

BOXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

www.boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk



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Beechen Hall
Wildfell Close
Walderslade
Chatham
Kent ME5 9RU

To Parish Councillors, members of the public and press.

Date 26 May 2015

Members are hereby summoned and notice is given that a **Meeting of the Parish Council** will be held on **1 June 2015** at the **European School of Osteopathy, Boxley, ME14 3DZ** commencing at 7.30 p.m.

- | | Time guide |
|---|---|
| 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 Annual Parish Council Meeting of 11 May 2015. | (7.33) |
| To consider the minutes and if in order sign as a true record (pages 3-6). | |
| 4. Matters Arising From the Minutes. | (7.35) |
| 4.1 | Minute 2750/9.1 Boxley Warren Awards for All application. Clerk to complete work when possible and will liaising with Cllr Harwood. |
| 4.2 | Minute 2750/9.2 Boxley Warren/Pilgrims Way. Road works to improve the junction planned for 22 July 2015. |
| 4.3 | Minute 2750/9.3 Code of Conduct Complaints 3 month deadline, report (page 6). |
| 4.4 | Any other matters arising from the minutes which are not on the agenda. |
| 5. Report from the PCSO and Police Issues. | (7.45) |
| Report and Crime statistics see will be supplied at the meeting. | |
| Adjournment to enable members of the public to address the meeting. | (7.55) |
| 6. Draft Minutes of Recent Committee Meetings. | (8.05) |
| For the parish council to receive the minutes. Members are allowed to ask questions of the Committee Chairmen but may not initiate a discussion. | |
| 6.1 | Environment Committee meeting 11 May 2015 see report (pages 6-7) |
| 6.2 | Environment Committee meeting 18 May 2015 see report (pages 7-12). |
| 6.3 | F&GP Committee 19 May 2015 see report (pages 12-14). |
| 6.4 | Annual Meeting of the Parish see report (pages 14-15). |
| 7. Finance. | (8.10) |
| 7.1 | Payments made out of meeting 01.04.15 – 30.04.15 see report (pages 15-17). |
| 7.2 | Receipts for the period 01.04.15 – 26.05.15 see report (pages 17-18). |
| 7.3 | Account balances as at 26.05.15 to be supplied at meeting. |
| 7.4 | To authorise payment of accounts (list to be supplied at meeting). |
| 7.5 | Internet Banking. To receive a verbal update on setting up the account. |
| 7.6 | To identify a volunteer to undertake the next Parish Councillor Internal Audit (approximately September 2015). |

8. **2014/2015 End of Year Return.** (8.20)
To receive the recommendation of the F&GP Committee that the parish council agree and sign the End of Year Return see report (pages 18-21).
9. **Policies and Procedures.** (8.25)
Lobbying and predetermination (review) see report (pages 22-23).
10. **Reports from Borough and County Councillors.** (8.30)
Our Ward councillors are invited to report and discuss matters affecting the parish.
11. **Reports from councillors/office.** (8.40)
Members/staff who have attended any meeting on behalf of the parish council are invited to give a brief summary.
11.1 Police/Parish Liaison Meeting Thursday 21 May 2015 see report (page 24).
11.2 Maidstone's Civic and Freedom Parade and Civic. To receive a verbal report from Cllr Bob Hinder.
12. **Matters for Decision.** (8.48)
To consider any issues, such as attendance at meetings or identified on the evening.
12.1 Grove Green Community Hall. Change to Charitable Incorporated Organisation. To receive a verbal report from Cllr Vic Davies.
12.2 SMART (South Maidstone Action for Roads and Transport) meeting Thurs 11 June at 7.30, The Vine Church, Boughton Lane see report (page 24).
13. **Matters for Information.** (9.06)
13.1 KALC Parish News.
13.2 WWG has received a £3,800 grant (50% of costs) towards the purchase and installation of a unit at Beechen Hall.
14. **Next Meeting.** (9.07)
Meeting of the Parish Council on Monday 6 July 2015 at Weaving Village Hall, Weaving Street ME14 5JP commencing at 7.30 pm. Councillors' reports and requests for items to be included on the agenda to be submitted no later than 29 June 2015.

Pauline Bowdery
Clerk to the Council.

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.

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.

Items to be returned to a future agenda: None.

**Supporting agenda papers for the Meeting of the Parish Council
Monday 1 June 2015
The Chairman will assume that these have been read prior to the meeting.**

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

**Item 3 Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held at Beechen Hall,
Wildfell Close, Walderslade on Monday 11 May 2015 commencing at 7.30 pm.**

Councillors present: Mr Ivor Davies (Chairman), Mr V Davies, Mrs P Brooks, Mr P Dengate, Mr M Hinchliffe, Mr B Hinder, Mr D Hollands, Mrs K Macklin, Mr G Smith, Mrs A Spain, Mr A Springate, Mr P Sullivan and Mrs M Waller, together with the Clerk, four members of the public/press and PCSO Day.

1. Apologies and absences.

Cllrs Wendy Hinder, Harwood (MBC meeting). Borough Councillor D Butler.

2. Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying.

None received.

3. Election of Chairman.

Cllr Brooks nominated, with Cllr Vic Davies seconding – **Cllr Ivor Davies**. There being no other nominations this was **agreed**. The Chairman thanked fellow councillors and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

4. To Elect a Vice-Chairman.

Cllr Waller nominated, with Cllr Dengate seconding – **Cllr Brooks**. There being no other nominations this was **agreed**.

5. To Appoint Committees, Committee Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen.

Committees their Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen were appointed.

5.1 & 5.2 Environment Committee

Cllr P Brooks
Cllr I Davies
Cllr P Dengate (Vice-chair)
Cllr B Hinder
Cllr W Hinder (Chair)
Cllr D Hollands
Cllr A Springate
Cllr M Waller

5.3 & 5.4 Estates Committee

Cllr P Brooks
Cllr I Davies
Cllr V Davies (Chair)
Cllr P Dengate
Cllr B Hinder (Vice-chair)
Cllr G Smith
Cllr A Spain
Cllr P Sullivan

5.5 & 5.6 Finance and General Purposes Committee (F&GP Committee)

Cllr P Brooks
Cllr I Davies (Chair)
Cllr V Davies
Cllr B Hinder (Vice-chair)
Cllr W Hinder
Cllr P Dengate
Cllr G Smith

6. Appoint Representatives to External Bodies.

Grove Green Community Association
Kent Association of Local Councils

Cllr Vic Davies
Cllr Ivor Davies, Cllr Dennis Hollands and Cllr Wendy Hinder (reserve).

Action with Communities in Rural Kent

Cllr Ivor Davies.

(ACRK)

Sandling Village Hall (2 Trustees)
Vinters Valley Nature Reserve (Trustee)
Boxley Warren LNR
Mid Kent Steering Group

Cllr Waller and Cllr Dennis Hollands.
Cllr Vic Davies.
Cllr Tony Harwood.
Cllr Smith.

Representatives **noted** that if they were unable to attend a meeting then it was their responsibility to send apologies. Representatives were also asked to provide regular reports to the parish council.

7. **Inspection of Deeds and Trust Documents.**

Noted that the originals are stored at the council's solicitors (Whiteheads Monckton's) with the parish office retaining copies.

Item 10 was taken at this point.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.58 pm for a member of the public to ask what action the parish council was taking on the new Lordswood Urban Extension planning application. A copy of the Environment Committee agenda was supplied and the member of the public was invited to attend the Environment Committee meeting on 18 May. The meeting reconvened at 8.04 pm.

8. **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 13 April 2015.**

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

9. **Matters Arising From the Minutes.**

9.1 Minute 2737/4.1 Boxley Warren Awards for All application. Clerk to complete work when possible and will liaise with Cllr Harwood. **Noted.**

9.2 Minute 2737/4.4 Boxley Warren/Pilgrims Way. Road works to improve the junction are now planned for 22 July 2015. **Noted.**

9.3 Minute 2738/15 Code of Conduct Complaints 3 month deadline. No update on the decision taken by MBC was available. **Noted.** Members expressed their disappointment that the MBC's solicitor's recommendation was to have an open-ended deadline for complaints.

9.4 Minute 2737/4.5 Councillor presence at Beechen Hall 7 May 2015. Cllr Dengate congratulated the office on the council's excellent displays and the Chairman endorsed his sentiments. Cllr Bob Hinder, on behalf of the Friends of Boxley Warren, added his thanks for the group's stand (one of two featuring the woodland volunteer groups). The Chairman commented that the displays had attracted the interest of a good number of residents with whom office staff and councillors were able to engage in conversation after they had voted. The exercise had proved very successful.

9.5 Any other matters arising from the minutes which are not on the agenda. There were none.

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

PCSO Megan Day introduced herself to Councillors and members of the public. Crime statistics and a report were **received** and **noted**. Discussion took place on the lack of cross-border exchange of information as PCSO Day had not received information on a recent case of arson close to the Medway boundary. The PCSO said she would look into this urgently. PCSO Day had been unsuccessful in obtaining the loan of a mobile camera to be erected in Lordswood to monitor car crime; she was advised to contact MBC's Community Safety Unit as they might be able to help.

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

Received and noted:

11.1 Environment Committee meeting 13 April 2015.

11.2 Environment Committee meeting 20 April 2015. A minor change to item 7.2, "Dovehill Wood" instead of "Dove Hill allotments", was requested and agreed.

11.3 Estates Committee meeting 21 April 2015. Minor changes to item 4.1 were requested and agreed.

12. **Finance.**

- 12.1 Payments made out of meeting. 14.04.15 – 05.05.15. **Noted.**
- 12.2 Receipts for the period 01.04.14 – 05.05.15. **Noted.**
- 12.3 Account balances as at 05.05.15. **Noted.**
- 12.4 Payments of accounts. None were presented.
- 12.5 Internet Banking. Members **received** and **noted** the Clerk's report that councillors' mandates were being collected. **Action: all councillors.**
- 12.6 Parish Services Scheme Funding Agreement. **Ratified** the signing of the documents by the Chairman and Clerk to meet an impending deadline.
- 12.7 Boxley Village Green and South Wall. The Chairman proposed seconded Cllr Dengate that **the Parish Council allows the Estates Committee, in consultation with the RFO, to decide on the number of quotations sought (Financial Regulations 12.3 (f)) to carry out the repair work to the wall. Agreed.**

13. **Public Engagement.**

Lengthy discussion took place on the various issues and it was **agreed:**

- The flyer with general, not individual, information was available for councillors to deliver if they wished. In an election year the Clerk will advise when such delivery should cease. **Action: office.**
- When possible the general contact details and the flyer will be included as an item in the parish council's regular Downs Mail page. **Action: office.**
- Councillors could have contact cards to hand out to residents etc. but they were not to be delivered through letterboxes.
- A parish councillor group photograph, with names, will be included on the parish council's website. Proposed Cllr Dengate seconded Cllr Hinchliffe.

Cllr Hinchliffe withdrew his request concerning including resumés on the website. The Chairman thanked members for their constructive input and support for this initiative to make the parish council seem less remote and to engage residents more.

14. **Policies and Procedures**

There were none for review

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

Received and **noted** the written report from Borough Councillor Wendy Hinder which congratulated Cllr Greer on his re-election and Cllr Butler's appointment as Deputy Mayor. She raised some concerns about lorry parking and fly-tipping and would be monitoring these issues.

16. **Strengthening parish and town council accountability. DCLG consultation on extending the remit of the Local Government Ombudsman to larger parish and town councils.**

After discussion to was **agreed** that the parish council's response would be that it believed that the Local Government Ombudsman's jurisdiction should be extended to all parish councils, not just those considered large, thus allowing residents a right to an independent review of their complaint where sufficiently grave.

17. **Reports from councillors/office.**

17.1 Maidstone Area KALC Meeting, 29 April 2015 Cllr Ivor Davies's report covering HGV parking, Economic Development Strategy, Local Plan, Planning and Parish Charter was **received** and **noted.**

17.2 Cllr Vic Davies gave a report on the Vinters Valley Trust AGM and notified members that he had again been appointed Chairman of the Trust. The Chairman congratulated him on the appointment.

18. **Matters for Decision.**

18.1 Maidstone's Civic and Freedom Parade and Civic Service Saturday 23 May, 2015. Cllr Bob Hinder to attend. **Action: office.**

18.2 Pilot Local Warden Support Officer Scheme. After discussion it was **agreed** that the parish council would apply to be in the pilot scheme. **Action: office.**

19. **Matters for Information.**

Received and noted.

19.1 NALC Direction of Travel (April 2015)

19.2 2015 KALC Membership Survey. **Action: Chairman and Clerk.**

19.3 Bredhurst Wood Fayre, 30th & 31st May. Cllr Bob Hinder notified members that FoBW will be having a presence at the event and would be taking the office display. **Action: office.**

19.4 Cllr Bob Hinder notified members that Boxley Gardening Society had asked whether the allotments could be open to the public for the Open Garden event on Sunday 14 June. He would make himself available to supervise and he asked for a display to be arranged. The Chairman also volunteered to be in attendance. **Action: Cllrs Ivor Davies, Bob Hinder and office.**

19.5 Parish Independent Remuneration Panel Report.

Boxley War Memorial, Cllr Smith raised an issue about the names of the WW2 fallen and he was assured that they were listed on the memorial.

20. **Next Meeting.**

Monday 1 June 2015 at the European School of Osteopathy, Boxley ME14 3DA. Councillor requests for agenda items are to be submitted no later than 26 May 2015.

Meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.

Item 4. Matters Arising From the Minutes. *Purpose of item: information.*

Item 4.3 Code of Conduct Complaints 3 month deadline

MBC have informed the Clerk of the removal of the three month rule with effect from 23 May 2015 with the coming into force of its new Constitution.

Item 6. Draft Minutes of Recent Committee Meetings. *Purpose of item: information.*

Item 6.1 Minutes of the Environment Committee on Monday 11 May 2015 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade, commencing at 9.40 p.m.

Councillors present: Mr P Dengate (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks, Mr Ivor Davies, Mr M Hinchliffe, Mr B Hinder, Mr D Hollands, Mr A Springate and Mrs M Waller together with the Clerk.

1. **Apologies and absences**

Cllr Wendy Hinder (MBC meeting)

2. **Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying**

None received.

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

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

15/502203/FULL – Erection of single rear storey rear extension at Shene Cottage, 5 Pilgrims View, Boxley ME14 3DQ. **Ratified** the Assistant Clerk's decision after consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair out of meeting of Do not wish to object.

15/502550/Full - Removal of Condition 9 existing buildings within the site to be removed) of planning permission MA/13/1712 at Court Lodge Farm, The Street, Boxley

ME14 3DX. **Ratified** the Assistant Clerk's decision after consulting the committee, to confirm that Condition 7 was sent in error by MBC and that there should only be a decision on Condition 9 which was Wish to see refused but not reported to the planning committee for the reason set out below:

- To prevent overdevelopment of the site which is set within the AONB and to safeguard the character and appearance of the surrounding area. As nothing has changed in this respect since the condition was imposed, there appears to be no good material reason to have it removed.

15/502861/TPO –Application to remove deadwood and thin canopy by approx 20% of 2 No Oak trees at 25 Lombardy Drive, Maidstone ME14 5TA. **Ratified** the Assistant Clerk's decision after consulting the committee – Do not wish to object defer to the views of the Landscape Officer.

15/502863/TPO – Application to prune back 1 Oak canopy to leave 5-6m radial spread at Vinters Valley Nature Reserve Maidstone ME14 5TA. **Ratified** the Assistant Clerk's decision after consulting the committee – Do not wish to object defer to the views of the Landscape Officer.

15/503076/FULL – Erect conservatory to the rear of the property at 25 Clarence Court, Weaving ME14 5UP. *Do not wish to object.*

15/502881/FULL – Replacement rear extension at Linden Cottage, Boarley Lane, Sandling ME14 3BU. *Do not wish to object.*

15/503178/FULL – L Shaped Stable block for personal use at Willow Farm, Tyland Lane, Sandling ME14 3BL. *Do not wish to object. However members have requested that if the planning officer is minded to approve then a condition is imposed for personal use only and not commercial.*

15/503248/FULL. Erection of rear extension, changes to fenestration and insertion of roof lights at 32 Cornflower Close Weaving Kent ME14 5UL. *Do not wish to object.*

4. **Next Meeting**

Next full environment meeting 18 May at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Meeting closed at 9.45 pm.

Item 6.2 Minutes of the Environment Committee on Monday 18 May 2015 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.30 pm.

Councillors present: Mrs W Hinder (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks, Mr Ivor Davies, Mr P Dengate, Mr B Hinder, Mr M Hinchliffe, Mr A Springate, Mrs M Waller together with the Clerk (until 8.30pm), Assistant Clerk and four members of the public

1. **Apologies and absences**

Cllrs Dennis Hollands (Unwell).

2. **Declaration of Interests, dispensations, predetermination or Lobbying**

All councillors were lobbied on item 8.3 and Cllr Dengate was predetermined on planning application 15/503359/OUT.

3. **Minutes of the Meetings of 13 & 20 April 2015**

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

Items 8.3 and planning application 15/503359/OUT were taken at this point to enable the members of public to speak and for the Clerk to answer any questions councillors/public may have.

4. **Matters Arising From Minutes**

- 4.1 Minute 2744/8.4 Parking at St Michaels Close. The Assistant Clerk notified members' that KCC did not consider there was a need for a dropped kerb crossing outside MEP and whilst the parking issue was acknowledged the site visits had shown that the entrances to the two units were not blocked by vehicles and so KCC would be taking no further action.
- 4.2 Minute 2744/8.5 Dropped Kerb at Sandling Lane Response from KCC. **Noted** additional signs will be installed to alert motorists that a new pedestrian point is in operation.
- 4.3 Minute 2744/8.6 Westfield Sole Road Not suitable for HGV signs. **Noted** new signs are on order.
- 4.4 Minute 2744/8.7 Parking charges at the Cobtree Manor Park car park. **Noted** MBC's response that the proposed charging would be introduced.
- 4.5 Minute 2744/11 Installation of hard standing/apron at Boxley Road noticeboard. A cost for the work is being sourced. **Noted.**
- 4.6 Any other matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda. There were none.

There were three members of the public present for planning application 15/503359/OUT.

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

15/503359/OUT. Outline application with all matters reserved for residential development (approx 89 dwellings) plus open space, biomass plant and access road (plus emergency access) (Revised Scheme) at Land East Of Gleamingwood Drive Lordswood Kent.

Boxley Parish Council considers that there are no fundamental changes to the current application to warrant a change to MBC's previous decision on MA/13/1797 which was to refuse permission.

The Parish Council strongly objects to this application and would like see it refused and reported to the planning committee for the reasons set out below:

The development of this greenfield site is inherently unsustainable.

The Lordswood urban development has a clear strong outer perimeter at Gleamingwood Drive where urbanisation stops. Beyond this perimeter there is only sporadic development in the form of rural dwellings and hamlets. The introduction of 89 residential dwellings cannot be anything but unacceptable urbanisation in undeveloped countryside.

The impact of dominating 2 to 3 storey buildings into a countryside setting will have a harmful and detrimental impact on the countryside, ancient woodland and character of the area including the loss of important wildlife habitats. It is therefore considered that this development is contrary to NPPF section 11.109/112/113/116/118/120 conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

Access to the site is through ancient woodland that has previously been protected from development as it is a buffer zone between the urbanisation of Lordswood and the countryside of a strategic gap which stops the urbanisations of Walderslade/Lordswood connecting to Hempstead Valley.

The proposed road layout will result in loss of Ancient Woodland and the sub-dividing of the area into compartments which will be detrimental to wildlife. The introduction and impact of human and pet, especially cat, activity in the woodlands will have a harmful and eroding impact on the wildlife and wildlife habitats including those of the Dormouse population. The area being developed has a thriving bat population and so development will have an adverse impact on this protected species. There is currently some human intrusion in the woodland margin areas fronting Gleamingwood Drive and Westfield Sole Road and this would significantly increase with the proposed development.

The site is in the setting of the North Downs AONB and it is considered that any development is contrary to NPPF section 11.115 "Great weight should be given to

conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty”.

The introduction of additional light pollution and noise pollution will have an unacceptable and urbanising impact on the local countryside.

The government’s interactive mapping website (www.magic.gov.uk) shows the proposed site for development is replanted ancient woodland and not a general plantation as indicated in the application’s accompanying reports. It is considered that the proposed development will therefore be contrary to NPPF Section 11.118 “Planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodland and the loss of aged veteran trees found outside ancient woodland”. Attention is drawn to the Natural England Standing Advice for Ancient Woodland (SAAW 2012).

The introduction of the access/egress highway infrastructure across ancient woodland is also contrary to section 11.118.

The applicant’s inclusion of a biomass facility is considered in this case unsustainable and over optimistic for the following reasons:

- At its most optimistic figure it will initially serve only 11% of homes at the site. Whilst there is an expressed wish to increase this facility unless the infrastructure to supply heat is supplied at the development stage it is unlikely to happen.
- The fuel for the biomass facility will come from the replanted ancient woodland area and from another close by ancient woodland site. Whilst the parish council is not averse to seeing woodlands managed as a ‘cash crop’ it questions the practicality of running such a business immediately adjacent to residential dwellings.
- Any expansion of the biomass energy supply to the remainder of the development will require fuel from other sources and the supporting documentation omits any mention of how the biomass facility will be run in the future and whether it will be set up as a separate business etc. There is also no information on or any forecast of the increased heavy vehicle traffic that will be required to feed the plant.

Residents living in the northern part of the site would be faced with:

- A 370m walk to access the green open area;
- A 750m walk to leave the actual development.

Pedestrian access to the local facilities, including schools and health centre will require from:

- The north residential area a 1.75km – 2Km walk or
- from the main development area a 1.4 – 1.65 km walk.

The parish council objects to the misleading information presented in the Transport Assessment which calculates the distance to the local facilities from the site entrance and not the residential areas. It is therefore highly likely that residents will rely on motorcars to access local services making the development unsustainable.

There is clear local evidence that residents do not like to walk through wooded areas, even adjacent to roads, the nearby Walderslade Woods development is a residential development in a wooded area and reliance on cars is much higher than in the adjacent non-wooded areas.

NPPF Section 6 delivering a wide choice of quality homes sets certain standards for this type of greenfield development. It is considered that this application fails to meet these standards. Specifically section 49 sustainable development: 50 sustainable inclusive and mixed communities; 53 development would cause harm to local area; 55 sustainable development in rural areas “*where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities*”.

The Transport Assessment Statement regularly quotes the Medway Plan Policy T2. The actual road network that residents would use to access the motorway network is within Maidstone and KCC. It is considered that insufficient consideration/research has been undertaken on:

- The impact on Walderslade Woods Road (A2045), the M2 feeder roads and the heavily used narrow, winding Westfield Sole Road.
- The ability of the junction of Gleamingwood Drive and Lordswood Lane to cope with the additional usage.

Although there has been a minor adjustment to the location of the entrance it is considered that the proposed entrance is still unacceptable. Gleamingwood Drive is poorly designed with inadequate vision splays, on-street car parking and multiple junctions on a long bend. Due to its poor design any additional traffic introduced into this system will have an adverse impact on the safety of current users. A shared pedestrian/cycling route exists in Medway. The MBC section of Gleamingwood Drive does not have a cycle path and there are no, as stated in supporting documents, *"quieter cycle routes linking the site to Capstone Farm Country Park & ski centre or Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre"*.

This application will contravene ENV35 of the MBC borough wide local plan and BNE34 of the Medway plan as development would have an adverse and harmful impact on the character of the area and the loss of a local amenity. It is considered that the economic and social benefits of this application will not outweigh the overwhelming priority to conserve the area's landscape, which has already seen excessive development and a massive loss of wildlife.

The draft Section 106 legal document is worthless. The application makes minor reference to the supply of affordable housing but the size and scale of the suggested residential dwellings bear no relationship to affordable housing. The draft section 106 document has two options which is the supply of affordable housing or, when the developer demonstrates that this would not be viable none will be supplied. The omission of smaller units from the submitted plans speaks volumes.

The application indicates that if the development is allowed then this would safeguard and allow more management of the surrounding Ancient Woodlands and yet the Section 106 statement makes no reference to this and without a strong legal document safeguarding funds for future maintenance the statements concerning this are invalid.

It is considered that the planning application fails to meet the three dimensions, as identified in NPPF Achieving sustainable development, namely

- **Economic role** – the land in question is not the right type nor is it in the right place.
- **Social role** – there is an in-balance (towards larger houses) in the mixture of properties put forward with an inadequate and already overloaded supporting local service infrastructure.
- **Environmental role** - The development will destroy biodiversity due to the loss of ancient woodland and the development of a greenfield site.

The meeting was opened to allow the members of public speak and all three supported and **agreed** with the Committee's views. At 8.25pm the Clerk and the members of the public left the meeting.

CLlr Dengate requested that KCC H, W & T reconsider their decision on the transport survey based on the lapsed time between applications. **Action office letter to KCC.**

Members requested a check with MBC on the TPO status of this ancient woodland. **Action Office.**

15/502789/FULL – Change of use from a dwelling house (C3) to a residential care home (C2) at 8 Tollgate Way, Sandling, ME14 3DF. *WITHDRAWN*

15/502812/ENVSCR – EIA Screening Opinion: Change of use from a dwelling house (C3) to a residential care home (C2) at 8 Tollgate Way, Sandling, ME14 3DF. *WITHDRAWN*

15/503218/TPO – TPO application to fell 1 Silver Birch at 15 Brownelow Copse, Walderslade ME5 9JQ. *Defer to the views of the Landscape Officer.*

15/503387/ADV. Advertisement Consent for 5 non-illuminated sponsorship sign at roundabout at Westfield Sole Road Walderslade. *Wish to object for the reasons set out below:*

- Roundwood roundabout is currently maintained and paid for by Boxley Parish Council and has been for several years following a grant from County Cllr Paul Carter and funds from Borough Councillor Wendy Hinders devolved budget to improve the grassed area of this roundabout.
- This is a busy roundabout and members feel these signs would be a distraction to motorists.

If the officer is minded to approve members have asked for the following caveats to be implemented:

- If the signs are damaged in any way they are to be removed and replaced within 14 days.
- KCC takes on the responsibility of maintaining and funding the roundabout.

15/503458/TPO. TPO application to crown reduce 1 Oak tree by 1-1.5m, remove two lowest limbs of 1 Hornbeam, crown reduction of 1 Pear tree by 3-4ft at 8 Travertine Road Boxley Kent ME5 9LQ. *Defer to the views of the Landscape Officer.*

MC/15/0550 – Revised drawings for the construction of a 4 bedroomed detached dwelling with associated detached carport/log store at Highview Farm, Lordswood Lane, ME5 8JP. *Noted*

15/503655/FULL. Variation of Condition (12) (BREEM) of Planning Permission MA/14/503218/FULL (Erection of depot/workshop building (Class B2) with ancillary offices and sales; access, parking, vehicle washing facilities and landscaping; and including rooftop installation of photovoltaic panels.) - to allow submission of final 'Very Good' certificate within 6 months of first occupation at Brooklyn Yard Chatham Road Sandling Kent ME14 3AW. *Do not wish to object.*

15/503636/TPO. TPO Application to fell 1 Sweet chestnut at 6 Micawber Close, Walderslade ME5 9JZ. *Defer to the views of the Landscape Officer.*

15/503486. Removal of current shed and construction of open fronted storage unit 30m x 9m x 4.5m high. Storage of Banger racing cars at Broad View Farm, Blind Lane Lidsing.

As there was insufficient information supplied to make an informed decision, members asked to defer the decision to allow the office to talk to the planning officer and a decision will be made out of meeting after consulting the committee.

6. Planning Decisions, Appeals and Appeals Decisions

None.

7. Volunteer Groups

7.1 **Received** and **noted** a report from Rob Burrows Chairman of WWG.

7.2 **Received** and **noted** a report from Friends of Boxley Warren Chairman, Bob Hinder. He also added the groups thanks to the office staff for all their hard work in preparing the stands during Election Day. He also passed on his thanks in advance for their help with the stands for the Bredhurst Wood Fayre which will be held on the

weekend of 30 – 31 May, 2015 where the group has been invited to attend. Cllr Bob Hinder also confirmed that Sunday 24 May task day has been cancelled.

8. Highways and Byways

8.1 HGV parking on residential roads. The meeting received Cllr Ivor Davies's report on the Area Meeting of KALC. The parish council's request for support was well received by members attending and Maidstone KALC would be offering support. Cllr Martin Hinchliffe suggested that the Parish Council waits to see what happens with Kent KALC as they appear to be taking up the issues on a county wide basis and review any updates available. Cllr Dengate requested the opportunity for the Parish Council to discuss this issue with the new MP Helen Whatley, Cllr Ivor Davies explained that he had already invited her to address the Parish Council. **Agreed** if nothing heard then a new invitation would be sent to the MP after the September recess. **Action: office.**

Item to be returned to the agenda in September unless information is available before this date. **Action: office.**

8.1.2 Petition. **Noted** a draft is with Cllrs Martin Hinchliffe, Paul Dengate and Ivor Davies for approval.

8.1.3 Report of the KALC meeting with KCCH, W & T Interim Director. **Received and noted.**

8.2 Litter picking. Members **received** and **noted** the Clerk's report that MBC Street Cleansing team is restructuring to provide cover over a 7 day period instead of 5 with a resulting increase of cleansing in the rural areas. Members agreed to monitor this new system and bring back to the agenda if there are any issues. **Action: Cllrs and office.**

8.3 Bike barrier at footpath linking Fitzwilliam Road and Camomile Drive. After consideration of the situation and the report from the Maidstone CSU Cllr Dengate proposed and members **agreed** in principle to a contribution, dependent on costs, towards the purchase and installation of a barrier. **Action Clerk to investigate costs, other sources of funding and circulate to members.**

8.4 Repair work Boxley Road (Walderslade) **Noted.**

9 Policy and procedures review

Laminated planning advice sheets – **Noted** still fit for purpose.

10. Matters for Information

10.1 Parish Guide to Drainage 2015 **noted** electronic version available on request

11. Next Meeting

Next full environment meeting 8 June 2015 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.
Items for the agenda must be with the parish office no later than 29 May 2015.

Meeting closed at 9.07pm.

Item 6.3 Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade on Tuesday 19 May 2015 commencing at 7.35 p.m.

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

1. Apologies and non-attendance

None as all members were present.

2. Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying.

There were none.

3. **Minutes of the meeting of 10 March 2015**

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

4. **Matters Arising From the Minutes**

4.1 Minute 2735/4.2. Complaints form available to complete on website. This has now been activated and is working. **Noted.**

4.2 Minute 2735/4.4 New accounting software. Training has been undertaken by the Clerk & Assistant Clerk and the software was installed on 14 May. **Noted.**

4.3 Minute 2735/6 Website Review. No information/feedback was received from councillors. Cllr Dengate asked that a permanent sign up link for community alerts is established on the home page of the website. **Action: office.** The Chairman asked if more photographs could be placed in the gallery and councillors would be asked to supply them. **Action: councillors and office.**

4.5 Any other matters arising from the minutes, not on the agenda. There were none.

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

5. **Financial report.**

Members received a briefing on how the new style reports would gradually be introduced to members and committees. It was recognised that members would need to keep the office informed of whether that style report gave them the information that they felt was necessary.

5.1 Reconciliation of accounts as at 14 May 2015 **Received and agreed.**

5.2 Income/Expenditure report as at 14 May 2015 was not available but would be supplied to members out of meeting. **Action: Clerk.**

5.3 Investment Bonds. Members received notification of where funds were being transferred to. The Chairman noted that the Cooperative Bank funds were over the agreed £30,000 limit that was imposed by the parish council; the Clerk explained that salaries and also payment for the WWG unit were imminent and this figure would be quickly reduced. **Noted.** Two investments were due to mature just before or near to the next meeting and it was **agreed** that a decision on reinvestment could be undertaken out of meeting subject to the Clerk following the procedure already agreed for this action. **Action: Clerk and committee members.**

5.4 Minute 2735/4.3 Parish Councillor audit. Cllr Hinchliffe's audit was **Noted and received.** The Clerk was asked to amend the form as was recommended in the report. **Action: Clerk..**

5.5 Cooperative Account. Notification has been received that whilst free banking remains there was a reduction in interest rates and when interest would be attracted to the account. **Noted.**

6. **End of Year Accounts.**

6.1 Review 2014/15 budget v outturn. Members **received** the report.

6.2 **Received** a copy of the revised pages for the End of Year Return. The Clerk gave an explanation to members how the previous mistake had taken place. The Chairman supplied a spreadsheet which was also **received.** The Chairman proposed that **a recommendation is made to the parish council to sign the End of Year Return. Unanimously agreed.**

7. **Policies and procedures reviews**

7.1 Reserves Policy (review). The Clerk notified members that she would be submitting a briefing note on the way Earmarked Reserves should be identified and managed and it was **agreed** that, with some minor amendments now, the document is reviewed in six months. **Action: Clerk.**

7.2 The parish office has undertaken reviews of the Petty Cash and Payment of bills by Direct Debit and Standing Orders list policies and has judged them as still fit for purpose. **Noted.**

8. **Review of banking arrangements**

Signatures and mandates were being collected. **Action: Clerk.** It was planned to open the account in June.

9. **Personnel matters**

TOIL, training, leave and leave/sickness cover. The Clerk's update was **received** and **noted**.

10 **Grant Requests**

None received.

11 **Matters for Information**

Walderslade Woodlands Group Awards For All application. Members' were notified that the grant application for the new store had been successful.

12 **Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 14 July 2015 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Meeting closed at 8.53 p.m.

Item 6.4 Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish held at Kent Scouts Activity Centre, Lower Grange Farm, on Monday 13th April 2015 commencing at 7.00pm.

Clerk's note: The following are the draft minutes of the meeting which will be signed at the 2016 Annual Meeting of the Parish. Members' are asked for their views on the accuracy. The minutes will be written up in the minute book.

Present: Mr Ivor Davies (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks, Mr P Dengate, Mr M Hinchliffe, Mr B Hinder, Mrs W Hinder, Mr D Hollands, Mrs K Macklin, Mr G Smith, Mrs A Spain, Mr P Sullivan and Mrs M Waller together with the Clerk, Parish Clerical Officer, Borough Cllr D Butler and three members of the public/press.

Visitors: Mr T Harwood, Mr V Davies and Mr A Springate.

1. Apologies for absence.
County Councillors Paul Carter and Ian Chittenden, Rob Burrows – Walderslade Woodlands Group, Monty Knight-Olds – Grove Green Community Hall, Mr M Dickinson – Sandling Village Hall.
2. Minutes of last meeting.
The minutes were agreed and signed as a correct record.
3. Matters arising.
There were none.
4. Boxley Parish Council Chairman's Report.
The Chairman gave an overview of the work of the Parish Council during the past year. In this he made reference to the unveiling of a commemorative plaque at the war memorial to mark the centenary of the beginning of the Great War. Two trees representing Britain and Germany (Oak and Linden) were planted in Grove Green with the intention of erecting a similar plaque to mark the ending of the war.

Due to lack of a mandate from the community, the Parish Council had decided to take no further action on a Neighbourhood Development Plan unless circumstances changed.

The Chairman thanked all the volunteers and volunteer groups working within the parish for the benefit of residents. He also expressed thanks for the work of the Parish Council committees under the chairmanship of Wendy Hinder (Environment) and Vic Davies (Estates). Thanks were also given to the office and Beechen Hall staff.

5. Financial Report.
The Clerk reported that the Parish Council was about to enter its audit period where its books and paperwork were open for public inspection.

Work is underway to complete the End of Year Report for submission to the External Auditor. Copies will be made available on the website and from the parish office.

6. Reports were received from:
County Councillor Paul Carter
Dove Hill Allotments – Chairman of Working Group Bob Hinder
Friends of Boxley Warren – Chairman Bob Hinder
Vinters Valley Trust – Chairman Vic Davies
Walderslade Woodlands Group – Chairman Robert Burrows

7. Questions.
There were none.

8. Date of next meeting.
To be advised.

Item 7 Finance.

Clerk's briefing note.

The office needs to now convert its way of working to calendar months and has arranged to receive statements on the 1st of the month but this has caused a slight delay in taking off details. Members' will be supplied with the May 2015 details at the meeting.

One of the differences you will immediately have noted is that the bank accounts have been reported separately.

The reports produced here are a list rather than an analytical report and members will be consulted as to which they prefer. To that end a paper copy of the May 2015 summary report and the corresponding fuller report or reports (for the same period) will be supplied to members to consider and make comments on before the next parish council meeting. It may take a few months to settle on the report members prefer and which meets their needs.

On this occasion it has not been possible to place next to the report entries a reference number. This summary can only be produced in a pdf format and even when placed in a table it has not been possible to accurately place a reference number by the entry. If a member has a query they are asked to identify it by the date and payee name.

Item 7.1 Payments made out of meeting 01.04.15 – 30.04.15 **Cooperative Bank**

At: 13:48

Co-Op General Account

List of Payments made between 01/04/2015 and 30/04/2015

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Cheque Ref</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
01/04/2015	Mail Publications Ltd	3DD1	490.13		Publicity
08/04/2015	British Telecom	3DD4	81.31		British Telecom
13/04/2015	KCC (KCS)	BL2206374	126.00		KCC (KCS)
13/04/2015	Kent Wildlife Trust	B62080	46.00		Subscription
13/04/2015	ICO	3DD2	35.00		Subscription
13/04/2015	Scribe 2000 Ltd	B1504/43/1	294.00		Scribe License
13/04/2015	Rialtas Business Solutions	B24173	1,557.48		Omega Accounting Software
13/04/2015	ICCM	B4584	90.00		ICCM Subscription
13/04/2015	KCC (KCS)	B12206374	419.32		Pedestal/Photocopier/Lease
13/04/2015	Kent Association Local Council	501298	1,368.00		Annual Subscription
13/04/2015	Kent Association Local Council	501299	25.00		Councillor Training
21/04/2015	Mrs P Bowdery	BIMPREST55	115.31		Imprest Account
22/04/2015	Wide Fit Shoes	BIMPREST76	17.50	Rob Burrows - WWG	Boot Laces - WWG
22/04/2015	Robin Hood Service Station	BIMPREST76	17.09	Robert Burrows - WWG	Petrol - WWG
22/04/2015	Rob Burrows	BIMPREST76	6.75		Mileage for task day
22/04/2015	Mrs P Bowdery	BPC01	2,169.40		Salary
22/04/2015	Mrs A Candy	BPC03	554.13		Salary
22/04/2015	Ms D Davies	BPC05	32.50		Litter Picking
22/04/2015	Mr I Davies	BPC06	40.00		Chairman Allowance
22/04/2015	Mr V Davies	BPC07	33.46		Councillor Allowance PAYE
22/04/2015	Mr P Dengate	BPC08	25.66		Councillor Allowance
22/04/2015	Mrs M Fooks	BPC02	1,213.89		Salary
22/04/2015	Mr T Harwood	BPC09	33.46		Councillor Allowance PAYE
22/04/2015	Mr R Hinder	BPC10	33.46		Councillor Allowance PAYE
22/04/2015	Mrs W Hinder	BPC11	33.46		Councillor Allowance PAYE
22/04/2015	Mrs L Lake	BPC04	40.00		Downs Mail Delivery
22/04/2015	Mrs K Macklin	BPC12	41.66		Councillor Allowance PAYE
22/04/2015	Mr G Smith	BPC13	33.46		Councillor Allowance PAYE
22/04/2015	Mrs M Smith	BH01	510.59		Wages
22/04/2015	Mrs A Spain/Colney	BPC15	33.46		Councillor Allowance PAYE
22/04/2015	Mrs M Waller	BPC16	36.06		Councillor Allowance PAYE
22/04/2015	Mr B Douglas	BH05	202.27		Wages
22/04/2015	Mr J Read	BH02	202.27		Wages
22/04/2015	HMRC	577PW00105	1,430.93		PAYE
22/04/2015	EFT Receipts Ac	IT687085	98.35		Pension Contributions March
Total Payments			11,487.36		

HSBC

Printed on : 26/05/2015

Boxley Parish Council

Page No 1

At : 13:49

HSBC General Account**List of Payments made between 01/04/2015 and 30/04/2015**

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Cheque Ref</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorized Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
01/04/2015	Maidstone Borough Council	2DD1	538.48		Rates
13/04/2015	Co-Op General Account	102677	1,651.35		Beechen Hall
13/04/2015	SITA UK Ltd	2DD2	127.49		Refuse Collections
13/04/2015	Capital Cleaning (Kent) Ltd	102678	36.60		Sanitary
20/04/2015	Performing Rights Society Ltd	102679	258.02		Performing Rights License
Total Payments			2,611.94		

**Item 7.2 Receipts for the period 01.04.15 – 30.04.15
Cooperative Bank.**

Printed On : 26/05/2015

Boxley Parish Council

Page No 1

At : 13:51

Co-Op General Account**Cash Received between 01/04/2015 and 30/04/2015**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Cash Received from</u>	<u>Receipt No</u>	<u>Receipt Description</u>	<u>Receipt Total</u>
02/04/2015	Cooperative Bank	Stment 110	Interest	4.35
10/04/2015	Maidstone Borough Council	10481	Precept	100,931.00
13/04/2015	HSBC General Account		Beechen Hall	1,651.35
22/04/2015	HMRC	1562	VAT Refund Jan - Feb 2015	456.01
23/04/2015	Roz Perry	Plots7a	Replacement Key	15.00
Total Receipts				103,057.71

HSBC

NB an error has been identified at 09/04/2015 Beard R1490, this should actually read Teenie Boopers.

Printed On : 26/05/2015

Boxley Parish Council

Page No 1

At : 13:50

HSBC General Account

Cash Received between 01/04/2015 and 30/04/2015

<u>Date</u>	<u>Cash Received from</u>	<u>Receipt No</u>	<u>Receipt Description</u>	<u>Receipt Total</u>
01/04/2015	Ramanandi	C721F	Hall Hire	169.50
01/04/2015	Reid	C789D	Hall hire	35.25
01/04/2015	Sing & Sign	R1488	Hall Hire	22.28
01/04/2015	Smith	C788D	Hall hire	41.12
02/04/2015	Pilates	R1487	Hall hire	92.40
02/04/2015	Short Mat Bowls	R1482	Hall hire	210.00
07/04/2015	Medway Council	C785D	Hall hire	143.00
07/04/2015	Thompson	C778F	Hall hire	37.25
08/04/2015	Kumon	R1484	Hall Hire	178.14
08/04/2015	Sing & Sign	R1485	Hall Hire	44.55
08/04/2015	Tumbletots	R1491	Hall Hire	108.90
09/04/2015	Beard	C792D	Hall Hire	35.25
09/04/2015	Beard	R1490	Hall Hire	39.60
09/04/2015	Coleman	C767F	Hall Hire	72.50
09/04/2015	Davies	C757F	Hall hire	86.15
09/04/2015	Mir	C796F	Hall hire	85.25
10/04/2015	A Bead in Time	R1480	Hall hire	145.75
10/04/2015	Age Concern	R1481	Hall hire	508.28
11/04/2015	Sing & Sign	R1489	Hall Hire	44.56
14/04/2015	Karate	R1483	Hall hire	212.40
16/04/2015	Davies	C759F	Hall Hire	170.30
16/04/2015	Padam	C738F	Hall hire	75.65
22/04/2015	Jamani	C774F	Hall Hire	305.00
22/04/2015	NGREA	R1486	Hall hire	42.90
27/04/2015	Beard	C792F	Hall Hire	37.25
27/04/2015	Scarrott	C799D	Hall hire	35.25
28/04/2015	Khan	C801F	Hall hire	193.80
Total Receipts				3,172.28

Item 8 2014/2015 End of Year Return. *Purpose of item: Action.*

To receive the recommendation of the F&GP Committee that the parish council agree and sign the End of Year Return.

Members will receive, at the meeting an explanation booklet on the way the accounts are managed and run and this will include further financial records.

Section 1 – Accounting statements 2014/15 for

Enter name of reporting body here:

Boxley Parish

Council/Meeting

Readers should note that throughout this annual return references to a 'local council' or 'council' also relate to a parish meeting.

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2014 £	31 March 2015 £	
1 Balances brought forward	307,000	290,165	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2 (+) Annual precept	RESTATED 97,983	91,506	Total amount of precept received or receivable in the year. Excludes any grants received.
3 (+) Total other receipts	RESTATED 91,585	81,373	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept received (line 2). Include any grants received here.
4 (-) Staff costs	76,702	78,504	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and employment expenses.
5 (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0.00	0.00	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the council's borrowings (if any).
6 (-) All other payments	RESTATED 129,701	92,802	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7 (=) Balances carried forward	290,165	291,738	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) – (4+5+6)
8 Total cash and short term investments	328,555	328,211	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March - to agree with bank reconciliation.
9 Total fixed assets plus other long term investments and assets	RESTATED 431,159	437,159	The original Asset and Investment Register value of all fixed assets, plus other long term assets owned by the council as at 31 March
10 Total borrowings	0.00	0.00	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11 Disclosure note Trust funds (including charitable)	yes	no ✓	The council acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing trust funds or assets. N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2015 the accounting statements in this annual return present fairly the financial position of the council and its income and expenditure, or properly present receipts and payments, as the case may be.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer

[Signature line]

Date

[Date line]

I confirm that these accounting statements were approved by the council on this date:

[Signature line]

and recorded as minute reference:

[Signature line]

Signed by Chair of the meeting approving these accounting statements.

[Signature line]

Date

[Date line]

Section 2 – Annual governance statement 2014/15

We acknowledge as the members of:

Boxley Parish

Council/Meeting

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2015, that:

	Agreed		Yes means that the council
	Yes	No	
1 We approved the accounting statements prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations and proper practices.	YES		prepared its accounting statements in the way prescribed by law.
2 We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	YES		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3 We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and proper practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the council to conduct its business or on its finances.	YES		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with proper practices in doing so.
4 We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	YES		during the year has given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about the council's accounts.
5 We carried out an assessment of the risks facing the council and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	YES		considered the financial and other risks it faces and has dealt with them properly.
6 We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council accounting records and control systems.	YES		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of the council.
7 We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	YES		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8 We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the council and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.	YES		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant.
9 Trust funds (including charitable) – in our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.		NA	has met all of its responsibilities where it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.

This annual governance statement is approved by the council and recorded as minute reference

Signed by:

Chair

dated

dated

Signed by:

Clerk

dated

*Note: Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response. Describe how the council will address the weaknesses identified.

Section 4 – Annual internal audit report 2014/15 to

Boxley Parish

Council/Meeting

The council's internal audit, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year ended 31 March 2015.

Internal audit has been carried out in accordance with the council's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the council.

Internal control objective	Agreed? Please choose only one of the following		
	Yes	No	Not covered
A Appropriate accounting records have been kept properly throughout the year.	YES		
B The council's financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	YES		
C The council assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	YES		
D The annual precept requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	YES		
E Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	YES		
F Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	YES		
G Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with council approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	YES		
H Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	YES		
I Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.	YES		
J Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	YES		
K Trust funds (including charitable) The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			Not applicable

n/a.

For any other risk areas identified by the council (list any other risk areas below or on separate sheets if needed) adequate controls existed:

Name of person who carried out the internal audit KEVIN FUNNELL, F.H.AAT

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit K Funnell Date 11 MAY 2015

If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

**Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or, if coverage is not required, internal audit must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Item 9 Policies and Procedures. *Purpose of item: Information/decision.*

Clerk's note: Under the Code of Conduct issued by the Standards Board (now defunct) there was a specific statement that Councillors who were predetermined could not vote on the issue without breaking the Code of Conduct.

The current Code of Conduct (2012) does not have such a specific statement about predetermination. This, as it was explained at the time, is because the seven principles of public life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership) cover the behaviour required from a councillor and if he/she follows these then they would be expected to excuse themselves from voting. Failure to follow these principles could result in a complaint being made about a councillor.

Do councillors think that the current policy accurately reflects the situation on predetermination?

Some footnotes have been added to try to improve the clarity of the document which is published on the website.

Current policy. Guidance for Parish Councillors on Lobbying and Predetermination.

This guidance is to assist you in your day to day contact with members of the public who may wish to bring something to your attention, discuss an issue or solicit your support (lobbying). It supplements, but does not replace, the Code of Conduct¹ with which councillors should conform at all times.

Caution & Commonsense

You should always bear in mind that unless caution and common sense are exercised there is always the possibility that the impartiality and integrity of a councillor could be questioned. It is therefore advisable that councillors, especially members of the Environment Committee who may be approached on planning issues, should take care about expressing an opinion that a member of the public may take as indicating support or giving permission of the parish council. Information² on Predisposition, Predetermination² or Bias and the Code of Conduct is available from the parish office.

You must declare that you have been lobbied if the issue in question is discussed at a parish council or committee meeting³.

Lobbying.

This is a time-honoured tradition especially in the planning and development arena. It is also probably the most controversial side of local politics in this country.

When being lobbied you should take great care about expressing personal opinions, especially if you are or will be part of the decision making process. Humans consistently deceive themselves by selectively hearing only what they want to hear.

Parish councillors are expected to:

- Respect the decisions of the parish council and its committees; and
- Avoid attempting to anticipate decisions not yet made.

It is therefore advisable that if lobbied you should use the occasion only to gather information. This may be done by inviting the member of the public to point out matters or features which are relevant to the issue but avoiding entering into a debate. This information can then be passed onto the relevant committee or the office.

You should also inform the resident of their right to address⁴ or write to the council, details of how to do this can be found on the Parish Council website or obtained from the parish office. It helps if the office is made aware of any resident indicating that they will be attending a meeting as relevant paperwork can then be taken to the meeting.

¹ Available from www.boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk or parish office.

² See section **Making a decision in council/committee** for explanation of predisposed and predetermined.

³ Lobbying does not mean that a councillor could not vote on an issue.

⁴ How to ask a question at a council and committee meeting leaflet is extremely helpful to residents wishing to speak to members.

Discussions & site-visits.

No councillor is required to deal with any query from a member of the public if they feel uncomfortable or intimidated by the situation. You are however asked to refer the person to the parish office or provide the office with their contact details. No member of the public has a right to enter your home in any circumstances.

A discussion may take place for various reasons. If it is to complain about e.g. verge cutting, details should be noted and passed to the parish office. The office will then decide whether the issue should be either:

- (a) Treated as day to day 'housekeeping' and not therefore referred to a committee. However the member of the public and the councillor will be kept informed of the action taken. Councillors can ask that such issues be placed on an agenda in order that the situation is monitored; or
- (b) Placed on an agenda.

If the issue is to do with a planning application then the resident might ask you to visit the site. It is recommended that if a member decides to do so, the parish office is apprised of the situation and that, if possible, you are accompanied by another councillor. Please note that you have no legal right of entry on to any private land unless invited by the landowner.

Prior to the visit the parish office, if notified, will supply:

- A briefing note giving any relevant history and background, together with, if applicable, the planning application(s)⁵;
- Details of any relevant policy of the parish council;
- Details of which local authority department might be responsible for any service under discussion; and
- Suggestions on how a problem can be resolved or how best to proceed.

After the meeting please make a verbal/written report to the parish office with an indication of what, if any, action you feel is required and declare that you have been lobbied.

Making a decision in council/committee.

The purpose of these guidelines is not to stop a councillor having or expressing their personal opinions. A councillor can be predisposed to a situation but should not be predetermined.

Predetermination or bias is where a councillor is closed to the merits of any arguments relating to a particular issue and makes a decision on the issue without taking all arguments into account. Councillors will receive information from different sources but should retain an open mind to the merits of all the arguments until making their final decision.

ADD? *Predisposition is where a councillor has strong views on an issue but is open to information and persuasion that might then affect the way they vote.*

Ultimately councillors have to decide for themselves the balance between their personal opinions, the needs of the parish/community as a whole and the requirements of the Code of Conduct.

There is an important difference between those councillors who are actually involved in making a decision and those who are seeking to influence it. Councillors not involved in the decision-making are generally free to speak about how they would like the decision to go. In parish councils this can lead to problems as issues can be dealt with in committee and then be bumped-up to full council. Councillors having earlier spoken out strongly against an issue might then be considered as predetermined or biased. If you are in this position, you may wish to consult the Clerk for advice in advance.

If in doubt the following test is helpful "Would a fair-minded and informed observer, having considered the facts, decide that there is a real possibility that the councillor had predetermined the issue or was biased?"

⁵ Planning applications can be found on the parish council and Maidstone Borough Council websites.

Item 11 Reports from councillors/office*Purpose of item: Information.*

- 14.1 Police/Parish Liaison Meeting Thursday 21 May 2015. To receive a verbal report from Councillors who attended. Minutes of the meeting are available from the parish office.

Item 12 Matters for Decision. *Purpose of item: Information.*

Dear Clerk to the Parish Council

Since the successful launch of our SMART 2 Report in March 2015, we have been approached by a number of local groups and parish councils. They all want to know how we got to the point where our ideas and proposals are now being formally studied by MBC and KCC with a view to putting them into action.

Rather than speaking with a series of individuals or small groups, we felt it would be beneficial to have one large meeting. This would encourage everyone to share problems and experiences as well as hearing about the SMART group approach to improving traffic conditions.

We will tell you how the group was formed, what we have achieved, how we collect information and evidence, discuss our future work programme and much more.

We therefore invite you and members of your Parish Council to a meeting to be held at The Vine Church Boughton Lane (on the New Line Learning site) on Thursday 11th June 2015 at 7.30 p.m.

Please reply to Alan Moore, SMART Committee member at alan@northloose.co.uk by Friday 29th May and indicate how many people will be attending.

Yours sincerely

Sean Carter
Chairman of SMART

SMART consists of:- Loose Amenities Association; Loose Parish Council; North Loose Residents Association; Valley Conservation Society; Loose Borough Councillor; South Ward Borough Councillor.