. It will be removed ASAP by Lucanus at a cost of **£50.00**. BPC has sufficient funding for a replacement. Cllr Jones proposed a budget of **£1500.00** for the purchase of the bench and installation. It was **agreed** funds will come from the Village Projects budget and the installation from the Maintenance budget. Proposal seconded by Cllr Davis with all in favour.

AP14: Clerk to obtain quotes for bench and circulate to Cllrs.

AP15: Clerk to obtain installation quote from Lucanus.

112/24 Planning

- a. The Lidsing High Court hearing was held on 17th September with Cllrs Jones, Davis and Sharp in attendance. The Judge, Mr Justice Fordham, refused permission for BPC to bring a claim for statutory review of the adoption of the Maidstone Local Plan Review, and particularly the allocation of Lidsing Garden Village as a strategic site. This decision signals the end of the legal process and Bredhurst Parish Council’s five-year battle to save Lidsing. This means that the site allocation stands. BPC and its legal advisers will work with Maidstone Borough Council and the developer, FD Attwood and Partners, on the Supplementary Planning Document which sets out more detail on the form of development that comes forward, including access issues. There will be no further legal challenge. The Clerk confirmed that expenditure on fighting Lidsing since the beginning totalled **£101,473** with **£85,187** raised through public donations and **£16,286** contributed by BPC. It was agreed that Cllr Harwood would close the GoFundMe site. Thanks to be passed on to all supporters who have stood by BPC and given so generously to the campaign. All Lidsing banners should now be taken down. Cllr Jones confirmed that MBC was forming a Stakeholder Steering Group which she and Cllr Thompson will attend representing residents across Boxley Downs Ward. Cllr Harwood will represent BPC with Cllr Davis as substitute.

AP16: Clerk to email residents.

- b. The Clerk informed Cllrs that 21/502751/EIOUT will be heard at the MBC Planning Committee on 17th October at 6pm. **Noted.**

The Chair extended the meeting for a further 30 minutes.

113/24 Finance

- a. The financial statement and bank reconciliation for P/E 30th September 2024 was **agreed** by all Cllrs and signed by the Chair.
- b. All payments made out of and at meeting were **agreed** by Cllrs. Cllrs Davis and Harwood were nominated to authorise the payments.

Payments made out of meeting.

Ref	Details	Amount	VAT*	Total	Auth
82	Cllr G Davis – Travel Expenses for Cllrs Jones, Davis and Sharp to attend High Court Hearing 17/9/24	49.50		49.50	SH/RC
83	Bytes – Sept Inv. 1370241	9.64	1.93	11.57	GD/RC

84	Leigh Day Inv. 124838 Disbursements	38.28		38.28	GD/RC
85	Leigh Day Inv. 124838 Counsel Fees	4,800		4,800	GD/RC
86	Leigh Day Inv. 124838 Leigh Day Fees	4,000	800	4,800	GD/RC
87	OneCom Inv. 7325991	36.36	7.27	43.63	GD/RC
88	(M Fooks) Clerk Salary + Office Rental	-		-	GD/RC
89	M Fooks McAfee Anti-Virus Software for PC	59.99		59.99	GD/RC
90	M Fooks – Misc. Barn Expenses	5.05		5.05	GD/RC
91	UTB - Manual Handling Charge (Quarterly)	5.40		5.40	GD/RC
92	UTB – Service Charge – (Quarterly)	18.00		18.00	GD/RC
93	Leigh Day – Adverse Costs	10,000		10,000	GD/RC
94	Alison Jackson – Returned Barn Deposit Ref 1-24/25	100.00		100.00	GD/RC

Payments for authorising at meeting

Ref	Details	Amount	VAT*	Total	Auth
95	Safeplay Playground Services Inv. 27841	55.00	11.00	66.00	GD/SH
96	Savills Q3 Playing Field Lease – Inv. 946847	137.50		137.50	GD/SH
97	Rachel Ford – Gardening – September - 8 hours	220.00		220.00	GD/SH
98	Mike Searley - Grass Cutting - Aug/Sept/Oct	75.00		75.00	GD/SH
99	Southern Water Inv. 70114588148	40.59		40.59	GD/SH
100	Lucanus Services - Replacement Posts for Information Board	146.28		146.28	GD/SH

* VAT to be reclaimed

- c. Cllrs **received** and **accepted** the 2024/2025 Q2 budget report with no issues being raised. It was proposed by Cllr Collins, seconded by Cllr Davis with all in favour to vire **£500.00** from Village Maintenance budget to Village Projects budget to enable the purchase of a new bench.
- d. Cllrs **received** and **noted** the Audited AGAR Report for 2023-2024.
- e. KCC Internal Audit Visit was confirmed for 23 October 2024 at Blacksmith Barn.

114/24 Highways Improvement Plan

KCC has confirmed double yellow lines have been approved for the junction of Hurstwood Road and Fir Tree Grove. It will take around 5 months from design to completion. The 20mph speed limit in Hurstwood Road has passed consultation and is now in the design stage with upright 20mph signs to be installed. Road markings may not be possible because of existing parking bays.

AP17: Clerk to write to the Head at Bredhurst CoFE School nearer to the date of installation.

115/24 Policies and Procedures.

- a. Cyber Security Policy – **Received** and **adopted**.
- b. Noticeboard Policy – **Received** and **adopted**.

116/24 Tree Inspection – Contract Renewal

Cllrs **received** a quotation from Lucanus Services. Cllr Gooda proposed to accept the quotation for **£325**, seconded by Cllr Davis with all in favour.

AP18: Clerk to contact Lucanus Services

117/24 Allotments – Annual Review of Allotment Rent

Deferred to November meeting.

118/24 Model Code of Conduct

Cllrs to consider the proposed changes and provide the Clerk with any comments to be relayed back to the Maidstone KALC committee.

AP19: Cllrs to forward comments for Clerk to submit to Maidstone KALC committee.

119/24 Consultations

Cllrs **received** and **noted** the following consultations and their deadlines:

- a. PCC Consultation on new priorities for Kent Police (Closes early December 2024)
- b. National Highways and Transport Survey 2024-25 (Closes 28 February 2025)
- c. MBC – Residents Survey 2024 (Closes 20 October 2024)
- d. MBC - Discretionary Rate Relief Consultation (Closes 31 October 2024)

AP20: Clerk to respond to Discretionary Rate Relief Consultation

120/24 Reports from Parish, Borough, and County Councillors (if present)

Written reports from Borough Cllrs Thompson and Jones were **received** and **noted**.

Borough Cllr Jones met with KCC Vegetation Manager and has been supplied with all schedules. She is also investigating if Parish Councils are able to buy in additional services from MBC such as Street Sweeping.

121/24 Correspondence

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

- a. Resident’s request for speed signs to be repainted in Dunn Street.
These have been reported to KCC.
- b. KALC Newsletter – October
- c. Resident’s suggestion for BPC to consider adopting a Neighbourhood Development Plan.
This will be considered as a project for 2025/2026.
- d. My Community Voice Kent October Newsletter
- e. Road Safety & Active Travel Group (RSATG) Newsletter
- f. Update regarding recent sheep attack by dogs.
See 108/24b.

122/24 Closed Session

- a. Lidsing legal update – Details minuted separately.
- b. Personnel matters – Details minuted separately.

123/24 Close of Meeting

Meeting closed at 9.15 pm with no further business to discuss.

124/24 Date of Next Meeting – Wednesday 13th November at 7.00pm.

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