

BOXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

www.boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk



Clerk – Mrs Pauline Bowdery
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Beechen Hall
Wildfell Close
Walderslade
Chatham
Kent ME5 9RU

To Parish Councillors, members of the public and press.

Date 7 April 2015

Members are hereby summoned and notice is given that a **Meeting of the Parish Council** will be held on **13 April 2015** at **Kent Scouts Activity Centre, Lower Grange Farm, Grange Lane, Sandling, Maidstone ME14 3DA** commencing after the finish of the Annual Meeting of the Parish but no earlier than 7.30 p.m. when it is proposed to transact the following business:

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. Apologies and absences. | Time guide
(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 Parish Council Meeting of 2 March 2015. | (7.33) |
| To consider the minutes and if in order sign as a true record (pages 3-5). | |
| 4. Matters Arising From the Minutes. | (7.35) |
| 4.1 Minute 2729/4.1 Boxley Warren Awards for All application. Clerk to complete work when possible and will liaise with Cllr Harwood. | |
| 4.2 Minute 2729/4.2 War Memorial leaflet. A draft leaflet is enclosed for members to give views. | |
| 4.3 Minute 2729/4.3 Internet Banking. Setting up of the account is being undertaken by the office with the views of the working group being sought. | |
| 4.4 Minute 2729/13.2 Boxley Warren/Pilgrims Way. Road works to improve the junction are now planned for 22 July 2015. | |
| 4.5 Minute 2730/8.2 Councillor presence at Beechen Hall 7 May 2015. Councillors Ivor Davies and Dengate have volunteered to attend. | |
| 4.6 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 (pages 5 - 6). | |
| 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 9 March 2015 (pages 6-9). | |
| 6.2 F&GP Committee 10 March 2015 (pages 9-10). | |
| 7. Finance. | (8.08) |
| Due to a change to another accounting system the payments, receipts and account balances | |

will be provided to members either at the meeting or at a later date.

- 7.1 Payments made out of meeting 24.02.15 – 31.03.15.
- 7.2 Receipts for the period 14.02.15 - 31.03.15.
- 7.3 To note Account balances as at 31.03.15.
- 7.4 To authorise payment of accounts (list to be supplied at meeting).
- 7.5 End of Year Return see report (page 11).
8. **Public engagement.** (8.16)
 - 8.1 To consider Cllr Hinchliffe's report (page 12).
9. **Consultation on future delivery of Library, Registration and Archive Services in Kent.** (8.25)

To receive Cllr Hollands report and to ratify the decision, after consultation with councillors, to respond objecting to the proposal, see report (page 12).
10. **Parish Charter.** (8.27)

To consider the draft MBC Parish Charter, see report (page 13).
11. **Policies and Procedures.** (8.33)
 - 11.1 Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Terms of Reference see report (page 13).
12. **Reports from Borough and County Councillors.** (8.40)

Our Ward councillors are invited to report and discuss matters affecting the parish.
13. **Local Council Award Scheme** (8.50)

To consider the briefing requested by members (pages 14-18).
14. **Reports from councillors/office.** (8.58)

Members/staff who have attended any meeting on behalf of the parish council are invited to give a brief summary.

 - 14.1 MBC/Parish Annual Conference 21 March 2015, Cllr Ivor Davies report (pages 19-20).
15. **Matters for Decision.** (9.01)

To consider any issues, such as attendance at meetings or identified on the evening.

 - 15.1 Arrangements for dealing with Code of Conduct complaints about Councillors - proposed removal of 3 month rule see report (page 20).
16. **Matters for Information.** (9.06)
 - 16.1 Kent Downs AONB Management Plans 2014 – 2019.
 - 16.2 KALC Maidstone Committee minutes 18 February 2015.
 - 16.3 KALC Parish News March 2015 circulated or supplied to members.
 - 16.4 CPRE Countryside Voice Spring Issue.
 - 16.5 Kent Downs AONB Newsletter April 2015 (e-mail 01.04.05).
 - 16.6 KWT Wild Kent Spring 2015.
17. **Next Meeting.** (9.07)

Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on Monday 11 May 2015 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade ME5 9RU commencing at 7.30 pm. Councillors' reports and requests for items to be included on the agenda to be submitted no later than 5 May 2015.

Pauline Bowdery

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 13 April 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 Meeting of the Parish Council held at Weaving Village Hall, The Street, Weaving on Monday 2 March 2015 commencing at 7.30 pm.

Councillors present: Mr Ivor Davies (Chairman), Mr V Davies, Mrs P Brooks, Mr P Dengate, Mr B Hinder, Mrs W Hinder, Mr D Hollands, Mrs K Macklin, Mr G Smith, Mr A Springate, Mr P Sullivan and Mrs M Waller together with the Clerk, Borough Cllr D Butler and two members of the public/press.

1. **Apologies and absences.**
Cllr Harwood (MBC meeting), Cllr Hinchliffe (holiday) and Cllr Spain (holiday).
PCSO Day.
2. **Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying.**
There were none.
3. **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 26 January 2015.**
The minutes of the meeting were, with the addition of the apologies from Cllrs Bob & Wendy Hinder (holiday) and Cllr Hollands (holiday), agreed and **signed** as a correct record.
4. **Matters Arising From the Minutes.**
 - 4.1 Minute 2721/4.1 Boxley Warren Awards for All application. Clerk to complete work and liaise with Cllr Harwood. **Noted.**
 - 4.2 Minute 2721/4.2 War Memorial leaflet. Permission has been obtained from Mrs Winter-Briggs to use her research on the personal history of the men named on the War Memorial. A final draft of the leaflet will now be prepared and submitted to the parish council for approval. **Action: Clerk/office when time allows.**
 - 4.3 Minute 2722/9 Internet Banking. Setting up of the account is being undertaken by the office with the working group being brought in at the relevant time. **Action: Cllr Ivor Davies, Cllr Vic Davies, Cllr Dengate and the Clerk.**
 - 4.4 Minute 2722/13.2 Boxley Warren/Pilgrims Way. The report on the crash at the gate and the damage to the newly erected posts was **received**. Road surface work and additional signage is planned for this month. The Clerk was requested to obtain an update on the situation. **Action: Clerk.**
 - 4.5 Any other matters arising from the minutes which are not on the agenda. There were none.
5. **Report from the PCSO and Police Issues.**
Report and crime statistics. **Noted and received.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7.40 for a resident to make a positive comment about the newly resited bollards at Old Chatham Road, Sandling. Meeting reconvened at 7.41 pm.

6. Draft Minutes of Recent Committee Meetings.

Noted and received:-

- 6.1 Environment Committee meeting 26 January 2015.
- 6.2 Environment Committee meeting 9 February 2015. Item 4.7 Item 4.7 Cllr Dengate asked whether a response to the letter to the Department of Transport had been received. The Clerk said that it had and was on the agenda for the meeting on 9 March.
- 6.3 Estates Committee 10 February 2015.

7. Finance.

- 7.1 Payments made out of meeting 20.01.15 – 23.02.15. Cllr Dengate enquired about a number of zero entries on the report and these were explained by the Clerk. **Noted.**
- 7.2 Receipts for the period 20.01.15 – 13.02.15. **Noted.**
- 7.3 Account balances as at 13.02.15. **Noted.**
- 7.4 Payment of accounts. **Authorised**
- 7.5 Members were reminded that they should not sign blank cheques or authorisation letters, the need to check invoices against cheques and authorisations when signing and that cheques stubs need to be initialised by both signatories. **Noted.**

8. Public engagement.

- 8.1 Cllr Hinchliffe's report was **noted** and the item was deferred to the next meeting to allow Cllr Hinchliffe to present the suggestions. Members asked for some minor adjustments to the draft flyer and a view was presented that, to save he office work, it should be a single generic document and not a modified one for each area. The small information card was welcomed with a request that it be trimmed to a smaller size to allow it to be kept in a wallet. **Cllr Hinchliffe and the office.**
- 8.2 Councillor presence at Parish Hall on Thursday 7 May 2015. The idea was generally welcomed. The Clerk was asked to proceed with organising a larger display at Beechen Hall than for previous elections and councillors would be contacted to see if they were available to attend. It was **agreed** that the Walderslade Woodlands Group and Friends of Boxley Warren should also be invited to attend. **Action: Clerk and councillors.**
Some concern was expressed at a suggestion that parish council leaflets might be handed out to persons exiting their councillors' own local polling stations elsewhere. Both the legality and desirability of this was questioned. Cllr Hollands volunteered to check what could or could not be done. **Action: Cllr Hollands.**

9. Local Council Award (previously called Quality Council) Scheme.

After lengthy discussion covering the actual tangible benefits of having an award, the possible impact on the council's Power of Competency and the cost, both financial and in office time, of applying.

To allow members to fully debate the issue it was **agreed** that the Clerk will produce a spreadsheet listing all the criteria for Foundation, Quality and Gold standards and showing what is already achieved and what is achievable. **Action: Clerk.**

10. Consultation on future delivery of Library, Registration and Archive Services in Kent.

After lengthy discussion on the likely impact of the proposed change Cllr Hollands volunteered to undertake some additional work to produce a briefing report which could be circulated to members for decision out of meeting on whether and how to respond. **Cllr Hollands and the Clerk.**

11. **Policies and Procedures.**

11.1 Procedure for Projects not Managed by the Parish Office. **Agreed**

11.2 Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Terms of Reference (reviews). Members, having **noted** that these reviews are scheduled for April, **agreed** that members would be expected to read the documents on-line unless they specifically asked for a paper copy. This decision will be revisited next year.

11.3 Equal opportunities statement (review). **Agreed.**

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

Cllr Butler gave a report covering: housing allocation; lack of school places; the success or otherwise of the new Maidstone/Swale/Tunbridge Wells shared services, especially planning; and the forthcoming change to the decision making process at MBC from a cabinet to committee structure.

Cllr Butler was heartily congratulated on his election as Deputy Mayor.

Cllr Wendy Hinder's report on the situation at Old Chatham Road, Sandling was **received**.

To this she added that she had just visited the area and was happy to see that the bollards were being repositioned but remained unhappy about the slow progress in completing the work.

13. **Reports from councillors/office.**

Noted and received.

13.1 KALC Maidstone Area Committee meeting 18 February 2015. Information was requested on the additional powers given PCSOs in some other counties which those in Kent do not have. **Action: office.**

14. **Matters for Decision.**

14.1 Police and Parishes Forum meeting Thursday 21 May: advance notification for diaries. **Noted.**

14.2 Electronic copies of agendas. Councillors were asked to notify the parish office if they wished to receive copies of agendas electronically. **Noted.**

15. **Matters for Information.**

Noted and received.

15.1 New updated NALC website www.nalc.gov.uk has been launched.

15.2 Kent Tree and Pond Partnership courses and update on its work.

15.3 KALC Parish News February 2015 circulated or supplied to members.

15.4 Oast to Coast Magazine of ACRK issue Spring 2015

16. **Next Meeting.**

Monday 13 April 2015 at Kent Scouts Activity Centre, Lower Grange Farm, Grange Lane, Sandling, Maidstone ME14 3DA commencing after the Annual Meeting of the Parish which starts at 7 p.m.

Meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.

Item 5. Report from the PCSO and Police Issues. <i>Purpose of item: Information.</i>

Boxley Crime Figures
1st March 2015 - 1st April 2015
Total of crimes 8

Since the 1st March there have been 4 ASB calls for nuisance vehicles in Chatham/Walderslade woods and 2 calls for nuisance youths in Chatham and Vinters Park.

Date	Location	Crime
26/03/2015	Olivine Close	CRIMINAL DAMAGE TO PROPERTY VALUED UNDER £5000
01/03/2015	Bracken Hill	THEFT FROM MOTOR VEHICLE
25/03/2015	Badger Road	THEFT FROM MOTOR VEHICLE
21/03/2015	Olivine Close	CRIMINAL DAMAGE TO PROPERTY VALUED UNDER £5000
19/03/2015	Boxley Road	BURGLARY WITH INTENT TO STEAL
18/03/2015	Cobtree Manor	THEFT FROM MOTOR VEHICLE
14/03/2015	Pilgrims Way	THEFT
05/03/2015	Weaverling Street	THEFT FROM MOTOR VEHICLE

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

Item 6.1 Minutes of the Environment Committee on Monday 9 March 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 and Mrs M Waller together with the Assistant Clerk

1. Apologies and absences

None.

2. Declaration of Interests, dispensations, predetermination or Lobbying

None.

3. Minutes of the Meetings of 9th February 2015

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

4. Matters Arising From Minutes

4.6 Minute 2724/4.1 Boxley Warren gate. Update from PC meeting **noted**. The Assistant Clerk confirmed that the matter was now with KCC and that County Councillor Paul Carter has become involved to progress the installation.

4.7 Minute 2724/4.2 Pilgrims Way/Lidsing Road junction. Update **noted**.

4.8 Minute 2724/4.3 Clearway Sandling. Erection of posts and signage. Members **received** and **noted** the Clerk's update. Cllr Wendy Hinder confirmed that there have been no reports of any illegal parking by lorries and that local residents were pleased with effect of the barriers.

- 4.9 Minute 2716/8.2 KCCH&T seminar 19/11/14. Members **received** and **noted** KCCH&T's response.
- 4.10 Minute 2725/7.1 No motorcycle signs Beechen Bank Rd/Cossington Road entrance. The request has been referred to the Walderslade Woodlands Group. Cllr Davies asked for clarification on why this matter was referred to WWG particularly as he knew the locations where the signs should be installed. **Action Clerk.**
- 4.11 Minute 2726/8.2 footpath between Wildfell Close and Boxley Road. Ownership to be investigated. The Assistant Clerk confirmed that Richard Emmett, KCCH&T will undertake a site visit during w/c 9 March.
- 4.12 Minute 2726/11.2 KALC Planning Update **received** and **noted.**
- 4.13 Any other matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda. **None.**

There were no members of the public present.

5. Planning Applications and Appeals for Consideration

15/500155/FULL. Single storey side extension at 2 Franklin Drive, Weaving, Kent ME14 5SY. **Ratified** the Assistant Clerk's decision after consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of *Do not wish to object.*

15/501119/FULL. Two side dormers to existing first floor at Brendan Grove Green Road Weaving Kent ME14 5JT.

Do not wish to object, however concerns were raised over the type of glass used for the bathroom window. If the officer is minded to approve then a condition should be included ensuring obscured glass is used as this window overlooks the neighbouring property.

15/501334/FULL. Single storey side and part front extension at 20 Forstal Cottages Forstal Road Aylesford Kent ME20 7AH.

Do not wish to object.

15/501114/TPO. Tree Preservation Order..2 x Hornbeams (A and C) - 5m crown lift, 30% reduction to leave a height of 10m and a spread of 6m at 10 Galena Close Boxley Kent ME5 9NE.

Do not wish to object but defer to the views of the Landscape Officer.

15/501120/TPO. Tree Preservation Order..T1 and 2 - Silver Birch - Fell to approx 2ft above ground. T3 - Leylandii - Reduce by approx 2m. T4 - Clean out Oak and thin by approx 10% at 2 Brockbank Close Walderslade Kent ME5 9US.

Do not wish to object but defer to the views of the Landscape Officer.

15/501418/FULL. Garage conversion at 30 Orache Drive, Weaving Kent ME14 5UG.

Do not wish to object.

15/501378/TPO. Tree Preservation Order Application - Sweet Chestnut - complete coppicing of the remaining two stems at 10 Greensands Boxley Kent ME5 9DQ.

Do not wish to object but defer to the views of the Landscape Officer.

15/501494/TPO/PAHE. Tree Preservation Order to reduce the crown of 3 Hornbeam trees by at least 30% at 2 Olivine Close, Walderslade ME5 9NQ.

Do not wish to object but defer to the views of the Landscape Officer.

5.2. Planning procedure reminder, **received** and **noted.**

6. Planning Decisions, Appeals and Appeals Decisions **Received** and **noted.**

MA/14/500485 Occupational manager's dwelling with accommodation on two floors
APPEAL: Dismissed The Nursery, Dunn Street, Bredhurst, ME7 3ND.

14/502252/OUT – Outline application for a development of 8no. houses with access considered at this stage and all matters reserved for future consideration at Land at Junction of New Cut Road and Bearsted Road, Weavering. An appeal has been lodged with the Planning Inspectorate. Representation should be made by 18 March, 2015.

14/500290/FULL – Demolition of a number of disused temporary structures associated with Maidstone Studios and the erection of 77 dwellings together with access, parking and garaging, landscaping and ancillary works on land east of Maidstone Studios.
Recommended Approval.

7. Volunteer Groups

- 7.1 **Received** and **noted** the following report from Rob Burrows (Chairman) of WWG;
We met last week to conclude our review of the KWT management advice notes. We will now meet with them to get all changes approved and the plan finalised. When that is done+, we can then apply to the Forestry Commission for funding.
The KCC 'agreement to manage' has been reviewed and amended by the Parish, and returned to KCC, hopefully for finalisation.
For our Task Day this month, we continued our chipping and tidying of Cossington valley south. This has included the initial work to create a new glade at this end of the valley. We will now generate a mini-plan so that this glade can be micro-managed on a five year cycle without needing to apply for felling licences each time. We have now chipped from Forestdale Road to within metres of the crossroads. Many thanks to Graham for all his help transporting the chipper..... and everything else on his trailer! Our next Quarterly meeting will be this month, on the 24th March, at Beechen Hall at 7.00pm.
- 7.2 Friends of Boxley Warren Chairman, Bob Hinder gave a verbal update that the group would be meeting on Wednesday 18 March and it is hoped that work will start soon as there are 3 new volunteers waiting to participate in projects.

8. Highways and Byways

- 8.1 Clearway Chatham Road. **Received** the response from DoT Under Secretary of State Robert Goodwill MP. Cllr Dengate stated he was disappointed with the response as it was felt the letter was 'sweeping the problem under the carpet and pushing back the problem to the LA's or local enforcement/regulatory bodies'. He also stated that at present there is no enforced government legislation to penalise foreign lorries/HGV's.
- After discussion members agreed to the following actions:
- Forward the response from DoT Under Secretary of State Robert Goodwill MP to all stakeholders including County Councillor Paul Carter and a representative at MBC.
 - Request an agenda item at the next KALC meeting.
 - Set up a petition to encourage the government to review its strategy.
- 8.2 Grovewood Drive South HGV parking. Members **received** and **noted** the Clerk's report that a resident had reported that HGVs are regularly starting to park overnight and for a couple of days at a time. Lorries are from Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. Local councillors and residents have been asked to report what they see so that a history can be built up. It has also been reported today that lorries have been parking on Lodge Road. Cllr Hollands confirmed that he hadn't seen any lorries parked over the weekend.

9. Policy and procedures review

None to review

10. **MBC Local Plan**

Received and **noted** an update on Urban boundary explanation.

11. **Matters for information**

There were none.

12. **Next Meeting**

Next full environment meeting 20 April 2015 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.
Items for the agenda must be with the parish office no later than 13 April 2015.

Meeting closed at 8.14pm.

Item 6.2 Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade on Tuesday 10 March 2015 commencing at 7.30 p.m.

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

1. **Apologies and non-attendance**

Cllr P Dengate (work commitment) and Cllr Wendy Hinder (MBC commitment).

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

None declared.

3. **Minutes of the meeting of 13 January 2015**

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

4. **Matters Arising From the Minutes**

4.1 Minute 2718/4.1: password security. Members **received** Cllr Dengate's report. They **noted** the new arrangements for password security and encryption of files where necessary, and that creation of graduated access levels was in hand. Members expressed thanks for Cllr Dengate's assistance in this matter.

4.2 Minute 2718/4.2: making a complaints form available on the website. The website administrators have been reminded that they have yet to put the necessary link on the website which the parish office cannot do. **Noted.**

4.3 Parish Councillor audit. Cllr Hinchliffe has been booked to attend the office on 16 March 2015. **Noted.**

4.4 New accounting software. Order placed. Training for the new system will take place at the office on 19 March and 14 May. **Noted.**

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

The meeting was adjourned for Cllr Smith to make a personal statement as a member of the public

5. **Financial report.**

5.1 Reconciliation of accounts report as at 2 March 2015. **Received** and **agreed.**

5.2 Income/Expenditure report as at 2 March 2015. **Noted** and **received.** Members considered the chairman's summary budget report and **noted** that there was no cause for concern

5.3 Investment Bonds. **Noted** that the reinvestment of the maturing bond will be decided out of meeting.

6. **Policies and procedures reviews**

Website Review. Members **agreed** to ask all councillors to send in their views on the content and ease of finding information on the website. **Action: All councillors.**

7. **Review of banking arrangements**

The Clerk reported that the work was progressing with the working group now being consulted on the number and types of authorization that might be required. **Noted.**

8. **Insurance**

The new format asset and insurance list required by auditors was **received** and **noted**. The office was thanked for the time and effort put into its compilation.

9. **Appointment of Internal Auditor**

Cllr Bob Hinder proposed Cllr Vic Davies seconded that Kevin Funnell FMAAT be reappointed for two years. **Unanimously agreed.**

It was also **agreed** that the scope of the appointment be reaffirmed, namely:

To undertake 2 audit visits per annum and to undertake what work is necessary to complete Section 4, Annual internal audit report to Boxley Parish Council, of the Annual Return of Parish Councils.

To investigate and submit reports to the Finance and General Purposes Committee regarding the Parish Council's and Responsible Financial Officer's compliance to The Practitioners Guide to the Account and Audit Regulations (2014).

To highlight any weaknesses and insufficiencies in the accounting procedures of the Parish Council.

10. **Personnel matters**

TOIL, leave and leave/sickness cover. The Clerk's report was **received** and it was **noted** that the Assistant Caretaker position had been filled.

11. **Grant Requests**

None received.

12. **Matters for Information**

None submitted.

13. **Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 19 May 2015 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Meeting closed at 8.23 p.m.

Item 7.5 End of Year Return Notice of Audit. *Purpose of item: information.*

The formal notices and a summary of the rights of the public to view the parish council's books have been displayed in the noticeboard and will also be placed on the website.

Boxley Parish Council

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF DATE FOR THE EXERCISE OF ELECTORS' RIGHTS

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015

**Audit Commission Act 1998, Sections 15 and 16 and
The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 (SI 2011 No 817)**

NOTICE

- 1 Date of announcement 24 April 2015
- 2 Each year the body's annual return needs to be reviewed by an external auditor appointed by the by the Audit Commission. Any person interested has the right to inspect the accounts and make copies of the annual return and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers and receipts relating to the accounting statements. For the year ended 31 March 2015 these documents will be available on reasonable notice by application to:

Pauline Bowdery, Parish Clerk.
Boxley Parish Council, Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Chatham, Kent ME5 9RU.
Tel. 01634 861237
E-mail Clerk@boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk

Commencing on 8 May 2015 and ending on 5 June 2015

The parish office is generally open Mon - Fri 9.00 am to 3.30 pm however arrangements can be made to open at other times, including evenings. An appointment is advisable.

- 3 Local government electors and their representatives also have:
 - The opportunity to question the auditor about the accounts; and
 - The right to make objections to the accounts or any item in them. Written notice of an objection must first be given to the auditor and a copy sent to the body.

The auditor can be contacted at the address in paragraph 4 below for this purpose on 8 June 2015 and until the audit has been completed.

- 4 The body's annual return is subject to review by the appointed auditor under provisions of the Audit Commission Act 1998, the Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2011 and the Audit Commission's Code of Audit Practice, all as transitionally saved. The appointed auditor is:

Littlejohn LLP
Ref: SBA
2nd Floor
1 Westferry Circus
Canary Wharf
LONDON E14 4HD
(sba@littlejohnllp.com)

- 5 This announcement is made by Pauline Bowdery, Parish Clerk.

Item 8 Public engagement. *Purpose of item: Information/decision.*

Item 8.1 Public engagement: Cllr Hinchliffe's report.

One of the original suggestions made by myself was a flyer, publicity poster (for noticeboards and displays) and also a contact card. A working draft for the flyer (the poster will be based on the agreed document) and contact card will be supplied, prior to the meeting, for members' for information and comment.

Community Alerts. Since the last report on this in the Downs Mail another 5 people have been added to the system. The Assistant Clerk was contacted by a Clerk from an Essex Parish who asked questions on how the system was worked and set up. Unfortunately we do not know how they came to hear about it. The Clerk has also contacted the Borough Councillors in adjacent Wards to see if they wish to be included as well. Hopefully the *from small acorns* saying will prove true.

Item 9 Consultation on future delivery of Library, Registration and Archive Services in Kent. *Purpose of item: information and ratification.*

Report from Dennis Hollands.

I attended an open day to ask questions and get some background.

The services being considered for transfer to a charitable trust are all mandatory Births and deaths registration would be by appointment only so they think a better service would be offered.

KCC cannot make a charge for library services but a charity could for some of the auxiliary services already provided, for example for IT access, archive retrieval.

In my opinion KCC cannot cut staff numbers any more so there is no further savings that can be made there without a massive change e.g. charitable trust who would then use volunteers to replace/supplement the paid staff to run the departments.

KCC is stating that people aren't using the service so much however local people have complained to me that they cannot get to the library without incurring large car parking fees. East Station is suggested as the nearest parking but the current cost is £5.10 for a day ticket (reduced amount after 2.00) and both car parks beside the station were full at 9.30 on 2 April 2015. The reduction in usage at the Maidstone Library is probably due to lack of cheap and convenient parking.

I am concerned a charity won't keep to the requirements for keeping archives.

I am also concerned that if you go out to sponsorship from businesses e.g. a large developer might this not compromise KCC

£3 million needs to be saved. If you go to a charitable trust they will look for sponsorship and rate/rent rebate.

KCC would have seats on the Trustee Board

The questions in the consultation are loaded to answer in a specific way and not really designed for organisations to respond to however there are areas where general comments might be slotted.

In my personal view if savings of £3 million have to be made it cannot be achieved through staff reduction, or rate/rent rebates. I doubt that there will be enough from sponsorship so in my view savings will be via cuts to services (mobile libraries) and charges for services like IT and relying on volunteers rather than paid and qualified staff. I strongly doubt that savings will be achievable by the format of a charitable trust. **My recommendation is that a strongly disagree to the proposal response is made with the above reasons being given.**

I would encourage individual councillors to go on-line and respond personally.

Item 10 Parish Charter. *Purpose of item: Decision.* Deadline for response 31 May 2015.

Maidstone Borough Council are undertaking a consultation on the new document and this will be discussed at the KALC Maidstone Area Committee meeting on 29* April 2015.

The full document can be found on the MBC website or obtained from the parish office. A further briefing will be supplied to members prior to the meeting.

Item 11 Policies and Procedures Review. *Purpose of item: information and decision.*

11.1 Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

An annual review of these documents is required and all documents are available to view on the website or on request to the office a paper copy will be supplied.

No councillor has come forward with any requests of suggestions for changes. The RFO has undertaken a review and is not suggesting any changes however further reviews will be undertaken as the parish council investigates and then undertakes a decision on setting up internet banking. Any recommendation on revisions that might be needed will be reported to the parish council.

Item 13 Local Council Award Scheme. *Purpose of item: Information and decision.*

From Local Council Award Scheme A guide to the Local Council Award Scheme.

The Local Council Award Scheme exists to celebrate the successes of the very best local councils, and to provide a framework to support all local councils to meet their full potential. All local councils want to serve their local communities and make a real difference to the lives of the people that live there. The scheme offers councils the opportunity to show that they meet the standards set by the sector, assessed by their peers, and to put in place the conditions for continued improvement.

The Award Scheme has been designed to both provide the tools and encouragement to those councils at the beginning of their improvement journeys, as well as promoting and recognising councils that are at the cutting edge of the sector. It is only through the sector working together to share best practice, drive up standards and supporting those who are committed to improving their offer to their communities that individual councils and the sector as a whole will reach its full potential.

Tangible evidence of the benefit of the scheme.

Clerk's comment. In the early days the Quality Standard set clear targets and I have no doubt that it raised the bar for parish councils. In 2004, when the scheme was first created, there was much talk about Local Authorities recognising that Quality Councils were different and could do more but the much suggested partnership working, with possible financial support, was not forthcoming. The benefits from Quality Status were, in my view: a four year intensive health check; councillors, staff and the community could be confident that a quality service was being given and there was a bar set for continued improvement.

From Terry Martin, Secretary KALC.

Many thanks for the e-mail. We have the Council's Certificate in the office for the Foundation Level, which will be signed by the KALC Chairman very shortly and posted out to you.

The Scheme has been designed to try to make it less onerous than the previous Scheme by not requiring hard copies of all the paperwork and taking a more virtual approach.

You will obviously be able to cover any direct tangible benefits that Boxley had under the previous Quality Parish Scheme. With regards to the new Local Council Award Scheme it is very much early days and no doubt the Council will be able to assess over

the next 6 months what benefits the new Scheme actually brings to the Council. At this very early stage I can only comment in broad terms. Having accreditation will help demonstrate and provide assurance to both the Council and to its residents that it operates to a certain standard. It also provides a framework for Councils that wish to improve their performance. It might also help improve the Council's relationship with its principal authority and other local partners by showing that it operates to a national professional standard.

On a national basis, the Scheme will contribute to the national reputation of the sector, demonstrating that Councils operate to a professional standard and showing a commitment to improvement.

The General Power of Competence is not linked to the Local Council Award Scheme.

Local Council Award Scheme

The Foundation Award

Complies now	✓
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Nearly complies need a bit of tweaking	✓	1
Nearly complies need a fair bit of tweaking	✓	2

Could comply with a large amount of work	✓	2
Not sure what is wanted/needed	?	

The council confirms by resolution at a full council meeting that it publishes online:

Governance	✓	□	Ref	Community	✓	□	Ref	Notes	□
Its standing orders and financial regulations	✓	□	14	Council contact details and councillor information in line with the Transparency Code	✓	□	□		
Its Code of Conduct and a link to councillors' registers of interests	✓	1	15	Its action plan for the current year	✓	1	2	Need to do a link to our web page or MBC	
Its publication scheme	✓	□	16	Evidence of consulting the community	✓	□	15	A minimum single A4 document listing the council's objective for the current year	
Its last annual return	✓	□	17	Publicly advertising council activities	✓	□	□		
Transparent information about council payments	✓	2	18	Evidence of participating in town and country planning	✓	□	5	Minutes currently do not include the expenditure sheets that are submitted with the agenda.	
A calendar of all meetings including the annual meeting of electors	✓	□	□						
Minutes for at least one year of full council meetings and (if relevant) all committee and sub-committee meetings	✓	□	□						
Current agendas	✓	□	□				9	The judging panel would normally expect the budget to show columns comparing the previous 2 years budget for comparison.	
The budget and precept information for the current or next financial year	✓	3	□						
Its complaints procedure	✓	□	□						

The council also confirms by resolution at a full council meeting that it has:

A risk management scheme	✓	□	Ref	Notes			19	Disciplinary and grievance procedures	✓	
A register of assets	✓	□	21	<i>They really do expect councillors to be undertaking regular formal training</i>			20	A policy for training new staff and councillors	✓	
Contracts for all members of staff	✓	□	□				21	A record of all training undertaken by staff and councillors in the last year	✓	1
			22	<i>KALC training currently does not attract CPD points</i>			22	A clerk who has achieved 12 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points in the last year	X	2

The Quality Award

The council confirms by resolution at a full council meeting that it meets all requirements for the Foundation Award and that it also publishes online:

Governance	✓	□	Ref	Community	✓	□	Ref	Notes	□
Draft minutes of all council and committee meetings within four weeks of the last meeting	✓		26	A community engagement policy involving two-way communication between council and community	✓				
A Health and Safety Policy	✓		27	Councillor profiles	✓	1	27	<i>Photographs will be expected, no personal details needed contact details and ward represented is sufficient a profile.</i>	
Its policy on equality	✓		28	A grant awarding policy	✓				
			29	Evidence showing how electors contribute to the Annual Parish or Town Meeting	✓	1			
			30	An action plan and related budget responding to community engagement and setting out a timetable for action and review	✓	2	30	<i>An action plan summaries findings from community engagement, sets out aims and objectives and includes a timetable for completion</i>	

			31	Evidence of community engagement, council activities and the promotion of democratic processes in an annual report, online material and regular news bulletins	✓	1		
			32	Evidence of helping the community plan for its future	X	4		<i>The panel would expect to see that the council consults the community in 3 different ways (such as Surveys, focus groups, online and street polls and community workshops. It will look for at least 3 positive actions for the community in the last year.</i>
							32	

The council also confirms by resolution at a full council meeting that it has:

A scheme of delegation (where relevant)	✓	36	At least two-thirds of its councillors who stood for election	✓	38	A qualified clerk	✓
Up to date insurance policies that mitigate risks to public money	✓	37	A printed annual report that is distributed at locations across the community	✓	39	A clerk (and deputy) employed according to nationally or locally agreed terms and conditions	✓
Addressed complaints received in the last year	✓				40	A formal appraisal process for all staff	✓ 1
					41	A training policy and record for all staff and councillors	X 4

Note KALC training currently does not attract CPD points

The Quality Gold Award

The council confirms by resolution at a full council meeting that it meets all requirements for the Foundation and Quality Awards and also publishes online:

Governance	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Note	<input type="checkbox"/>

A business plan covering a financial forecast for at least three years linked to revenue and capital plans for the council and its community	✓		43	An annual report, online material and at least four news bulletins a year with evidence of:	✓	Ref 44- 46	<i>The panel would expect to see that the council consults the community in 4 different ways (such as Surveys, focus groups, online and street polls and community workshops. It will look for at least 4 positive actions for the community in the six year.</i>	
			44	Engaging with diverse groups in the community using a variety of methods	X			
			45	Community engagement leading to positive outcomes for the community	X			
			46	A broad range of council activities, including innovative projects	X			
			47	Co-operating constructively with other organisations	✓			

The council also confirms by resolution at a full council meeting, that it has prepared statements (of no more than one page each)

Ensures that the council delivers value for money	✓	1	50	Provides leadership in planning for the future of the community	?	52	Manages the performance of the council as a corporate body	?
Delivers best practice in meeting its duties in relation to bio-diversity and crime & disorder	✓	1	51			53	Manages the performance of each individual staff member to achieve its business plan	?

Clerk's note on general improvements

Make sure all documents now state a review date? Currently BPC relies on the review calendar

Go ahead with the profile work?

MBC Annual Conference with its Parishes, Headcorn, Saturday 21 March 2015

Report by Ivor Davies

The following topics were covered:

- **MBC Leader's Overview (Cllr Annabelle Blackmore)**
 - Aware of the need for improvement in MBC/Parish relations, she had asked John Perry (Cabinet Member and former parish council chairman) to take this forward. Already significant advances. [*Murmurs of agreement*].
 - 50% cut in KCC Highways budget will mean no cleaning of main roads. Possible partnership opportunity for MBC/parishes? [*Murmurs of dissent*].
- **Parish Finances (Paul Riley, MBC Head of Finance, and Peter Couling, M/KALC)**
 - LCTS (Local Council Tax Support) grant downward trend likely to continue.
 - Pooling arrangement enabling MBC to retain higher percentage of business rates.
 - Parish Services Scheme (PSS): Underspend may be carried forward if MBC told. Admin costs allowed but each parish must have a consistent means of calculation.
- **MBC/Parish Liaison (Zena Cooke, Director of Regeneration & Communities)**
 - Work in progress on lower fuel costs, social isolation of older people, skill sets and employability of 18-24 year-olds, a quality partnership between MBC/KCC/bus companies.
 - Need for more efficient MBC/parishes information exchange, particularly in planning.
 - Pleased to report dozens of successes in freeing up empty houses.
- **Parish Charter (John Perry and Sarah Robson, Community Partnerships Manager)**
 - New charter, a result of MBC/KALC collaboration, will be a living document subject to regular updating.
 - To be signed off by parishes and leaders of all political groups.
 - Based on principle of subsidiarity, i.e. services to be provided at the right level.
 - Launched at meeting; six weeks consultation period.
- **Local Plan Update (Rob Jarman, Head of Planning; John Hughes, M/KALC)**
 - MBC's assessed housing need now down to near 16,000 but still a shortfall of 2,400 sites.
 - Have to ask adjacent authorities if they can take some of demand; but not hopeful as they are likely to be facing similar problems and Maidstone's case no stronger.
 - Still working on transport/water/sewage/drainage infrastructure argument but experience has shown that it is difficult to make a successful case.
 - Maidstone actually ahead of neighbours in producing Local Plan. [*Expressions of incredulity*]
 - (In answer to question) Affordable housing biased towards rural areas because developers can more easily afford it as this is where development is most profitable.
 - (As part of Annabelle Blackmore's closing remarks) "Of course the need for Local Plans could be scrapped after the [General] Election!".
- **Safer Communities (Chief Inspector Mick Gardner, Borough Commander & PCSOs)**
 - Borough Commander only appointed two weeks previously.
 - New Safer Communities Team formed.
 - New rural dog teams and a mounted unit being set up.
 - Pressures not only financial; crime up and international terrorism a growing problem.
 - New interactive smartphone app in April for reporting fly-tipping.
 - Horsecwatch on Facebook successful; Country Eye to be promoted.

- Boxley Warren problem drawn to Borough Commander's attention.
- **Working with Communities & Resilient Communities (UK Power Networks & KCC)**
 - Parishes need to plan for power cuts and other emergencies.
 - How will people cope without mobile phones?

All-in-all a wide-ranging and interesting meeting.

Item 15 Matters for Decision. *Purpose of item: Information.*

Item 15.1 Arrangements for dealing with Code of Conduct complaints about Councillors - proposed removal of 3 month rule.

Clerk's note.

The deadline for a response to MBC is 13 April and the deadline for parish councillors to respond to the office is 9 April. The following is a summary of the comments that have been received so far and, should there be no changes, the response that will be sent.

As at 7 April a majority view had not yet been received but currently from the comments that have it is clear that parish councillors will support the removal of the 3 month time limit but do not wish to see a situation where complaints could be hanging over a councillor's head for an indeterminate time.

Probable response, any change to this will be reported to members at the meeting.

Boxley Parish Council supports the removal of the 3 month time limit rule however it is felt that there should be a defined deadline and it is suggested that this is 6 months.