

**Minutes of the Estates Committee Meeting held at Beechen Hall, Wildfell
Close, Walderslade on Tuesday 14th August 2012 at 7.30pm.**

Councillors present – Mr V Davies (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks, Mr I Davies, Mr P Dengate, Mr B Hinder, Mr P Sullivan, Mr G Smith, Mrs M Waller together with the Clerk and Assistant Clerk.

1. **Declarations of Interest and Lobbying**
None declared.
2. **Apologies and absence.**
None as all members present.
3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting 19th June, 2012.**
The minutes of the meeting were **agreed** and **signed** as a correct record.
4. **Matters Arising From Previous Minutes.**
 - 4.1 Minute 2398/4.1 Boxley War Memorial – As no quotes had been received in time for the meeting members agreed that the Chair, Vice Chair and Assistant Clerk could make a decision and progress the issue. Cllr I Davies suggested contacting stone masons for quotes. **Action – Chair, Vice Chair and Assistant Clerk.**
 - 4.2 Minute 2398/4.3 Wall Mounted Water Boiler – Members agreed for the Assistant Clerk to bring back a further report, with costs, to the October meeting to allow members to agree a budget for 2013/14 for this item. **Action – office.**

As there were no public present the meeting was not adjourned

5. **Boxley Parish Burial Ground.**
All members **agreed** the procedures and draft documents with slight typographical amendments. It was **agreed** that Cllr Ivor Davies would clear the final letter for signing. Cllr Dengate requested that all the information is placed on the website. **Action – Clerk and Cllr Ivor Davies.**
6. **Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard**
Litter Picking – Cllr I Davies proposed seconded by Cllr Brooks and all Members **agreed** to the advertising of the vacancy for 1 hour per week at the minimum wage adult rate. The Clerk to organise the advertisement etc. and would notify the committee if there are any problems. The Chairman has arranged for the rubbish to be placed in the Grove Green Hall refuse bin. **Action – Clerk.**

Playground Inspection – **Agreed** that playground inspection training, at a cost of £175 for up to 4 people, should be purchased. Cllr Vic Davies, Cllr Sullivan, the Clerk and Assistant Clerk would attend the training to enable them to carry out the weekly/monthly playground inspections. Members **noted** the need for an annual professional inspection of the playground for the purposes of insurance policy. **Action – office, Cllr Vic Davies, Cllr Sullivan, the Clerk and Assistant Clerk.**

Grounds Maintenance - Members **noted** that the cost of maintenance was more than the provision in the budget but that the outstanding amount would be placed against the Diamond Jubilee Orchard budget with an adjustment to the future grounds maintenance budget.

Tree Maintenance and boundary treatment – **Agreed** the Clerk, after consultation with Cllr Harwood, would provide a report to the October meeting on the boundary work that was required at the site. Replacement trees would be ordered for replanting. **Noted** there was provision in the original budget for the

boundary work. **Action – Clerk.**

7. **Allotments.**

Members received the Clerk's briefing report. After lengthy discussion and consideration a number of issues and ways to proceed were **agreed**:

- Allotments Association. The Clerk was to arrange membership of an association that could help and advise the parish council.
- Water. Rather than just agree to have standpipes it was suggested that systems incorporating ball cocks, push buttons or pressure plates should be investigated. Members considered there was a need to have a system that automatically turned off.
No sprinklers or hosepipes would be allowed at any allotments and water harvesting opportunities should be investigated. Cllr Dengate suggested using the geography of the land to channel rain water into a collection system to supplement piped water. There was also a need to investigate what rainwater harvesting features could be used if sheds were allowed on the site.
- Noticeboards. Either 2 boards or a large double unit would need to be supplied. One area for parish council notices the other for allotment holders' messages.
- Sheds/storage units. Members felt that strong consideration should be given to the parish council providing allotment plots with a storage unit or a unit in an adjacent area. Members preferred to have control over any structures that were erected. Members agreed that there needed to be further discussion and depending on the decision the draft regulations might need to be adapted.
- Site visit. Arrangements were to be made to visit Burham Allotments and if it could be arranged the Medway Council allotments at Hempstead. A question list would be produced by the Clerk and provided to members on the site visit.
- Bonfires. There was concern over bonfires especially the impact on smoke drifting across adjacent roads. Bonfires would probably not allow bonfires at the site but felt there was a need for further investigation.
- Equalities Act. Members noted that the allotments layout would conform to the requirements of the Act but that it would help on any site visit to actually investigate this issue in detail.
- Cllr Hinder notified members that some allotments had an area where local farmers or horse owners could deposit manure for use at the allotments. He asked that this be considered/investigated.

Various comments were made on the draft documents but it was **agreed** that the committee would gradually work through the documents over the next 3 meetings.

8. **Closed Churchyard St Mary and All Saints.**

8.1 Beech Tree - Members **agreed** for an aerial survey to be carried out and to carry out the remedial work on dead branches. The Clerk to liaise with the Church and then the Chairman on costs etc. **Action – Clerk and Chairman.**

8.2 Yew Tree – Members noted the Clerk's report on this tree and the adverse impact on the listed wall. The Clerk was to seek the advice of the Conservation Officer but members recognised that there may be no option but to remove the tree. The Clerk was to seek advice on whether another species of tree could be planted there and whether the Yew wood could be used elsewhere. The Clerk was to liaise with the Church about the need to remove the tree and the cost. Delegated powers were agreed for the Clerk to liaise with the Chair and Vice Chair and to resolve the issue. **Action – Clerk.**

8.3 Box Trees – The Chairman commented that the War Memorial looked better without any Box trees adjacent to it. It was however recognised that there

should be some Box trees at the village. It was **agreed** that Cllr Vic Davies and Cllr Sullivan would plant the replacement Box trees into the verge at their current position whilst the issue of the Yew tree and whether to have Box trees by the War Memorial was resolved. Members **noted** the advice that as soon as the, currently distressed, Box trees recovered it would need to make a decision on the exact location. **Action- Cllrs Davies and Sullivan.**

9. **Assistant Clerk's Report.**

9.1 Noted the receipt of hire fees were received for June/July (Brackets indicate income over same period previous year).

		2011/2012
Casual	£3,728.20	(£1,962.16)
Regular	<u>£3,166.16</u>	<u>(£3,191.12)</u>
Total	£6,894.36	(£5,153.28)
Cumulative figures for	2012/13	2011/2012
Casual	£ 6,531.70	(£3,391.33)
Regular	<u>£ 6,823.71</u>	<u>(£5,747.45)</u>
Total	£13,355.41	(£9,138.78)

It was **noted** that the increase in hall use was having an impact on the current staffing arrangements and hours. Currently an informal arrangement was in operation with the retired relief caretaker helping out when needed but it was now considered that there a need to review the situation with perhaps the appointment of a third member of staff on an as and when needed contract. **Agreed** there would be an investigation of the situation and a report would go to the next meeting. **Action – office.**

9.2 Marketing Plan – Members **noted** the revisions on the Marketing Plan. It was **agreed** to arrange a review meeting for the website working group. **Action – Assistant Clerk.**

Action	Note	Completion date	Office review Date
Website	Work in progress for new website.	Went live 31 st May	August
Planning Change Extended Hours			Bring back to agenda with report October 2012.

9.3 Incidences at the hall - Members **received** and **noted** the Clerk's report and **agreed** to allow the parish office to monitor the situation and if incidences become more frequent to notify the committee. **Noted** the Alcohol Risk Assessment being considered later in the meeting had been revised to take account of recent events.

9.4 Regular New Hirer – **Noted** Beechen Hall has another regular hirer starting Thursday 6th September NCT mother and baby exercise class.

10. **Review of Policies and Procedures.**

10.1 Clerk's delegated powers – hall maintenance - **Agreed.**

10.2 Burial Grounds Regulations - **Agreed** with minor typographical amendments.

10.3 Annual Inspection of hall – Members **noted** the schedule of projects and **agreed** for them to be brought back to future meetings and to be included in the budget. An inspection of the hall would take place half an hour before the next meeting. **Action – Assistant Clerk to modify agenda.**

- 10.4 Fire Risk Assessment - members **noted** that there had been no change was still fit for purpose.
 Drink and Personal Licence Holder Risk Assessment for hall - **received and noted.**
- 10.5 Annual Competency review – **received and noted.** The Clerk was asked to include details of land acquisition policies in the list. Cllr Dengate asked for clarification on the process for placing an item on an agenda and the Clerk will send around a reminder. It was also suggested that a reminder goes on the bottom of agenda. **Action – Clerk.**
11. **Flag pole.**
 Members **received** the Clerk’s briefing report on flagpoles and flags. It was **agreed** that the Clerk would investigate possible locations and pole designs and notify members. After discussion and with 2 objections it was **agreed** that a recommendation would be made to the parish council that only the Union Flag would be flown and that it would generally be kept flying, although the etiquette was not to fly the flag during the night. **Action – Clerk.**
12. **Carbon Footprint**
Received the updated carbon footprint and environmental impact briefing note for the Parish Council. It was **agreed** that the committee would gradually work through the issues that could be improved and members’ prioritised 2 issues for immediate work with reports to be produced for the next meeting.
- Wall insulation at Beechen Hall
 - Solar photovoltaic panels for Beechen Hall.
- The Clerk was asked to update the document to include the land at Sandy Lane.
Action – Clerk.
13. **Matters for Information**
Noted the Clerk attended a meeting at St Mary’s Church to discuss the issue of parking at the village. Members were given a brief update and informed that the issue will be placed before the parish council for discussion.
14. **Date of Next Meeting.**
 Tuesday 9th October, 2012 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade, Chatham commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Meeting closed at 9.55 p.m.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings

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