

BOXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

www.boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk



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1 December 2014

To All Members of the Council, press and public.

There will be a meeting of the **Environment Committee** on **Monday 8 December 2014** 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 Interests, dispensations, predetermination or Lobbying** (7.31)
Members are required to declare any interests, dispensations, predetermination or lobbying on items on this agenda. Members are reminded that changes to the Register of Interests should be notified to the Clerk.
3. **Minutes of the Meetings of 3rd & 10th November 2014** (7.32)
To consider the minutes of the meetings (previous circulated) and if in order to sign as a true record.
4. **Matters Arising From Minutes** (7.34)
4.1 Minute 2690/4.3 Retention of planning applications. Members requested the office to investigate the retention rules for Maidstone Borough Council. MBC retain paper copies for 6 years but have electronic/micro fiche records as far back as 1974. A photocopying charge is made but there was no commitment as to how much? Members are reminded that the original reason for this item was to look at whether the parish council's retention of 3 years was too long. Would members object to paper plans being destroyed one year after the permission/refusal? Any large scale or controversial development (Newnham Court or 3 Ashes) would be retained for as long as it is deemed necessary.

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 (page 3). For decision.
6. **Planning Decisions, Appeals and Appeals Decisions** (7.58)
Notification of Appeal. Outline application with all matters reserved to develop the site for residential (approx. 89 dwellings) with open space, access road and biomass heating plant at Lordswood Urban Extension, Gleaming Wood Drive. The parish council's objections will be automatically forwarded by MBC. Deadline 24 December 2014. For information.
7. **Volunteer Groups** (7.59)
To receive any reports from volunteer groups associated with the parish council. For information.

8. **Highways and Byways** (8.06)
- 8.1 Running Horse roundabout new layout and white lining changes see report (page 3)
 - 8.2 Clearway Chatham Road, Sandling see report (3-4).
 - 8.3 Drainage investigation schedule see report (page 4)
 - 8.4 Trees The Street Boxley see report (page 4)
 - 8.5 KCCH&T meeting 19/11/14; see Cllr Hinchliffe report (pages 4-6)
 - 8.6 KCCH, T & W survey to consider the report (page 6).
9. **Policy and procedures review** (8.15)
- 9.1 To consider need for a policy on funding services e.g. shrub maintenance cut by principle councils. Members will be updated before or at the meeting on the cost of an extra cut etc. details currently awaited from KCC.
10. **Draft Budget 2015/2016** (8.27)
- To the draft budget (pages 7-8).
11. **MBC Local Plan** (8.37)
- To receive an update from Cllr Bob Hinder (pages 8-9).
12. **Matters for information** (8.52)
- To consider any received.
13. **Next Meeting** (8.53)
- Next full environment meeting 8 December 2014 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m. Items for the agenda must be with the parish office no later than 3 September 2014.

Pauline Bowdery

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:

Dec 2014 Minute 2600/10.4 PROW Round Wood Valley, review the request to KCC PROW for it to be made a PROW. Minute 2639/4.1 Grovewood Drive North crossing improvements.

Legislation allows for meetings to be recorded by anyone attending. Persons intending to record or who have concerns about being recorded should please speak to the Clerk.

REPORTS ATTACHED TO ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA 1 December 2014.

Members are reminded that the Chairman will assume that these papers have been read prior to the meeting.

Councillors wishing to suggest changes to any policy document or procedure in this agenda should notify the office, in writing, at least three working days in advance of the meeting. This will allow details to be circulated at the meeting (or in advance if particularly contentious).

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.

14/504806/FULL. Renewal of planning permission MA/11/0626 to extend temporary use of land for the siting of tents for retail display for a temporary period of time of not more than 80 days between May and August each year for a further five years until August 2019 at Notcutts Garden Centre Newnham Court Farm Bearsted Road Weaving Kent. *Deadline 5 December 2014*

14/502542/FULL. Conversion of garage to living accommodation at 28 Orache Drive Weaving Kent ME14 5UG. *Deadline 17 December 2014.*

14/505386/LBC. Listed Building Consent for insertion of new stair case from first floor to attic within bedroom 4, involving creation of a new wall and door in the attic space at The Old Vicarage The Street Boxley Kent ME14 3DX. *Deadline 16 December 2014.*

14/504931/OUT. Outline application (all matters reserved) for the erection of one 4 bedroom dwelling at Medway Cottage Forstal Road Sandling Kent ME14 3AR. *Deadline 18 December 2014*

Item 8. Highways and Byways. *Purpose of report:* Information.

Item 8.1 Running Horse roundabout new layout and white lining changes.

Members are notified that a resident has complained about the problems caused by the changes to the layout and lining and as some members will be aware there have been numerous complaints to the KM about this. A recent article in the KM had a KCC spokesperson quoted as saying there changes are planned.

The complaint has been sent onto County Councillor Carter with a request that the resident and parish council receives information on the changes that are being proposed etc. If members are happy the parish office will continue to deal with this as housekeeping and just update members when a response is received.

Item 8.2 Clearway Chatham Road, Sandling.

8.2.1 Correspondence from County Councillor Paul Carter "*Following David Brazier's recent message, he, I, Wendy Hinder and Michael Heath, the KCC Traffic Engineer met Inspector Stevens to discuss the issue of Old Chatham Road and the continued difficulties caused for residents by overnight HGV parking. It became evident that Kent Police were unlikely to be able to provide sufficient resources to adequately enforce the clearway already created, and I have now asked for a physical barrier to be installed to cause a narrowing of the carriageway that will effectively prohibit parking. It should be possible to achieve this without the need for further Traffic Regulation Orders, and I am waiting for a timeline for the work to be provided. This will follow procurement of the necessary materials.*

I don't anticipate a significant delay in getting the barrier designed and put in place. I have arranged for a letter to residents explaining what is to be done to be made

available to Wendy Hinder to distribute to residents. She and I will keep the Parish Council informed."

8.2.2 Kent County Council is asking that the parish council contributes towards the cost and of providing additional signage. The following correspondence has been received from the Community Partnership Safety Officer Nicolas Rathbone.

"With regards to new signage for no parking, littering or fouling etc. that I mentioned in the action plan. I have spoken with Sarah Robson who has agreed to fund half of the cost from her budget. I have no final costing's yet but a ball park figure for the display board is from £349 + VAT depending on the size. We would need to figure in installation costs too.

I shall be in touch when I have some more accurate costs."

Further details will be supplied to members if received before the meeting.

Councillor Wendy Hinder will give an update.

Clerk's note. Members suggested that the next Environment Committee meeting be held at Tyland Barn with representatives from KCC and also local residents invited. Due to the H&S implications of such a small meeting place with an unknown number of visits this would not be possible.

Item 8.3 Drainage investigation schedule.

Clerk's report. The parish office has obtained a copy of the schedule as there have been a number of queries and a particular problem in Boxley. The schedule shows that Strategic and Locally Important road (basically bus routes) are inspected once a year but the last inspection of rural and urban areas was April 2013.

A meeting with KCCH&T had indicated that areas with potentially more issues e.g. leaves, gradients or a history of flooding would be inspected more frequently than lower risk areas. This however is not backed up by the schedule for example Boxley Road near the junction of Travertine and also the Round Wood roundabout have been reported on numerous occasions concerning flooding but these areas were last inspected April 2013. Do members wish to take this issue further? A request for a copy of the policy regarding frequency of investigations could be requested and/or members could identify problem areas and ask that these be inspected more frequently. If the latter does not result in a change in the frequency of investigations then it would be possible to put in place a system whereby the office reports the trouble spots every year.

Item 8.4 Trees The Street Boxley.

The Boxley Village Society has raised concerns about dangerous trees overhanging Boxley Road this is currently being dealt with as housekeeping and members will be updated if this is not resolved.

Item 8.5 KCC H&T Meeting 19th November 2014. Cllr Hinchliffe's report.

Clerk's comment. Cllr Hinchliffe's report has highlighted a number of issues and where the Clerk considers that members may want action or where a response seems appropriate a note (in italics) has been included.

- Following reorganisation within KCC the Highways and Transportation Directorate now includes "waste" and from the 1st April 2014 is known as the KCC Highways, Transportation and Waste Directorate.
- Road pothole repairs policy:
 - First time permanent repair.
 - Repair potholes >50mm depth in highway and >20mm in footway.
 - Contractor has authority to repair adjacent potholes.

- Surface dressing over repairs.
- David Brazier - Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport:
 - Cuts in grants from central government continue - now reached stage where public will see changes.
 - Rural bus services remain undiminished.
 - Street lighting:
 - Studies have not found a correlation between crime and street lighting.
 - Part night lighting scheme continues saving £5m.
 - There are a total of 120,000 street lights.
 - Looking to convert to LED lights which are cheaper and more controllable.
 - Hoping to restore street lighting if above goes ahead.
 - Parish Councils/Villages can approach KCC to have lights turned off, even removed.
 - Plenty of salt for this winter (23,000 tonnes).
 - Fly tipping:
 - Highway Authority responsible for collecting fly tipped rubbish to make safe.
 - Carrying out review to clarify responsibilities consistently across the country - findings will be implemented from 1/4/15.
 - Severe Weather Plan:
 - Operational Status Alerts are issued by KCC - is BPC signed up to this? *Note. This will be checked. The office gets road closure notifications and in winter some reports on what is or has been going on but the Clerk is not sure if this is the same system. The Clerk gets most of her bad weather warnings from another source.*
 - Some suggested questions for Parish Councils to consider in preparation for severe weather:
 - How do you get information? *Note. Checking .*
 - How is this information communicated within the parish? *Note. Road closures are advertised on the website, Facebook and community alerts. If enough notice is given it is put on local noticeboards and (but rarely) included in the Downs Mail. There is no specific policy to share such information it is considered that this type of community notification is covered by the Community Inclusion policy. Other information is also notified to the public for example in December DM page is an article about salt bins and using the contents on the public highway. A lengthier explanation on when and how to do this, with a link to the KCC website, is placed on the website when bad weather is forecasted.*
 - Do you know who is available to help? *Note. The office has the contact details of the farmer that deals with snow clearance otherwise contact is made through the KCC contact centre. The Clerk has contacted the Kent4x4response organisation to see if it is possible to advertise their existence in case of need during severe weather (e.g. snow at Walderslade). The office is aware of the KCC Emergency Planning Department etc.*
 - Do you know who and/or where parish may be particularly vulnerable? *Note. Common sense is used however the parish council decided, for logistical purposes) not to produce its own response plan and so it does not keep a list of vulnerable persons.*
 - How do you respond to bad weather in your parish? *Note. Commonsense is used.*

- How do you coordinate the response in the parish? *Note. BPC does not become involved in this.*
- How do you share information? *Note. Generally the website, Facebook and now community alerts.*
- How do you help people whose homes have been affected by flooding or power outages? *Note. BPC does not become involved in this.*
- What information and support do you need to help you respond better? *Note. Advance and accurate warning of bad weather. KCC pays for very detailed reports so that it knows when to send out its gritters and it would be good to have sight of this report.*
- Salt and Salt Bins:
 - Salt bins are currently being filled. Will now only be filled once a year unless requested to fill otherwise. *Note. This is a change in previous policy so the parish council should use the website, Facebook and community alert system to remind residents to report when salt bins are nearly empty.*
 - Has BPC asked for salt spreader and bag of salt from KCC? *Note. This has been investigated by the office. In the past a salt bag was obtained for a particularly bad site however permanent salt bins were then placed near the site so this was cancelled. Salt spreader and salt bag work when it is a small village when there is a central point but not for such a spread out parish.*
 - Salt spreading by KCC is prioritised - has BPC notified KCC of main arterial routes (Richard Emmett). *Note. Yes and it also prioritised the roads in the parish to try to ensure that really busy roads that were not bus routes got a visit before a smaller close.*
 - If residents spread salt or clear snow outside their property boundary are they insured? Advice on wording in insurance policy available from KCC.

Item 8.6 KCCH, T & W survey

No response has so far been received from any resident and one councillor has responded. Councillors that offered to undertake the work (Cllrs Bob Hinder and Paul Dengate) are asked to submit their views.

Item 10 Draft Budget 2015/2016. Purpose of report: Decision.

Environment Committee Budget 2015/2016

1516Env -
02/10/2014

INCOME

Ref.	Description	Code	Budget 2014/15	Forecast income to 31/03/15
✓	Drawn from reserves or precept		2,920	2,452
Total			2,920	2,452

Forecast budgets

Budget 2015/16	Budget 2016/17	Budget 2017/18	Budget 2018/19

%
increase

EXPENDITURE

Ref.	Description	Code	Budget 2014/15	Forecast income to 31/03/15
✓	Coach tour	30	0	0
3.2	Street maintenance	109	2,500	2,152
✓	Roundabout maintenance	108	420	300
Total			2,920	2,452

Budget 2015/16	Budget 2016/17	Budget 2017/18	Beget 2018/19
375	380	0	385
2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
308	315	321	327
2,808	2,815	2,821	3,212

Priority

Important

Desirable

Desirable

2.8

3.2	Various (Parish C Act 1957, s1:RTR Act 1984 s72 etc.)	Street maintenance including barriers, signs, litter etc. Env. Committee has an agreed policy/procedure/projects for allocating the budget. No budget to be spent without these being followed.
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Ref 3.2 Street Maintenance Schedule

Clerk's note. Members were investigating the possibility of taking on the soft landscape maintenance, currently undertaken by KCCH,T&W, of the parish. Rather than undertake this members asked for details of the additional cost of another maintenance cut in the Walderslade area and this is provided below.

Cost of an additional maintenance cut at Walderslade.

KCCH,T&W would require BPC to have an additional cut for all the soft landscape areas in Walderslade and Lordswood. This would therefore include shrub beds, urban hedge and rose beds. An extra cut has been priced out as £10,232.73 plus an additional, it is likely, 10% management charge = £10,817.41.

KCCH,T&W has confirmed that if BPC took on full responsibility for the soft landscaping in the parish then it would have to indemnify KCC from all claims so in other words it will take on full liability and so must have adequate insurance and risk assessments in place.

KCCH,T&W would issue an annual grant being awarded notification and this would allow the parish council to opt out of the agreement if it wished. The benchmark grant will vary from year to year (up or down) and so there would be the risk that if the parish council entered into, for example, a 3 year contract to get best value it would not be able to suddenly cancel the agreement with the contractor if the value of the benchmark grant dropped. At the very least it will face a penalty for withdrawing early.

Two residents have been complaining about the poor maintenance in the Walderslade area and whilst they were being kept updated on the situation the Clerk took the opportunity to ask their view on whether they would be willing to pay a little extra on their precept if this got them a second cut. Both residents emphatically said no and were very much against the double taxation issue.

Clerk's summary of financial impact. The following would need confirming from KCC if members decide that they wish to proceed but from the information provided this would be the forecast impact

BPC takes on all soft landscaping for the parish and arranges a second maintenance cut at Walderslade.	
KCC Grant less than £13,500, guesstimate from Clerk	£13,200
Total Income	£13,200
Cost of maintenance (using current KCC contractors but it could go out to general tender) in the region of	£28,000 - £30,000
Additional office costs to manage (52 hrs)	£1,000
Total expenditure	£29,000 - £31,000
Difference between income and expenditure	£15,800 - £17,800

Item 11 MBC Local Plan. *Purpose of report: Information.*

Training Gypsy and Travellers

If anyone had been to previous training there was no new information from this session ! They reiterated their efforts to find new sites in the latest troll of the Borough with no success. I suspect that this session was carried out in order to show in the Local Plan application that efforts are being made to address this problem.

We heard in quite a lot of detail the problems that are occurring in the Headcorn area and how they are trying to address them.

We were taken through 3 recent appeals that have occurred where the authority have refused permission and the main point that came out from these is that the inspectorate is leaning toward the applicant on grounds of education, health and the low need for sustainability. Appeals were upheld but what is interesting is that the appeals were allowed with only temporary permission – this on the grounds that the authority needs to do more to find permanent sites where the families could then be moved to.

The current figure for the authority is a need for 187 sites and it is clear that they do not have enough to meet the need for the next 5 year period.

New government discussion on possible changes to the criteria of what constitutes a Gypsy and Traveller family are ongoing but no changes look possible in the immediate future.

The only area that has under occupancy at present is with the showground personnel at Detling and a question was asked – but not answered – as to why this ground could not be used to help cover the deficit.

Bob and Wendy Hinder