

Minutes of the Boxley Parish Council Meeting held at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade on the 9th June 2025 at 7.30pm

Councillors Present: S Thompson (Chair), P Mclean (Vice Chair), A Adams, J Akehurst, A Brindle, H Bryant, I Davies, R Dines, C English, V Jones and P Sullivan, together with Mrs D Baylis – Parish Clerk, 2 members of the public, Kent County Councillor Mr Spencer Dixon and Maidstone Borough Councillor Mark Naghi.

A minute's silence was observed for Derek Butler, past Ward Councillor for Boxley and close supporter of the work of Boxley Parish Council over many years. Appreciation for Derek was given by Cllrs Brindle, English and Thompson, including the remarks sent in by others who were not able to speak in person. Announcements will follow on Boxley Parish Council's website.

1. Apologies and absences

Cllr J Sampangi

2. Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying

None.

3. Motion to exclude the press and public from the meeting for all items in the confidential section.

It was proposed by Cllr A Brindle, seconded by Cllr S Thompson and all agreed that members of the public be excluded from all items in the confidential section should this become necessary.

4. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 7 May 2025

Cllr Brindle raised Minute number 3944 Item 13.5 Guidance Notes on Reasons for Absence. The Clerk reported that this was being amended and would be brought back to the next full council meeting.

Cllr Brindle raised Minute number 3943 Item 9. Matters arising from the minutes. She wanted an update on the fly tipping in Wents Wood reported by a member of the public. Cllr English said that John Edwards was sending him a map showing MBC's responsibilities.

5. Matters Arising From the Minutes

None.

6. Crime Report and Police Issues

It was proposed by Cllr S Thompson, seconded by Cllr P Mclean and all agreed that the Community Beat Officers should be sent an invitation to all future Parish Council meetings, including a copy of the meeting agenda when published.

Public Session at the discretion of the Chairman. Parishioners may address the meeting with regard to any item on the Agenda (time limited to 3 minutes per person). Items not on the Agenda must be submitted to the Clerk in advance of the meeting. Non-parishioners are only able to address the meeting at the invitation of the Chairman.

The members of the public did not wish to speak.

7. Draft Minutes of Recent Committee Meetings

7.1 Environment Committee 12 May 2025

Noted

7.2 Estates Committee 19 May 2025

Noted

7.3 Finance and General Purposes Committee 19 May 2025

Noted

8. **Finance**

8.1 **Bank Balances**

Noted

8.2 **Finance General**

The Clerk was asked to arrange a meeting of the Long Term Investment Working Group. Cllrs I Davies, A Brindle, V Jones and S Thompson put themselves forward as Group members. The meeting would be a day time meeting. The Terms of Reference will be set at the next F&GP meeting.

8.3 **Receipts and Payments 1-30 May 2025**

Noted

8.4 **To note the Internal Auditors Reports**

Report noted

8.5 **To Approve the signing of the Annual Governance Statement**

It was proposed by Cllr C English, seconded by Cllr I Davies and all agreed that the Council had met all the assertions in the Annual Governance Statement and that it should be duly signed.

8.6 **To approve the signing of the Accounting Statement by the RFO and Chairman**

It was proposed by Cllr C English, seconded by Cllr P Mclean and all agreed that the Accounting Statements be signed.

8.7 **To consider the final report from the Internal Auditor**

The Internal Auditors final report was considered. Cllr Brindle proposed thanks to the office staff for their hard work in getting such a good audit report, and this was agreed.

9. **Policies and Procedures**

9.1 **Councillor Allowance Scheme for publication on the Website**

It was agreed to defer this to the September meeting. The Clerk was asked to ensure that the legislation regarding allowances for co-opted members was circulated to members in advance of the meeting papers.

9.2 **Committee Terms of Reference – item requested by Cllrs Thompson, Mclean and Dines**

Cllr Brindle raised a number of anomalies caused by the proposed changes. It was agreed to defer this item until the July meeting to allow further work to the Terms of Reference to be done. It was agreed to have a working group meeting on the 19th June to look at these in detail before they were brought back for decision.

10. **Reports from Boxley Parish Councillors/Office**

10.1 **Office Staff Report**

Noted.

10.2 **Councillors Reports**

Cllr Thompson thanked all those who had attended the meeting on Friday 6th June with Tristan Osborne MP to look at issues that affect Boxley Parish that cross the border with his constituency.

Cllr Thompson thanked all the Councillors who had set up and/or manned the Parish Council stand at the St John's School fete on the 7th June. It was a very successful event and the 'Name the badger' competition had proved very popular.

10.3 **Borough/County Councillor Reports**

Cllr Jones said that she had mainly dealt with fly tipping particularly on Impton Lane. The KCC highways rep for Boxley was leaving KCC. It was not known who his replacement

would be. KALC were hosting a meeting at the Ashford International Hotel on Local Government Reorganisation on the 11 June 2025.

Cllr Naghi said that his main item to report was the planning application for a 5 storey self storage unit at Eclipse Park. It was turned down by the planning committee as too large for the site. He had opposed the development.

Cllr Thompson reported that the last round of the Community Governance Review and KCC Boundary reviews were finally finished and the re-drawing of the boundaries was now in effect, around 'Bearsted Park' at Grove Green/Thurnham parish. He had attended courses on Social Media and the Borough course on Chairmanship.

The next stage of MBC Community Governance Review was starting and there was a meeting of the MBC Democracy and General Purposes Committee on Wed 25th June with this on the Agenda, including consideration of Grove Green. Cllr Thompson has been lobbied by residents in Forstal regarding a planning issue and street cleaning.

The Clerk was asked to check on the exact boundaries of Parish, Borough, County and parliamentary and report to councillors.

10.4 **Kent County Council Representative**

Mr Dixon said that there had been teething problems with the need to train 57 new Councillors with a system that was not designed for this volume of new Councillors.

Cllr Thompson asked Mr Dixon to note significant issues raised at this meeting in advance of a follow up meeting with Boxley Parish Cllrs. Cllr Mclean referred to issues with the non-completion of the Bearsted Road major road improvement scheme. Cllr Brindle said that the traffic light issue on the KIMS roundabout had been fixed with the addition of solar power units. The lights stop on red if they run out of battery. Cllr Adams explained the issues with the nuisance parking caused by the schools on Grovewood Drive South. Mr Dixon said that he would like to have a meeting with Councillors to go over issues in more detail. Cllr Brindle, English, Adams, Dines, Mclean and Thompson expressed an interest in this, and all councillors will be invited.

Mr Dixon said that he was planning to hold surgeries for residents. The Clerk offered the use of Beechen Hall for these.

Cllr Thompson highlighted Community Resilience as being a key KCC initiative Mr Dixon could research in advance of our meeting.

10.5 **KALC Representative**

The last meeting had not been attended due to a clash with a BPC meeting. BPC will review the membership representation of KALC and the appointment of substitutes. MAC KALC will be contacted for clarification of the process.

10.6 **Grove Green Community Hall Representative**

Cllr Mclean said that no meeting had been held. They were waiting for the year end to be done the following month and would have a meeting then.

10.7 **Sandling Village Hall Representative**

Cllr Akehurst passed on a big 'thank you' for the vegetation cutting around the hall. Landscape Services had provided an excellent service and were planning a second cut later in the year.

10.8 **Vinters Valley Nature Reserve Representative**

Cllr Brindle reported that the Big Day Out was on the 14th June. There had been a lot of leaflets given out at the St John's School fete so she was hopeful for a good turnout. Activities on offer included pond dipping, teddy bears' picnic and tours.

10.9 **Any other reports**

None made.

11. **Sandling**

Cllr Akehurst thanked the Parish Council for the new noticeboard. Cllr Thompson thanked Cllr Akehurst for the work she was doing in Sandling.

12. **Lidsing**
Cllr Jones reported that there was no update as the last meeting had been cancelled. Boxley and Bredhurst were carrying out co-ordinated traffic counts.
Cllr Dines said that the development had a large Medway element. Medway's Regulation 19 submission was being published the following week. It contained more development in the Capstone Valley. The ransom strip in North Dane Way had been sold.
13. **Cluster Meetings**
Cllr Thompson said that no meeting had been held for a considerable time but that a meeting was imminent.
14. **Matters for Decision**
None for this Agenda.
15. **Correspondence**
None received.
16. **Matters for Information**
Report noted.
17. **Items for Next Agenda**
Noted. It is helpful but not required to use the form when submitting requests for agenda items at any meetings to the Chair and Clerks by the advertised due dates.
18. **Meetings**
Next Meeting Monday 7 July 2025.
It was agreed to hold the postponed Environment Committee meeting on the 23rd June at 7.30pm at Beechen Hall with a Woodland Management Committee meeting held before this starting at 6.30pm

The Chairman requested an extension of the meeting as it was past 9.30pm

Confidential Section

19. **Personnel matters. This item was held in open session.**
Cllr Akehurst reported that the Committee were working hard on staff job roles and these had been redrafted and reformatted. They were now ready for review by the Personnel Committee. Once reviewed they would be sent to staff for review and signature.
It was proposed by Cllr P Mclean, seconded by Cllr S Thompson and all agreed that a filing cabinet be purchased for the storage of confidential staff records.

Meeting closed at 9.40 pm.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

Chairman Date