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## WESTERN AREA COMMITTEE

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**MINUTES** of the Meeting held in Bredgar Village Hall, Bexon Lane, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 8HB on Thursday, 31 August 2023 from 7.00 pm - 8.52 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Mike Baldock, Monique Bonney, Ann Cavanagh (Vice-Chair), James Hunt, Chris Palmer, Richard Palmer, Paul Stephen (Chair) and Sarah Stephen.

**NOMINATED PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES:** Parish/Town Councillors Angela Gladwin and Ross Richardson (Bobbing Parish Council (PC)), Brian Clarke and David Priestley (Bredgar PC), Steve Tolhurst (Iwade PC) and Lee Burgess and Vivien Rich (Tunstall PC).

**NOMINATED PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES (Virtually):** Councillor Nicola Butlin (Borden PC).

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Janet Dart, Charlotte Hudson and Jhilmil Kishore.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE (Virtually):** Kent County Councillor Rich Lehmann (Divisional Member for Swale).

**APOLOGY:** Councillor Roger Clark.

### 240 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair read out the emergency evacuation procedure.

### 241 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

### 242 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 June 2023 (Minute Nos 75 – 86) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair a correct record, subject to the following change:

Minute No. 81 Western Area Committee Priorities should have included the following action:

“To obtain information on Swale Borough Council (SBC) land in the Western Area so that Members could consider transferring land assets to Parish Councils.”

### 243 BREDGAR AND HARTLIP CONSERVATION AREA REVIEWS

The Senior Conservation and Design Officer gave an update on the Bredgar and Hartlip Conservation Area Reviews. The consultant Peter Bell carried out the reviews and the consultations concluded on Monday 14 August 2023.

Responses were being reviewed in advance of taking a report to the Planning and Transportation Policy Working Group meeting on 19 September 2023 and then onto

the Policy and Resources Committee on 18 October 2023. It was envisaged that the adopted versions of both documents would be published on the SBC website by the end of 2023.

Comments were made about the possibility of having satellite conservation areas, however, there was currently no mechanism for this.

Both Bredgar and Hartlip Parish Council representatives and members of the public said they were very happy with the reviews and said they would help to improve the villages. They also passed on their thanks to the Conservation and Design team and the consultant Peter Bell.

It was agreed that a discussion about Article 4, Conservation Area Reviews, should be scheduled for the November 2023 meeting.

**Resolved:**

- 1) That a discussion about Article 4, Conservation Area Reviews, be scheduled for the November 2023 meeting.**

## 244 PARKING POLICY

Councillor Richard Palmer in his capacity as Chair of the Parking Policy Member Working Group, gave a short presentation about the development of a draft Parking Policy.

He said that there was no formal Parking Policy, and it was something the Community Committee would like to be developed. They had agreed that a Parking Policy Member Working Group should be set up to work with officers to develop a draft policy.

The membership of the Working Group had been drawn up from the Community Committee with one representative from each political group, plus the Chair.

The Working Group had met twice to discuss the main themes that should be included in the scope of the policy. Councillor Palmer went through the proposed scope of the policy and asked if the Area Committee had any comments on it and whether they considered anything was missing.

The following comments were made:

- Volunteers were affected by the introduction of evening parking charges, a suggestion was made to look at providing volunteers with parking vouchers;
- the night-time economy had been affected by evening charging in short-stay car parks;
- the inclusion of tackling pavement parking was suggested;
- look at where enforcement officers visited, in particular rural areas;
- look at school parking in general, including buses, parents, pupils as well as anti-idling measures;

- look at different options for evening charging, perhaps a night-time charge of £2 to park after 6 pm;
- make it clear what the responsibilities of SBC and Kent County Council (KCC) were;
- make it clear that parking on private developments was not the responsibility of SBC; and
- to relieve bus parking near the Memorial Hospital, Sittingbourne, look at installing allocated bus bays further down Bell Road by the Borden Grammar School playing field as that area was no longer used for parking by people using the commuter buses.

Councillor Palmer thanked everyone for their comments which would be fed back to the Parking Policy Working Group.

**245 PUBLIC FORUM**

No issues were raised.

**246 CORPORATE PLAN UPDATE**

Councillor Mike Baldock gave an update on the development of the SBC Corporate Plan. He went through the proposed priorities and asked for comments. The priorities were discussed and the following amendments were suggested:

Community – To support our communities and help our residents to live, work and enjoy their leisure time safely in our Borough.

Economy – Working with our businesses and organisations to improve the economy.

Environment – To help prepare our Borough for the challenges ahead and work towards a cleaner, healthier, more enjoyable environment.

Health and Housing – To aspire to suitable and sustainable housing across the Borough and improved health and wellbeing.

Running the Council – To engage with communities and outside bodies to deliver our priorities in an open and efficient way, working within our resources.

**247 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Members noted the progress on actions.

Youth provision in villages – The Head of Housing and Community Services advised that she had spoken to Brogdale CIC (Community Interest Company) to obtain clarification on their report submitted to the June 2023 meeting. They had advised that not all parishes in the Western area were contacted, the youth worker had mainly focused on the larger parishes. Regarding what should happen next, as KCC were reviewing their youth services provision and carrying out a consultation, there was likely to be a reduction in commissioning of the sort of services Brogdale

CIC provided. Without KCC funding it would not be possible for Brogdale CIC to provide any add-on services. After some discussion it was agreed to invite Rebecca O'Neill, the CEO (Chief Executive Officer), Brogdale CIC, to the next KALC (Kent Association of Local Councils) meeting with a view to encouraging parish councils to contribute funding to youth provision. It was also agreed to invite Rebecca O'Neill to the November 2023 Western Area Committee meeting to talk to parish councils about the provision of services for young people which Brogdale CIC could potentially provide in their areas.

Rose Hill & Meads Woodland Management and Work Plans – Councillor Mike Baldock advised that the Rose Hill Woodlands Friend Group had been up and running for a year and had not requested a Borough Councillor representative on their Group. Councillor Baldock moved the following motion: *That the Western Area Committee request that a Swale Borough Council Outside Body nomination be made to Rose Hill Woodlands Friends Group be reversed as a Borough Council representative was not required.* This was seconded by Councillor Ann Cavanagh and on being put to the vote agreed. The Meads Woodland Friends Group would like to continue with the nomination of a Borough Council representative to their Group.

Heritage issues – it was agreed that an update on Heritage Listings be given at the November 2023 Western Area Committee meeting.

Fulston Manor School, student parking – as no response has been received to the letter sent to the Headteacher of Fulston Manor School, Sittingbourne, about dangerous parking at the Eden Village estate, it was agreed to write to the Chair of the Fulston Manor School Governors.

Access to library of photographs – a member of the public suggested that the photographs in the proposed SBC library of photographs be made available to outside organisations under license so that SBC be credited when photographs were used. The Policy & Engagement Officer agreed to feed this suggestion back to the officer leading on the tender.

**Resolved:**

- 1) That Rebecca O'Neill the CEO (Chief Executive Officer), Brogdale CIC be invited to the next KALC (Kent Association of Local Councils) meeting with a view to encouraging parish councils to contribute funding to youth provision.**
- 2) That Rebecca O'Neill the CEO (Chief Executive Officer), Brogdale CIC be invited to the November 2023 Western Area Committee meeting to talk to parish councils about the provision of services for young people which Brogdale CIC could potentially provide in their areas.**
- 3) That the Western Area Committee requested that a Swale Borough Council Outside Body nomination be made to Rose Hill Woodlands Friends Group be reversed as a Borough Council representative was not required.**

- 4) *That an update on Heritage Listings be given at the November 2023 Western Area Committee meeting.*
- 5) *That a letter be sent to the Chair of Fulston Manor School Governors about dangerous parking at the Eden Village Estate.*
- 6) *That the photographs in the proposed SBC library of photographs be made available to outside organisations under license so that SBC be credited when photographs were used. The Policy & Engagement Officer to feed this suggestion back to the officer leading on the tender.*

#### 248 LOCAL ISSUES TO BE RAISED

Councillor Ann Cavanagh said that on 22 August 2023 she attended a launch for a World War One Defences event organised by Newington History Group. Members of the History Group asked her to pass on their thanks to Western Area Committee for the funding for the information boards.

#### 249 MATTERS REFERRED TO AREA COMMITTEE BY SERVICE COMMITTEES

No issues were raised. It was agreed it was not necessary to include this item in future Western Area Committee agendas as any issues would be included under separate agenda items.

#### 250 MATTERS REFERRED TO SERVICE COMMITTEE CHAIRS FOR CONSIDERATION

No issues were raised.

#### Chair

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel