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The parish council apologies for any inconvenience.**

BOXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

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Beechen Hall
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To All Members of the Council, press and the public.

5th November 2012

There will be a meeting of the **Environment Committee** on **Monday 12th November 2012** at **Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade** commencing at 7.30 pm when it is proposed to transact the following business;

1. **Apologies and absences** (7.30)
To receive and accept apologies for absence.
2. **Declaration of Interest or Lobbying.** (7.31)
Members are required to declare any interests or lobbying on items in this agenda.
3. **Minutes of the Meetings of 1st & 8th October 2012.** (7:32)
To consider the minutes of the meetings and if in order to sign as a true record (already circulated).
4. **Matters Arising From Minutes.** (7.36)
 - 4.1 Minute 2467/4.1 marker at Cossington Lane. A query has been raised as to whether this is actually a private road owned by the residents and clarification is being sought by the parish office.
 - 4.2 Minute 2467/4.2 PRoW Round Wood valley. KCC lost the original paperwork so on 10/10/12 details resent. Issue will be investigated.
 - 4.3 Minute 2467/5.4 Boxley Road/Grange Lane movement of speed restriction. There has been a Police objection to KCCH&T's consultation on this. KCCH&T has been contacted with a request that it looks at other possibilities.
 - 4.4 Minute 2467/4.4 additional white lining Boxley Road/Beechen Bank Rd. KCC have booked this work in. It is weather sensitive so may take some time to complete.
 - 4.5 Minute 2467/4.6 Beechen Bank ownership investigation. A land registry request has been submitted by the parish office.
 - 4.6 Minute 2467/4.7 Saracen Fields open area. County Councillor Paul Carter has asked an officer to look into the situation and report back to him. The officer has been in contact with the office to get background information.
 - 4.7 Minute 2469/8.1 & 8.3. Trees leaning over Walderslade Woods Road and other work as identified by Councillors (vegetation cut back on: footway adjacent to Boxley Road North of M20; footpath that dips into the trees at Round Wood roundabout between Lordswood Lane and Boxley Road) have been reported to Cllr Paul Carter with a request that he considers using his devolved budget to pay for work.

To adjourn to allow members of the public to address the meeting.

5. **Planning Applications and Appeals for Consideration.** (8.05)
To consider planning applications. Members' are reminded to consider possible section 106 requests or to suggest any conditions.

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. To ratify the Clerk's decision, after consultation with members,

No objection to a booking office which will only attract occasional visits by taxi drivers. However wish to object to the application should the classification allow any expansion of the booking office to include a driver's rest area or a taxi rank. Due to the lack of specific on site car parking any expansion to a simple booking office could have an adverse impact on the quality of life for residents as the booking office is a 24 hour operation.

Wish to object to the possible 24 hour opening of the workshop, no objection if there a condition restricting the hours of the workshop for example 8.00 – 17.00 Monday – Saturday.

The Parish Council would welcome further discussion with the Planning Officer should the Council's response mean that the application has to be reported to the Planning Committee. The Parish Council does not approve of retrospective planning applications.

MA/12/1856 erection of a single storey rear extension at Appledore, Weaving Street ME14 5JJ. 27/11/2012

MA/12/1883 erection of a two-storey rear extension and installation of first floor windows to the side elevation (resubmission of MA/12/0609) at 16 Trotwood Close, Walderslade ME5 9JU. 29/11/12

MA/12/1898 erection of a single storey front extension at 42 Lombardy Drive, ME14 5TB. 29/11/12

TA/0135/12 – Tree Preservation Order application: TPO No.1 of 1969: an application for consent to fell one Hornbeam Tree (T1) and coppice one Oak Tree (T2) at 15 Greensands, Walderslade ME5 9DQ. 16/11/2012

TA/0151/12 application for consent to crown reduce by 20% one Sweet Chestnut tree at 11 Micawber Close, Walderslade ME5 9JZ. 12/12/12

TA/0171/12 – Tree Preservation Order application , TPO No.24 of 1987 application for consent to crown reduce 3no Ash trees and 3no Leylandii tree to 5m above ground level at Sandhurst, Grove Green Road, Weaving ME14 5JT. 27/11/2012

TA/0176/12 – Boxley Conservation Area notification of intention to crown reduce and thin the crowns of 1(no) Oak tree and 1(no) Ash tree by 25% at Parsonage Farm, The Street, Boxley ME14 3DX. 12/11/2012

TA/0177/12 - Tree Preservation Order application: TPO No.1 of 1969: an application for consent to crown thin one Wild Cherry tree by 20%and crown lift to 4m above ground level at 2 Iris Close, Walderslade ME5 9QD. 27/11/2012

TA/0178/12 - Tree Preservation Order application: TPO No.1 of 1969: an application for consent to remove branch of one Silver Birch tree overhanging at 10 Violet Close, Walderslade ME5 9ND. 27/11/2012

TA/0179/12 – Conservation area notification of intention to reduce the height of a group of Laurels to 2.4m above ground level and fell 10 No. cypress to ground level at Court Lodge Farm, The Street, Boxley ME14 3DX. 15/11/2012

MA/12/1856 - Erection of a single storey extension at Appledore, Weaving Street , Weaving ME14 5JJ. 27/11/2012

6. **Planning Applications and Appeals Decisions** (8.25)
 Report from Cllr Bob Hinder MA/11/0791 The Oaks, Westfield Sole Road – report on Maidstone Planning Committee meeting 1st November 2012.
 "Regarding planning meeting felt we got some reward for objecting and my time attending as the condition was changed. It will now be a 10 year landscaping. To ensure that what has been planted is not removed after 5 years with no recourse to any punitive action possible by MBC. Very complementary comments regarding new play scheme at Cobtree is in process of being constructed."
7. **Neighbourhood Development Plans** (8.30)
 To receive
 - Briefing Report (enclosed). Members must decide whether to wait for the response to the Draft Core Strategy or whether to proceed further.
 - Draft audit on Lordswood and Walderslade (enclosed).
 - Grove Green and Weaving Street (enclosed).
8. **Walderslade Woods and Volunteer Group** (8.45)
 To receive a report/update on the Group's activities see report (page 4-5).
9. **Highways and Byways.** (8.55)
- 9.1 To consider any issues raised by Councillors or the residents.
 - 9.2 Highway vegetation maintenance see report (page 5).
 - 9.3 Westfield Sole Road. At the parish council meeting Cllr Smith's requested 'improvements' along this road. White lining and road sweeping have been requested and Cllr Smith has been notified of previous but unsuccessful efforts by the committee to get improvements. There is currently no funding for additional white lining however Cllr Carter is being approached to request some of his devolved budget be released.
 - 9.4 Weaving Street. Members are informed that the Grove Green Lane Residents Association has sent a petition to KCC asking for something to be done about the Weaving Street/Grove Green Lane junction. The GGLRA also contacted the MP who has informed them that if the parish council also supported their concerns it would help if he received a letter from them.
 - 9.5 Report from Cllr Bob Hinder on the KCC Highways and Transportation conference held on 7 October 2012 see attached report (page 6-7).
 - 9.6 KCC Highways and Transportation Survey. The deadline for response is 12 December 2012. It is an on-line survey and members must decide whether one of them or the parish office undertakes the survey. Clerk's suggestion: As this is a mixture of questions, some of which are better answered by the office, perhaps it should be a joint effort with a councillor attending the office to do the survey.
 - 9.7 Abigail Crescent, Walderslade. A resident contacted the parish council to inform it that the road was never adopted. KCCH&T has been contacted with a request for an investigation as when the developer went bust there should have been a bond lodged that would allow work to be 'completed' in order that the road could be adopted by KCC.
 - 9.8 Highway Maintenance Budget. It has been suggested that as the parish office was not successful in getting salt bins marked up with a 'use on public highways only' statement that KCC be asked to produce a sign to be placed on the bins with payment being made from this budget.
 - 9.9 Dog fouling Walderslade Woods. Members asked to be able to discuss this. Posters were placed adjacent to the footpath and an item was included in the Downs Mail. The woods are not covered by a dog fouling byelaw as, it appears, MBC would undertake this work on KCC land unless specifically requested to and this did not happen in this case.
 - 9.10 Maidstone Studios audience parking on Grove Green. Deferred from last meeting
10. **Policy and procedures review.** (9.10)
 Pre application discussions see report (pages 5-6).

11. **2013/14 Budget – draft.** (9.15)
Members are 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.
12. **Matters for information.** (9.25)
For members to be notified of any information or for members to request agenda items.
- 12.1 Heritage At Risk. Direct Information Service notification "On Friday 12 October, English Heritage launched the Heritage at Risk Register 2012 and announced an ambitious programme to find out how the one major element of our heritage not already covered by the Register – the nation's Grade II listed buildings can be assessed. Adding those found to be at risk from neglect, decay, damaging alterations or dereliction to the national or local At Risk Registers would be a first step to securing their future". Do members wish to identify Grade II listed properties (such as St Andrew's Chapel) it is concerned about?
- 12.2 Members are reminded that they can request a street sweep or litter pick by contacting MBC via the website or 01622 602202. Most roads within the parish are now on a 12 week schedule or a 'sweep when requested' schedule. Councillors are also reminded that they should report highway faults or problems directly to KCCH&T by the website or 08458 247800.
13. **Next Meeting.** (9.30)
Next full environment meeting 10th December 2012 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.
- In view of the confidential nature (personal details and data) on the Enforcement item about to be transacted, it is advisable that the public and press will be excluded from the meeting for the duration of or part of the item.
14. **Enforcement and Section 106 updates from MBC.** (9.31)
To consider, if any received, confidential updates.

Clerk to Boxley Parish Council.

Items to be returned to agenda: Minute 2368/5.1 Walderslade Woods road/A2045 – work to obtain speed reduction –KHS awaiting plans (04/12).

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

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<p>Item 8 Walderslade Woods Group. <i>Purpose of report: information.</i></p>
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Report from Rob Burrows, Chairman WWG.

I have been involved with discussions with the MBC Landscape Office team and it has been agreed that I and (hopefully soon) other members of the group will be involved in charting the peripheral woodland adjacent to residential areas, and compiling a record of its significant trees. This will be the first step in the redrafting TPO 1969, as these are the trees which are 'at risk' from illegal cutting. A letter drop will take place to residential

properties that are in areas which already show signs of unauthorised work, the aim of which is to educate local residents about TPO's, and the penalties involved.

Arrangements have been made for the Forestry Commission to visit the woods in order to build a relationship with them, and hopefully to gain information, advice and guidance. I will also use the opportunity to find out more about the Ash tree situation.

I have asked the KWT to review the existing management plan, as it is now five years old. The original plan needs to be brought up to date, and also include the plateau areas. A request is going to the parish council's Finance Committee to make available the 20% reduction in the annual budget, to pay for this revision, the cost of which I am currently awaiting from KWT.

The WWG is involved with Bredhurst Woodlands Group and the North Downs AONB Unit, in applying for a Local Heritage Initiative Grant to undertake a LIDAR survey of the local woodlands.

Two of the group have just completed a second tranche of chain saw training to allow a pole chainsaw to be used.

The group is trying to find funding to purchase a wood chipper, as, now the group is actively involved in coppicing ever larger areas, there is a dire need to recycle the cut material into wood chips for the paths.

This year an informal, but extremely useful, first aid course was organised. The course introduced members to what actions should be taken in an emergency. It was especially adapted for accidents that might occur during the use of chainsaws (which is why a first aid certificate could not be awarded). The purpose of the training was to ensure numerous members could react properly to any situation.

Item 9.2 Highway vegetation maintenance. *Purpose of report: information and possible action.*

Cllr Holmes and the Clerk were asked to undertake some work to enable a report to be put together for submission to KCC. Councillors were asked to be proactive in October and to report highway faults and to notify the office of the reference number assigned to the fault report. To date only 2 Councillors have notified the office of highway faults. The Clerk has also reported faults and in total 9 faults have been reported, 3 of which are in the Tonbridge & Malling area.

Vegetation over growing signs is the predominant problem and KCCH&T are starting to work on the faults reported. What has been identified so far is that generally the vegetation immediately around the sign is cut but no work is undertaken on vegetation leading up to the sign.

The Clerk has also been informed by a Highway Inspector that the 2 cuts regime is likely to come back next year.

Clerk comment: The lack of response from Councillors could indicate that problems are really localised or that there are less faults than thought. It is suggested that work is still undertaken on checking the Government Guidelines on Highway Verge Maintenance with a report submitted to the committee to allow discussion.

Item 10 Policy and procedures review. *Purpose of report: information and possible action.*

Procedure for review – this was produced for councillors but it is now also a document supplied to the public.

Pre Application discussions with the Boxley Parish Council Environment Committee.

- Applicants (who attend having given no notice) will be allowed up to 3 minutes to address members. This is already Parish Council policy and the meeting will be adjourned to allow this. Once reconvened the applicant is unable to contribute unless asked a direct question by the chairman or committee member.
- If possible details of the proposed application would be included on the agenda
- If it is a request from or an agent working on behalf of a development company or if it is large scale development then an agenda item may be included to allow fuller discussion between the developer and councillors.
- Applicant can submit a draft plan to allow members to consider the proposal; and with prior arrangements can also use the parish council's projector if they wish to show photographs etc. to help their explanation.
- Members can ask questions to help them identify any concerns that they may have. Members would be asked to refrain from discussing in depth any issues that would be the responsibility of the Planning Department for example they can ask for sympathetic materials but should not normally discuss the exact materials that they would wish to see.
- Members would identify any concerns about the proposal in order to help the applicant. It is likely that these would be additional traffic, access and egress to the site, design, loss of privacy to neighbours etc.
- Members would be asked, where possible, to restrict their comments to one brief succinct statement about the proposed application. Where possible members are to refrain from repeating concerns already stated by other members.
- Members will not be able to state whether they would support a proposed application. Present policy states that a decision can only be taken when a planning application is submitted via the Planning Department.

The Clerk suggests the following addition:

- The Council has a policy that members will not take into account the personal situation surrounding development. Councillors will work to the Planning Material document produced by the parish office.