

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held at The European School of Osteopathy, Boxley village on Monday 3rd September 2012 commencing at 7.30 pm.

Councillors present – Mr Ivor Davies (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks, Mr V Davies, Mr P Dengate, Mr Bob Hinder, Mrs Wendy Hinder, Mr D Holmes (after item 4), Mrs K Macklin, Mr K Perry, Mr A Springate, Mr P Sullivan and Mrs M Waller together with the Clerk, Borough Councillor D Butler, PCSO Hawthorn, 2 members of the public and 2 members of the press.

1. Apologies and absences.

Cllrs Harwood (work), Smith (unwell) and Spain (holiday). County Councillor Paul Carter (KCC commitment).

2. Declaration of Interests or Lobbying.

None declared.

3. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 2nd July 2012.

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

4. Co-option to Parish Councillor Vacancy (South Ward.)

Mr Dennis Holmes was invited to address the meeting and answer members' questions. He was then asked to leave the room and members voted on and **agreed his co-option to the position of Parish Councillor (South Ward)**. Lengthy discussion took place on the fact that, despite warding, the majority of Councillors now lived in the North Ward. Regrets were expressed that no residents of the South Ward had applied to join the Council although the elections and the vacancy had been extensively advertised.

Mr Holmes signed his Declaration of Office and was invited to join the meeting.

Item 6 and the adjournment for the public were taken at this point.

5. Matters Arising From the Minutes.

5.1 Minute 2421/4.1 Round Wood. **Noted** the request to withdraw the village green application was approved by KCC and signs, giving the public the right to comment, had been erected concerning the voluntary registration application.

5.2 Minute 2421/4.4 Website. **Noted** the working group would be meeting shortly to decide on what further work, if any, was required. Members were asked to pass on their views or comments to the parish office.

5.3 Minute 2422/9.1 Parish Tour. Members approved the itinerary and asked for a walk through Vinters Valley NR to be arranged. It was **agreed** that the Clerk would propose a date to members for the tour.

5.4 Minute 2422/10 Code of Conduct **Noted** advert had not yet been placed due to a complication caused by KALC Maidstone area committee.

5.5 Community Project Grant. **Noted** closing date for applications has been set for 28th September and this will then be progressed with the judging group.

5.6 Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard. **Noted** The lease agreement was still outstanding due to the item relating to emptying of the dog waste bin; a reminder had been sent to MBC. The Chairman informed members that he had received a letter from the Queen's Lady in Waiting thanking the Council for their gift of the CD and accompanying message of congratulations, a copy of which would be placed on the website. Cllr Vic Davies then informed members that a total of £200 had been raised through the sale of the CD and had been donated to Maidstone Mencap. The Chairman thanked Cllr Davies for his work on designing and producing the CD. The Clerk notified members that the Lottery Fund had accepted the end of project report and had signed it off.

6 Report from the PCSO and Police Issues.

6.1 **Received and noted** crime statistics and report.

- 6.2 PCSO contract. **Noted** the police are taking legal advice and the Chairman had been invited to a meeting to discuss the situation with Chief Inspector Bumpus.

The meeting was adjourned at 8.21 pm to allow a member of the public to address the Council about a planning application for shops at Penhurst Close. His comments were noted by members without comment. As it was recognised that the permitted 3 minutes for the public to speak had not been sufficient for him to list all his objections and concerns, he was encouraged to send a letter for circulation to members of the Environment Committee. The meeting reconvened at 8.27 pm.

7 **Draft Minutes of Meetings since Previous Parish Council Meetings.**

Noted and Received:

- 7.1 Environment Committee meeting 2nd July 2012, a mistake concerning location was identified.
- 7.2 Environment Committee meeting 9th July 2012.
- 7.3 Finance Committee 10th July 2012.
- 7.4 Estates Committee 14th August 2012, a request for a slight amendment was made.

8 **Finance.**

- 8.1 **Noted and received** payments made out of meeting 03.07.12 – 28.08.2012. Appendix A.
- 8.2 **Noted and received** receipts for the period 26.06.12–28.08.2012. Appendix B.
- 8.3 **Noted and received** account balances as at 28.08.12. Appendix C.
- 8.4 **Authorised** payments of accounts.
- 8.5 **Noted and received** the signed off Annual Return for 2011/2012.
- 8.6 Members were reminded that: they should not sign blank cheques or authorisation letters; they need to check invoices against cheques when signing; cheques stubs need to be initialled by both signatories; and that they were personally responsible for keeping their Register of Interests details up to date.

9 **Land at Sandy Lane, Boxley.**

An update on the current situation was **received**.

10 **Flag at Beechen Hall.**

Members **agreed** that only the Union Flag would be flown at the hall and that, as was becoming common practice elsewhere, it would normally be flown continuously because of the difficulty of rostering staff to raise and lower it. The Clerk assured members that protocol would be followed when state mourning was declared and also that the design of the flagpole would be such as to ensure that the flag could not be tampered with.

11 **Parish Council Payments Consultation.**

Ratified the Council's response that supported the removal of the 2 signatories' requirement.

12 **Matters for Decision**

- 12.1 Action with Communities in Rural Kent Annual Meeting on Thurs 13 September 2012, any interested members would contact the office.
- 12.2 KALC Annual Finance Conference Saturday 20th October 2012 at Lenham Community Centre. Cllr Macklin and the Chairman expressed interest in attending and the Clerk would supply details to them. **Action Cllrs Macklin, I Davies and the Clerk.**

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

Cllr Wendy Hinder bought up the issue of inadequate highway maintenance and the problems and complaints that this was causing. It was **noted** that the issue would be

discussed at the next Environment Committee meeting.

Cllr Butler discussed the Core Strategy Consultation and notified members that Core Strategy public meetings were being held by MBC.

14 Policies and Procedures Review.

14.1 Code of Practice for Handling Complaints against the Parish Council. It was **agreed** that, with the amendments required by the change to the Code of Conduct, the document was still fit for purpose.

14.2 Policy on dealing with Code of Conduct Complaints. **Agreed.**

14.3 Dispensations (new policy). **Agreed**, after discussion, the proposal from the Chair that the proposed policy be adopted with the Proper Officer of the Council dealing with any requests for dispensation.

14.4 Land and Building Purchase Policy. Members **agreed** that the policy was still fit for purpose but, for the sake of clarity, Cllr Macklin proposed seconded by Cllr Bob Hinder that it be placed on record that "**this policy allows the Parish Council to consider purchasing land solely to stop detrimental development**". This was **agreed** with 1 abstention.

14.5 Draft Minutes on Website. **Agreed** as still fit for purpose. It was also **agreed** that this policy need only be returned to the Council if problems arose.

14.6 Standing Orders Revisions (due to changes brought about by the Localism Act 2010). **Agreed.**

Noted the planned review of policy and procedure for Internal Complaints and Civic Recognition Recommendations had been deferred to the October meeting.

15 Reports from councillors/office.

15.1 Walderslade Ward (Medway) PACT Meeting, 16 July 2012: report by Cllr I Davies.

15.2 Friends of Boxley Warren Meeting 21/8/12: report by Cllr I Davies.

15.3 Cobtree Country Park: report from Cllr Smith.

15.4 Maidstone JTB: report from Cllr Bob Hinder. Members were concerned that Cllr Hinder had not been allowed to speak to the Committee and it was **agreed** the Chairman would write a letter concerning the issue. **Action Cllr I Davies.**

16 Parish Services Scheme.

Members **received** an update on the situation. It was **agreed** that the latest information from KALC should be circulated to members for consideration but concern was expressed that a petition would not work and that a parish poll would be very expensive. Cllr Macklin suggested that the Parish Council should consider putting to Maidstone Area KALC that it uses the new Right to Challenge legislation against MBC. The Clerk was asked to produce a briefing paper. **Action: Clerk.**

Cllr Butler agreed to take up the issue regarding the maintenance of trees on open spaces.

As it was 9.30 pm the Chairman used his devolved powers to extend the meeting by 30 minutes.

17 Matters for Information.

17.1. Agenda items, clarification from the Parish Clerk.

17.2 Report from Mike Phillips (Mid Kent Downs Officer) Celebrating Boxley Warren Update for Boxley Parish Council – April 2012

17.2 ACRK Rural News 118, 119 and 120.

17.3 Kent County Playing Fields Association newsletter August 2012.

17.4 Openness and transparency – a guide for councillors (sent electronically to all councillors).

17.5 Medway Neighbourhood Watch newsletter issue 28.

17.6 KALC Maidstone Area Committee minutes 25.07.12.

17.7 Thank you letter from Friends of Boxley Church for the grant.

- 17.8 Thank you letter from Kent Wildlife Trust. The grant will go towards updating a walks leaflet as well as installing an information board at the Tyland Barn site.
- 17.9 Cobtree Park newsletter Aug – Sept 2012.

18 Next Meeting.

Monday 1st of October 2012 at 7.30 pm at St Johns School, Grove Green.

Meeting closed at 9.38 p.m.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

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