



# BOXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

www.boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk

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It has not been possible, due to limitations on this website, to include the financial reports at item 7. A copy can be obtained by contacting the parish office.

To Parish Councillors, members of the public and press.

29 October 2012

Members are hereby summoned and notice is given that a **Meeting of the Parish Council** will be held at the **European School of Osteopathy, Boxley Village ME14 3DZ** on **Monday 5 November 2012** commencing at 7.30 p.m. when it is proposed to transact the following business:

- |  | Time guide |
|--|------------|
| <b>1. Apologies and absences.</b>  | (7.30)     |
| To receive and accept apologies for absence.   |            |
| <b>2. Declaration of Interests or Lobbying.</b>  | (7.31)     |
| Members are required to declare any interests or lobbying on items in this agenda.   |            |
| <b>3. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 1 October 2012.</b>   | (7.33)     |
| To consider the minutes of the meeting and if in order to sign as a true record (pages 3-5).   |            |
| <b>4. Matters Arising From the Minutes.</b>  | (7.46)     |
| 4.1 Minute 2461/4.2 Round Wood/Walderslade Woods. Report attached (page 6).  |            |
| 4.2 Minute 2461/4.3 Website: The working group is gradually working through ideas etc. The Clerk suggests that, as the work is mainly 'house-keeping' rather than requiring Parish Council decisions, the item is removed from the agenda and only returned if there is an identified need.                                  |            |
| 4.3 Minute 2461/4.6 Community Project Grant: the judging group considered that the two submitted applications did not fully satisfy all the relevant criteria. It therefore proposes that no award be made this financial year but that appropriate provision is made in the next financial year after reviewing the scheme. |            |
| 4.4 Minute 2461/4.7 Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard. The issue regarding the dog waste bin has been resolved and MBC will continue emptying it. The revised legal agreement is being prepared.   |            |
| 4.5 Minute 2461/4.8 Concurrent Functions/Parish Services Scheme: Awaiting response from KALC.  |            |
| 4.6 Minute 2463/11.1 Speedwatch: Awaiting training dates and also for a safety audit on the two Boxley Roads and Beechen Bank Road.  |            |
| <b>5 Report from the PCSO and Police Issues.</b>   | (7.56)     |
| 5.1 Crime statistics (page 6).   |            |
| 5.2 PCSO Contract. A report on the meeting is attached (page 6-7).   |            |
| <b>To adjourn to enable members of the public to address the meeting.</b>  | (8.04)     |
| <b>6 Draft Minutes of Recent Committee Meetings.</b>   | (8.20)     |
| For the parish council to receive the minutes, members are allowed to ask questions of the Committee Chairmen but may not initiate a discussion.   |            |
| 6.1 Finance Scrutiny Committee meeting 4 October 2012 (page 7 - 8).  |            |
| 6.2 Environment Committee meeting 8 October 2012 (page 8 - 12).  |            |
| 6.3 Estates Committee meeting 10 October 2012 (pages 12 - 15).   |            |
| <b>7 Finance.</b>  | (8.25)     |

- 7.1 To note payments made out of meeting 02.10.12 – 29.10.12 (pages 25-26).  
 7.2 To note receipts for the period 26.09.12 – 29.10.12 (pages 27 - 28).  
 7.3 Account balances as at 29.10.12 (page 28).  
 7.4 To authorise payments of accounts (list supplied at meeting).
- 8 **Land at Sandy Lane, Boxley.** (8.32)  
 A confidential update is submitted for parish councillors.
- 9 **Cuckoo Wood.** (8.37)  
 To consider the report and recommendation from the Environment Committee regarding the request from the Burleigh Drive Residents Association for the Parish Council to purchase some of the land, see report (page 15 - 16).
- 10 **2013/2014 Draft Budget.** (8.47)  
 Members have an opportunity to submit projects or issues for funding in the draft budget, preferably for consideration at the Finance Committee meeting on 13 November. A report on the request for additional play equipment is attached (page 16).
- 11 **Policies and Procedures Review.** (8.57)  
 10.1 Freedom of Information and records management policy see report (p 16-21).
- 12 **Matters for Decision.** (9.07)  
 12.1 KALC AGM Sat 17 November 9.30 – 3.45 at Ditton Community Centre.  
 12.2 Friends of Boxley Warren see report (page 22).
- 13 **Reports from Borough and County Councillors.** (9.12)  
 To allow the councillors to report and discuss matters affecting the parish.
- 14 **Reports from councillors/office.** (9.17)  
 Representatives who attended any meeting on behalf of the parish council are invited to give a brief summary.  
 14.1 Cllr Perry's report on the St John's School Expansion Consultation meeting that he attended as a private citizen (see page 22).  
 14.2 Boxley Warren. October update and also Cllr Bob Hinder report on a recent task day (pages 22 - 23).  
 14.3 Maidstone KALC Finance Information Event, 20 October 2012 (see page 23).  
 14.4 Maidstone Rural Neighbourhood Police/Parishes Forum, 25 October 2012 (see page 23).
- 15 **Consultation on Council Tax Base.** (9.23)  
 To ratify the Clerk's response, after consultation with members see attached (page 24).
- 16 **Matters for Information.** (9.24)  
 16.1 CPRE – AGM Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> December, Darent Room, County Hall, Maidstone, 7.30pm. Fieldwork issue Autumn 2012.  
 See report (page 24) for list of newsletters etc.
- 17 **Next Meeting.** (9.15)  
 Monday 3 December at St John's School, Provender Way, Grove Green. Councillor requests for agenda items are to be submitted no later than 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2012.

Clerk to the Council.

Items to be returned to a future agenda: Quality Parish Council application; Parish Tour (December agenda to set a date).

In accordance with policy the meeting should close no later than 9.30 pm but the Chairman has power to extend it by 30 minutes.

**Item 3 Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held at St Johns School, Provender Way, on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012 commencing at 7.30 pm.**

Councillors present – Mr Ivor Davies (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks, Mr P Dengate, Mr T Harwood, Mr Bob Hinder, Mrs Wendy Hinder, Mr D Holmes, Mrs K Macklin, Mr K Perry, Mr G Smith, Mrs A Spain (arrived during item 5), Mr A Springate, Mr P Sullivan and Mrs M Waller together with the Clerk, PCSO Hawthorn and 2 members of the press/public.

**1. Apologies and absences.**

Cllr V Davies (convalescence). Borough Councillor Butler. Cllr Spain had sent apologies as she would be late in arriving.

**2. Declaration of Interests or Lobbying.**

Cllr Spain declared a pecuniary interest in item 8 land at Sandy Lane. No other declaration of interests or lobbying were received.

**3. Minutes of the Parish Council Meetings of 3<sup>rd</sup> September and 27<sup>th</sup> September 2012.**

The minutes of the meetings were **agreed** and **signed** as a correct record.

**4. Matters Arising From the Minutes.**

4.1 Minute 2422/9.2 Quality Council. **Noted** a NALC review of 2 sections of the criteria was currently underway and no submissions for Quality Status were being accepted. Councils seeking reaccreditation will have their Quality Status extended and once the review is completed (early 2013) will have a 3 month grace period in which to submit their portfolios.

Item 5 was taken at this point.

4.2 Minute 2434/5.1 Round Wood. **Noted** still awaiting answer on the voluntary village green application submission. The Clerk was asked to get an update. **Action: Clerk.**

4.3 Minute 2434/5.2 Website: **Received** the report on the recent Working Group meeting. Following a discussion on whether the inclusion of a photographs and/or précis for individual Councillors would make the Parish Council more approachable and accessible, members voted against this. Cllr Macklin suggested that a page where interested councillors could engage with residents by for example describing why they had become a councillor should be considered. **Action: Website Working Group.**

4.4 Minute 2434/5.3 Parish Tour. After discussion it was **agreed** to defer this to early spring. **Action: Clerk and Assistant Clerk.**

4.5 Minute 2434/5.4 Code of Conduct advert. **Noted** the advert appeared in the October edition of the Downs Mail.

4.6 Minute 2434/5.5 Community Project Grant. **Noted** the applications would be supplied to the judging group to allow consideration.

4.7 Minute 2434/5.6 Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard. The Clerk was asked to remind MBC that the lease was still unsigned as the outstanding issue regarding the dog waste bin needed resolving. **Action: Clerk.**

4.8 Minute 2436/16 Parish Services Scheme. Members **received** the information and the request from Maidstone Area KALC to undertake a petition which members felt would be time consuming and not an effective method of changing the MBC position. Furthermore, the petition wording required the Parish Council to organise a parish poll if Maidstone Borough Council did not capitulate which members had already declined to do on the grounds of cost. It was **agreed**, proposed by Cllr Macklin seconded by Cllr Wendy Hinder, that **Boxley Parish Council would not become involved in the petition.**

## 5 Report from the PCSO and Police Issues.

5.1 **Received and noted** crime statistics and report. It was **noted** that Sandling Village had been targeted and the Police were monitoring the area. PCSO Hawthorn had visited those affected and also undertaken a crime prevention leaflet drop in the village. It was **agreed** that the Clerk would liaise with PCSO Hawthorn about placing an article in the Downs Mail about the availability of cheap shed alarms. **Action: Clerk.**

The situation regarding the Maidstone Studios audience parking on roads in Grove Green was raised. Cllr Perry thanked PCSO Hawthorn for his recent presence and intervention to try to control the inconsiderate parking. After discussion covering possible restricted parking measures, the need for the Studios to sort out the problem and the possible use of the Park and Ride site, it was **agreed** the issue would be deferred to the Environment Committee. **Action: Environment Committee.**

5.2 PCSO Contract. **Noted** a meeting with Chief Inspector Jon Bumpus has been arranged for Monday 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2012 , 11am at Beechen Hall.

The meeting was adjourned at 8.10 pm to allow a member of the public to comment on recent crime in Sandling and also to complain about highway signs outside St Andrews Cottage at Sandling being covered by vegetation. The meeting reconvened at 8.14 pm.

## 6 Draft Minutes of Meetings since Previous Parish Council Meetings.

### **Noted and Received:**

6.1 Environment Committee meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2012.

6.2 Environment Committee meeting 10<sup>th</sup> September 2012. Cllr Perry thanked the committee members for the Core Strategy consultation work that they had undertaken at the meeting

6.3 Finance Committee meeting 11<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

## 7 Finance.

7.1 **Noted and received** the payments made out of meeting 04.09.2012 – 25.09.12.

7.2 **Noted and received** the receipts for the period 29.08.2012 – 25.09.12.

7.3 **Noted** account balances as at 25.09.12.

7.4 No payments of accounts were submitted.

7.5 Members **noted** the request to submit suggestions or issues to the parish office or relevant committee for inclusion in the 2013/14 draft budgets.

A request from Burleigh Drive Residents Association that the Parish Council assume responsibility for land at Cuckoo Wood was considered. It was **agreed** that the issue would initially be discussed by the Environment Committee at its 8<sup>th</sup> October meeting. The Clerk to request a copy of the letter's missing appendix A; obtain the draft management plan and write to The Crown Estates to gather information on the legal status of the land referred to in the letter. A report was to be made to the November Parish Council meeting. **Action: Environment Committee and Clerk.**

Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard. Cllr Harwood suggested that some additional play equipment for slightly older children be placed at the area. He had noted an increase in use and some of the older children had asked for something for them. The Clerk was to investigate whether there was available space and whether the mixture of ages and equipment could be safely accommodated. Cllr Harwood suggested 'spinners'. **Action: Clerk.**

## 8 Land at Sandy Lane, Boxley.

The Clerk informed Cllr Spain that there was no reason for her to withdraw from the meeting as members were only being informed that issues were being progressed and there was nothing specific to be reported.

## 9 Power of Competency.

It was proposed from the Chair and **unanimously agreed** that "**Boxley Parish Council, having met the criteria (Localism Act 2010 s8) of having a qualified Clerk and two thirds of its 15 Councillors elected at the May 2012 elections,**

**adopts The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence)(Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012.”**

**10 Policies and Procedures Review.**

10.1 Community Strategy. After lengthy discussion on Parish Council attendance at school fetes it was **agreed** that the Parish Council was still committed to attending these. Members requested much more advance notice of the dates and it was suggested that better pitches should be negotiated to try to attract more interest. It was also suggested that perhaps the Parish Council could sponsor something, like a bouncy castle, and have its pitch adjacent to that.  
**Action: Parish office.**

The Community Engagement Strategy was, with minor adjustments, **agreed**.

10.2 Civic Recognition Recommendations. Members were notified that they could nominate any residents and should a nomination be received then the issue would be referred to the next Parish Council meeting. It was **agreed** that the Parish Council would consider its own 'annual award' to recognise residents or people who contribute to the parish and provision was to be included in the draft budget. **Action: Clerk.**

10.3 Protocol for members of the public attending parish council and committee meetings. It was **agreed** that the document was still fit for purpose.

**11 Matters for Decision.**

11.1 Speedwatch. Members agreed that this was a valuable tool for educating drivers and that it needed to be started up again. It was **agreed** that the parish office would inquire about training and arrange for the approval of possible sites, for its use, in Boxley Road, Walderslade and Beechen Bank Road. Cllr Spain requested its use along Boxley Road near Harbourland Farm. **Action: Parish office.**

11.2 KCC public consultation – proposal to expand St John's CE Primary School Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> October at 7 pm. Members were encouraged, as individuals, to attend the public meeting and make a response to the consultation. However it was decided that the Parish Council would only monitor the situation.

11.3 Purchase of wreath. Cllr Macklin proposed, seconded by Cllr Dengate that a **donation of £120** be made. This was **agreed**.

11.4 E-mail from Chairman KALC Maidstone Area Committee regarding petition. This issue had been dealt with under item 4.8.

**12 Reports from Borough and County Councillors.**

Cllr Wendy Hinder notified members that she had been dealing with individual residents' complaints and had nothing else to report at the moment.

**13 Reports from councillors/office.**

13.1 MBC Core Strategy Parish Liaison Meeting 4/9/12. Report by Ivor Davies

13.2 MBC Council Tax Discount Review Briefing 20/9/12. Report by Ivor Davies

13.3 KALC (Maidstone) Bi-monthly Meeting 26/9/12. Report by Ivor Davies

**14 Matters for Information.**

14.1 Medway Valley Countryside Partnership's 2012 Newsletter.

14.2 Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Countryside Day 2012 – Planning for the future of this fine landscape. Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October.

14.3 Mid Kent Downs Countryside Partnership newsletter. Cllr Smith notified members of the work the Mid Kent Downs Group was undertaking in publicising walks in schools.

14.4 KCC Highways Parish Seminar Monday 8<sup>th</sup> October. Cllr Bob Hinder will be attending.

**15 Next Meeting.**

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> November at European School of Osteopathy, Boxley Village ME14 3DZ.

Meeting closed at 9.13 p.m.

**Item 4 Matters arising from the Minutes.** *Purpose of item: information.*

**Item 4.1** Minute 2461/4.2 Round Wood/Walderslade Woods. KCC's recent advertisement of the voluntary village green application received no objections. They are now preparing a report for the 21 November meeting of their Regulation Committee Panel recommending that the land is added to the Village Green Register. KCC has also commissioned a planning application for the area at Wildfell Close and this will be provided to the parish council. Background information on previous work undertaken by the parish council in relation to this is enclosed in members' folders (available at the meeting).

**Item 5 Report from the PCSO and Police Issues.** *Purpose of item: information.*

**Item 5.1 Crime figures for Boxley 21/09/2011 to 20/10/2011**

Burglary

24/09/2012 Lower Grange Farm, Sandling, Three Caravans broken into. Nothing stolen  
16/10/2012 Pilgrims View, Sandling, Attempted shed break, nothing stolen.

Theft

29/09/2012 Boarley Lane, Sandling, Ride-on Mower stolen, Recovered by PCSO  
Hawthorn  
18/10/2012 Badger Road, Wheelie Bin stolen

**Item 5.2. PCSO Contract: Report from the Chairman.**

PCSO Contract: Report from the Chairman.

The Clerk and I met with Chief Inspector Bumpus and Inspector Wyatt on 15 October to discuss our concerns regarding the PCSO patrolling outside the parish when the understanding was that, in return for a salary contribution from the parish of 50%, we would have 100% of the PCSO's time, operational requirements excepted.

Inspector Wyatt said that there was no such commitment in the contract. The Clerk replied that that might be so but it was most certainly the implicit understanding when the contract was negotiated.

Moving on, CI Bumpus pointed out that much had changed since the contract was agreed in 2004. Police resources were now even more greatly stretched and he just did not have enough PCSOs available to allocate one to each ward, let alone a single parish. This position might conceivably improve after 15 November with the election of a Police and Crime Commissioner, but he had to plan on the assumption that it would not. As it appeared that the PCSO would need to spend less than 5% of his time in the adjoining parish, he failed to understand why the parish council felt so strongly about the matter.

CI Bumpus then reminded us that separate funding for PCSOs under the Home Office initiative is ring fenced only until March 2013. After that date, the money will go into the general police pot, which will be allocated by the Commissioner according to perceived need. What this might be will not be known until after the election.

After further discussion it was agreed that, in view of this and because, according to CI Bumpus, a new contract will be needed to reflect the replacement of the Kent Police Authority with a new body, CI Bumpus would take note of our current grievance and come back to us once more is known. We asked that this be done in plenty of time so that it can be considered as part of the 2013-14 budget-setting process.

**Clerk's note:** The Parish Council has to give 6 months' notice to withdraw from the current contract and as much depends on the coming election, it was felt to be sensible

to wait for the outcome. CI Bumpus will contact the Parish Council as soon as matters become clearer. It is likely that the PCSO issue won't be settled any earlier than December but as the draft budget has to be set by the end of January CI Bumpus was told that the information must be with the Parish Council in January.

Should the Parish Council then decide not to continue funding the PCSO, the Police would then decide how to cover Boxley Ward (which includes Bredhurst). Although the Police currently have to ensure that each ward has an allocated PCSO, most PCSOs in fact cover 2 or 3 wards (it depends on population). PCSO Hawthorn was saved from being moved away from this parish in the last PCSO shake up because of the contract.

**Item 6. Draft Minutes of Recent Committee Meetings.** *Purpose of item: To receive.*

**Item 6.1.** Minutes of the Financial Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on Wednesday Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2012 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.32 p.m.

Councillors present – Mr. A Springate (Chairman), Mr. P Sullivan and Mrs. W Hinder, together with the Clerk and Councillor Ivor Davies.

1. **Elect a Chairman.**

Cllr Sullivan nominated Cllr Springate seconded by Cllr Hinder - **agreed.**

2. **Apologies and non-attendance.**

None - Mrs. A Spain (absent).

3. **Declaration of Interest or Lobbying.**

None.

4. **Minutes of the meeting of the Financial Scrutiny Committee 11<sup>th</sup> January 2012.**

The minutes of the meeting were **agreed** and **signed** as a correct record.

5. **Matters Arising from previous meetings.**

None.

6. **Independent Internal Auditor's Report 9<sup>th</sup> February 2012.**  
**Received** and **noted.**

7. **TOIL and new system for managing TOIL and Annual Leave.**

Members' **agreed** the new system of a monthly report on the amount of TOIL due will be supplied to the Finance Committee members with a draft policy, to ensure that TOIL and annual leave is managed proactively, will be presented to the November Finance Committee meeting for adoption.

8. **End of Year 2011/12 Audit – report.**

Members **received** the signed report and Clerk's explanation on the comment made by the Auditor.

9. **Annual Review of the system of internal audit and control (Annual Governance Statement).**  
**Received** and **approved.**

10. **Parish Councillor Audit 30th August 2012.**

**Received** Cllr Bob Hinders' internal audit. Cllr Hinders' recommendation under item 10 was **noted.** The Clerk was asked to explain the procedure by which the checking of salaries would take place.

- Added to the scheduled 3 monthly checklist that the Chairman completed would be a reminder to check the previous month's salary calculations.

- The paperwork and Scribe will be produced for checking by the Chairman.
- The on line PAYE system will be opened so that the entries can also be checked.
- The salary audit will then be signed off and dated on the minimum standards checklist.

**11. Other auditing issues.**

Cllr Ivor Davies – updating of register of interest by councillors. It was **agreed** that once a year (September) the paper copies of the register would be produced for the individual councillors to check for accuracy. It was **noted** that every 4 months councillors were reminded of the need to keep their individual records updated.

**Action – Clerk.**

**12. Matters for Information.**

**Noted** on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2012 the Independent Internal Auditor was booked to visit the office.

**13. Date of Next Meeting.**

To be arranged as required.

Meeting closed at 8.02 p.m.

**Item 6.2** Minutes of the Environment Committee held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2012 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.33 pm.

Councillors present; Mrs W Hinder (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks, Mr I Davies (left during public adjournment and returned during item 18), Mr P Dengate, Mr B Hinder, Mr D Holmes, Mr K Perry, Mr A Springate and Mrs M Waller together with the Clerk and 11 members of the public.

Cllr Holmes notified the meeting that as there was a vacancy on the committee he was interested in becoming a member. The Chairman welcomed him to the committee.

**1. Declaration of Interest or Lobbying.**

All members declared that they had been lobbied on MA/12/1629. Cllr Holmes informed members that he had an interest, due to its proximity to his property, in item 4.7.

Cllr Wendy Hinder informed members that she was a Borough Councillor member of the KDAONB unit (item 12).

**2. Apologies and absences**

Cllr Spain (approved absence). Cllr Davies' gave apologies that due to a School Governors meeting he would have to absent himself for part of the meeting.

**3. Minutes of the Meetings of 3<sup>rd</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> September 2012.**

The minutes of the meetings were **agreed** and **signed** as a true and correct record.

Due to the public attendance planning application MA/12/1626 was taken at this point in the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.37 pm to allow members of the public to comment on MA/12/1629. The meeting reconvened at 7.50 pm. After the decision was taken by members the public left. A comfort break was taken from 8.02 pm – 8.10 pm.

**4. Matters Arising From Minutes.**

4.1 Minute 2440/5.1 marker at Cossington Lane. After considering the costs for erecting a finger post members decided **no further action**.

4.2 Minute 2440/5.2 PRoW Round Wood valley. **Noted** awaiting result of the KCC's deed of dedication for a PRoW submission. **Action** – parish office to chase.

4.3 Minute 2440/5.4 Boxley Road/Grange Lane movement of speed restriction signs. Cllr Bob Hinder having attended a KCC Highways and Transport Conference (a

report will be submitted to the next meeting) confirmed that KCC was looking into this.

- 4.4 Minute 2442/9.1 additional white lining Boxley Road/Beechen Bank Rd. **Noted** KCC has scheduled this work.
- 4.5 Minute 2442/9.4 Advertising vehicle sparked on Gleamingwood Drive. **Noted** these were removed after the parish office contacted the company. The situation will continue to be monitored.
- 4.6 Minute 2451/15 Beechen Bank ownership investigation. **Noted** the office will commence work when time allows.
- 4.7 Minute 2451/16 Saracen Fields open area. **Noted** a letter had been sent to County Councillor Paul Carter.

## 5. **Planning Applications and Appeals for Consideration.**

MA/12/1458 – Erection of a two storey and single storey rear extension insertion of die and rear dormer windows and installation of a swimming pool at Myosotis, Chatham Road, Sandling. *Do not wish to object.*

MA/12/0997 – Amended floor plan for ground floor side and rear extensions with raised rear terrace at Frantom, Grove Green Road, Weaving. *Do not wish to object.*

MA/12/1609- Conservatory to south west elevation. 8, Tufa Close, Walderslade. *Do not wish to object.*

MA/12/1626- variation of condition 2 of planning permission MA/11/1970 – (Erection of a first floor side extension over existing garage) to allow a change in materials to weatherboarding to the elevations of the extension. 49 Lombardy Drive. *Do not wish to object.*

MA/12/1627 – Retrospective application for change of use to private taxi booking office and associated workshop to maintain taxi vehicles at Tyland Corner, Tyland Lane, Sandling.

After lengthy discussion it was **agreed** that the Clerk would speak to the Planning Officer concerning the issues raised by members. The decision was to be cleared by members via e-mail. Concerns raised included the 24 hour opening, additional parking on the highway and whether the business designation would be carried on the site if the owner sold the business. Members asked that the decision included the comment that the Parish Council did not approve of retrospective planning applications. **Action – Clerk and members.**

MA/12/1629- Erection of detached four bedroom dwelling (Resubmission of MA/12/0375) Hillah Cossington Road, Walderslade.

*Wish to see refused and request the application is reported to the Planning Committee for the following reasons:*

- Due to the size of the footprint and the small site the proposed development would have an adverse impact on the neighbours including a possible loss of privacy.*
- The proposed development and footprint overwhelms the site which is infilling in a garden.*
- The proposed building would be built on an elevated section of the site and would have an adverse impact on the street scene and character of the area.*
- Development will result in a loss of trees and wildlife habitats.*
- The introduction of hard surfacing and a long driveway would add to the flooding issue that already exists on Cossington Lane (an unadopted road). During rain storms the lane is subject to a 'river' of water sweeping down from the steep sided woodland valley. The hard surfaced footpath (KH656) becomes a funnel for water draining from the two higher adjacent areas. Additional water coming off the proposed hard surfaces would add to this problem as the lane has no highway drainage.*

- *The additional access/egress will be directly beside the footpath subway to the woods. Additional traffic movements at this point will create health and safety issues for pedestrians.*

*Concern was raised as only two doors, in close proximity to each other, existed in the property.*

*If the planning officer is minded to agree then*

- *Landscaping should be required to shield neighbours.*
- *Traffic management conditions to control issues that will be raised during construction.*

MA/12/1631- Erection of replacement chalet bungalow at Hillview Road, Old Lidsing Road, Lidsing.

*Do not wish to object however there was concern as it was felt that the design would have an adverse impact on the street scene.*

MA/12/1644 – Installation of a new play area at Cobtree Park, Forstal Road, Aylesford. *Wish to see approved.*

TA/0147/12- Tree preservation order , TPO no. 1 of 1969 , application for consent to carry out works to 1no American Hornbeam including reduce height to 6m, reduce breadth to 4m and thin canopy by 15%. 28 Forestdale Road, Walderslade.

*Do not wish to object defer to Landscape Officer's view.*

TA/0153/12 – Tree Preservation Order application: TPO No.1 of 1969 an application for consent to fell Hornbeam at 25 Goldstone Walk, Walderslade.

*Do not wish to object defer to Landscape Officer's view.*

TA/0154/12- Tree Preservation Order application: TPO No.23 of 1981: an application for consent to fell 1 No Oak (T83) at 44 Lombardy Drive, Grove Green.

*Member's wished to see the application refused unless the Oak is diseased and considered dangerous.*

TA/0156/12 - Tree Preservation Order application: TPO No.15 of 2005 an application to remove SE limb at 5m at Woodlands adjacent White Ladies, Boxley Road, Walderslade. *Do not wish to object defer to Landscape Officer's view.*

## 6. **Planning Applications and Appeals Decisions**

**Noted** MA/12/0693 Tesco application for extended delivery hours was being considered at the Maidstone Planning committee on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2012 and Cllr Spain would be attending.

Planning rota. Cllr Holmes agreed to his inclusion on the rota.

## 7. **Walderslade Woods and Volunteer Group.**

Cllr Springate notified members that the next task day was on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2012. Members were notified of complaints being received by the parish office about dog mess on paths in the woodlands. There was a specific issue relating to the KH32a steps and the WWG would be putting up some signs and the Clerk was liaising with the various authorities. **Noted** members asked to be kept informed of the situation.

## 8. **Highways and Byways.**

8.1 An issue was raised about trees leaning over Walderslade Woods Road and footways in the area. There was concern that the weight of any snow would make the trees lean lower and then either falling or becoming a danger. **Action** – parish office.

8.2 Highway vegetation maintenance. After consideration it was **agreed** that the Environment Committee would produce a report to be submitted to KCC on the problems and issues that it felt were being caused by the lack of maintenance. There was also concern over safety critical judgements and the possible lack of consistency in these judgements. It was **agreed** that all councillors would be asked to report to KCC any highway vegetation or safety issues and then to

supply the reference number to the parish office. **Action – Parish Councillors.**  
Cllr Holmes offered to liaise and work with the Clerk to draw together the various guidelines and KCC policy that was spread throughout a number of documents.  
**Action – Cllr Holmes and Clerk.**

**Noted** the complaint received at the PC meeting about highway signs, outside St Andrews Cottage at Sandling, being covered by vegetation.

8.3 County Councillors devolved budget. Councillors were reminded to submit requests to the parish office. **Action – Parish Councillors.**

8.4 Dropped kerbstones. The Chairman notified members that she had requested, in her role as a Borough Councillor, dropped kerbs at Beechmore Drive.

As it was 9.30 pm the Chairman used her devolved powers to extend the meeting until 10.00 pm.

9. **MBC Core Strategy: Strategic Sites Allocation Consultation and Integrated Transport Strategy.**

Members **ratified** the Clerk's amendments to the Integrated Transport Strategy.

10. **Policy and procedures review.**

Pre application discussions due to the time it was **agreed** to defer the issue to the next meeting. **Action – Environment Committee meeting.**

11. **Neighbourhood Development Plans**

Due to the time it was **agreed** to defer the issue to the next meeting. **Action – Environment Committee meeting an early agenda item.**

12. **Kent Downs AONB Management Plan Review 2012-13 Statement of Community and Stakeholder Involvement.**

It was **agreed** that the Clerk would respond to the consultation stating the Parish Council's support.  
**Action – Clerk.**

13. **2013/14 Budget – draft.**

**Noted** members were reminded that they should give advance notice of any projects or expenditure that they want included in the draft budget. Members will be asked to discuss their draft budget at the November meeting.

14. **Matters for information.**

No issues were raised.

15. **Next Meeting.**

Next full environment meeting 12<sup>th</sup> November 2012 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.

16. **Enforcement and Section 106 updates from MBC.**

**Noted** no update had been received.

17. **Maidstone Studios audience parking on Grove Green**

The issue had been deferred from the Parish Council meeting but due to the time it was agreed to defer it to the next meeting. **Action – Environment Committee.**

18. **Cuckoo Wood.**

The request from the Burleigh Drive Residents Association for the Parish Council to purchase some land was considered. After lengthy discussion covering: the cost of purchase and future maintenance costs; benefit would be to neighbouring areas which were not within the parish; importance of preserving Ancient Woodland; the need to identify possible grant opportunities. It was **agreed** (with 3 abstentions) that the recommendation to the Parish Council would be "**there was a need to undertake further investigations including:**

- **The possible partnership working with MBC and the other appropriate groups.**

- **The potential cost of purchasing the land.**
  - **Future maintenance costs.**
  - **Grant opportunities for the purchase and maintenance of the land.”**
- Action – Clerk and Parish Council.**

#### 19. **Renegotiation of Section 106 planning obligations: Consultation**

**Ratified** the Clerk’s response, after consultation with members.

**Question 1** – is the Government’s objective to encourage formal reconsideration of Section 106s on stalled development supported by the shortened relevant period given in the draft regulation?

*The Parish Council is not convinced that renegotiation of S106 obligations will result in a surge in house-building. There are other, more important, reasons for the stalled state of this sector. We fear however that renegotiation will frequently be to the detriment of our community’s genuine needs.*

*Comments: The 1 month deadline will create an enormous burden on local planning authorities at a time when they are already over stretched. We have concern also about the impact on the Planning Inspectorate.*

**Question 2** – does 6 April 2010 represent a reasonable cut off for the proposed change? Yes

**Question 3** – what approaches could be taken to secure acceptable affordable housing delivery through revised obligations?

*The approach outlined in the consultation document seems reasonable. To meet their obligations for affordable housing the Government should require planning authorities to consider alternative provisions without S106’s. This could include the development of affordable housing within areas of town centre that are well furnished by public transport and public amenities, e.g. train stations, bus routes and good shopping facilities. Some lateral thinking may be required for example the conversion of high rise office spaces that are no longer occupied by business.*

#### 20. **Draft response to MBC Council tax consultation.**

**Ratified** the Clerk’s response, after consultation with members.

*Boxley Parish Council supports option 3 as this will have less impact on the vulnerable members of society and might encourage empty property owners to release their properties for occupancy.*

The meeting closed at 9.44 pm.

**Item 6.3** Minutes of the Estates Committee Meeting held at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2012 at 7.43pm.

Councillors present – Mr V Davies (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks, Mr I Davies, Mr P Dengate, Mr B Hinder, Mr P Sullivan, Mr G Smith, Mrs M Waller together with the Assistant Clerk.

*Councillors undertook an inspection of the hall between 7.10 – 7.40pm to consider projects to be put forward for the 2013/14 budget which will be presented at December’s meeting.*

#### 1. **Declarations of Interest and Lobbying**

Cllr Vic Davies declared an interest (personal connection) for item 4.2.

#### 2. **Apologies and absence.**

Cllr Pat Sullivan arrived at 8.04 during item 8.

#### 3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting 14th August, 2012.**

The minutes of the meeting were **agreed** and **signed** as a correct record.

#### 4. **Matters Arising From Previous Minutes.**

4.1 Minute 2430/4.1 War Memorial - **Agreed** and **ratified** the Assistant Clerk’s decision after consulting with Cllrs Vic & Ivor Davies to proceed with Mid Kent

Memorials quote of £175.00 to paint the names and wording on the lower drum of the memorial in black enamel.

4.2 Minute 2430/6.1 Litter Picking. **Noted** the Parish Office is progressing the successful application for a Litter Picker and will provide all equipment and relevant training. **Action Parish Office.**

4.3 Minute 2430/6.2 Playground Inspection Course – Members **noted** the course date and increased fee.

4.4 Minute 2430/6.3 Tree maintenance and boundary treatment to Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard. The Clerk, will, in conjunction with Cllr Harwood produce a job specification. **Noted.**

4.5 Minute 2432/9.2 Website – This item has now been deferred to the full parish council and as such any updates will be reported on future Parish Council agendas. **Noted.**

4.6 Minute 2433/13 Flag pole – The Assistant Clerk informed members that the Clerk would forward an update by email with regards to its position. It was suggested that if members had a preference for where it should be sited, to email the Clerk. **Action Clerk.**

As there were no public present the meeting was not adjourned.

5. **Allotments** – Members **received** and **noted** the Clerk's report on her recent training and as a result would set a date with the working group to meet and update the draft documents and to arrange for a visit to another site. **Action Clerk.**

6. **Assistant Clerk's Report**

6.1 **Received** and **Noted** the receipt of hire fees were received for June/July (Brackets indicate income over same period previous year).

	<b>2012/2013</b>	<b>2011/2012</b>
Casual	£2,091.90	(£2,670.56)
Regular	<u>£3,505.71</u>	<u>(£3,620.69)</u>
Total	£5,597.61	(£6,291.25)
Cumulative figures for		
Casual	£ 8,623.60	(£6,061.89)
Regular	<u>£10,329.42</u>	<u>(£9,368.14)</u>
Total	£18,953.02	(£15,430.03)

6.2 Planning Change – Extended Hours – Members **noted** the Assistant Clerk's report and after discussion and consideration **agreed** in principal for the following changes:

Monday – Friday - To remain as is. 9am – 10.30pm

Saturday – To remain as is. 9am – 11.30pm

Sunday 11am – 10pm.

This is subject to consultation with current staff and the appointment of a further relief caretaker.

7. **Carbon Footprint.**

This item was taken after item 8, as Item 8 was taken in conjunction with 6.2. Members **received** the Assistants Clerk's initial investigations which included a rough estimate for placing photovoltaic solar panels onto the roof at Beechen Hall after discussion and consideration of the facts members requested further estimates be sought and to be returned to the December agenda for further consideration. **Action Assistant Clerk**

8. **Additional Caretaking at Beechen Hall.**

Members received the Assistant Clerk's report and considered the options that were given to help solve the issues the current caretaking staff are facing. Members have **agreed** that a third person is needed and have requested further information from the office and the current caretaker's for job descriptions and duties and how this can be best implemented. A meeting is to be set up between the Parish Office and Caretaking staff so that a report can be prepared for final decision at the December meeting. **Action Parish Office and Caretakers**

9. **2012/13 Budget**

Hall inspection. – Concrete Slabs at the entrance to the hall. The Assistant Clerk informed the committee that this item should not have been on the agenda and work was in hand.

10. **2013/14 Draft Budget** – Members were reminded that suggestions for projects should be put forward for consideration at the meeting or to the office.

Hall Budget

The following issues were identified in previous budgets or by the office and were covered by the hall inspection before the start of the meeting.

- 10.1 Wall mounted boiler/replacement fridge and slight remodelling the kitchen to accommodate proposed changes. Members received the costs for installing a wall mounted boiler but asked if further costs and feasibility could be sought for placing the boiler in a different location within the kitchen. Members agreed the fridge is still fit for purpose but would consider replacing if the kitchen had to be remodelled to accommodate the boiler.
- 10.2 New front doors and windows at Beechen Hall – Members agreed that these were still fit for purpose especially the windows and agreed to review the front doors annually.
- 10.3 Hand dryers for the toilets. Members considered the information presented to them together with costs and requested further investigation and costs for purchasing and the running of such equipment as well as estimates for supply of power to the hand dryers.
- 10.4 Hall internal/external decoration. The Assistant Clerk confirmed that additional painting and maintenance is required during 2013/14 and will draw up job specifications to establish costs for budgeting purposes.

General Budget

- 10.5 Common Land at Grange Lane – Cllr Waller gave members a brief history of this site and has requested that the Parish Council takes responsibility for maintaining the area. As it was unclear as to who owned the land members were very reluctant to agree to any future maintenance. It was therefore proposed from the Chair, seconded by Cllr Bob Hinder and unanimously **agreed** that a land registry search is carried out in order to establish who owns the land and to be brought back to the December meeting for further consideration.

**Action Assistant Clerk**

11. **Review of Policies and Procedures.**

- 11.1 Bouncy Castle Policy – this was reviewed in April 2012 no further action required. **Noted.**
- 11.2 Use of Boxley Green – to consider and decide if the current policy is still fit for purpose. Further additions were proposed and agreement was given for Cllr Ivor Davies to amend and circulate to members for their approval outside of the meeting. **Action Cllr Ivor Davies.**
- 11.3 Grounds maintenance contract – The current contract expires 31/3/2014 no further action required until October 2013. **Noted.**
- 11.4 Review of electrical safety/maintenance contract. The current contract expires Jan 2014 no further action is required until October 2013. **Noted.**

*Members also agreed that policies and procedures will only be brought back to the agenda if there has been a fundamental change in legislation or if the policy is no longer fit for purpose, however these will still be reviewed on an annual basis by the office.*

12. **Tree Maintenance at Beechen Hall**

Members received a report from the Clerk after seeking advice from Maidstone

Borough Council's Tree officer for carrying out the long term maintenance of trees at Beechen Hall which are covered by Tree Preservation Orders. Members were unanimous in their **agreement** for the work to proceed in this financial year and for further quotes to be obtained so that a request can be made to the finance committee to release some reserves to cover this expenditure. **Action Assistant Clerk.**

13. **Matters for Information**

There were none presented.

14. **Date of Next Meeting.**

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> December, 2012 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade, Chatham commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Meeting closed at 9.13 p.m.

**Item 9 Cuckoo Wood.** *Purpose of item: information and to make a decision on whether to progress. Members are reminded that the Council has a Land or Building Purchase Policy.*

At its last meeting the Parish Council received a letter, too late to include on the main agenda but circulated to members, from Burleigh Drive Residents Association (BDRA) suggesting that the Parish Council purchases and take responsibility of 4.3 hectares of Ancient Woodland at Cuckoo Wood. The BDRA letter stated that they "would like, either, to reclaim it or to arrange for it to be purchased by Boxley Parish Council". The letter did not contain a map of the area but this was obtained and supplied to members of the Environment Committee (enclosed for non-committee members).

The October Parish Council meeting referred the issue to the Environment Committee to gain some initial views and the following is the draft minute on the item.

"Minute 2470/18. The request from the Burleigh Drive Residents Association for the Parish Council to purchase some land was considered. After lengthy discussion covering: the cost of purchase and future maintenance costs; benefit [would be] to neighbouring areas which were not within the parish; importance of preserving Ancient Woodland; the need to identify possible grant opportunities. It was **agreed** (with 3 abstentions) that the recommendation to the Parish Council would be "**there was a need to undertake further investigations including:**

- **The possible partnership working with MBC and the other appropriate groups.**
- **The potential cost of purchasing the land.**
- **Future maintenance costs.**
- **Grant opportunities for the purchase and maintenance of the land."**

The 4.3 hectares surrounds the residential development and is, the BDRA advises, owned by the Crown Estate. The Bona Vacantia Division of the Treasury Solicitor's Department ([www.bonavacantia.gov.uk](http://www.bonavacantia.gov.uk)) deals with the sale of such land. It obtains the sale price through the District Valuer, who may advise putting the land to auction. If the Crown Estate decides to deal with a purchaser directly then on top of the sale purchase price the purchasers will also have to pay the Treasury Solicitor's legal costs and any disbursements. The website includes guidelines on Costs and Charges (BVC 18). The Crown Estates can if it wants give up ownership of the land but its paperwork also states it is required "to obtain the best price".

As stated in the BDRA letter they have been working with The Mid Kent Downs Countryside Partnership and a draft management plan has been produced (an electronic or paper copy is available for members from the parish office). The draft management plan identifies Coppicing Rotation for a number of the areas that the Parish Council is being asked to consider purchasing. If the land comes into the ownership of the Parish Council it will be responsible for any maintenance or health and safety work that is

required. This will be an on-going cost as the area is criss-crossed by footpaths and some of the land borders public highways and footways. The adjacent 12.4 hectares of Ancient Semi-natural Woodland (including a small area of wet woodland) is owned by Gorstyfields Ltd. This company has entered into an agreement with Maidstone Borough Council to manage the land as a Local Nature Reserve with management decisions being taken by a committee of MBC, the landowners, The Mid Kent Downs Countryside Partnership and other interested parties.

The BDRA is working closely with The Mid Kent Downs Countryside Partnership, which is a well-respected and experienced unit that is extremely good at locating and attracting outside funding.

*Clerk's recommendation. Prior to agreeing any purchase of land the Parish Council will need to fully investigate the on-going maintenance costs it would incur.*

Enclosed for members is a copy of the draft management plan's Summary of Prescriptions and Activities

Clerk's comment. This is the total investigation that has taken place by the parish office. To proceed further the Parish Council would need to contact the Land Registry to obtain an official copy of the entry and then send this and other information to the Bona Vacantia Division and/or approach the Crown Estate's own solicitors if necessary. Members' guidance is sought as to whether they wish the parish office to undertake the work.

**Item 10 2013/14 Draft Budget.** *Purpose of item: information.*

At the October Parish Council meeting Cllr Harwood notified members that he had been approached by some young people about additional play equipment, a 'spinner' was mentioned, at the Orchard play area and the Clerk was asked to investigate the possibility and report back to the Council.

Clerk's report.

An assessment was undertaken on 17 October 2012 and with the size and layout of the current area it would not be possible to accommodate the request for a number of reasons.

- The site is small and a unit could not be incorporated that would not adversely affect or impede the natural and safe traffic flow around the site.
- A 'spinner' would require, depending on the design, a safety area of between 4 square and 8 square metres. To achieve a 4 square metre safety zone would mean placing the 'spinner' immediately adjacent to, on one side, the toddler play area site which would create a safety hazard. On the other side it would be immediately adjacent to the fence which would should be avoided.
- The age range of a 'spinner' is generally up to 12 years and the current site is too small to be able to segregate toddler play equipment from the older/teenager 'spinner'.

Near the rear of the site almost between the 2 sets of swings there is an area that might be large enough however this part of the site is not flat. It might be possible with landscaping and the installation of a safety surface to place a spinner in this area but prior to doing so further investigation and measurements will need to be taken to ensure there would be no conflict with the swings, traffic flow etc.

**Item 11 Policies and Procedures Review.** *Purpose of item: review and if required amend the policies/procedures.*

Clerk's note. *The current document is produced as a leaflet using Publisher software. The following text is from the leaflet but its reproduction in word means that so some of the formatting is a little 'off'. The leaflets' front page has been produced in text only.*

*Members' are reminded that should anyone approach them concerning obtaining copies of any parish council document they must notify the parish office immediately. Because of the Council's policy to operate openly and with accountability it is rare to get a Freedom of Information request however once a request, which can be verbal, is received by any staff member or councillor the 20 day deadline for a response starts.*

**Boxley Parish Council**  
Freedom of Information Act 2000  
Publication and document  
retention scheme

Contents;

⇒ Introduction

⇒ Publication Scheme.

⇒ Classes of Information

⇒ Document retention

### **Freedom of Information**

The Freedom of Information scheme is intended to encourage local councils to publish more information proactively and to develop a greater culture of openness and transparency. All local authorities are required to have a publication scheme and to list the information it produces (Classes of Information).

Other information is available at the parish office or the Clerk may know its location/publisher and help will be given where possible to locate it. The parish council may not publish a document but may have a copy that can be consulted. Details of the Freedom of Information publication scheme and Classes of Information will be available on the parish council's website and from the parish office. Notices advertising the publication scheme will regularly be displayed on the community noticeboards in the parish.

Boxley Parish Council endeavours to be open and accountable and is happy to make the documents detailed in the following list available. Photocopies of documents requested under this scheme will be forwarded within 20 working days.

If a request for information is refused a reason or explanation must be supplied. Appeals against any refusal can be made using the parish council's existing complaint procedure. Details of the complaints procedure is explained on the parish council's website or in the leaflet "Complaints Procedure" which is available from the parish office. If the applicant is not satisfied with that response there is a procedure to appeal to the Information Commissioner. Further information on the procedures and the scheme can be found at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk).

It is not the intention of the parish council to charge for copies of this scheme or for information requested. However it has reserved the right to do so. Charging (for the cost of photocopying and postage and packaging) will be at the discretion of the Clerk and the Chairman of the parish council. When dealing with issues such as charging or vexatious requests the parish council will use the guidance published by the Information Commissioners Officer to reach a decision.

Further information or copies of particular documents can be requested from or consulted at the parish office, the opening hours of which are generally 9.00 – 15.00 Monday - Friday. Arrangements can be made to open the parish office outside of these hours. In the spirit of openness and accountability the parish council allows residents to address members at its public meetings. Details can be obtained from the parish council website or office.

The Clerk to the Council will be responsible for operating the scheme on a day to day basis; in the absence of the Clerk the Assistant Clerk will be responsible.

The parish council has an adopted Record Management Policy and Procedure details of which are included in this document.

## **Classes of Information.**

### **Who are we and what we do.**

- Minutes of council, committee and sub-committee meetings – limited to the last two years.
- Councils' Annual Report to Parish Meeting.
- Agendas and supporting papers for council, committee and sub-committee.
- Members Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
- Information relating to the last Periodic Electoral Review and boundary review of the council area.
- Responses to planning applications.
- Reports and responses by council to consultation papers.
- Reports produced for Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- Parish Newsletter (one year).
- Parish Information Leaflets.
- Information related to work by the parish council and parish office relating to local issues (e.g. highway problems).

### **What we spend and how we spend it.**

- Annual return form.
- Annual Statutory report by auditor (internal and external).
- Budget details.
- Income and Expenditure records, Bank Statements for all accounts.
- Precept request.
- VAT records.
- Investment Review
- Allowances and Subsistence.
- Terms and conditions of employment\*.
- Job descriptions. \* Exclusions – 'personal records' i.e. appraisals, employee specific salary details, disciplinary records, sickness records and the like by virtue of being personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998.

### **What our priorities are and how we are doing.**

#### **How we make decisions.**

- Standing Orders.
- Terms of Reference for Committees.
- Financial Regulations.
- Complaints handling procedure
- Community Engagement Strategy

#### **Our policies and procedures.**

Policies and Procedures relating to the management of Beechen Hall.

Policies, protocols and procedures relating to the effective management of the parish office and the running of the parish council including:

- Race Equality Review; Equal Opportunities Statement; Compassionate leave; Training Strategy.
- Protocol for attending parish council and committee meetings; Parish Councillor guidance notes for site visits/lobbying/Predetermination etc.; Meetings – Protocol for attending; Draft minutes publication on website policy; Absences- Guidance notes for acceptable reasons.
- Freedom of Information; Records Management Policy and Procedure.
- Health and Safety Policy; Risk Assessments.
- Disciplinary Procedure; Grievance Procedure.
- Grants Procedure and Policy; Investments approved Policy; Petty Cash; Payment of

- bills by Direct Debit and Standing Orders policy; Allowances and subsistence;
- Boxley Burial Ground Regulations and grave plans.
- Grounds Maintenance Contract; Use of Boxley Green and Wildfell Close Open Space; Sale of Public Land, Purchase of land
- Pre Planning Application discussions; Traffic management during building work.
- Setting Policy Procedure; Replacement Procedures for projects not managed by parish office.
  - Vision and business plan
  - Code of Conduct
  - Land and building purchase.

**List and Registers.**

- Members Register of Interests.
- Assets and Inventory lists.
- Boxley Burial Ground Registers.

**The Services we offer.**

- Beechen Hall (see Our policies and procedures)
- Boxley Burial Ground (see Our policies and procedures).
  - Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard (including play area).

\*Exclusions – all documentation relating to individual applications and registrations under both privacy and data protection laws. Copies of planning consultations, Development and Structure Plans, Rights of Way/Footway maps all of which are available from the local planning and/or highway authority respectively.

**Document retention periods.**

**General Correspondence and implementation of the policy.**

An annual review of all documentation will take place and documents will then be destroyed or passed to archives as indicated by the document retention periods.

General written (paper) correspondence will be destroyed 12 months after the last correspondence or closure of the issue. General e- mail correspondence will be kept for 6 months or printed off and treated as paper correspondence. It is recognised that common sense must be used and it is acknowledged that there will be occasions when documentation or correspondence is kept or a précis is made for future reference. Any such retention will only be for the purpose of historical recording or for the effective and efficient administration (e.g. car parking at Boxley Village which is an issue that regularly surfaces).

The parish Clerk, as identified, in the Record Management Policy will therefore give guidance for good records, management practice and will promote compliance with this policy.

**Who are we and what we do**

Basic file description	Retention period
Minutes of council, committee and sub committee meetings	
- signed copy	Permanent. Send to archives.
- draft minutes	3 months after minutes signed. Shred

- members copies.	Operational use
Agenda	Permanent. Send to archives
Members declaration of acceptance of office	Permanent. Send to archives
Information relating to the last Periodic Electoral Review of the council area.	6 months after being replaced by next review. Shred
Information relating to the last boundary review of the council area.	6 months after being replaced by next review.
Responses to planning applications	Date of planning permission granted or refused + 3 yrs. Shred
Grounds Maintenance Schedule	Until superseded + 12 mths
Reports and responses to by council to consultation papers	2 years

### **What we spend and how we spend it.**

Basic file description	Retention period
Annual return form	Current year + 6 years. Archive.
Annual Statutory report by auditor (internal and external)	Current year + 6 years. Archive
Budget details.	Current year + 6 years. Shred
Income and Expenditure records, Bank Statements from all accounts	Current year + 6 years. Shred.
Precept request	Current year + 6 years. Shred
VAT records	Current year + 6 years
Allowances and subsistence for parish councillors.	6 months after being replaced by next review.
Terms and conditions of employment.	Until replaced by new terms and conditions
Job descriptions.	Until JD reviewed

### **How we make decisions**

Basic file description	Retention period
Standing Orders	Until superseded plus 12 months

Terms of references for Committees	Lifetime of the Committee plus six months.
Financial Regulations.	Until superseded plus 12 months

**Our policies and procedures**

Basic file description	Retention period
Policies and procedures unless specifically identified.	Until superseded
Race Equality Review	Until superseded + 6 months
Equal Opportunities Statement	Until superseded plus 12 months
Risk Assessments.	Current year + 6 years
Fees and charges applied by the council.	Current year + 6 years
Insurance policies	Current year +21 years
Boxley Burial Ground Regulations and grave plans	Grave plans permanent

**Lists and registers**

Basic file description	Retention period
Members Register of Interests	On resignation
Assets and Inventory lists.	Current year + 6 years
Boxley Burial Ground Registers	Permanent

**Notes**

The following documents (produced by other agencies) are retained by the parish council for reference purposes only.

Copies of planning consultations	Operational use plus 12 months
Development Plan	Operational use plus 12 months
Structure Plan	Operational use plus 12 months
Local Plan	Operational use plus 12 months
Rights of Way/Footway maps	Operational use plus 12 months

**Item 12 Matters for decision.**

Friends of Boxley Warren. As members will see from item 14.2 a 'Friends of' group has been set up and they have already undertaken a task day at the site. Boxley Parish Council is working in conjunction with the Mid-Kent Downs and the parish office has been approached about whether the Council's insurance will cover the volunteers on task days. The parish council's insurance does cover volunteer groups and as the council use to cover Walderslade Woods Group a procedure is already in place for dealing with such a situation. The long-term future of the Boxley Warren, after the current funding expires, is being planned and with the Council's permission this group will work under Boxley Parish Council's insurance.

*Clerk's comment: there is little extra work involved in this for the office as The Mid Kent Steering Group will be producing the risk assessments, First Aid training is already being arranged and the group has competent leaders.*

**Item 14. Reports from councillors/office. Purpose of report; information.**

14.1 Report from Cllr Perry.

I went to the meeting last night at the school regarding the proposed changes. Wendy and I listened and it was an excellent presentation. Many questions were asked of the panel regarding educational matters and also the infrastructure of the roads and parking etc. I had my say on a comment that was made regarding building work and introduced myself as a resident and parish councillor. One resident came up to me afterwards and thanked me for my contribution. All in all a good meeting, stage one over.

14.2 Boxley Warren

**Celebrating Boxley Warren Update for Boxley Parish Council – October 2012  
Progress and Events in last 3 months**

It has been a fairly quiet last 3 months though the project is still on track to be completed on time. The only slight concern is the heritage activities that are supposed to be delivered by KCC Heritage. Despite attempts to get a programme of activities and dates from them nothing has happened yet. This situation will be monitored and an alternative provider will be found if nothing has happened by the end of the year.

Activities undertaken up to October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012:

- Plan and promote bat walk led by Kent Bat Group and attended by 13 people
- Plan, promote and run two Boxley Warren Action Days. One led by MKDCP and one led by Friends of Boxley Warren:  
14<sup>th</sup> October – attended by 11 people  
23<sup>rd</sup> October – attended by 6 people
- One Friends of Boxley Warren meeting (21<sup>st</sup> August) where the group agreed to start monthly practical tasks and to become a constituted group.
- Boxley Warren leaflets design now in progress.
- Management plan review now completed and adopted by Boxley Warren Local Nature Reserve Advisory Committee.
- Winter task programme finalised and promoted
- Reptile and butterfly surveying workshops organised for spring 2013

**Planned Activities in the next 3 months**

- At least 4 Boxley Warren Action Days (3 led by Friends of Boxley Warren)
- Meeting of Friends of Boxley Warren – 20<sup>th</sup> November
- Practical event with 41<sup>st</sup> Medway Scouts
- Design, promote and initiate community heritage/archaeology project
- Creation of Boxley Warren pages on Boxley Parish Council website
- Complete the design of Boxley Warren promoted walk leaflet
- Appointed Person 1<sup>st</sup> Aid course
- Constitute Friends of Boxley Warren and purchase tools and training for group.

**Expenditure**

**Activities**

Walk leader

**£225.00**

£75.00

Walk co-ordination	£150.00
<b>Establishment of Friends Group</b>	<b>£200.00</b>
<b>2 x Boxley Warren Action Days</b>	<b>£442.27</b>
Refreshments	£34.93+
Promote, co-ordinate and lead	£400.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£867.27</b>

A full copy of the accounts for the project is held at the Boxley Parish Council office

Total spent so far: £16,937.98  
Total Budget: £56,526.00

### **Report on inaugural meeting of Boxley Warren Volunteers - Sunday October 14th 2012 Bob Hinder**

Well the first working day arrived and what a beautiful day it was - the weather could not have been kinder to the volunteers. It was so pleasing that 10 people turned out to be told what was expected from the first day. It was spent mainly cutting down rogue Sycamore shoots using tools supplied by Steve Wright. We did supply requests of what we felt should be purchased for our use in the future and everyone agreed that the "silkie" were the ideal purchase. I felt we all benefited from the expertise on offer and were given an insight into the purposes behind the formation on this group. A lunch of sausages was enjoyed together with welcome cups of hot tea or coffee. Ivor sent apologies - a clash with his commitment to the railways. The next working day is Tuesday 27th November when we hope more volunteers will turn up and help - the KM photographer was in attendance and hopefully publicity from them will maybe bring forward some more help. I wish it recorded that Councillor Perry turned up with his wife Linda who demonstrated that females can work just as hard as males!

### **Item 14.3 Maidstone KALC Finance Information Event, 20 October 2012**

Cllr Macklin and the Chairman attended this seminar in Lenham. Topics covered: key legislation, budget setting, insurance and audit. A lot of ground was covered, of which little was new to either of us. It did, however, serve to consolidate what we already knew and could be considered an afternoon well spent.

### **Item 14.4 Maidstone Rural Neighbourhood Police/Parishes Forum, 25 October 2012**

The Chairman attended this meeting in Headcorn. Significant points:

- Fewer crimes overall, although domestic abuse has increased.
- The focus on anti-social behaviour has been effective.
- Police maximum response times to a "deemed" emergency are set at 15 minutes in urban areas and 20 minutes elsewhere. Over 87% of calls from rural areas met the under-20 minute target last year.
- There are no plans to change how PCSOs are resourced "at the present time" (many parishes expressed dissatisfaction with the present situation, seeing their PCSO but rarely).
- An exercise in Ware Street (Bearstead) at varying times over a five-day period, showed 'only' 30 out of 700 vehicles to be exceeding the 40 mph limit - far different the public perception of vehicle speeds on this stretch of road.
- Chief Inspector Bumpus undertook to take up with the Traffic Unit the possibility of allowing use of Speedwatch in 20 mph zones. He was strongly supportive of Speedwatch but was aware of the difficulty in finding volunteers.
- There is a new Neighbourhood Watch coordinator, Jacquie Blake.

**Item 15. Consultation on Council Tax Base. Purpose of report; ratification**

**Question 1 – Do you agree that that the council tax base for local precepting authorities should be calculated excluding council tax support reductions in order to provide certainty for local tax payers and for the funding of local precepting authorities?**

*Agreed. This method of calculation would mean that the precepting authorities (including the Police and Fire & Rescue Service) would be less likely to be impacted upon by billing authorities' political decisions. This would be a simple and effective way of dealing with what could become, every financial year, a very complex issue and provide certainty for the funding of local precepting authorities.*

**Question 2 – Do you agree that the Secretary of State should also direct billing authorities to transfer an amount they estimate to be necessary to offset the cost of reductions attributable to local precepting authorities from their general fund to the collection fund?**

*If the Parish Council understands the consultation document correctly (paragraph 3.9 is not altogether clear) then the billing authority would need to use its general fund to top up any shortfall it experiences due to the changes and could not pass on any of this shortfall to the billing authorities. If this understanding is correct then this is supported.*

*Parish Councils can only receive their precept (which in Boxley Parish is £21.04 per band D property per annum totalling £81,916) by asking the billing authority to collect it. A Parish Council has little influence on the billing authority and is totally at its mercy. There is concern that if billing authorities use other methods for calculating council tax to try to accommodate the 10% reduction then this would mean Parish Councils would receive their precept less 10% a proportionate deduction.*

**Question 3 – Should legislation permit the council tax base (TP) for each of the items A-E listed above for billing authorities and F and G for major precepting authorities to be calculated including or excluding localised council tax support reductions (new item Z in the draft regulations)?**

*The proposal to use unadjusted tax bases to calculate the different special items would mean that Parish Council precepts are safeguarded and is therefore preferred. The issue that must be recognised is that Parish Councils can only precept once a year and they need the assurance that the precept requested will be paid in full. However this is felt to be primarily a matter for billing authorities and major precepting authorities.*

**Item 6 Policy and procedures reviews and adoption Purpose of item - To consider the current documents/information and identify any changes that may be required.**

16.2 Oast to Coast magazine issue Autumn 2012.

16.3 KALC Maidstone Committee - minutes of meeting held on 26 September 2012.

16.4 ACRK Rural News issue 122 (e-mail 11.10.12).

16.5 KALC Parish News issue 364 (copied to all councillors).

16.6 Open Spaces Magazine Autumn 2012 (e-mail 26.10.12).