



BOXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

www.boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk

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

2 December 2013

There will be a meeting of the **Environment Committee** on **Monday 9 December 2013** at **Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade** commencing at 7.30 pm when it is proposed to transact the following business:

1. **Apologies and absences** (7.30)
To receive and accept apologies for absence.
2. **Declaration of Interest or Lobbying.** (7.31)
Members are required to declare any interests, dispensations, lobbying or changes to the Register of Interests.
3. **Minutes of the Meetings of 4 & 11 November 2013.** (7.33)
To consider the minutes (previously circulated) of the meetings and if in order to sign as a true record.
4. **Matters Arising From Minutes.** (7.35)
 - 4.1 Minute 2590/4.1 Lordswood bike barriers: MBC has been notified that the installation work has been described, by a resident, as 'shoddy'. MBC was arranging to visit and check out this statement but despite reminders have not contacted the parish office about the situation. BPC has not yet been approached to pay for the work and will not do so until it is satisfied.
 - 4.2 Minute 2590/4.2 Vegetation removal Grovewood Drive South: Design work is underway and an update should be available in time for the meeting.
 - 4.3 Minute 2590/4.3 Junction improvements at Lordswood Lane/Gleamingwood Drive: a response is awaited from KCCH&T. Clarification on the current situation is being sought from KCCH&T. The Clerk was asked to submit a plan of what signage and the suggested locations of such signs but a message was then left saying it was in hand.
 - 4.4 Minute 2590/4.5 Pedestrian crossing at Running Horse roundabout. Matter has been reported to KCCH&T. Awaiting response.
 - 4.6 Minute 2590/4.6 Microchipping for Dogs, no Saturday dates are available until April 2014 so weekday availability is being checked.

To adjourn to allow members of the public to address the meeting. (7.38)

5. **Planning Applications and Appeals for Consideration.** (7.48)
See attached list (pages 3).
6. **Planning Applications and Appeals Decisions** (8.05)
To receive details of any information received (page 3-4).
7. **Neighbourhood Development Plans.** (8.07)
Due to annual leave, contact with companies will be made to arrange a visit early in the New Year.
8. **Maidstone Borough Local Plan.** (8.08)
To receive any update received from MBC. See report on pages 4-5.

9. **Volunteer Groups.** (8.13)
To receive any verbal reports on the various groups.
10. **Highways and Byways.** (8.17)
10.1 To consider any issues raised by Councillors or the residents.
10.2 Yellow Lines at Provender Way, see report page 5.
10.3 Inconsiderate parking Grove Green caused by events at Maidstone Studios see report page 6-7.
10.4 KCC Highway Survey response. Cllrs Vic Davies and Paul Dengate offered to draft responses for comparison see report (page 7) and enclosure.
10.5 Public Right of Way, Round Wood valley see report page 7.
11. **Policy and procedures review.** (8.33)
There are none.
12. **Matters for information.** (8.34)
13. **Next Meeting.** (8.35)
Next full environment meeting 13 January 2014 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m. Items for the agenda must be with the parish office no later than 6 January 2014.
- In view of the confidential nature (personal details and data) on the Enforcement item about to be transacted, it is advisable that the public and press will be excluded from the meeting for the duration of or part of the item.
14. **Enforcement and Section 106 updates from MBC.** (8.36)
To consider, if any received, confidential updates.

Pauline Bowdery
Clerk to Boxley Parish Council.

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

Items to be returned to agenda: Minute 2558/5.3 Community Infrastructure Levy:
Minute 2558/5.6 Local Green Spaces and historic sites.

**REPORTS ATTACHED TO ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA 9 December 2013.
Members are reminded that the Chairman will assume that these papers have
been read prior to the meeting.**

Item 5 Planning Applications. *Purpose of report:* To consider planning applications. Members' are reminded to consider possible section 106 requests or to suggest any conditions. Members are reminded that the paper versions are available from 7.00 pm

MA/13/1794 Retrospective application for the erection of a front porch and replacement windows and door at 43 Orbit Close, Walderslade ME5 9NF. 18/12/13

MA/13/1796 Application for an extension and alterations to existing double garage to provide ancillary accommodation and a single integral garage at The Banks, Boxley Road, Walderslade, Chatham, Kent, ME5 9JE 17/12/2013

MA/13/1836 Erection of a single storey rear extension and first floor extension above garage, part conversion of garage to habitable accommodation, alterations to front door arrangement and construction of raised terrace at 6 Chequers Close, Chatham, Kent, ME5 9SR 19/12/2013

MA/13/1931 Demolition of existing buildings and redevelopment of site to provide new retail development comprising food store (A1), general A1 retail units, A3 cafes/restaurants and A3 conversion of existing oasthouse with associated highway works, closing up of existing site access, formation of new access via New Cut Roundabout and Newnham Park spine road, associated earthworks, parking and landscaping at Newnham Court Shopping Village, Bearsted Road, Weaving, Kent. 23/12/2013

Clerk's comment: further information in the form of a briefing note will be sent on to the Environment Committee councillors and other councillors on request.

MA/13/1894 Single storey front extension at 4 Exton Gardens, Weaving, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 5AT 24/12/2013

MA/13/1970 Roof extension including insertion of rear dormer windows to facilitate loft conversion at 76 Chatham Road, Sandling, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 3BB 24/12/2013

MA/13/1886 Erection of a two storey classroom extension comprising of 6 general classrooms and a single storey extension and refurbishment to provide new kitchen and canteen facilities at Valley Park Community School, Huntsman Lane, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 5DT 24/12/2013

MA/13/1953 Application to remove condition 2 of MA/09/0973 which states No development hereby permitted shall be occupied unless and until completion and opening to traffic of a scheme of improvements or such other scheme of works has been approved in writing by the Secretary of State for Transport at Proposed Kent Clinic Institute, Newnham Park 25/12/2013

MA/13/1985 Erection of a side and rear extension and infilling for front balcony and new dormer window along with a new front porch at Millstream House, Boarley Lane, Sandling ME14 3DD 26/12/2013

MA/13/1687 Outline application with all matters reserved for future consideration for a new 12 court sports hall and ancillary accommodation at Valley Park Community School, ME14 5DT 26/12/2013

TA/0133/13 TPO No. 1 of 1969: An application for consent to cut back overhanging branches of one tree to boundary with 17 Iris Close at 15 Iris Close ME5 9QD. 27/12/2013

TA/0190/13 TPO No.1 of 1969 an application for consent to undertake a crown reduction of 30% to 1. No. Silver Birch at 24 Round Wood Close, Walderslade ME5 9UL. 12/1/2013

Item 6 Planning Applications and Appeal Decisions. *Purpose of report:* To consider any MBC decisions contrary to BPC views and appeal decisions.

The following notification has been received from MBC.

*"Dear Pauline and Councillors
48 Bargrove Road.*

This is to advise you that following a site visit by Nick Gallavin, Arboriculturist. It has been agreed that a Copper Beech tree designated as T256 of TPO No. 29 of 1981 can be removed as an exemption to the current TPO regulations as it is diseased.

Please note that the owner is under a duty to replace the tree with a replacement tree following the removal of the diseased tree.

*Kind regards
Patricia Finch
Technical Support Officer"*

Item 8. Maidstone Borough Local Plan. *Purpose of report:* Information only.

E-mail from MBC (29/11/13). Currently a maximum of 2 people can attend. The six week consultation on this draft starts 16/12/13 and so ends approx. 26/1/2014. The draft has been downloaded and a more detailed report will be given to committee members. It should be possible to put an article into the Downs Mail to warn members of the public that the consultation has started.

Dear Colleague

I am writing to invite you to the stakeholder consultation launch event for the Maidstone Borough Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy.

It's a challenging time in Maidstone right now, the council is preparing a full local plan replacement for the first stage of consultation in the New Year and there is a need for new developments across the borough, be they homes, shops or employment. An important part of all of this, however, is how green and blue infrastructure can be delivered and how the borough will remain an attractive place to live and work for the years to come.

Green and Blue Infrastructure covers a very wide range of areas/topics, but is most commonly considered to be: natural and semi-natural green spaces, green and blue corridors (such as rivers), outdoor sports space, parks and gardens, amenity green space (such as general green space within housing areas), provision for children and teenagers, allotments and community gardens, cemeteries and churchyards, and accessible countryside and nature reserves. There are many overlapping benefits that green and blue infrastructure can bring, such as health or sustainable transport links. Importantly, it does not stop at Maidstone's boundaries either and our partners in surrounding councils have made good progress developing their own strategies, which we will look to complement in the most appropriate way.

The council has prepared a draft strategy but it is at an early stage and that is why we would like you to take part in the process. So far we've looked at what the borough already has, but we need to understand what we're going to do with this in future years and how we can accommodate the new development that is needed. The council sees the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and the local plan as working together to deliver sustainable, prosperous communities.

The draft strategy is being given initial consideration by scrutiny and Cabinet next week (2 and 4 December respectively). Report - <http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/documents/s33098/Green%20and%20Blue%20Infrastructure%20Strategy.pdf>. Draft strategy - <http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/documents/s33099/Appendix%201%20->

[%20Draft%20Green%20and%20blue%20infrastructure%20strategy.pdf](#). I will incorporate any changes coming out of these meetings and then circulate the updated draft strategy ahead of the stakeholder event.

The event that we would like you to attend is taking place at the Maidstone Town Hall chamber (map below) on 16 December 2013 – registration, tea and coffee at 9:30am for a 10am start and lasting until 1:30pm.

Please email your response to ldf@maidstone.gov.uk, by the end of 11 December, so that we can arrange the event to best capture your views and opinions for how we can take this project forward.

Kind regards

Darren Bridgett
Principal Planning Officer

Clerk's report on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 November which considered the next group of Local Plan policies (development in the countryside, economic development, the town centre and urban areas, and affordable housing).

For members information of the many draft policies presented to the OSC 17 would have a direct impact on the parish and these will be tracked and members' warned, where possible, when consultations would be due. For more information about the Local Plan, visit www.maidstone.gov.uk/localplan<<http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/localplan>>.

Item 10 Highways and Byways. *Purpose of report:* Information.

Item 10.2 Yellow Lines at Provender Way. Response from Michael Heath, Traffic Engineer, Safety Schemes, Maidstone and Tonbridge & Malling

You contacted Kent County Council regarding the above location and the request to consider additional waiting restrictions.

The situation in Provender Way in relation to St Johns Primary School is one which affects virtually every school in the county, largely as a result of parental inconsideration. Where these actions have affected road safety we will act to address these. In the case of St Johns Primary I'm pleased to say there have not been any such incidents in Provender Way. I will monitor the situation with regard to obstruction of the bus route and if necessary bus stop clearway markings could be implemented.

Kent County Council is about to launch the following website resource, aimed at helping schools to help themselves with regard to inappropriate parking. The site is currently being piloted in Gravesham and Dartford. Schools elsewhere will be able to access this in the New Year.

<http://www.responsibleparking.co.uk/>

Clerk's comment: This response has been supplied to the school and their comments are awaited. The office has suggested that they could consider approaching County Councillor Carter to see if work could be paid for via his devolved budget but that prior to this they may wish to visit the website to see if it had any new ideas.

Details of the website have also been passed on to parish councillors who have a connection to a school.

Item 10.3 Inconsiderate parking Grove Green caused by events at Maidstone Studios.

Borough Councillor Hinder and the parish office have again received complaints about inconsiderate parking caused by people attending events at Maidstone Studios (21/11/13 and 26/11/13). The following complaint outlines the problems being experienced

“I would like to draw your attention to the fact that once again visitors to the Maidstone TV studios have caused traffic chaos to the residents of Grove Green. This evening, 21st November, visitors to the studios had parked cars such that they almost totally blocked the north end of Provender Way as well as Shepherds Gate drive. Should emergency vehicles need to access these roads I believe that their ability to do so would be severely impeded. This in addition to the risk of accidents affecting local residents. I have previously written to the studios in a private capacity to raise my concerns as well as making personal representation to security staff on the gates. While the security staff were helpful the letter didn't even generate an acknowledgement which I'm afraid to say is a fair reflection on the level of community engagement shown by this business. I am aware of previous council involvement but it appears that the studio management have taken little heed.

May I suggest that it is time to escalate matters as they are quite clearly either unwilling or incapable of managing the situation. I would suggest that formal traffic enforcement is required on all evenings that they are holding mass audience events and that the cost of this should be the responsibility of the studios. The current situation has been ongoing for many months and I believe that it urgently needs to be addressed with concrete actions rather than the empty promises of the Maidstone Studios”.

Clerk's briefing: The parish council and Borough Councillor has previously approached and met Mr Geoff Miles of The Maidstone Studio's and various regrets and assurances have been received but the issue of inconsiderate parking has not been resolved nor has it lessened. Mr Miles has contacted Cllr Wendy Hinder (28/11/13) about the situation and has offered to meet with her and the parish council.

The most recent meeting resulted in the parish council arranging for the Studios to have access to the KCC messaging signs to advertise when the studio was full but it is not known whether this facility has been used. A request for an information board to be placed outside the studios was refused by Mr Miles. Mr Miles' gave assurances that the studio car park was open to audience members however residents' are still reporting that the car park is not full when the security guards direct vehicles to Grove Green.

The parish council, Borough Councillor and residents have approached the Police and the previous PCSO has attended however this has not resulted in any short or long term improvements. Maidstone Borough Council's Parking Operations has been advised of the latest problems and a request for them to investigate and advise on any options that may stop/control this reoccurring problem has been sent. The resident's suggestion that recordings at the studio are treated like major events (such as Leeds Castle or a football event) has been passed on.

It should be noted that over the years MBC has been contacted but it appears that nothing came of the requests for help.

Clerk's suggestion. It is recommended that a response is awaited from Maidstone BC. Should MBC not be able to suggest anything then members' are potentially faced with the following options:

- Empower and encourage residents to make complaints direct to Geoff Miles and the studios by publishing the 2 e-mail addresses in the Downs Mail. Such methods have previously been used by frustrated organisations and individuals and if sustained may bring about changes. Encourage residents to report every inconsiderably parked car to the Police, KCC and MBC which may make the organisations responsible for highways, parking and enforcement more proactive in dealing with the issue. *Clerk's note: I am not necessarily suggesting that the parish council organise such an event but that it suggests that complaints should be actively sent to the people who cause the problem or organisations that could help but have a history of not doing so.*

- Arrange another meeting with the studios but it is not clear what this will achieve.
- Admit defeat and do nothing. Clerk's note: *this may be preferable to raising residents' expectations.*
- Boxley Parish Council has Power of Competency which theoretically could mean that with MBC's permission it may be possible to adopt some parking operations powers however this would need further in-depth investigation and any such adoption and then action would potentially be extremely expensive (an expense that parishioners would have to bear).

Item 10.4 KCC Highway Survey.

At the last meeting it was agreed that two councillors (one for North and one from the South ward) would draft a response for comparison. The draft responses are enclosed for committee members' consideration; copies can be supplied on request to non-members.

Item 10.5 Public Right of Way, Round Wood valley.

Deferred from December 2012 minute 2480/4.2 Public Right of Way, Round Wood valley. KCC had refused, due to financial constraints, the request for the path to be designated a PRow. **Agreed** revisit in 12 months but until then **no further action.**

Clerk's comment: in view of the continued cutbacks at KCC do members' wish to keep this on the agenda or revisit it. It is suggested that there is no further action.