



BOXLEY PARISH COUNCIL
www.boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk

Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade, Chatham, Kent. ME5 9RU
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Clerk Mrs Daniela Baylis **Assistant Clerk** Mrs Melanie Fooks

A G E N D A

To All Members of the Council, Press and Public

There will be a meeting of the **Finance & General Purposes Committee** on **Monday 16 September 2019** at **Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade** commencing at 7:30pm when it is proposed to transact the following business:

1. Apologies and non-attendance

To receive apologies from members unable to attend.

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

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 meeting of 15 July 2019

To consider the minutes of the meetings (previously circulated) and if in order to sign as a true record (pages 3-5).

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

4.1 Any other matters arising from the minutes, but not on the agenda.

Adjournment to enable members of the public to address the meeting.

5. Financial report.

5.1 Reconciliation of accounts report (page 6).

5.2 Income/Expenditure report as at 31.08.19. See report (pages 7-10).

5.3 Petty cash reconciliation. To receive confirmation that this was undertaken prior to the meeting.

5.4 Investments Report. *See report (page 11).*

5.5 Earmarked Reserves. See report (page 11).

6. Completion of Annual Audit

See report (page 11)

7. Changes to IT and website

Update

8. Bank Mandates

To update members on the current situation. See report (page 12).

9. Contingency Fund and Budget adjustments

To consider any requests for adjustments.

10. Personnel matters

10.1 TOIL, training, leave and sickness cover. (see report page 12).

11. Policies and Procedures: Reports and Reviews

11.1 Risk Assessment – documents to follow

11.2 Grievance Procedure (pages 12-13).

- 11.3 Financial Transactions Policy (pages 14-16).
- 11.4 Disciplinary Procedure (pages 16-20).
- 11.5 Annual health and safety and accident book review (page 21).
- 11.6 Staff appraisals (report page 21).

12. Grants

- 12.1 Poppy Wreath- to agree a budget for the purchase

13. Matters for Information

- To consider any information received.

14. Items for Next Agenda

- Councillors' reports and requests for items to be included on the agenda to be submitted no later than 8th November 2019.

15. Date of Next Meeting

- Monday 18th November 2019 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Daniela Baylis

Daniela Baylis
Clerk to the Council.

Date: 10th September 2019

Issues to be returned to agenda as they develop: None.

Note to all councillors: you are welcome to attend and speak at meetings of committees of which you are not a member but only committee members may vote.

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.

Supporting agenda papers for the Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee on Monday 16th September 2019
The Chairman will assume that these have been read prior to the meeting.

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

Item 3 Minutes

Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade on Monday 15th July 2019 commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Councillors present: Mr I Davies (Chairman), Mr V Davies, Mrs L Clarke, Mr B Hinder and Mrs W Hinder together with the Clerk Mrs D Baylis and Assistant Clerk Mrs M Fooks.

1. Apologies and non-attendance

Apologies: Cllr Hayday, Cllr Dengate and Cllr Brindle

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

All Councillors present declared an interest in item 8.

3. Minutes of the meeting of 28 May 2019

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

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

4.1 Minute 3259/4.1 Long Term Investments Working Group. A meeting will be arranged for the group in the near future. **Action: Clerk.**

4.2 Minute 3259/4.2 Cyber Crime GDPR. The update has been completed and the Clerk will forward this to Councillors. **Action: Office**

4.3 Minute 3259/10 Insurance. All insurance premiums were paid as approved by members. Cybercrime insurance minimum premium will be £305 but details of exact cover are still awaited. Nothing has been received to date. **Noted.**

4.4 Any other matters arising from the minutes, but not on the agenda. **None.**

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

5. Financial report.

5.1 Reconciliation of accounts. The Chairman reported that, prior to the meeting, he had successfully undertaken a reconciliation of all the bank accounts. **Noted.**

5.2 Income/Expenditure report as at 30.06.19. **Received** and **noted**, members asked for clarification on expenditure under some codes and this was given.

5.3 Petty cash reconciliation. The Chairman reported that, prior to the meeting, he had undertaken a reconciliation and all was in order.

5.4 Investments Report. It was agreed to reinvest the money in the Lloyds accounts for a further 3 months. It was agreed to move £50,000 of the Parish Council's money from the HSBC Beechen Hall account into the UTB account.

5.5 Earmarked Reserves. **Noted**

6. General Data Protection Regulation

The Clerk will produce an update on outstanding action and circulate it to members for comment. **Action: Clerk.**

7. **Changes to IT and Website**

Website. The Clerk and Assistant reported that further problems had occurred with the website and that the provider was still failing to respond to the council's complaints. It was proposed by Cllr Bob Hinder and all agreed that the office should contact Stone Parish Council to get the name of their website provider with a view to obtaining a quotation for a new website and new domain name. **Action: Office.**

New data storage. No action until website requirements list is agreed.

Wi-Fi Extender for Acorn Room. The Clerk and Assistant clerk would look into the cost of this. **Action: Office**

8. **Parish Councillor and Chairman Allowances (remitted by full council)**

After discussion it was agreed **to recommend** to full council that allowances should in future be linked to the Consumer Price Index with the latest annual variation available in November (normally that for September) being used to determine any increase.

Cllr Bob Hinder then opened a discussion on whether the present Councillor Allowance system is equitable with all eligible councillors able to claim the same amount no matter the number of committee and full council meetings attended. After considering possible alternatives, it was agreed to leave matters as they are.

Following this Cllrs Bob and Wendy Hinder left the meeting at 8.20 while the issue of the Chairman's Allowance was discussed. It was **agreed to recommend** to full council that the allowance be 50% of the Councillor Allowance and furthermore that Committee Chairs be paid 25%, with no councillor able to claim more than one additional allowance. These changes to be effective immediately.

Cllrs Bob and Wendy Hinder returned to the meeting at 8.25

9. **Bank Mandates**

The bank mandate changes were in progress with the previous Clerk being removed and Mrs Baylis added. **Action: parish office.**

10 **Contingency Fund and Budget adjustments**

Gratuities Budget. Noted that with the payment to the previous Clerk the earmarked reserve was now closed.

Contingency Fund. An urgent need to update the Beechen Hall electrical consumer units had not been foreseen and the Estates Committee had insufficient funds to meet this need. **Agreed** that once all the quotations have been received, money could be vired to cover this cost. **Action: Office and Estates Committee.**

11 **Personnel matters**

11.1 TOIL, training, leave and sickness cover

The Assistant Clerk's hours were now within the TOIL ceiling.

12 **Policies and Procedures: Reports and Reviews**

12.1 **Health and Safety Policy (Review).** It was **agreed** to change the title of this document from 'rules' to 'Policy'; the existing paragraph stating that "The parish council has a full health and safety policy which is available in the staff handbook or from the parish office" to read "A copy of this policy shall be included in the staff handbook and also available from the parish office; **(Action: Office)** and with no other amendments **to recommend** that the policy be adopted by full council.

12.2 **Direct Debits, Standing Orders and BACs transfers (Review).** As the existing policy does not adequately reflect current practice, a new policy needs to be drafted. **Action: Office**

- 12.3 **Risk Assessment (General) (Review).** *This was deferred to enable the new Clerk to look at the current policy. **Action: office.***
- 12.4 **Public Use of Computers (Review).** It was proposed by Cllr B Hinder and all agreed that this policy be scrapped.
- 12.5 **Training Needs.** Cllr Mrs Hinder said that she felt it was very important that members of the Environment Committee went on planning courses to keep up to date with current practice and legislation.
- 12.6 **Draft Financial Regulations.** After minor amendments it was **agreed to** recommend to full council that the new format and amended draft be adopted.

13. **75th Anniversary of VE Day 8 May 2020**

This was deferred to allow councillors to come up with ideas. It was noted that the Church had recently asked to use the village green in Boxley for a VE Day Fete.

14. **Grants**

No applications received

15. **Matters for Information**

None received

As it was 9.30pm the Chairman used his delegated powers to extend the meeting for a further 30 minutes.

16. **Items for Next Agenda**

Councillors' reports and requests for items to be included on the agenda to be submitted no later than 9 September 2019. **Noted.**

17. **Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 16 September 2019 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Meeting closed at 21.33 p.m.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

Chairman..... Date.....

Item 5. Financial report.

Item 5.1. Reconciliation of accounts. *Purpose of the report. To safeguard the parish council's funds and to ensure a robust method of maintaining the accounting system is in place. Periodic reconciliations are required, the Parish Council decides how many and when and the F&GPC undertakes these at each meeting.*

Clerk's note. To satisfy the audit regulations the parish council has to have policies and procedures in place to ensure it is managing risk and its financial affairs. The Council's risk assessment (put together by F&GPC) decided "*Statements for current accounts are reconciled by the office on a monthly basis and as received for Investment Bonds. The F&GPC signs off all bank reconciliations at its bi-monthly meetings*".

For the information supplied below to be verified the Chairman will see the original supporting documents, including the latest bank statements.

Account closing balances.

Date	BANK ACCOUNTS (closing balances at last statement)	
01.08.19	Coop General Account	£3,530.05
31.08.19	HSBC Beechen Hall	£26,319.68
31.08.19	Unity Trust Bank (UTB)	£62,537.04
18.04.19	Barclays Bank	£84,085.33
06.08.19	Lloyds A (matures 08/11/2019)	£51,554.02
24.07.19	Lloyds B (matures 29/10/2019)	£25,302.36
31.03.19	Nationwide Beechen Hall (95 day saver account which rolls over)	£11,281.57
31.05.19	Nationwide Parish Council (now 95 day saver account which rolls over)	£65,415.16
	Total	£330,025.21

Item 5.2 Income/Expenditure Report as at 31/08/2019: Information

09/09/2019

Boxley Parish Council

Page 1

10:19

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/08/2019

Month No: 5

Cost Centre Report

	Actual Current Mth	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
<u>100 Parish Office</u>							
4000 Salaries	3,368	20,937	43,861	22,924		22,924	47.7%
4005 PAYE	1,154	7,468	14,385	6,917		6,917	51.9%
4010 Pensions	545	9,927	3,912	(6,015)		(6,015)	253.8%
4020 Administration	22	282	950	668		668	29.7%
4021 IT General	115	723	10,000	9,277		9,277	7.2%
4023 Telecomms	51	99	0	(99)		(99)	0.0%
4025 Audit	0	(338)	612	950		950	(55.1%)
4026 Bank/Credit Card Charges	3	52	240	188		188	21.6%
4030 Books and Publications	0	0	30	30		30	0.0%
4035 Rates	191	1,177	2,130	953		953	55.3%
4040 Licences/Leases	0	239	420	181		181	57.0%
4045 Subscriptions	0	2,021	2,250	229		229	89.8%
4050 Training/Conferences	0	0	385	385		385	0.0%
4055 Travel-Staff	80	230	505	275		275	45.4%
Parish Office :- Indirect Expenditure	5,528	42,819	79,680	36,861	0	36,861	53.7%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(5,528)	(42,819)					
<u>110 General Parish Council</u>							
4100 Hire of Halls	0	115	470	355		355	24.5%
4105 Insurance	0	824	1,585	761		761	52.0%
4110 Parish Tour	0	0	400	400		400	0.0%
4115 Publicity	1,119	3,750	8,000	4,250		4,250	46.9%
4120 Website Admin	0	(990)	3,500	4,490		4,490	(28.3%)
General Parish Council :- Indirect Expenditure	1,119	3,699	13,955	10,256	0	10,256	26.5%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(1,119)	(3,699)					
<u>120 Councillor & Subsistence Allow</u>							
4150 Chairman's Allowance Personal	9	47	133	86		86	35.2%
4155 Chairman's Allowance Civic	110	167	180	13		13	92.7%
4160 Councillor's Allowance/PAYE	309	1,541	3,679	2,138		2,138	41.9%
4165 Subsistence	0	89	180	91		91	49.2%
Councillor & Subsistence Allow :- Indirect Expenditure	427	1,843	4,172	2,329	0	2,329	44.2%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(427)	(1,843)					
<u>130 Finance</u>							
1076 Precept	0	113,335	113,335	0			100.0%
1090 Interest Received	117	342	770	428			44.5%
1100 Parish Service Scheme	0	5,551	13,876	8,326			40.0%

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/08/2019

Month No: 5

Cost Centre Report

	Actual Current Mth	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
1130 Other	0	0	2,000	2,000			0.0%
Finance :- Income	117	119,228	129,981	10,753			91.7%
4205 Capital Schemes	0	(2,659)	5,829	8,488		8,488	(45.6%)
4206 PWLB Repayment	0	3,593	7,186	3,593		3,593	50.0%
4210 Contingency Fund	0	1,309	10,000	8,692		8,692	13.1%
Finance :- Indirect Expenditure	0	2,242	23,015	20,773	0	20,773	9.7%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	117	116,986					
<u>150 Grants</u>							
4270 Other Grants	0	250	1,500	1,250		1,250	16.7%
4275 Walderslade Woods Group	1,497	2,357	5,492	3,135		3,135	42.9%
4280 Village Hall Grants	0	3,770	5,492	1,722		1,722	68.6%
4285 Vinters Valley Park LNR	0	(3,943)	6,593	10,536		10,536	(59.8%)
4295 Friends of Weaving Heath	0	(457)	250	707		707	(182.6%)
Grants :- Indirect Expenditure	1,497	1,977	19,327	17,350	0	17,350	10.2%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(1,497)	(1,977)					
<u>220 Burial Ground</u>							
1200 Burials	0	0	1,500	1,500			0.0%
Burial Ground :- Income	0	0	1,500	1,500			0.0%
4420 Admin Fee	0	0	250	250		250	0.0%
Burial Ground :- Indirect Expenditure	0	0	250	250	0	250	0.0%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	0	0					
<u>230 Green Spaces</u>							
4210 Contingency Fund	0	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%
4400 Maintenance	49	283	1,000	717		717	28.3%
4450 Boxley Village Green	0	0	900	900		900	0.0%
4460 WDJ Orchard	0	72	1,000	928		928	7.2%
4465 Franklin Drive OS	0	0	5,640	5,640		5,640	0.0%
Green Spaces :- Indirect Expenditure	49	355	9,540	9,185	0	9,185	3.7%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(49)	(355)					
<u>240 Grounds Maintenance</u>							
4500 Grounds Maintenance Contract	1,111	2,222	10,141	7,919		7,919	21.9%
4510 Closed Churchyard Maintenance	0	3,981	4,677	696		696	85.1%
Grounds Maintenance :- Indirect Expenditure	1,111	6,203	14,818	8,615	0	8,615	41.9%
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(1,111)	(6,203)					

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Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/08/2019

Month No: 5

Cost Centre Report

	Actual Current Mth	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
<u>250 Street Furniture</u>							
4550 Noticeboards	0	(1,133)	2,000	3,133		3,133	(56.7%)
Street Furniture :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>(1,133)</u>	<u>2,000</u>	<u>3,133</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3,133</u>	<u>(56.7%)</u>
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>0</u>	<u>1,133</u>					
<u>260 Beechen Hall</u>							
1230 Hire Fees Casual	659	6,949	18,500	11,551			37.6%
1231 PL Insurance Income	6	62	190	128			32.6%
1235 Hire Fees Regular	1,518	11,162	33,000	21,838			33.8%
1250 Wages - AEC	0	0	500	500			0.0%
Beechen Hall :- Income	<u>2,183</u>	<u>18,173</u>	<u>52,190</u>	<u>34,017</u>			<u>34.8%</u>
4001 Wages	1,365	7,017	19,716	12,699		12,699	35.6%
4005 PAYE	371	1,848	4,228	2,380		2,380	43.7%
4010 Pensions	44	234	494	260		260	47.3%
4015 Hall Card Payment Charges	6	16	0	(16)		(16)	0.0%
4020 Administration	2	65	213	148		148	30.3%
4021 IT General	29	290	990	700		700	29.3%
4023 Telecomms	51	99	0	(99)		(99)	0.0%
4025 Audit	0	(338)	612	950		950	(55.1%)
4035 Rates	445	2,747	5,037	2,290		2,290	54.5%
4040 Licences/Leases	0	535	927	392		392	57.7%
4105 Insurance	0	851	1,210	359		359	70.3%
4210 Contingency Fund	0	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%
4605 CCTV/Alarms Maintenance	0	(630)	2,000	2,630		2,630	(31.5%)
4610 Consumables	79	439	1,075	636		636	40.9%
4615 Electricity	178	895	2,350	1,455		1,455	38.1%
4620 Gas	19	442	1,460	1,018		1,018	30.3%
4625 Water	0	167	1,100	933		933	15.2%
4630 Electrical Safety	0	310	435	125		125	71.3%
4635 Fire Safety	0	0	98	98		98	0.0%
4640 Gas Maintenance	0	0	273	273		273	0.0%
4645 Ground Maintenance	0	0	1,544	1,544		1,544	0.0%
4650 Hall Maintenance	247	729	2,500	1,771		1,771	29.2%
4655 Hall Marketing	0	128	150	22		22	85.3%
4660 Refuse Collections	352	998	2,400	1,402		1,402	41.6%
Beechen Hall :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>3,187</u>	<u>16,844</u>	<u>49,812</u>	<u>32,968</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>32,968</u>	<u>33.8%</u>
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(1,004)</u>	<u>1,328</u>					

Continued over page

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/08/2019

Month No: 5

Cost Centre Report

	Actual Current Mth	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
<u>270 Beechen Hall projects</u>							
4550 Noticeboards	0	0	500	500		500	0.0%
4705 Internal Decoration	0	0	250	250		250	0.0%
4719 PA System/Hearing Loop Hall	0	0	3,000	3,000		3,000	0.0%
Beechen Hall projects :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3,750</u>	<u>3,750</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3,750</u>	<u>0.0%</u>
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>					
<u>280 Allotments</u>							
1280 Allotment Income	426	431	1,188	757			36.3%
Allotments :- Income	<u>426</u>	<u>431</u>	<u>1,188</u>	<u>757</u>			<u>36.3%</u>
4020 Administration	0	0	70	70		70	0.0%
4105 Insurance	0	191	400	209		209	47.7%
4400 Maintenance	101	2,886	4,500	1,614		1,614	64.1%
Allotments :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>101</u>	<u>3,077</u>	<u>4,970</u>	<u>1,893</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,893</u>	<u>61.9%</u>
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>324</u>	<u>(2,646)</u>					
<u>300 Environment</u>							
4802 Highway Projects	0	0	40,000	40,000		40,000	0.0%
Environment :- Direct Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>40,000</u>	<u>40,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>40,000</u>	<u>0.0%</u>
4800 Street Maintenance	0	(1,125)	15,000	16,125		16,125	(7.5%)
Environment :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>(1,125)</u>	<u>15,000</u>	<u>16,125</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>16,125</u>	<u>(7.5%)</u>
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>0</u>	<u>1,125</u>					
Grand Totals:- Income	<u>2,726</u>	<u>137,832</u>	<u>184,859</u>	<u>47,027</u>			<u>74.6%</u>
Expenditure	<u>13,020</u>	<u>76,801</u>	<u>280,289</u>	<u>203,488</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>203,488</u>	<u>27.4%</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(10,294)</u>	<u>61,031</u>	<u>(95,430)</u>	<u>(156,461)</u>			
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(10,294)</u>	<u>61,031</u>					

5.4 Investments.

Purpose of the report. To safeguard the parish council's funds and to ensure a robust accounting procedure all investment transactions require prior approval by the F&GPC.

Clerk's note. The following figures do not match the figures given at item 5.3 which are based on end of month bank reconciliations. The figures below reflect the latest statements received which may not be the end of the month.

Date	BANK ACCOUNTS chronological forecast of estimated likely available funds		
End of September	Coop General Account	£3022.55	
End of September	HSBC Beechen Hall	Approx £29,500.00	

End of September	Unity Trust Bank (UTB)	Approx. £55,000.00	
	Barclays Bank	£84,085.33	
OCTOBER			
29	Lloyds B (matures 29/10/2019)	£25,347.00	Reinvest for 3 months or longer?
NOVEMBER			
08	Lloyds A (matures 08/11/2019)	£51,644.98	Reinvest for 3 months or longer?
95 day notice funds			
31.03.19	Nationwide Beechen Hall	£11,281.57	Should this be fixed for one year?
31.03.19	Nationwide Parish Council	£20,415.16	Should this be fixed for one year?

5.5 Earmarked Reserves.

The Previous clerk's gratuity is currently coded as the pension payment it was but needs to be taken out of the specific ear marked reserve for the purpose. We need to talk to Rialtas to find out how to code this correctly.

Item 6 Completion of Annual Audit

The Annual Audit has been completed and the 'Notice of Conclusion of Audit' together with AGAR sections 1,2 and 3 put onto the Website. We have had a note as follows 'Section 1, Assertion 5 which has been incorrectly completed. The Risk Assessment for the Parish Council has not been reviewed and approved by the whole authority during the year under review.' Various Risk Assessments have been reviewed by Committees but none were reviewed and approved at a main Parish Council meeting. This was a new requirement for this year.

Item 7 Changes to IT and website

Clerk's report. Work is currently being undertaken to produce a requirements document for the new website. A website plan has been produced. We are currently working on turning this into a requirements document.

Item 8 Bank Mandates

The Bank mandate changes are now completed. We have a new card for HSBC and UTB that will enable us to deposit cash more easily.

Item 10. Personnel Matters

Training requested:

KALC Annual Finance Conference 12 October – modules on Investment Strategies, Business Development and general financial regulation change updates - £72

KALC Transport Conference 26 October – modules on 'Overview of transport in Kent in 2019', 'the HGV problem', a presentation from Highways England amongst others - £72

Free Planning Training from MBC (all 2 hours, 6-8pm)

Mel Fooks – Enforcement 10 October, S106/CIL 14 November

Dani Baylis – S106/CIL 14 November, Landscapes and Ecology 20 January

Item 11.2 Grievance Policy

Boxley Parish Council

Grievance Policy & Procedure

Policy

Anybody working in an organisation may, at some time, have concerns about their work, working conditions or relationships with colleagues that they wish to have addressed and resolved. The following procedure sets out the framework for such resolution. Its aim is to give a fair hearing to the grievance and of ensuring consistent and equal treatment in all cases.

In setting this procedure the Parish Council has used the following as its basis:

- ACAS Statutory Code of Practice on Discipline and Grievance (Secretary of State approved on 6th April 2009).
- The ACAS Guide which gives information and guidance on good practice.

These documents will be consulted if any issue or situation needs clarification. Mediation, if both parties agree it would be useful, will also be considered.

A flow-chart copied from the relevant ACAS booklet is attached for ease of reference.

Procedure

Dealing with grievances informally

Employees having a grievance or complaint to do with their work or the people they work with should, wherever possible, start by talking it over with their manager or the Parish Clerk. Often a quiet word is all that is needed. A written record of the discussion can be made if requested.

Formal grievance procedure

If the matter is serious or the employee wishes to raise the matter formally, the grievance should be set out in a letter addressed to the Parish Clerk, sticking to the facts

and avoiding language that is insulting or abusive. If the grievance is against the Parish Clerk the letter should be addressed to the Chairman of the Parish Council.

Grievance hearing

The Chairman of the Parish Council committee will be responsible for the process.

The Grievance Hearing Committee will be made up of the Vice-Chair of the parish council and the two committee chairs (or vice-chairs if unavailable). Any person named as the cause of the grievance will be excluded from the decision process.

The employee will be called, normally within five days, to a meeting with the Hearing Committee to hear and discuss the grievance. The employee has the right to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative at this meeting.

After the meeting the chairman of the Hearing Committee will give the employee its conclusions in writing, normally within 24 hours.

Appeal

If the employee is unhappy with the decision and wishes to appeal they should let the Chairman/Parish Clerk know.

The employee will be invited to a meeting of the Grievance Appeals Committee, normally within five days, to have the appeal heard. The employee has the right to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative at this meeting. The Grievance Appeals Committee will normally consist of the Chairman of the Parish Council and two other councillors with any councillor involved in the grievance or earlier hearing excluded.

After the meeting the Chairman will give the committee's decision in writing, normally within 24 hours. The Grievance Appeal Committee's decision is final.

Councillors' grievances

A similar procedure will be followed where a parish councillor has a grievance except that the complainant should normally take up the matter with Chairman of the Parish Council. If the grievance is against the Chairman, it is the Parish Clerk that takes the lead.

Reissued to staff //19

Item 11.3 Financial Transactions Policy
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Boxley Parish Council

Financial Transactions Policy

This policy is intended to detail the working practices of the office with regard to financial transactions and is an addition to the Financial regulations.

Banking Arrangements

Boxley Parish Council currently has the following bank accounts:

Unity Trust	Day to day banking – Parish Council
HSBC	Day to day banking - Hall
Co-Op	Day to day banking – Parish Council, 1 direct debit, being run down
Lloyds A	Investment account
Lloyds B	Investment Account
Barclays	Instant Access Investment Account
Nationwide PC	Investment bond – 95 day access
Nationwide Beechen Hall	Investment bond – 95 day access

All bank accounts are approved by the Council and may not be delegated to a Committee. Bank Statements are reconciled on a monthly basis and reviewed and signed off bi-monthly at Finance and General Purposes committee meetings. On activation by a minute of Boxley Parish Council the Clerk/ RFO has the delegated authority to transfer funds within the Councils bank accounts up to the sum of £15,000, provided that a list of such transactions be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the Council or of the F&GPC. The Clerk/Assistant clerk shall be the service administrators on any accounts with internet banking provisions.

Payment of Accounts

All payments made, by whatever means, are reported to Council at monthly meetings. Only the Parish Office computers are to be used by Councillors making payments. 2 Councillors are required to log in, using their personal log in details, and authorise any payment made from the Parish Council bank accounts. The Clerk and Assistant Clerk will not make these payments but will load them onto the banks system for completion by 2 Councillors.

General Payments

The Clerk/Assistant Clerk shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation. All parish Councillors can be authorised to approve payments, with a minimum of 2 authorisations for any payment. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the Clerk/Assistant Clerk to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the Council. At every authorisation of payments Councillors must check invoices against the accompanying payment schedule and payment authorisation and initial the payment schedule to indicate agreement of the details. Signatories of cheques should also initial the cheque counterfoil.

Regular Payments

On activation by a minute of Boxley Parish Council every financial year the Clerk/Assistant Clerk shall draw up a list of regular payments such as those associated with staff salaries, utilities, maintenance contracts etc for which the council or a duly authorised committee may authorise payment for the year provided that general authorisation of payment protocols are adhered to.

Some regular payments such as utilities can be made by variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by 2 Councillors.

Petty Cash

The Parish Council operates a petty cash imprest system of £150. The Parish Council has a debit card on the HSBC account. This will be used to withdraw cash to top up the petty cash to £150. Every month the petty cash book is made up and authorised by a Councillor. The amount to be topped up will be authorised by 2 Councillors and the appropriate amount will then be withdrawn. This amount will be shown on the Bank statement and detailed on the monthly financial reports to Council.

The Clerk/Assistant Clerk may provide petty cash for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Receipts for payments made shall be forwarded to the Clerk with a claim for reimbursement. These will be kept as a record of payments made and reconciled monthly.

Any cash income received must be paid in separately and not paid into the petty cash account.

Safeguards: a maximum cash withdrawal per day amount to be set.

Payment of salaries and Councillor Allowances

In advance of the salary/Councillor Allowance payment date, a payment request for signature by 2 Councillors will be drawn up. The payment request will detail gross pay, PAYE, pension payments, any other deductions and net pay as worked out on the payroll software.

Amounts due to HRMC, NEST (pension provider) etc will also be detailed for authorisation.

No changes can be made to any employees pay or Councillors allowances without the prior consent of the F&GPC.

In the interests of security and confidentiality, these payments will be listed as a total, each calendar month and reported with all other payments to Council on the monthly report.

Card Payments

The debit card is only to be used in circumstances where normal ordering procedures are not available/suitable or improved value money can be obtained. Payments will be authorised by 2 Councillors and receipts retained. All payments will be detailed on the monthly report to Council.

Safeguarding

Cards should be signed by the named card holder as soon as they are received. Cards must be stored in the safe when not used. Pin numbers should be kept secret and not divulged to any other person. Any unwanted or expired cards should be destroyed. Any lost or stolen cards must be reported immediately. Card details must not be sent by email or any other written communication. Telephone payments must only be made to established suppliers with a registered address and verified accreditation. The terms and conditions signed up to with the card issuer must be adhered to at all times.

Payment receipts

Most receipts are BACS transfers.

These are checked by the Assistant Clerk and entered into the Rialtas accounts software under the appropriate code and cost centre.

Cheques are paid into the Bank account and recorded in a ledger. The payment is entered into the Rialtas accounts software under the appropriate code and cost centre.

Cash is paid into the bank account and recorded in a ledger. They are entered into the Rialtas accounts software under the appropriate code and cost centre.

Recording of Financial Transactions

All financial transactions are entered into the Rialtas accounts programme with the appropriate code and cost centre allocation. Monthly reports are produced for approval at full Council meetings. Hard copies of appropriately signed receipts and payment records are stored in a dedicated file in the fire proof filing cabinet.

Beechen Hall Financial Transactions

Hirers make payments for the Hall or Acorn Room by BACS or card. An initial deposit is payable within 2 weeks of the booking with the rest due one month before the commencement of hire. Certain hirers (parties) need to leave a £100 cash deposit as a cleaning charge. They also need to leave a refundable damage deposit of £150.

Hire fees

BACS payments are identified when they come into the bank account and noted on the booking form.

Card payments can be taken over the telephone or in person. The amount is entered into the machine by office staff with the pin entered by the client. A receipt is issued to the client and one kept on the booking record to be reconciled with the bank account. A receipt for a telephone payment will be posted to the client.

Deposits

Cleaning

The Cleaning deposit is kept in the safe and returned to the client if no extra cleaning has been required. If extra cleaning is required then this amount is deducted from the deposit and the remainder returned to the client.

Damage

Cheques are stored with the booking form and either returned to the client or shredded as requested by the client.

Card payments.

These are kept as a pre-authorized transaction that will not be processed unless we request it following any damage during a hire.

12.4 Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

Boxley Parish Council

Disciplinary Policy & Procedure

Policy

All employees are to be helped and encouraged to achieve and maintain high standards of conduct, attendance and job performance. However, with the aim of ensuring consistent and fair treatment for all in the organisation, where an employee fails to meet these standards, the procedures set out below will apply.

In setting these procedures the Parish Council has used the following to guides:

- ACAS Statutory Code of Practice on Discipline and Grievance (Secretary of State approved on 6th April 2009).
- The ACAS Guide which gives information and guidance on good practice.

A flow-chart copied from the relevant ACAS booklet is attached for ease of reference.

These documents will be consulted if any issue or situation needs clarification. Mediation, if both parties agree it would be useful, will also be considered.

Procedure

Informal Action

Informal action should be considered to resolve problems prior to instigating formal procedures. Often a quiet word is all that is needed to resolve an issue. A written record of this discussion can be made if requested.

The Formal Action procedure below may be implemented at any stage if the employee's alleged misconduct warrants this.

Formal Action

1. Principles

No disciplinary action will be taken against an employee until the case has been fully investigated by management.

The employee will be advised of the nature of the complaint against them and will be given the opportunity to state their case before any decision is made at a disciplinary meeting.

Employees will be provided, where appropriate, with written copies of evidence and relevant witness statements in advance of a disciplinary hearing.

At all stages of the procedure the employee will have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative, or work colleague.

No employee will be dismissed for a first breach of discipline except in the case of gross misconduct, when the penalty will be dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice.

An employee will have the right to appeal against any disciplinary action.

2. Responsibility

The Chairman of the Parish Council will be responsible for the process and will, if needed, appoint a Disciplinary Appeal Committee made up of the Vice-Chair of the Parish Council and the two Committee Chairs (or Vice-Chairs if unavailable). Any councillor directly involved in the disciplinary matter will be excluded from the process.

3. The Procedure (see further below for the procedure in cases of Gross Misconduct):

First stage of formal procedure

If conduct does not meet acceptable standards, a first warning for misconduct will be given at an interview. This may take one of three forms:

In the case of first or minor misconduct the council may issue a **Verbal Warning:**

The council will notify the employee of the reason for the warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement. The employee will be notified of their right of appeal and that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action. A note confirming the verbal warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file with a copy provided to the employee with notification that the warning will remain in force for six months.

In most other cases the council will issue a **Written Warning:**

If there is a repetition of earlier misconduct which resulted in a verbal warning or for different and more serious misconduct. The written warning will set out the nature of the misconduct and the change in behaviour required together with the right of appeal. The warning will also inform the employee that a final written warning may be considered if there is no sustained satisfactory improvement. A record of the warning will be kept, but it will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after a specified period (e.g. twelve months).

A **Final written warning** may be given where:

The offence is sufficiently serious, or if there is further misconduct or a failure to improve performance during the currency of a prior warning. This will give details of the complaint, the improvement required and the timescale. It will also warn that failure to improve may lead to dismissal (or some other action short of dismissal) and will refer to the right of appeal. A copy of this written warning will be kept by the line manager but will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after twelve months subject to the employee achieving and sustaining satisfactory conduct and/or performance.

The following are some examples of misconduct:

- unauthorised absence
- poor timekeeping
- misuse of the Council's resources and facilities including telephone, email and internet
- inappropriate behaviour
- refusal to follow reasonable instructions
- breach of health and safety rules.

Dismissal or other sanction

If there is still further misconduct or failure to improve performance the final step in the procedure may be dismissal or some other action short of dismissal such as demotion or disciplinary suspension. Dismissal decisions can only be taken by the Chairman of the Parish Council and the employee will be provided in writing with the reasons for dismissal, the date on which the employment will terminate, and the right of appeal.

If some sanction short of dismissal is imposed, the employee will receive details of the complaint, will be warned that dismissal could result if there is no satisfactory improvement, and will be advised of the right of appeal. A copy of the written warning will be kept by the line manager but will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after twelve months subject to achieving and sustaining satisfactory conduct and/or performance.

Gross misconduct

The following list provides some examples of offences which are normally regarded as gross misconduct:

- Theft or fraud
- Physical violence or bullying
- Deliberate and serious damage to property
- Serious misuse of an organisation's property or name
- Deliberately using Parish Council computers or wi-fi to access internet sites containing pornographic, offensive or obscene material
- Serious insubordination
- Unlawful discrimination or harassment
- Bringing the organisation into serious disrepute
- Serious incapability at work brought on by alcohol or illegal drugs

- Causing loss, damage or injury through serious negligence
- A serious breach of health and safety rules
- A serious breach of confidence.

If an individual is accused of an act of gross misconduct, they may be suspended from work on full pay, normally for no more than five working days, while the alleged offence is investigated. If, on completion of the investigation and the full disciplinary procedure (with right of appeal), the Chairman of the Parish Council is satisfied that gross misconduct has occurred, the result will normally be summary dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice.

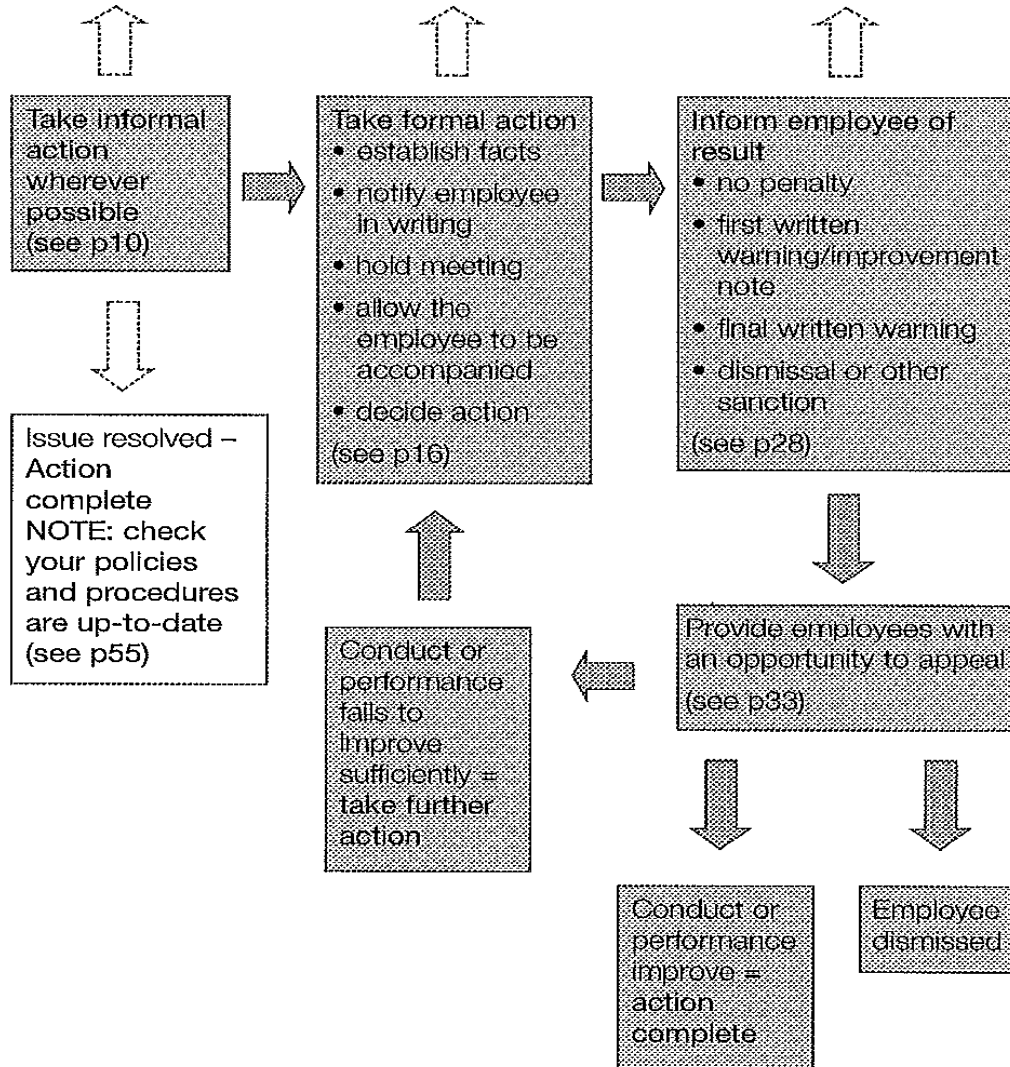
Appeals

An employee who wishes to appeal against a disciplinary decision must do so within five working days. The Disciplinary Appeals Committee will hear all appeals and their decision is final. At the appeal any disciplinary penalty imposed will be reviewed.

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Handling discipline – an overview

- Always follow the Acas *Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures*
- It may be helpful to consider mediation at any stage – see p7



Page 5

Item 11.5 Annual health and safety and accident book review

There have only been 3 minor accidents in the book this year. All were minor injuries with no professional treatment required. The reporting system is working well and no changes are needed. The first aid kits in the hall and office have been reviewed and are adequate and in date. The office first aid kit is very compact. For an effective first aid response it would be useful to have a 'grab bag' with first aid kit, a torch, whistle, blanket etc. We will need to purchase a suitable bag to consolidate what we have and also purchase a whistle and a dedicated torch.

Item 11.6 Staff appraisals

Appraisals in the past have been very ad hoc. The Clerical Assistant has had one appraisal since 2013 and the Assistant Clerk has had 2 in the 9 years she has worked for Boxley Parish Council. The care taking staff have never had an appraisal. On discussion (amongst the office staff) appraisals, whilst they have their uses tend to make staff very uncomfortable as it's a series of judgements and often more detrimental than constructive. We would prefer a new system of monthly office meetings to discuss our priorities for the month and any difficulties encountered/ongoing with working practices. It would also enable us to shift the workload around effectively during times of high pressure. This would identify and resolve any issues quickly. This could be done in the presence of a Councillor/s and reports could be generated if needed.