

BOXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

www.boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk



Clerk – Mrs Pauline Bowdery
Assistant Clerk – Mrs Melanie Fooks
Tel – 01634 861237

Beechen Hall
Wildfell Close
Walderslade
Chatham

E-mail – Clerk@boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk

Kent ME5 9RU

To Parish Councillors, members of the public and press.

Date 27 August 2013

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 ME14 3DA** on **Monday 2 September 2013**, commencing at 7.30pm when it is proposed to transact the following business:

- | | Time guide |
|---|------------|
| 1. Apologies and absences. | (7.30) |
| To receive and accept apologies for absence. | |
| 2. Declaration of Interests or Lobbying. | (7.31) |
| Members are required to declare any interests, dispensations or lobbying on items on this agenda. (<i>Members are reminded that changes to the Register of Interests should be notified to the Clerk.</i>) | |
| 3. Co-option to Parish Councillor Vacancy (South Ward). | (7.33) |
| To consider the application(s) for the position of Parish Councillor, see attached report (page 3) and confidential enclosure. | |
| 4. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 1 July 2013. | (8.00) |
| To consider the minutes of the meeting and if in order to sign as a true record (pages 3 - 5). | |
| 5. Matters Arising From the Minutes. | (8.02) |
| 5.1 Minute 2551/9 Community Chest: The scheme is being publicised with a closing date of 22 October 2013. | |
| 6. Report from the PCSO and Police Issues. | (8.05) |
| Crime statistics and report (page 6). | |
| To adjourn to enable members of the public to address the meeting. (8.15) | |
| 7. Draft Minutes of Recent Committee Meetings. | (8.25) |
| For the parish council to receive the minutes. Members are allowed to ask questions of the Committee Chairmen but may not initiate a discussion. | |
| 7.1 Environment Committee meeting 8 July 2013 (pages 6 - 9). | |
| 7.2 F&GP Committee meeting 9 July 2013 (pages 9 - 10). | |
| 7.3 Environment Committee meeting 1 August 2013 (pages 10 - 12) | |
| 7.4 Estates Committee meeting of 13 August 2013 (pages 12 - 15). | |
| 8. Finance. | (8.31) |
| 8.1 To note payments made out of meeting 02.07.13 – 27.08.13 (pages 20 - 23). | |
| 8.2 To note receipts for the period 25.06.13 – 27.08.13 (pages 24- 25). | |
| 8.3 Account balances as at 27.08.13 (page 26). | |
| 8.4 To authorise payments of accounts (list to be supplied at meeting). | |
| 8.5 Members are reminded that they should not sign blank cheques or authorisation letters, the need to check invoices against cheques when signing and that cheque stubs need to be initialled by both signatories. Applications for dispensation must be submitted to the Clerk. | |
| 8.6 A volunteer for the parish councillor internal audit is sought. | |

9. **Land at Sandy Lane, Boxley.** (8.40)
 The following resolution will be placed before members (see report page 15):
"That a contract be entered into to sell the area of land to be disposed of at the agreed fixed price to the agreed party".
 If agreed, the contract will then be signed by the Chairman and Clerk.
 A verbal update on other matters will be supplied at the meeting. Should any confidential information be received which the parish council needs to discuss, the Chairman will move to exclude the public and press for the duration of the item.
10. **Policies and Procedures Review.** (8.55)
 10.1 Adopted Code of Conduct – Complaints; see report (page 15 - 16).
 10.2 Land & Building Purchase Policy; see report (pages 16 - 17).
 10.3 Internal Complaints; see report (page 17 – 18).
11. **Matters for Decision.** (9.03)
 To consider attendance at meetings etc; see report (page 19).
12. **Reports from Borough and County Councillors.** (9.08)
 To allow councillors to report and discuss matters affecting the parish.
13. **Reports from councillors/office.** (9.15)
 Representatives who have attended any meeting on behalf of the parish council are invited to give a brief summary.
 13.1 Cobtree Country Park, report from Cllr Smith (see page 19).
14. **Matters for Information.** (9.25)
 To receive a summary of information received (page 19).
15. **Next Meeting.** (9.30)
 Monday 7 October 2013 at St John's School, Grove Green. Councillor requests for agenda items are to be submitted no later than 30 September 2013.

Pauline Bowdery
 Clerk to the Council.

Items to be returned to a future agenda: Quality Parish Council application.
 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.

**Supporting agenda papers for the Meeting of the Parish Council
Monday 2 September 2013.
The Chairman will assume that these have been read prior to the meeting.**

Item 3. Co-option to Parish Councillor Vacancy (South Ward).*Purpose of item: decision.*

Deadline for submission of applications was 25 August 2013 and applications are provided to members under confidential cover.

Members are reminded of the procedure that the Parish Council has previously agreed/used when dealing with co-option to vacancies (one or more candidates).

- A candidate will be asked to submit a letter or CV which will be supplied to members under a confidential cover.
- Candidates will be invited to the meeting and allowed up to 3 minutes each to address the meeting.
- No candidate will be present whilst another candidate speaks.
- Councillors will be able to ask questions of each candidate.
- The Council shall decide and vote on the appointment in the absence of the candidates.
- The meeting and decision are taken in an open and public meeting.
- A successful candidate will be asked to sign a Declaration of Office and then join the meeting.

Anyone who lives within 3 miles of the parish boundary or who works within the boundary can apply for the vacancy. The parish council has however stated that it considers that the South Ward is currently under-represented by local residents and that it would particularly welcome applications from candidates who live in this area.

Clerk note. Legislation requires a clear majority for the successful candidate so if more than one candidate stands the voting process can become a little drawn out; the Clerk will advise on the voting procedure at the meeting. Legislation requires a position to be filled as soon as reasonably possible.

Item 4. Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held at Weaving Village Hall, Weaving Street on Monday 1 July 2013, commencing at 7.35 pm.

Councillors present: Mr Ivor Davies (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks, Mr Vic Davies, Mr P Dengate, Mr Bob Hinder, Mrs Wendy Hinder, Mr T Harwood, Mrs K Macklin (arrived with apologies at item 3), Mrs A Spain, Mr A Springate, Mr P Sullivan, and Mrs M Waller together with the Clerk and 11 members of the public/press.

1. Apologies and absences.

Cllr Holmes (work) and Cllr Smith (convalescing). Borough Councillor Derek Butler and County Councillor Paul Carter (prior engagement).

2. Declaration of Interests or Lobbying.

Cllr Spain declared a pecuniary interest in item 10. Cllr Vic Davies and Cllr Sullivan notified members that they had been lobbied on an item being raised in the public session.

3. Co-option to Parish Councillor Vacancy (South Ward).

The decision to postpone the appointment to the casual vacancy was **ratified** to allow a further period of publicity. Members noted that no application from the southern half of the parish had been received and reiterated their concerns about under-representation on the council by South Ward residents. Discussion then took place on ways to encourage residents to apply such as a letter drop in the area, dispensing with the requirement for formal CVs and contacting local community groups. **Action: Clerk.**

4. **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 3 June 2013.**

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

5. **Matters Arising From the Minutes.**

Minute 2541/10 Cuckoo Wood: Members **received** a report on the residents' meeting. Cllr Harwood stressed the advantage to the residents were the parish council to lead on any future funding applications. This was noted.

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

Crime statistics were not available at the meeting and arrangements would be made to pass them on to councillors. **Action: Clerk**

The meeting was adjourned at 7.45 pm to allow members of the public to speak.

A number of local residents commented on the erection of a large marquee at the Fox and Goose PH and subsequent noise disturbance during its use. Concern was also raised about possible problems regarding on-street car parking as there was insufficient parking at the pub. MBC Planning had declined to undertake enforcement action regarding erection of the marquee and had invited the owner to submit a retrospective planning application. Members asked the Clerk to investigate the issue and residents were invited to contact the parish office so that written advice and updates on the situation could be sent to them. Advice was also given on the need for them to maintain logs of when disturbances occurred and to report each occasion to MBC Environmental Health and the Police. Residents were thanked for attending and informing the parish council of the problem. **Action: Clerk.**

The meeting reconvened at 8.05pm.

7 **Draft Minutes of Recent Committee Meetings.**

Noted and Received:

- 7.1 Environment Committee meeting 3 June 2013.
- 7.2 Environment Committee meeting 10 June 2013; with some minor adjustments being requested.
- 7.3 Estates Committee meeting 11 June 2013; with an adjustment for clarity purposes on item 4.6.

8 **Finance.**

- 8.1 **Noted** payments made out of meeting 04.06.13 – 24.06.13. A spelling mistake on voucher 139 was pointed out. The new method of presenting the information was considered and members suggested a change to the way sub-totals were presented.
- 8.2 **Noted** receipts for the period 29.05.13 - 24.06.13.
- 8.3 **Noted** account balances as at 24.06.13.
- 8.4 No payments of accounts were presented.

9 **Community Chest.**

Discussion took place on the maximum amount that could be awarded and the method of deciding on an award. It was **agreed** that:

- Maximum award would be £1,000.
- There would be a 3 month deadline for applications with a further round for grant applications if funds were left.

The Parish Council will form a panel of up to 5 people to:

- evaluate each application
- Agree the money allocated to the project and approve all payments
- Review the progress against the project plan by meeting the project team and if necessary visiting the project periodically
- Publicise the project
- Provide advice and support when requested or required to safeguard the project and monies.

10 **Land at Sandy Lane, Boxley.**

Cllr Spain left for the duration of the item.

Cllr Bob Hinder notified members that:

- Gallagher's would now be undertaking the trench and pipe installation work.
- The water pressure had been tested and it was adequate for the needs of the site.
- As a thank you the St Paul's Scouts Unit car park would be repaired.
- The entrance and gates were being sorted out.

He went on to thank the Clerk for the time and effort she was putting in to progressing this project. This was unanimously agreed.

The Clerk notified members that in view of the deadline set by the Royal Engineers there had been a need to authorise some large payments out of meeting and an explanation was included in the F&GP Committee agenda.

11 **Policies and Procedures Review.**

Press Policy: agreed with a minor change.

12 **Matters for Decision.**

12.1 MBC Parish Funding Agreement: **agreed** that, until advised to do so by the Maidstone Committee of KALC, the parish council would not sign the agreement because it did not fully reflect what had been agreed.

12.2 Kent's Police & Crime Commissioner meeting. The Chairman volunteered to attend the North Kent and Medway event on Tuesday 16th July at the Holiday Inn, Rochester. **Action: Chairman and office.**

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

Cllr Wendy Hinder reported that the grounds maintenance work on the Round Wood roundabout had not been completed and asked that the office chase MBC. A complaint had been made about dangerous parking in Cossington Lane and Brownlow Copse when the Guides' hut was in use; the parish office was asked to notify the organisation. **Action: office.**

MBC would be taking on some of the KCC grounds maintenance work and she would keep the parish council updated as this progressed.

14 **Reports from councillors/office.**

14.1 Cllr Bob Hinder's report on the Maidstone KALC Annual Meeting was **received**.

14.2 Cllr Macklin gave a report on her attendance at the St John's School Fete and Cllr Dengate's and her attendance at the Tunbury School Fair. The latter had generated a volunteer for Speedwatch and interest in activities at Beechen Hall. She asked that the office be thanked for the display which had been decorated to support the Mad Hatters Tea party theme at Tunbury.

15 **Matters for Information.**

Noted.

15.1 Wildfell Close development. The Chairman notified members that the office had been warned that a planning application was on its way.

15.2 Kent Scouts. Thank you letter for the grant.

15.3 Allotments & Leisure Gardener issue 2/2013.

15.4 Filming Council Meetings. New national rules are now in force, however these only apply to County and District Councils that operate 'cabinets' or 'executive committees' systems.

15.5 Maidstone Joint Transportation Board meeting 3 July 2013 **cancelled**.

15.6 The Kent police & Crime Commissioner's Newsletter for June now available.

16 **Next Meeting.**

Monday 2 September 2013 at the European School of Osteopathy, Boxley.

Meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.

Item 6. Crime figures for Boxley 21/06/2013 to 20/08/2013. *Purpose of report; information.*

Theft.

12/08/2013, Boxley Road, Chatham, Private Post Box stolen.

Theft from a motor vehicle.

03/07/2013, The Hedgerow, Weavering, Items stolen from a car.

29/07/2013, Grey Wethers, Sandling, Vehicle left insecure.

15/08/2013, Micawber Drive, Chatham, Fog lamps stolen.

17/08/2013, Chatham Road, Sandling, Vehicle left insecure.

Theft of a motor vehicle

09/08/2013, West Field Sole Road, Boxley, Keys left in the vehicle.

Burglary

02/07/2013, Samphire Close, Weavering, Items stolen from a garage, believed to be by workmen, working at the property.

12/07/2013, Shearers Close, Weavering, Bike stolen from a garage, the garage door was left up.

24/07/2013, Weavering Street, Weavering. Laptops and games console stolen.

29/07/2013, Tollgate Way, Sandling, Items stolen from the garage.

03/08/2013, Grey Wethers, Sandling, Items stolen from the garage.

14/08/2013, West Field Sole Road, Boxley, Container broken into.

Attempt Burglary.

08/08/2013, Vinters Park Crematorium, Attempted shed break.

Criminal damage

17/07/2013, Badger Road, Window smashed.

18/07/2013, West Field Sole Road, Damage to stables.

18/08/2013, Pilgrims View, Sandling, Damage to a gate and wheelie bin.

Report.

I have been liaising with victims of crime, vulnerable residents and undertaking general patrolling and dealing with issues such as nuisance parking and youths. I am gathering further information on the misuse of quad bikes. The mobile Police surgery was present in Boxley on Sunday 18 August and a list of dates will be provided to the parish office for publication on the website etc. Posters will also be provided for display in the n

Item 7. Draft Minutes of Recent Committee Meetings. *Purpose of report; information.*

Item 7.1 Minutes of the Environment Committee on Monday 8 July 2013 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 P Dengate, Mr B Hinder, Mr A Springate and Mrs M Waller together with the Clerk and Assistant Clerk and a representative for Vinters Valley Nature Reserve.

1. **Apologies and absences**

Cllr Holmes (work) and Cllr Spain (WI meeting).

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

Cllr Dengate declared that he was pre-determined on planning application MC/13/1549. All Councillors' present had been lobbied on MC/13/1549. Cllrs Brooks, Davies, Dengate and Bob Hinder as members of the estates committee declared an interest in planning application MA/13/1020.

3. **Development at Newnham Park.**

A presentation on the proposed development was received from David and Alex Hicken of DHA. They had covered points that had been highlighted by the Parish Council as potential issues and these included:

- Increase in traffic
- Parking/park & ride
- Water run-off and stream
- Sustainability/Renewable energy

Arrangements will be made for a site visit. **Action Office.**

The meeting adjourned at 8.30pm to allow DHA to leave.

The meeting reconvened at 8.35pm and the Chair requested that Items 8 and 9 were brought forward and taken at this point.

4. **Minutes of the Meeting of 10 June 2013.**

The minutes were **agreed** and **signed** as a correct record. However 3 June were not available for signing and will be taken to the next environment meeting.

5. **Matters Arising From Minutes.**

- 5.1 Minute 2544/4.1 Maidstone Studios; Members **noted** the clerks report.
- 5.2 Minute 2544/4.2 Quad bike barriers; **Noted** the Clerk's report.
- 5.3 Minute 2544/12 Community Infrastructure Levy; Cllr Wendy Hinder reported that she is still awaiting a response from KALC and will submit a further request if she does not hear anything. **Action Cllr Wendy Hinder.**
- 5.4 Minute 2545/7.1 Neighbourhood Area consultation: deadline for responses 23 July 2013. **Noted.**
- 5.5 Minute 2546/12.2 Changes to Permitted Development Legislation. This has been deferred to the next environment meeting as the information was not available in time for the meeting.

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

6. **Planning Applications and Appeals for Consideration.**

6.1 MA/13/0827 erection of a two storey and single storey rear extension insertion of side and rear dormer windows and installation of a swimming pool (amendment to previous refused MA/12/2149).

In view of the planning officers previous decision and the fact that there has been no real significant changes members wished to see the application refused but not reported to the planning committee.

6.2 MA/13/0931 – An application to vary conditions 2, 3, 8, 14, 16 to allow a further 24 month period for submission and approval of details and to vary condition 5 to allow a further 9 month period for the submission and approval of details of MA10/2185 at White Cottage, Grange Lane, Sandling ME14 3DA.

Do not wish to object.

6.3 MA/13/1088 loft conversion at Glen Isla, Weaving Street ME14 5JR.

Do not wish to object.

6.4 TA/0067/13 application for consent to crown lift to approximately 6m above ground of 4 sweet chestnut and reduce crown by approximately 4-5m of 3 ash trees at 2 Goldstone Walk, Walderslade ME5 9QB.

Defer to the Landscape Officers view.

6.5 TA/0083/13 application for consent to remove 6 Hornbeam trees at 6 The Covert, Walderslade ME5 9JJ.

Defer to the Landscape Officers view.

6.6 MA/13/1086 – proposed single storey rear extension at 29 Shepherds Gate Drive, Weaving, Maidstone Kent ME14 5UU.

Do not wish to object.

6.7 MA/13/1020 – installation of air extraction unit at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Boxley, Kent, ME5 9RU.

Wished to see approved.

6.8 TA/0091/13 Application for consent to crown reduce 1 Oak tree to leave canopy diameter of 6m at its broadest point; to thin its crown by 10% and to remove deadwood and epicormic growth at 12 Iris Close, Walderslade.

Defer to the Landscape Officers view.

6.9 MC/13/1549 Change of use from winter management depot for storage of salt and parking of seven gritters to an asbestos waste transfer station (resubmission of MC/12/3046) at Highways Depot, North Dane Way, Lordswood, Chatham, Kent ME5 8YE.

Wished to strongly object for the same reasons submitted in an earlier response on 13 February, 2013.

7. **Planning Applications and Appeals Decisions**

None submitted.

8. **Neighbourhood Development Plans.**

8.1 Consultation responses: This item was deferred to the next meeting in order for Clerk to produce a summary. **Action office.**

9. **Maidstone Borough Local Plan.**

9.1 Local Green Spaces and historic sites - **Received** the clerk's report concerning a letter from Cllr Fran Wilson asking for information on possible local green spaces and historic sites within the parish. Members **agreed** that the clerk compose a response.

9.2 Land South of Forstal Road - **Received** a report for the submission of land for economic development. It was **agreed** for the Clerk to lobby/brief the Cobtree Park Estate Committee on the status of the land and possible flooding issues. **Action Office.**

10. **Volunteer Groups.**

The Status Report for WWG July 2013 was **received** and **noted**.

The Status Report for FoBW July 2013 was **received** and **noted**.

11. **Highways and Byways.**

11.1 Crash Map. Members **noted** the clerk's report.

11.2 Junction improvements at Lordswood Lane Members noted KCCH&T's response and requested further clarification on the terminology used for refusal and a reason why the request had failed. **Action Office.**

12. **Policy and procedures review.**

12.1 Annual Competency review – Members **agreed** for this to be deferred until the next meeting,

13. **Matters for information.**

13.1 Plot 4 Eclipse Site. **Noted.**

14. **Next Meeting.**

Members agreed not to have a meeting in August unless the need arises. Next full environment meeting 9 September 2013 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.

As no members of the public and press were present there was no resolution to exclude them however it was recognised that a report to be given in the next item was confidential due to personal details and data.

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

There were none.

Meeting closed at 9.25 pm.

Item 7.2 Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade on Tuesday 9 July 2013 commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Councillors present – Mr Ivor Davies (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks, Mr P Dengate, Mr Bob Hinder, Mrs Wendy Hinder, Mrs K Macklin and Mr G Smith together with the Clerk.

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

Mr Vic Davies (family commitment).

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

There were none.

3. **Minutes of the meetings of 21 May and 3 June 2013.**

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

4. **Matters Arising.**

4.1 Minute 2537/7 Earmarked Reserves amendment: **agreed** the Walderslade Woods Group's earmarked reserve was increased to £4,288.

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

5. **Financial report.**

5.1 Reconciliation of accounts report for 1 July 2013: **received** and **signed off**.

5.2 Income/Expenditure report as at 1 July 2013: **received** with members seeking clarification and explanations on various codes.

5.3 Investment Bonds: relevant information was contained in the report at item 5.1 and no other issues were identified.

5.4 Parish Services Scheme: **noted** amendment to the MBC grant. Members expressed concern that MBC was using out of date figures and noted that the KALC Maidstone Area Committee had raised this issue with MBC.

6. **BACS payment policy and procedure**

The Clerk's report was **received**. It was **agreed** that the system would be expanded to include payments to:

- Kent County Council.
- Maidstone Borough Council.
- Organisations that the parish council has close links with e.g. Vinters Valley Nature Reserve.
- Businesses that the parish council has accounts with e.g. Greenham Safety and Workplace Supplies.

Lists of approved recipients are to be included in the Accounts for Authorisation folders. It was confirmed that the Independent Internal Auditor was happy with the procedures operated by the parish council to pay BACS.

7. **Independent Internal Auditor Report.**

Report received. The comment concerning the fidelity cover was **noted** and the Clerk then explained that the IIA had been satisfied that due to the amount of expenditure being undertaken in the first couple of months this was not an issue. This was accepted.

8. **Policy and procedures reviews.**

8.1 Risk Assessment: **agreed** with some minor changes. The Chairman thanked Cllr Dengate for the sterling work that he was undertaking with the office to

ensure that the computer system and security level were correct for the parish council's needs.

8.2 Audit Controls Statement: **agreed.**

9 **SCRIBE reports.**

The advantages and disadvantages were discussed. It was **agreed** that, as certain documents were clearer when exported into Excel, the office should continue trialling the change and would judge which reports benefitted and the time taken to do the work. Review in one year. Cllr Dengate asked for a copy of an exported document in Excel.

10 **Personnel matters.**

10.1 TOIL and leave report **received.**

10.2 Office assistant post. **Received** and discussed a report on the cost and benefit of making the position permanent and increasing the hours. The Chairman proposed, seconded by Cllr Dengate that a permanent 15 hour contract be offered to the office assistant. **Agreed** (1 abstention). **Action – Clerk and Chairman.**

11 **Dove Hill Allotments Expenditure.**

A report on expenditure undertaken was **received.** It was recognised that agreement at formal meetings had not been possible because of the need to progress the project and **noted** that all but minor items had been cleared in advance with members of the Working Party. The Clerk was asked to produce a spreadsheet for members to consider whether the project would come in on budget. **Action – Clerk.**

12 **Grant Requests.**

None received.

13 **Matters for Information.**

13.1 Local Audit and Accountability Bill.

13.2 Electronic Payments and Electronic Agendas update.

14 **Date of Next Meeting.**

Tuesday 10 September 2013 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Meeting closed at 8.46 pm.

Item 7.3 Minutes of the Environment Committee on Thursday 1 August 2013 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 P Dengate, Mr B Hinder, Mr A Springate and Mrs M Waller together with the Clerk and two representatives from Kitewood.

11. **Apologies and absences**

Cllr Holmes (work) and Cllr Spain (holiday).

12. **Declaration of Interest or Lobbying.**

There were none.

13. **Minutes of the Meeting of 3 June and 8 July 2013.**

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

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

4. **Land of Impton Lane.**

The Chairman invited the representative of Kitewood to address members on the ideas that they had for developing their land at the West junction of Impton Lane

and Walderslade Woods Road.

It was explained that the original idea of a Scout Hall or Community Home were now not considered feasible and so Kitewood was investigating the possibility of a smaller development, perhaps age restricted, of bungalows. Two plans were shown to members and general discussion took place on various issues including:

- Whether there was a need for gardens.
- The need for adequate parking provisions.
- Whether an age restriction on property ownership was good or unfair and the need for mixed or starter homes for young people.
- Protection of trees and gifting of parcels of land to the parish council.
- Access to or the lack of local facilities.

It was **agreed** that it was a good exchange of views and that the parish council would await further information. The Chairman thanked Kitewood for attending.

5. **Matters Arising From Minutes.**

5.1 Minute 2553/5.1 Maidstone Studios: **Noted** Maidstone Studios had confirmed that they will use the electronic signs to warn of events and congestion but declined the request to place a board at the entrance.

5.2 Minute 2553/5.2 Quad bike: **Noted and agreed** five entrances at the open space can have measures put in place to slow down bikes. The parish council will cover the cost of installation (£1,679) with MBC purchasing/supplying materials etc. (£2,092). As the cost to BPC was within the budget of £1,800 the work has been authorised.

5.3 Minute 2553/5.3 Community Infrastructure Levy: **Noted and agreed** Maidstone KALC will be taking this up with MBC. This item will be returned to the agenda as the situation develops or changes. **Action - office.**

5.4 Minute 2545/7.1 Neighbourhood Area consultation: **Noted** this closed on 23 July and a report is now produced for an MBC Committee to consider adopting the Neighbourhood Area.

5.5 Minute 2546/12.2 Changes to Permitted Development Legislation for businesses. **Noted** a summary will be included in the September agenda. **Action - office.**

5.6 Minute 2554/9.1 Local Green Spaces and historic sites. **Noted and agreed** details of the parish council's concerns had been sent to the Opposition Party at MBC and Maidstone KALC was also investigating the issue. This item will be returned to the agenda as the situation develops or changes. **Action - office.**

5.7 Minute 2554/9.2 Land south of Forstal Road: **Noted and agreed** the Cobtree Trust Committee agreed in principle to the submission of the land as a potential development site. This item will be returned to the agenda as the situation develops or changes. **Action - office.**

6. **Planning Applications and Appeals for Consideration.**

6.1 MA/13/0274 An application for the conversion of church hall to dwelling at Boxley Church Hall, The Street, Boxley. *Do not wish to object.*

6.2 MA/13/0857 Erection of a garage roof extension and installation of rear dormer window at 3 Mayfield Close, Walderslade. *Do not wish to object.*

6.3 MA/13/0910 An application for a side extension to ground and first floors including conversion of part of existing garage to living accommodation at 18 Olivine Close, Walderslade.

Do not wish to object, but concern raised about the design of the rear windows which appear out of keeping with the design of the surrounding properties.

6.4 MA/13/1143 Variation of Condition 6 of MA/09/1569 to allow generator testing to be carried out on the third Saturday of each month for a period of four hours between 0900 hours and 1300 hours only and at no other time, for a temporary period of 18 months at Computer Sciences Corporation, Pegasus Place, Lodge Road. *Wish to see the application **refused** for the planning reasons set out below but **do not request** the application is reported to the Planning Committee.*

Reason for refusal: The impact on the surrounding residential properties and to the public using Vinters Valley Nature Reserve. The original condition was put in place due to the adverse impact on the local area and it is considered that 18 months is too long a period to be termed temporary.

6.5 MA/13/1158 Erection of a single storey rear conservatory at 78 Chatham Road, Sandling. *Do not wish to object.*

6.6 MA/13/1163 Outline application for the development of a medical campus comprising up to 98sqm of additional floor space (including additional hospital facilities, clinics, consultation rooms and a rehabilitation centre (classes C2/D1) education and training facility at Newnham Park, Bearsted Road, Weaving.

Do not wish to object however the parish council has concerns over;

- *The increase in traffic and the ability of the local area to cope with this.*
- *Insufficient on-site parking provision in the outline plan.*
- *Water run-off and any adverse impact on the stream that runs through the site and which serves Vinters Valley Nature Reserve.*

It also wishes to highlight

- *The impact on the park & ride and the need to improve public transport to the area.*
- *The need for sustainability and the lack of renewable energy suggestions for the site.*

6.7 MA/13/1251 Erection of a first floor extension and porch and conversion of part of garage to habitable accommodation at 8 Grey Wethers, Sandling.

Do not wish to object.

6.8 TA/0099/13 Tree Preservation Order application: TPO No.1 of 1969: an application for consent to reduce height by 30% and reduce crown spread by 30% of 3 Hornbeams, 1 silver birch, 1 crab apple and 1 maple tree at 6 Travertine Road, Walderslade. *Do not wish to object, defer to the Landscape Officer's views.*

6.9 TA/0100/13 Application for consent to lift canopy by removing trunk suckers to a height of 4m from ground level to 1no Hornbeam, to remove trunk suckers to the first main fork at 5m from ground level, remove three lowest branches overhanging the garage roofs and crown thin 1no English Oak by 15% and to re-coppice Hazel at 22 Spenlow Drive, Walderslade. *Do not wish to object, defer to the Landscape Officer's views.*

6.10 TA/0105/13 Application for consent to fell one Hornbeam at 26 Alexandra Glen, Walderslade. *Do not wish to object, defer to the Landscape Officer's views.*

7. **Planning Applications and Appeals Decisions**

None submitted.

8. **Matters for information.**

Street Farm, The Street, Boxley. **Noted** development has started but a number of non-compliance issues have come to light and these have been reported by the parish office to the relevant authorities and the situation will be monitored. **Action - office.**

9. **Next Meeting.**

Next full environment meeting 9 September 2013 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m. Items for the agenda must be with the parish office no later than 30 August 2013.

Meeting closed at 8.48 pm.

Item 7.4 Minutes of the Estates Committee Meeting held at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade on Tuesday 13 August, 2013 at 7.30pm.

Councillors present – Mr V Davies (Chairman), Mrs Pat Brooks, Mr P Dengate, Mr B Hinder, Mr P Sullivan, together with the Assistant Clerk.

1. **Declarations of Interest and Lobbying**

Cllr V Davies declared a pecuniary interest in Item 12.

2. **Apologies and absence.**

Cllrs Ivor Davies (holiday) and Geoff Smith (convalescing)

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting 11 June, 2013.**

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

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

4.1 Minute 2548/7.2 Yew Tree at St Mary and All Saints Church. **Received** and **noted** the Clerk's report and **agreed** the letter of objection to the TPO that has been applied for by MBC on this tree. Cllr Paul Dengate had a few minor amendments to the letter which he has forwarded to the Clerk. Members **agreed** that once the office is informed of the planning meeting this item will be discussed at they would nominate a member who sits on both the estates and environment committee to attend. **Action office.**

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

5. **Assistant Clerk's Report.**

5.1 Hire fees were **received** and **Noted** for June/July with a comparison for the same period in the previous year

(Brackets indicate income over same period previous year).

	2013/2014	2012/2013
Casual	£2,111.75	(£3,728.20)
Regular	<u>£4,965.24</u>	<u>(£3,166.16)</u>
Total	£7,076.99	(£6,894.36)

Cumulative figures for

Casual	£ 5,010.57	(£6,531.70)
Regular	<u>£11,121.32</u>	<u>(£6,823.71)</u>
Total	£16,131.89	(£13,355.41)

5.2 New Hall Hirer –**Noted** the new classes starting in September at the hall.

6. **Allotments** – Members **received** and **noted** Cllr Bob Hinder's report and the Chairman congratulated him for all of his hard work so far. Cllr Bob Hinder then gave a further verbal update explaining that together with the Clerk he was looking at obtaining estimates for new fencing for the site, installing gates and getting water to the site in the form of troughs which will form part of phase 2. He confirmed that the gates at the entrance are ready to be installed and the Scouts were very pleased with return of the hut and the hardstanding that had been laid in lieu of the Royal Engineers using their hut whilst phase 1 was being carried out. There is surplus geogrid and terrim which needs to be re-homed by the end of August. Cllr Hinder also reported a discrepancy with the bill from the road sweeping company which was being investigated by the office. **Action Office and Cllr Bob Hinder.**

8. **Beechen Hall Profit and Loss Report**

Members **received** the Assistant Clerk's report and agreed that it gave a good understanding and cost of running the hall. The Assistant Clerk agreed to forward this to Cllrs Ivor Davies and Paul Dengate. **Action Office.**

9. **Review of Policies and Procedures**

- 8.1 Annual Competency Review/Statement – Members **received, reviewed** with minor amends and **agreed** the content of this report.
- 8.2 Annual Inspection of the Hall – This was taken at the end of the meeting to enable members to decide if a tour of the building was necessary. Members agreed the following:

Replacement windows- to be reviewed annually and included in the budget when needed.
Replacement front doors- Members agreed for this to be investigated for 14/15 budget and to include an enclosing porch.
Ceiling Insulation over kitchen, 'caged store room and chair store. The Assistant Clerk informed members that the insulation is above the foyer and further investigation will be made for 14/15 budget.
Replacement lighting in car park (installed 96 or 97?) Members were happy that the lighting was sufficient at present.
Replacement floor in ladies and disabled toilets - review annually. As original flooring consider 15/16? Or complete refurbishment of toilets. If planned investigate tap sensors to stop water wastage? Members agreed for a total refurbishment of all toilets to be considered for the 15/16 budget and this would combine the grey water system.
Grey Water System. To be reviewed for 15/16 budget.
Replacement kitchen- to be annually reviewed and included in the budget when needed. Fairly good condition at present probably need it 2019/20?
Replacement fridge - to be annually reviewed and included in the budget when needed. <i>Members agreed for this to be included in the 14/15 budget</i>
Replacement tables and chairs. To be replaced as and when required (ad hoc). Tables and chairs purchased in 1994. Oct 2011 with three tables being replaced 2010 – 2012.
Members requested a budget is set for the Allotments as this will be responsibility of the estates committee.
Overhead project & screen for the committee room – Members requested this is considered for 14/15 budget.

The Assistant Clerk also informed members that the radiators in the committee room and kitchen were not functioning to their full capacity and that she had been advised by Cube Plumbing to carry out a power-flush to see what might be the problem. A quote for £455.00 was received. However due to a problem that occurred when they were called out to the allotments to secure a burst pipe they have agreed to waiver the charge for the power-flush as a gesture of goodwill. Members **accepted** this offer. **Action office.**

- 8.3 Burial Grounds Regulation (H) – Members **received** the Clerk's report and **agreed** a few minor alterations. Cllr Brooks requested confirmation of when she should carry out her inspection of the burial ground and how often. **Action Office/Cllr Brooks.**
- 8.4 Beechen Hall Fire Risk Assessments (H) – Members **received** and **noted** the additions to this policy. Cllr Dengate asked for clarification on how, when and by whom the testing for the additional equipment will be carried out.
- 8.5 Beechen Hall Drink and Public Licence (H) – Members **received** and **agreed** the Clerk's report.
- 8.6 Clerk's Delegated Power – Hall Maintenance (H) – **Noted.**

10. **Matters for Decision**

- 9.1 A request from Mid Kent Downs Steering Group for a guided tour of WDJ0 on 26th September at 10.30 – Members suggested that Cllr Harwood is asked and if he was unavailable they were happy for the Clerk accompanied by Cllr Vic Davies to attend. **Action Office.**
- 9.2 Box trees in planters at village green – Cllr Vic Davies requested that this is reviewed once a decision has been made about the Yew Tree.

11. **Matters for information**

10.1 Annual Playground Inspection WDJO – Members **received** and **noted** the Assistant Clerk’s report. Members also **agreed** that if there are any issues these will be resolved by the in-house inspection team and reported at the next meeting.

Action Office and Cllrs Vic Davies and Pat Sullivan.

10.2 Routine Playground Inspection – Members **noted** the Assistant Clerk’s report on the wear and tear of the grasscrete path and agreed for it to be monitored and the suggested action. Members agreed for the office to investigate purchasing wetpour for the playground surface. If this proves too expensive or the product does not have a long enough shelf life the office will proceed with a quote from MBC.

10.3 New oven and extraction unit at Beechen Hall - Members **noted** that planning permission had been granted by MBC.

11. **Date of Next Meeting.**

Tuesday 15 October, 2013 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade, Chatham commencing at 7.30 p.m.

12. **Staffing Issues** – Because of the confidential nature of this item it was taken without the press or public present. Members **received** and **noted** the Assistant Clerk’s report. It was **agreed** that a 1% increase to Caretaking staff would be awarded as per the budget and backdated to 1 April 2013 with a 2.5% rise awarded next year and included in the 14/15 budget.

Members also **noted** the increase in the government’s minimum hourly rate of pay.

Meeting closed at 9.00pm

Item 9. Land at Sandy Lane. *Purpose of report; to consider the resolution.*

Clerk’s briefing note. Between May and July 2012 the parish council approved the purchase of the land and the subsequent arrangement to sell part of it on to a second party. At various times since members have received updates on the progress of the sale and possible uses for the remaining land by the council. Because they were financially sensitive some of the decisions taken were made in confidential session. On 8 April 2013 a formal resolution to provide allotments was agreed.

The contract for the sale of the land to the second party has now been received from the parish council’s solicitors. The land being retained by the council is 8086.3 sq m with 5390.9 sq m being sold, at market valuation, to the second party. The contract contains agreements concerning upkeep of the entrance area, gates etc. and once parties sign the land transfer will be notified to the Land Registry.

The resolution to complete the sale at the contracted price must be passed by members before the sale can be completed.

Item 10 Policies and Procedures Review. *Purpose of item: information and decision.*
Clerk’s comment; there have been no external changes to affect the following policies.

Item 10.1 Adopted Code of Conduct – Complaints.

Current policy - Policy on dealing with Code of Conduct Complaints

Boxley Parish Council attempts to always work in an open and accountable way. While it is recognised that there may occasionally be complaints against individual Parish Councillors, in order to be fair to members, the Parish Council will not publicly acknowledge such a complaint until the independent Maidstone Borough Council

Monitoring Officer decides that there is a case to investigate. The Parish Council will take no action that interferes with the investigation or which may inflame the situation. It has however no control over what the complainant makes public.

If a member or officer of the Parish Council receives a complaint that may fall within the Code it shall be immediately passed on to the Clerk or Chairman/Vice-Chairman for referral to the MBC Monitoring Officer.

On receipt of a complaint the Chairman* will write a **confidential** briefing note to all councillors simply stating that Councillor X is the subject of a complaint which has been referred to the Monitoring Officer. In the interests of fairness the issue/complaint will not be discussed at any Parish Council meeting.

If the Monitoring Officer decides to take no further action then the Chairman* will write a **confidential** briefing note to all councillors stating no further action is being taken. The issue/complaint will not be discussed at any Parish Council meeting and it is up to Councillor X whether he/she wishes to have the complaint acknowledged publicly as unfounded.

If the Monitoring Officer notifies the Parish Council of a decision to further investigate the complaint, the Chairman* will write a **confidential** briefing note to all councillors stating this. The issue/complaint will not be discussed at any Parish Council meeting** however the Chairman and Vice-Chairman will draft a press release for use if the complaint becomes public. The press release will stick to the facts and not comment on the actual complaint. If subsequently the Monitoring Officer's decision is to take no further action then the Chairman* will write a **confidential** briefing note to all councillors stating no further action is being taken.

On notification that the Monitoring Officer considers that there is substance to the complaint, which is when it is likely that the complaint will become public, the Chairman* will again write a briefing note to inform all councillors of the situation. Advice will be sought from the Monitoring Officer on whether the issue should be acknowledged as an item at the next Parish Council Meeting. The Parish Council (and individual councillors if approached) will stick to the facts and not comment on the actual complaint. The press release will be reviewed and, if necessary, released.

At the conclusion of the investigation the Parish Council will prepare, if necessary, another press release acknowledging any decision made by the Monitoring Officer. A draft of this press release will be supplied to all councillors. If it is felt necessary an emergency Parish Council meeting will be arranged.

*or if necessary the Vice-Chairman or Clerk.

** If there is a recommendation from the Monitoring Officer that Councillor X or the Parish Council might require some training then the Parish Council will need to discuss generalities (i.e. need for and cost of training) but specifics of the complaint/decision will not be discussed.

Item 10.2 Land & Building Purchase Policy.

Clerk comment; the policy (below) has been slightly changed to improve grammar and presentation however the principles remain unchanged.

Chairman note: Do members wish to extend this policy to cover the possibility that the parish council may wish to rent a building or patch of land if the owner was unwilling to sell? It can easily be adapted by rewording the title "Land & Buildings Purchasing and Leasing Policy" and inserting "leasing" or "lease" as appropriate wherever purchasing is mentioned.

Land & Building Purchase Policy

The Council will consider purchasing land* or buildings** after careful consideration of the following;

Whether the use to which the land or building would be put would be primarily for the good of the parishioners. The judgment of what constitutes 'good' will be with the then Council but it is expected that the benefit to the parishioners would be recreational use, wildlife conservation or for environmental reasons either now or in the future.

The Parish Council will consider purchasing land to stop detrimental development.

Constitute good value for money in the context of the benefits (current or future), tangible and intangible, that would accrue, in the first instance, to our parishioners. If the previous criterion is met, the Council will obtain a property valuation, prior to any decision to buy. It must be able to justify the cost of any purchase including future maintenance, site security, etc. Any decision on the purchase of land or building will take place at an open meeting after careful deliberation. The Council will endeavour to identify, in advance, a wish list for areas where Council-held land or buildings would benefit local communities and the reasons why it is considered of benefit.

*Local Government Act 1972, ss 124,126,127 (Power to acquirement by agreement, to appropriate, to dispose of...) Local Government Act 1972, ss139 (Power to accept gifts of land).

** Local Government Act 1972, s133, s144. Local Government (Misc Prov) Act 1976, s19

Item 10.3 Code of Practice for Handling Complaints against the Parish Council.

Clerk's comment; The Government advises that the ACAS scheme for dealing with complaints should be followed and the following document was originally based on the ACAS recommendations (details are on the ACAS website www.acas.org.uk). The Clerk is signed up to the ACAS training and notification system and has not been notified of any changes to the guidance or legislation.

The previous agreed document has been amended to take into account the changes to the Code of Conduct.

A small change has been made to the presentation in that footnotes have been added.

Current policy.

Boxley Parish Council is committed to providing a quality service to residents of the Parish and to anyone who deals with the Parish Council. The Parish Council is determined to conduct its business in a fair and equitable manner. To meet this standard the following complaints procedure has been adopted. Complaints or allegations will normally fall under one of three heads, namely:

- Misconduct by Parish Councillors.
- Misconduct by Council staff.
- The Parish Council's procedures, policy or administration.

Misconduct by Parish Councillors.

All councillors have to conform to the adopted Code of Conduct¹ which details the behaviour and rules by which a Councillor has to work and details the seven principles of public life: **SELFLESSNESS, INTEGRITY, OBJECTIVITY, ACCOUNTABILITY, OPENNESS, HONESTY and LEADERSHIP.**

Any member of the public, parish councillor or council personnel can make a complaint using The Maidstone Borough Council complaints procedure details of which can be found on the Maidstone Borough Council website² or obtained from Maidstone Borough Council.

¹ A copy is available on the parish council website (www.boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk) or from the parish office.

² www.maidstone.gov.uk/complaints

The Parish Council has a separate policy (Code of Conduct Complaints¹) detailing the process it would take if it was informed of a complaint to the Monitoring Officer at Maidstone Borough Council.

Misconduct by Council staff.

Any complaints should be made in writing to the Chairman of the Parish Council, the e-mail contact address and telephone number are on the parish website or are available from the parish office. If a letter is received at the parish office it will be passed onto the Chairman. The matter will come under the Parish Council's adopted Disciplinary Procedure of the Parish Council.

The Parish Council's procedures, policy or administration.

A complaint should not be made just because you do not agree with a decision of the Parish Council. You will need to show that the Parish Council did not follow correct procedure or policy and this has resulted in unfair treatment. The Parish Council has numerous policies and procedures and its minutes and most records are open for public scrutiny. This policy is in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Publication Scheme³.

It is in the particular interest of a Parish Council to settle a complaint because, even if it is unjustified, it will in the absence of a settlement be raised again. This is bad for the council since it wastes time and affects its reputation.

1. If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified orally to a councillor or clerk and they cannot satisfy the complainant forthwith the complainant shall be asked to put the complaint in writing to the clerk.
2. If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the clerk he/she shall be advised to put it to the chairman.
3. (a) On receipt of a written complaint the clerk or chairman, as the case may be, shall try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant but shall not do so in respect of a complaint about the behaviour of the clerk or of a councillor without first notifying that person and giving them an opportunity for comment on the manner in which it is intended to attempt to settle the complaint. The Parish Council shall not get involved with complainants about the misconduct of a councillor but will instead refer the complainant to the Local Monitoring Officer at Maidstone Borough Council.
(b) Where the chairman receives a written complaint about his or her own actions then he or she shall forthwith refer the complaint to the council.
(c) Where the clerk receives a written complaint about his or her own actions then he or she shall forthwith refer the complaint to the chairman.
4. The chairman or the clerk shall report to the next meeting of the Parish Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
5. The chairman or clerk shall bring any written complaint that has not been settled to the next meeting of the Parish Council. The clerk shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered, and the complainant shall be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint orally.
If the complainant is submitting documentation or evidence to which they will be referring to at the meeting then they should, 7 clear working days prior to the meeting, provide copies to the council. Similarly the Parish Council should supply the complainant with copies of any Parish Council documents, which are requested and available under the Freedom of Information Act - Publication Scheme.

³ A copy of the Freedom of information Act publication scheme and the Council's minutes and many other policies are on the Parish Council's website www.boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk or are available from the parish office.

6. The Parish Council shall consider whether the circumstances attending any complaint warrants the matter being discussed in the absence of the press and public but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Parish Council meeting in public. In the interest of openness and accountability there must be clear relevant reasons or a request from the complainant for the matter to be held without the presence of the press or public.
7. At the meeting the Chairman should
 - (a) Introduce everyone
 - (b) Explain the procedure
 - (c) Ask the complainant to outline the grounds of the complaint.
 - (d) Allow members to ask questions.
 - (e) Allow the Clerk or other Proper Officer to explain the council's position.
 - (f) Allow members to question the Clerk or Proper Officer.
 - (g) Members to decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made.
8. Within 7 working days of the meeting the decision and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.
9. The Parish Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of the opinion that issues of law or practice arise on which advice is necessary. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.

Note. The Local Government Ombudsman is unable to deal with complaints about Parish Councils as its legal remit only covers County, District and Borough Councils.

Item 11. Matters for Decision *Purpose of item; consideration and decisions.*

- 11.1 **Civic recognition recommendations.** This item will be taken in confidence should the chairman consider it necessary. *Clerk's note: any member who wishes to put forward the name of someone who they consider should be nominated for civic recognition may do so at this point in the meeting.*
- 11.2 **KALC Community Awards Scheme.** To consider whether to adopt the awards scheme (details enclosed for members) and if agreed to identify whether members wish to nominate someone who lives or works within the parish boundary.

Item 13. Reports from councillors *Purpose of item; information.*

- 13.1 Mon 19 August Cllr Smith was given a tour, by the warden, of the new play area – the Castle, which is a brilliant facility for children. I was driven around the park to see the magnificent trees, especially the 7 Oak trees that the parish council paid for which are flourishing thanks to the special attention given by the Warden Eva Girling. More information will be supplied at the meeting.

Item 14. Matters for Information *Purpose of item; information.*

- 14.1 Kent Wildlife Trust magazine issue Summer 2013.
- 14.2 Kent Downs Orchid issue 23/Summer 2013.
- 14.3 Walderslade Woods Road islands, a 'thank you for your efforts' e-mail from a resident has been received.
- 14.4 Allotment magazine issue 3 2013
- 14.5 Thank you letter concerning the placement of posters on the parish council's noticeboard which benefits local groups.