

# BOXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

[www.boxleyparishcouncil.co.uk](http://www.boxleyparishcouncil.co.uk)

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To Parish Councillors, members of the public and press.

27<sup>th</sup> March 2012

Members are hereby summonsed and notice is given that a **Meeting of the Parish Council** is to be held at **Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close** on **Wednesday 4th April 2012** commencing at 7.30 p.m. when it is proposed to transact the following business:

Time guide

1. **Apologies and absences.** (7.30)  
To receive and accept apologies for absence. Members are reminded that they need to formally submit apologies prior to their absence and it would be helpful if this was not done at meetings.
2. **Declaration of Interests or Lobbying.** (7.32)  
Members are required to declare any interests or lobbying on items in this agenda.
3. **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012** (7.34)  
To consider the minutes of the meeting and if in order to sign as a true record (pages 3-4).
4. **Matters Arising From Minutes.** (7.38)
  - 4.1 Minute 2377/10.3 Energy. See update (page 4).
  - 4.2 Minute 2385/4.1 concurrent functions. Update see report (page 4-5).
  - 4.3 Minute 2385/4.2 Parking, Grove Green, to discuss the situation, due to the recent incident (dealt with by Cllr Wendy Hinder) the Chairman did not escalate the situation.
  - 4.4 Minute 2385/10.1 Annual meeting of the Parish. Verbal update will be given at the meeting.
  - 4.5 Minute 2385/4.7 School crossing dedication, it has not proved possible to get a mutually convenient date of all parties and so a press release to the KM etc. has been done. A photograph and an article is in the April Downs Mail.
- 5 **Report from the PCSO and Police Issues.** (7.40)  
Crime statistics received (page 5).

**To adjourn to enable members of the public to address the meeting.** (7.50)

In view of the confidential nature (financially sensitive) on the item about to be transacted, a resolution for the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the duration of or for part of the item will be placed by the Chairman.

- 6 **Round Wood.** (8.00)  
For members to consider the information in the confidential report, to discuss and debate any issues raised by that information. Notice is given that a resolution/s will be placed before the meeting, see attached report on process (page 5).
- 7 **Draft Minutes of Meetings since Previous Parish Council Meetings.** (8.20)  
For the parish council to receive the minutes members are allowed to ask questions of the Committee Chairmen.
  - 7.1 Environment meeting 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012 (page 5 - 6).
  - 7.2 Environment meeting 12<sup>th</sup> March 2012 (page 6 - 8).
  - 7.3 Finance Committee 13<sup>th</sup> March 2012 (pages 8 - 9).
- 8 **Finance.** (8.26)
  - 8.1 To note payments made out of meeting 06.03.12 – 27.03.12 (page 10).
  - 8.2 To note receipts for the period 28.02.12 – 27.03.12 (pages 11).

8.3 Account balances as at 27.03.12 (page 12).

8.4 To authorise payments of accounts (list supplied at meeting). Cllrs Wendy Hinder & Spain.

**9 Matters for Decision.** (8.34)

Too consider attendance at any meeting etc.

9.1 KCC Parish Council Legal Scheme (enclosure) to consider the information supplied and to decide action.

9.2 Land Purchase policy amendment see report (page 13).

9.3 MBC Civic Parade Sunday 20/05/12 (e-mail 26/03/12)

**10 Powers of competence.** (8.40)

To consider the new power and decide on action, a resolution to apply for the powers may be placed before members see report (page 13).

**11 Reports from Borough and County Councillors.** (8.50)

To allow the councillors to report and discuss matters affecting the parish.

**12 Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard.** (8.56)

To receive an update see report (page 13).

**13 Policies and Procedures Review.** (9.06)

13.1 Vision and Business plan see report (page 13).

13.2 Standing Orders, Terms of Reference and Financial Regulations see report (page 13 - 14).

**14 Reports from councillors/office.** (9.12)

The representatives who attended any meeting as representatives of the parish council are invited to give a brief summary.

14.1 Cobtree Park – Report from Cllr Smith (page 14).

14.2 Parish Liaison meeting 5<sup>th</sup> March Cllr Stead attended.

14.3 KALC meeting report (page 14 - 15).

14.4 Lord Lieutenants' Civic Service Cllr Smith attended see report (page 15).

**15 Parish Council Carbon Footprint** (9.18)

To consider the briefing note (enclosed for members).

**16 Matters for Information.** (9.26)

16.1 Spring edition of the Watchout newsletter, West Kent NHWA (e-mail 15.03.12).

16.2 Rural News 144 (e-mail 14.03.12)

16.3 Open Space magazine for Spring 2012. (e-mail 01.03.12)

**17 Next Meeting.** (9.28)

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2012 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close at 7.30 pm.

**18 Chairman's report.** (9.29)

To receive comments from the Chairman.

In view of the confidential nature (tenders) on the item about to be transacted, a resolution for the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the duration of or for part of the item will be placed by the Chairman.

**19 Orchard tenders.** (9.35)

To consider the tenders for the refurbishment work on the Orchard play area enclosed under confidential cover for members.

Clerk to the Council.

In agreement with policy the committee meeting is due to stop at 9.30 p.m. The Chairman has discretionary powers to extend by half an hour to 10.00 p.m.

**Item 3 Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held at Weaving Village Hall, Weaving Street, Grove Green on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012 commencing at 7.30 pm.**

Councillors present – Mrs P Brooks (Chairman), Mr I Davies, Mr V Davies, Mr B Hinder, Mrs W Hinder, Mrs K Macklin, Mr K Perry, Mr G Smith, Mrs A Spain, Mr A Springate, Mr P Sullivan, and Mrs M Waller together with the Assistant Clerk, PCSO Hawthorn (left after item 5), 1 member of the public and 2 member of the press.

**1. Apologies and absences.**

Mr M Pepper (holiday) Mr T Harwood (work commitments) Mr W Stead (MBC meeting).

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

None declared.

**3. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2012.**

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

**4 Matters Arising From Minutes.**

- 4.1 Minute 2375/4.1 concurrent functions. **Noted** no further information was available at the meeting and this will return to the April agenda.
- 4.2 Minute 2375/4.2 Parking, Grove Green, **Noted** still awaiting Cllr Peppers' report on contact with Mr Miles.
- 4.3 Minute 2375/5 Bikes on Pilgrims Way. Members welcomed and Noted the report on conflicting signage. Cllr Perry hoped this would be rectified promptly.
- 4.4 Minute 2375/6 Round Wood. Issue will be debated at April 2012 meeting. **Noted.**
- 4.5 Minute 2376/9 Vision and Business plan. Members **noted** this will be returned to the April meeting for consideration.
- 4.6 Minute 2376/10.1 Annual meeting of the Parish. This is being organised by the Clerk and Cllr Pepper. **Noted.** Cllr Smith **requested** for Cobtree Manor to be represented if outside organisations were invited to attend.
- 4.7 Minute 2376/10.2 School crossing dedication is being organised by the Clerk and Cllr Pepper. **Noted.**
- 4.8 Minute 2376/10.3 Energy. Members **noted** the response from Hugh Robertson. Members also **noted** the resurrection of the Parish Council carbon footprint document which will be submitted to the April meeting. Cllr Smith requested that this is reviewed annually through the correct committee.
- 4.9 Minute 2377/11 Locality Boards. Members **noted** the explanation for the recent Locality board meetings.
- 4.10 KIMS development Members **noted** the Clerk's update on development at this site and **agreed** that very little had taken place so far.
- 4.11 Trees, Cobtree Country Park. It was noted the Councils' trees had been planted and a plaque had been installed. Cllr Smith has **agreed** to visit the site and report back at the next meeting.

**5 Report from the PCSO and Police Issues.**

**Noted** and **received** the crime statistics. Clarification was sought on the PCSO issue at Bredhurst as it is believed that PCSO Hawthorn is to cover the area until further notice. PCSO Hawthorn was unaware of this. It was suggested that the funding the Parish Council gives towards the PCSO is withdrawn, however it was agreed to wait until a response has been received. Action the **Parish Office** to write to Kent Police for clarification.

It had been reported that the white lines at Orbit Close had been repainted. PCSO Hawthorn was asked if he had any information on the bad accident that happened along Lidsing Road by The Harrow Public House, as he had been on leave he did not have any information but **agreed** to pursue it. A discussion ensued regarding crash records and speed limits along this stretch of road. It was **agreed** that this should be placed on the next environment agenda. PCSO Hawthorn has **agreed** to set up a speed device along this stretch of road and will confirm dates with the Parish Office.

**5. Draft Minutes of Meetings since Previous Parish Council Meetings.**

**Received** and **noted** the draft minutes of

- 6.1 Environment meeting 6<sup>th</sup> February 2012.
- 6.2 Estates Committee 14<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

6. **Finance**

7.1 **Noted** payments made out of meeting 24.01.12 – 27.02.12. Appendix A.

7.2 **Noted** receipts for the period 17.01.12 – 27.02.12. Appendix B.

7.3 **Noted** account balances as at 27.02.12. Appendix C.

7.4 **Authorised** payment of accounts. Appendix D.

7. **Matters for Decision.**

8.1 Members unanimously agreed to adopt the £10,000 community project scheme draft document, with Cllr Brooks as the proposer and Cllr W Hinder as seconder.

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

**Received** the written report from County Councillor Carter.

Cllr W. Hinder informed members that cars parked on the verges within the parish have moved since she reported them. She also confirmed that she attended the informal opening of the Controlled Crossing at St John's School with Cllr V Davies.

10. **Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard**

Members **noted** the update that work was in progress for quotes for playground equipment, interpretation boards and information inserts. **Action** – the Parish office to confirm the official date for the opening ceremony and it was suggested that 2<sup>nd</sup> June be avoided. Cllr I Davies sought clarification on whether the financial regulations were being followed with regards to the quotes for play equipment. **Action** the parish office.

11. **Policies and Procedures Review.**

11.1 Proposed from the Chair, seconded by Cllr Macklin, Members unanimously agreed to change the title Equal Opportunities statement to Equality Statement to reflect the legislation it relates to.

11.2 Members **received** and **noted** the Replacement procedure for projects not managed by the parish office.

12. **Reports from councillors/office.**

12.1 Controlled Crossing Point. St John's School. Members **received** Cllr V Davies report.

12.2 MBC Core Strategy Post Consultation Conference. Members **agreed** to view Cllr I Davies report on the Environment Agenda for 12<sup>th</sup> March.

12.3 Parish Liaison Meeting 5<sup>th</sup> March – As Cllr Stead was not present it was **agreed** to defer this to the April meeting.

12.4 Friends of Boxley Warren, inaugural meeting 28<sup>th</sup> February – **received and noted** Cllr Smith's report.

13. **Matters for Information.**

13.1 KWT newsletter Feb 2012. .

13.2 Police Country Eye newsletter (e-mail 03/02/12).

13.3 ACRK annual report and other information.

13.4 Parish Council Elections

13.5 Temporary Closure of Tovil Green Household Waste Recycling Centre.

14. **Next Meeting.**

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2012 at Tyland Barn, Sandling at 7:30 p.m.

Meeting closed at 8.22 p.m.

**Item 4 Matters Arising.** *Purpose of item: information*

**4.1 Energy.** MBC has informed the Parish Council there is no policy within the Core Strategy dealing with renewable energy structures in the Countryside. This is something that MBC will have to produce but it is not yet in the timescale to do so. Parish office will monitor and return to agenda when any consultation is received.

**4.2. Concurrent functions update from Cllr Geraldine Brown Chairman Kent Association of Local Councils Maidstone Area Committee**

Dear Colleagues

Peter Coulling, John Perry and I met with Chris Garland, John Wilson and Zena Cooke from MBC following the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting where it was suggested that negotiations with KALC should be resumed. It was a very amicable meeting and we have:

1. secured discretion for each Parish to move its "pot" between allowable service categories;
2. secured discretion for Parishes to set higher or lower service levels, subject to Health & Safety;
3. secured indexation – although the precise index and its frequency of application have yet to be addressed. However, the principle is secured, with Full Council, of course, retaining the power to overrule; and
4. agreed that the list of allowable service categories should be modestly reviewed.

Two key issues remain:

- setting the total amount of funding available from MBC to the Parishes; and
- determining the particular amount that each Parish gets.

**MBC's position:** it wishes each Parish to hold separate discussions with MBC's service managers to "argue its corner" against the competing needs of other Parishes and non-parished areas.

**Review Team position:** we wish to protect "vulnerable" Parishes, admittedly at the expense of "stronger" Parishes, by not having 35 individual negotiations, but rather agreeing a "pot" across all Parishes, then to be distributed using the current formula structure (i.e. base amount, then per elector) which, despite its obvious over-simplification, Parishes have accepted for years.

**Item 5 Crime statistics 21/02/2011 to 20/03/2012. Purpose of item: information**

**Burglary**

13/03/2012, Tyland Lane, Lap top computers stolen.

**Attempted Theft**

09/03/2012, The European school of osteopathy, Mini digger.

**Theft**

12/03/2012, Grange Lane, Farm machine, stolen, left blocking a gateway.

15/03/2012, Harrow way, Weaving, Scrap metal stolen from a skip.

**Theft from a Motor Vehicle**

01/03/2012, Saracen Rise, Theft of vehicle parts from a parked car.

01/03/2012, Olivine Close, Theft of vehicle parts from a parked car.

**Item 6. Round Wood. Purpose of reports: information and for a decision to be taken.**

To consider and vote on a resolution (wording to be agreed at the meeting) which will either result in a village green application going ahead or for continued support of the KCC aim to develop the land adjacent to Wildfell Close to release a development fund for the woodlands with ownership of the woodlands passed over to the Parish Council.

Three possible courses of action for the Parish Council have been identified and once any confidential issues have been dealt with the Chairman plans to invite the press and public back into the meeting so that the 3 options (and their related resolutions) can be discussed and decided upon in public.

**Item 7 Draft Minutes of Meetings since Previous Parish Council Meetings**

**Item 7.1 Minutes of the Environment Committee on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2012 at Weaving Village Hall, Weaving Street, Grove Green commencing at 8.30 p.m.**

Councillors present – Mrs W Hinder (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks Mr Ivor Davies, , Mr K Perry, Mrs A Spain, Mr A Springate, and Mrs M Waller together with the Assistant Clerk.

1. **Declaration of Interest or Lobbying.**  
None declared.
2. **Apologies and absences**  
Mr M Pepper (holiday), Mr B Stead (MBC meeting)

Not adjourned as there were no members of the public present.

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

To consider planning applications. Members are reminded to consider possible section 106 requests or to suggest any conditions.

MA/12/0114 – Erection of a rear conservatory at Burnlea, Grove Green Lane, Weaving.  
*Do not wish to object.*

TA/0017/12 TPO Order No. 8 of 1986: an application for consent to fell one Pine Tree at 69 Franklin Drive, Maidstone.

*Members wish to see the application refused unless the Borough Landscape Officer recommends otherwise. The subject of the application is one of a line of highly-visible pine-trees that pre-date much of the surrounding residential development and has significant landscape value".*

### 4. **Next Meeting.**

Next Environment meeting 9<sup>th</sup> January 2012 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Meeting closed at 8.35 pm.

## **Item 7.2 Minutes of the Environment Committee on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2012 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.30 p.m.**

Councillors present; Mrs W Hinder (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks, Mr I Davies, Mr M Pepper Mr K Perry, Mr A Springate Mr W Stead and Mrs M Waller together with the Assistant Clerk.

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

### 2. **Apologies and absences**

Cllr Mrs A Spain (Holiday)

### 3. **Minutes of the Meetings of 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2012.**

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

The meeting was not adjourned as there were no members of the public present

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

4.1 Minute 2378/5.1 Walderslade Woods road/A2045 the report was **noted**.

4.2 Minute 2378/5.2 inconsiderate parking Walderslade Village/Boxley Road a response from Medway Council had still not been received and neither the Chief Constable of Kent Police replied. Cllr Pepper will escalate the issue by contact Tracy Crouch the MP for Walderslade and to look at drawing up a petition to residents in the local area in support of this issue. **Action** – Cllr Pepper.

4.3 Minute 2380/11.4 Marker at Cossington Lane. **Noted**

4.4 Minute 2378/4 Cowbeck Wood – Members **noted** a map of the area had still not been received for the meeting. Members queried what action should be taken – **Action** Clerk to review.

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

5.1 MA/12/0271 – Retrospective application for the change of use of residential care home to single dwelling at Ruby, Chatham Road, Sandling *Do not wish to object.*

5.2 TA/0020/12 – TPO No 24 of 1987, an application for consent to reduce Conifer by 30% and 2 Conifers by 10% at Ambleside, 4 Greenways, Weaving.  
*Do not wish to object.*

5.3 TA/0025/12 – TPO No 2 of 1995. An application for consent to fell 2 Cypress trees at Forstal Pumping Station, Forstal Road, Aylesford. *Withdrawn*

5.4 TA/0027/12 – TPO No 1 of 1969, an application for consent to Crown Lift T1 (Maple) to a height of 15 feet, crown lift T2 (Hornbeam) to a height of 22 feet and remove lower

branch of T3 (Maple) at 7, Bellgrove Court, Boxley, Chatham. *Make the following comments but defer to the Landscape Officer's view: Members feel the amount of height to be removed is excessive. These trees are a prominent feature and this will have a detrimental impact to the street scene.*

5.5 MA/12/0230 – Introduction of rear dormer and roof light to front elevation. At 7 Abigail Crescent, Walderslade, Chatham, Kent ME5 9DZ. *Do not wish to object.*

5.6 MA/11/2140 – Temporary siting of two storage containers (for a 5 year period) 6m long by 2.5m wide and 2.5m high. Replacement of boundary fence and field gate; and construction of post and rail fencing inside the site at Kent Wildlife Trust, Tyland Barn, Chatham Road. *Wished to see approved.*

## 6. **Planning applications taken to Planning Committee.**

6.1 **Noted** Cllr Ivor Davies report on Brooklyn Yard

## 7. **Planning Applications and appeals decisions.**

7.1 APP/U2235/A/11/2165169/NWF – MA/10/1627 Land of Beechen Bank, Boxley Road – Dismissed by Planning Inspectorate on 22 February, 2012. **Noted.**

7.2 Application decisions - **Received** and **noted.**

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

8.1 Members **received** and **noted** the Chairman's report. Cllr Pepper wished to congratulate the Chairman of the group and commend him on his hard work and vision for the future. Cllr Springate gave an account of the WWG task day, held on the 11th March in Round Wood. Eight members turned out, divided into two groups, one using the Grubber cut back the undergrowth around the Picnic bench area, whilst the second group continued with the coppicing and clearing of the created Hazel glade.

8.2 Public Rights of Way – Members **noted** the report and **agreed** that a request should be made for the footpath along Round Wood Valley to be registered as a PRoW. Action - office.

## 9. **Highways and Byways**

9.1 Old Chatham Road – the request for a deep clean of the area by Cllr Harwood was **noted** by members.

9.2 Double Yellow Lines, Cuckoo Wood Avenue - **noted** that funds have been approved and legal/consultation work will start in March.

9.3 Members' **noted** an update for completed works highlighted at February's meeting.

9.4 Cars parked on Boxley Road opp Beechen Bank Road – **Noted.** **Action** – office will advise the resident on the situation and what action can be taken.

9.5 Speed Reduction/Crash Statistics, Lidsing Road. Members **agreed** more adequate signage to be installed along this stretch of road, highlighting where the road bends and narrows in places. Action – office to contact Highways.

## 10. **Strategy for dealing with highway issues not receiving KHS funding.**

This was **received** and **agreed** by members with amendments.

## 11. **MBC Core Strategy Post Consultation Conference.**

**Received** and **noted.**

## 12. **Policies and procedures review**

12.1 Terms of Reference – This policy was **received** and **amended.**

12.2 Street Maintenance 'Policy' for budget expenditure was **received** and **amended.**

13. **Empty Properties** – Members **noted** MBC's policy on empty houses. After some discussion it was **agreed** that Cllr Pepper should attend the next MBC full council meeting on 25/4/2012 to ask the leader of the Council, Chris Garland if MBC is supporting the national campaign for empty houses.

## 14. **Matters for information.**

**Received** and **Noted.**

**15. Next Meeting.**

Next environment meetings 2<sup>nd</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> April 2012 (full) at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.

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

**Noted** no information had been received.

Meeting closed 9.00 pm.

**Item 7.3 Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2012 commencing at 7.30 p.m.**

Councillors present – Mr. M Pepper (Chairman), Mrs. P. Brooks, Mr. I Davies, Mr. V Davies and Mr. G Smith together with the Clerk.

**1. Apologies and non-attendance.**

Mrs. W Hinder (MBC commitment).

**2. Declaration of Interest or Lobbying.**

Cllr Vic Davies reminded members that he was a Trustee at Vinters Valley Nature Reserve (item 8.1.). Cllr Ivor Davies reminded members that he was Secretary to the Walderslade Woods Group (item 8.1).

**3. Minutes of the meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> January 2012.**

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

**4. Matters Arising.**

4.1 Minute 2355/5.1 Accounting software. It was **agreed** that individual members would approach the office for a briefing.

4.2 Minute 2355/5.2 Bad Debt. The report was **received** and **noted**. It was **agreed** that as long as the payments continue then the next report to the Committee would be in 6 months. If the debtor defaults then the committee is to be notified. **Action** – September agenda.

The meeting was not adjourned as no members of the public were present.

**5. Financial report.**

5.1 Income/Expenditure report of 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012 was **received**. A number of issues were discussed and it was **agreed** to vire £386 from the contingency fund to balance the overspend on subscriptions. Members asked that a review of all subscriptions be undertaken midway through the next financial year. **Action** – September agenda. A mistake in the inputting in the doubtful debt was noted and will be amended.

The Clerk was asked to look at code 38 to see if a better way of managing the way the PAYE was payment was allocated could be identified. **Action** – Clerk.

5.2 Reconciliation of accounts report of 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012. The reconciliation of accounts was **received and the individual bank accounts and investments were signed off as being correct**. The £31.67 discrepancy was **noted** and it was **agreed** that the Clerk would resolve this and notify members by e-mail. **Action** – Clerk.

5.3 Clydesdale Bank 3 month investment bond. Members **received** the report.

**6. Independent Internal Audit Report.**

Members **received** the report and **noted** the positive statements and that no recommendation for additional work was made.

An update on the situation regarding the End of Year Audit and the appointment of 4 firms was **received**.

**7. Outstanding Time off in Lieu.**

Not available for the meeting so **agreed** an update will be provided by e-mail to member of the committee.

**8. Policy and procedures reviews and adoption.**

8.1 Minute 2371/3 Annual grants to groups. Members **received** the report making positive remarks about the work of Vinters Valley Nature Reserve and Walderslade Woods Group. After discussion it was **agreed** that:

- The current procedures for payment of the grants to VVNR and WWG would continue. Members **noted** that the Environment Committee received regular reports from WWG and Cllr Vic Davies was asked to supply regular reports on VVNR. **Action** – Cllr Vic Davies and Cllr Springate. Members asked that budgets and End of Year Accounts were also supplied.
- The Museum of Kent Life and Kent Wildlife Trust would now be asked to make a grant application for funding.

Cllr Smith raised an issue about the need to have an emergency contingency fund for VVNR or WWG. After discussion members **agreed** that the current Contingency budget and procedures for its allocation was sufficient for any emergency.

8.2 Terms of Reference. **Agreed**, with some minor grammatical changes, as still fit for purpose.

## 9. **Walderslade Woods Group.**

9.1 Members **received** the request from the group to release the remaining unallocated budget. **Agreed** (1 abstention), the Chairman proposing seconded by Cllr Brooks, that the remaining budget be released. The committee **agreed** that in the future the group would have control of its budgeted grant but would still be required to produce a budget for the financial year.

9.2 **Received** and **welcomed** the WWG Chairman's report.

9.3 WWG 2012/13 budget **received** and **welcomed**.

## 10. **Grant Request.**

The Heart of Kent Hospice. **Agreed** proposed by the Chairman that a £100 donation be made. Payment was made under Section 137 of the Local Government Act.

## 11. **Matters for Information.**

11.1 Members were notified of the issue regarding the loss of the business rate rebate for the hall which was being investigated by the office and a report would be submitted to the Estates Committee.

11.2 Members were notified of the The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence)(Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012. After brief discussion members **agreed** that the Clerk would produce a briefing note for the April PC meeting. It was felt that the Parish Council should consider applying for any power that may benefit it or the parish although it may never actually choose to use that power.

## 12. **Date of Next Meeting.**

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2012 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Meeting closed at 9.12 pm.

**Item 9.2 Land policy purchase scheme.** *Purpose of item: Information and guidance required.*

Members may be aware of the decision by some parishes to purchase land for protection reasons. The Council has a land and building purchase policy (next due for review in September) but this Council is reactive rather than proactive and to change this stance it will need approval by Parish Council. Members' views are sought on whether they wish the Council to become proactive or continue to be reactive. Further investigation may be required to understand the cost implications of a proactive policy i.e. employing a land agent.

**Item 10. Power of competence.** *Purpose of item: information. Clerks comment. This information was received the day of the Finance Committee and was briefly discussed by that meeting and members asked for a briefing and if necessary a resolution to be placed on the agenda. Since then clarification has been received on some wording and a fuller reading of the Order has taken place. Some guidance from members on whether they would wish to pursue this power is requested so that training can be booked.*

The Localism Act 2012 created the possibility of a Parish Council's having a power of competence. In brief this would allow a Parish Council to provide any service it wished, currently a Parish Council can only undertake expenditure if it has been given the power to do so by legislation. Some years ago the Power of Well Being was introduced but the take up of this power by Parish Councils was poor and even if taken up it was rarely (if ever) used. There were likely to be many reasons for this but it was not a popular power as it was primarily aimed at large local authorities. The recent change that may actually make this power more popular is The Localism Act.

The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence)(Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 has now been passed and this details the conditions for a Council to apply for the power. A Parish Council has to pass a resolution, which must be reaffirmed at each subsequent relevant annual meeting. At the time of the resolution the Council must:

- Have two-thirds (or greater than that number) declared elected –contested or uncontested.
- A qualified Clerk. There is a list and my qualification is recognised.
- Relevant training on the exercise of this general power. No one yet has this training however KALC will offer this.

**Item 12 Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard.** *Purpose of item: Information*

Seat – ordered.

Interpretation boards (3) – actual boards ordered. Artwork has to be arranged and ordered.

Play equipment – will be ordered after there is an attempt to get a 3<sup>rd</sup> quote for the 3 pieces that residents choose.

Refurbishment work – separate item on this agenda to agree company.

Opening – this is being organised at the moment and members will be kept updated on this.

Lottery banners and stickers have been received.

Tree pruning – delayed until winter 2012/13.

Regular grass maintenance – being identified etc. and will be put in place.

**Item 12 Policies and Procedures Review.** *Purpose of item: review and if required amend the policies/procedures.*

**12.1 Vision and Business plan.** Minute 2376/9.2. The Council decided to place the plan on the website and to invite resident's comments and also allow Councillors to further consider the plans. No residents comments were received however Cllr Ivor Davies suggested some improvements. The remarks which did not change any of the principles already seen by members have been incorporated.

If any members wishes a duplicate copy of the plan this can be applied

**12.2 Standing Orders, Terms of Reference and Financial Regulations**

Standing Orders. No request to amend Standing Orders has been received.

Currently 2 standing orders concerning Code of Conduct (1(v) and 1(w)), due to the abolition of the Standards Board for England, are out of date. However it is anticipated that the work being undertaken by MBC and the requirements of the Localism Act will mean that a replacement Code of Conduct will be in place in the near future it is therefore recommended that there be no change to 1(v) and 1(w).

It is expected that KALC will send advice regarding amending the Standing Orders to take into account the Power of Competence and when this arrives it will be placed on a PC agenda for consideration.

The Clerk's considers that the current Standing Orders are fit for purpose in their current format. A copy of Standing Orders can be supplied to any councillor on request.

Terms of Reference. No committee asked for its Terms of Reference to be amended.

Financial Regulations. The Finance Committee has made a recommendation for an addition to ensure that the regulations acknowledge that the Parish Councillor and Chairman's Allowances are paid by Standing Order. It is suggested that rather than create a specific section that clarification is included in item 11 Payment of salaries so that it now reads

Payment of salaries and Parish Councillor Allowances\*.

11.1 The Council shall pay all salaries and Councillor Allowances in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance operating at the time. Salaries and Parish Councillor Allowances shall be as approved by a resolution of the council.

11.2 Payment will be made by cheque before the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month

11.3 Parish Councillor Allowances can be paid by Standing Order as approved by a resolution of the Council.

\*(shown as a footnote in the Financial Regulations) Includes the Chairman's Allowance

A copy of Financial Regulations can be supplied to any councillor on request.

#### **Item 14 Reports from councillors/office.** *Purpose of item: information.*

**13.1 Cobtree Park** – Report from Cllr Smith. The Cobtree Trust was not successful in the bid for Lottery Funds, this is disappointing because it will reduce expenditure on the Park. Eva said improvements are being carried out. Low level coppicing to create glades to encourage grassland had been carried out and a new fence around pond, because the banks of the pond are worn down. Repairs and some renewal of fencing between Park and Golf Course have been made. Trees for planting had not arrived; Eva said that all the trees had been planted, and that they were good specimens but there was NO Plaque presented.\*

Eva also said, Maidstone Borough Council have had important meetings with the Trust, and that considerable monies to be spent on making the Park Public Friendly. This is good news. My offer of some possible project may be useful later. We can wait now and see what happens.

\*Clerks comment – clarification is being sort regarding this.

**14.2 Report back on MBC KALC Meeting** held on the evening of the 21st March 2012 from Cllr Pepper.

I attended the above meeting on behalf of Boxley PC, Bill was also there as the Vice Chair of the Branch.

A raft of matters were discussed and I have listed those which I thought would be of interest for us.

- There was concern over the lack of 'voting' rights of the Parishes at some fora where the County and MBC share chairmanship (JTB for example) and it was suggested that members should write to their KCC Member expressing concern that this flies in the face of Localism where the Parishes have considerable powers to represent their communities.

- We spent over an hour on the details of a policy for 'poly tunnels'. Herefordshire have an agreed policy with the NFU but the members thought that Kent was substantially different from Herefordshire and wanted different tolerances. The early exchange with the NFU here in Kent on the Kent model has not gone well so it will be revisited. I personally think we should adopt the Herefordshire model and then seek conditions around the 10 or so differences between us on a local basis with the farming community on each planning application.

- The Branch has decided on creating Standing Orders to ensure it runs the business appropriately. A first draft is out and will be amended in the light of some comment before being presented to County for checking and then embedding into Maidstone's (KALC) processes.
- Speedwatch is to be refreshed and at the next Police Forum all Parish lead players on this important area will be invited along. I made the point as did Bill that this was a community lead programme and community volunteers played a major part and they should come along too.
- Kent Youth Services seems to be an issue with few resources. KCC have offered to train Parish Councillors to 'plug' the gap. An offer that most wanted to take up although it was doubted if KCC understood the implications of what they had offered let alone the CRB issues that would need to be met. I do think we should have a lead Councillor on youth issues. The sort of role played by Kaz at Grove Green in the past.
- We had reports back on matters at KALC Executive, Local Partnership forum, Metal theft forum, the JTB and the Standards forum. Interesting stuff with Bill reminding us that Parish Councillors MUST declare their register of interests in pain of prosecution for failing to do so. He also reminded members to ensure that all employees of the Parish Council should have an employment contract. There is a model on the KALC Web site. I can assure our members we are compliant.
- Concurrent Functions was the closing business where an update was given and the mandate to continue to progress the negotiations with the KALC review team was passed again by the members. We were also told that the MBC Overview and Scrutiny had declined to sign off the Parish Services Scheme as presented until the Cabinet Member had reported the ongoing costs of the administering by MBC Officers. A separate briefing on the outstanding matters and what had been agreed is in the PC Pack.

#### **14.4 Report from Cllr Smith. Lord Lieutenants' Civic Service 06.03.12.**

I attended the service at Rochester Cathedral. It was a beautiful and up lifting service celebrating services in the past and services in the future. The Cathedral was packed solid and I had a number of conversations with people which enabled me to promote Boxley Parish Council.