

**Minutes of the Environment Committee on Monday 13 October 2014 at
Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.30 p.m.**

Councillors present: Mrs Wendy Hinder (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks, Mr Ivor Davies, Mr P Dengate, Mr Bob Hinder, Mr M Hinchliffe, Mr D Hollands, Mrs A Spain, Mr A Springate and Mrs M Waller together with the Clerk and a member of the public.

1. Apologies and absences

All councillors were in attendance.

2. Declaration of Interests, dispensations, predetermination or Lobbying

All members declared that they had been lobbied on item 8.1.

3. Minutes of the Meetings of 1 & 9 September 2014

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

Due to the attendance of a resident item 8.1 was taken at this point.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.35pm to allow the applicant to address members on item 8.1. Meeting reconvened at 7.37pm.

4. Matters Arising From Minutes

- 4.1 Minute 2684/4.1 Part-night lighting. County Councillor Paul Carter's response explaining the financial savings of the scheme and that any resulting increase in crime would be monitored with the Police was **noted**.
- 4.2 Minute 2685/9.1 Speed Limit Walderslade Woods Road. The response from KCCH&T was **received and noted**. After brief discussion it was **agreed no further action**.
- 4.3 Minute 2686/10.2 Retention of planning applications. Members requested the office to investigate the retention rules for Maidstone Borough Council. **Noted** awaiting response from MBC.
- 4.4 Minute 2686/9.2 Bus route 130. **Noted** this matter is still being investigated by KCC, Medway and the bus company.
- 4.5 Minute 2686/10.3 Planning Rota. A query was raised about the need for all members to be on the rota. After a brief discussion the rota was accepted with an acknowledgement that members needed to ensure that they dealt with all applications professionally and would only object when there were material planning reasons to do so. The Clerk was asked to indicate to members if they were not following this policy.

5. Planning Applications and Appeals for Consideration

Received Clerk's update on paper planning applications which will cease once MBC finish an individual review of parish councils to see what their 'needs' are.

Members raised the issue of poorly prepared TPO applications with limited information on sketch plans. It was **agreed** to take this up with MBC and also at the meeting on 27 October. The Clerk was asked to investigate what guidance MBC supplied to applicants.

Action: Cllrs Bob & Wendy Hinder, Ivor Davies and Clerk.

14/500168/TPO. Fell Ash Tree at 30 Spenlow Drive, Walderslade. To ratify Clerk's response, after obtaining a majority view from members, to change the decision to mirror that of the Landscape Officer *Do not wish to object. A replacement tree planted elsewhere on the plot was suggested.*

14/502439/FULL/MAHA. Proposed car park for KIMS staff, together with associated landscaping at Land North of Newnham Court Shopping Village, Bearsted Road, Weaving.

Do not wish to object however there is a concern about the adverse impact on local traffic due to increased pressure on the highway infrastructure. The original application for the development clearly stated that it would not require extensive staff parking due

to its green travel plan and so all vehicular movement calculations did not include the extra 141 car parking spaces.

14/503063/FULL/KEHO. Retrospective application to retain parapet wall constructed 550mm higher than as previously approved (Planning Ref: MA/11/0814) at 20 Franklin Drive, Weaving.

Do not wish to object however the parish council wishes to express its concern that the planning permission was not adhered to and this was not picked up by Building Control during construction. The fact that the plans were ignored and retrospective planning permission is now required indicates a lack of effective monitoring at MBC.

Members requested that this issue be notified to the Chief Executive and Cabinet Member.

14/503122/TPO/LOWE. TPO No 1 of 1969: an application for consent to remove leaning stem of one silver birch; fell one sweet chestnut; and reduce height of three silver birches by one-third, bringing them down to roof height, and branch length by 1 metre to reduce canopy spread at Longwood House, 3 Longwood, Walderslade.

Do not wish to object but defer to Landscape Officer's view.

14/503126/TPO. TPO No. 1 of 1969: An application for consent to crown lift one Field Maple and one Hornbeam to 2.5m above ground level and one Oak to 4m above ground level; to crown thin one Beech by 15% and reduce long lateral branch by a maximum of 2.5m; to crown reduce two Hornbeams by 10% each and reshape (1m top and 0.5m sides); to reduce height of one Ash by 2m; to fell one Hornbeam; to reduce the two lowest branches of one Oak by a maximum of 2.5m each and to trim mixed hedging to the rear at 14 Round Wood Close, Walderslade.

Do not wish to object but defer to Landscape Officer's view.

14/503318/TPO/JAMO. TPO No. 13 of 1981: An application to reduce the crown height to a minimum of 18.4 metres and reduce the crown spread to a minimum of 4 metres radius 1 No. Oak tree referred to a T21 on the order, also reduce the crown height to a minimum of 17 metres and crown spread to a minimum of 4 metres radius 1 No. Oak tree referred to as T32 on the order at 49 Bargrove Road, Maidstone.

Do not wish to object but defer to Landscape Officer's view.

14/503334/TPO/AW2. TPO No. 1 of 1969: An application for consent to fell to ground level 1 no. Sycamore tree and crown thin by 10% and raise crown to a maximum of 5 metres from ground level 3 no. Hornbeams at 9 Cinnabar Close And 23 Micawber Close, Walderslade.

Do not wish to object but defer to Landscape Officer's view.

14/503661/FULL/KEHO. Erection of new 2m high paladin mesh fence and a pair of 9m wide paladin gates to part of the property at Bournes Removals, Unit C, Forstal Trading Estate, St Michael's Close, Aylesford.

Do not wish to object.

14/503722/TPO/RARE. TPO No. 1 of 1969: An application for consent to fell 1 no. Sweet Chestnut tree at 18 Goldstone Walk, Walderslade.

Do not wish to object defer to Landscape Officer's view. Members raised concern about the inadequate sketch map submitted with the application.

14/503782/TPO/AW2. TPO No. 1 of 1969: An application for consent to crown thin by no more than 15% and removal of all trunk suckers to the height of the first main branch, approximately 5m from ground level of 1 no. Oak tree at 11 Sylvan Glade, Walderslade.

Do not wish to object but defer to Landscape Officer's view.

14/503815/FULL/JOBA. Loft Conversion with front and rear dormers and roof lights (resubmission of MA/14/0734) at 8 Camomile Drive, Weaving.

Wish to see refused but not reported to the planning committee. It is felt that there is little change to the MA/14/0734 design and the Borough Council's reasons for refusal are still valid for this application.

The size and design of the dormer windows and their installation in such a highly visible location will have an adverse impact on the street scene. The dormers are overpowering and dominating the character of the house.

14/504069/FULL/JOBA. First floor side extension at 6 Wytherling Close, Bearsted.

Do not wish to object.

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

None received.

7. **Volunteer Groups**

Received and noted.

7.1 Friends of Boxley Warren. Report from Cllr Bob Hinder Chairman of FoBW. Two illegal motorbikes had been stopped by the Police but another two had been seen and their details have been supplied to the Police. For the third time in approximately 18 months the entrance gates have been destroyed by a car crash and this resulted in the planned task day having to be cancelled. **Noted** a request for a KCC investigation into the road at this point has been requested.

7.2 Walderslade Woodlands Group. Cllr Springate gave a verbal report and Rob Burrows's, Chairman of WWG, written report was received. It was reported that two quad bikes had been seen in the wood and access had been via the footway adjacent to the subway under Beechen Bank Road. **Agreed** Rob Burrows to be contacted about the possibility of a permanent structure to impede the bikes or a permanent No Motorbikes sign being erected. **Action Clerk.**

8. **Highways and Byways**

8.1 Land to side of 15 Goldstone Walk. Members considered the impact of the sale of the land to the adjacent property owner. The applicant notified members that KCC had agreed in principle to the sale but needed the parish council's approval. **No objection** (one abstention).

8.2 Parish & Town Council Seminar with KCCH&T Wed 19 November. Cllr Hinchliffe to attend. **Action Cllr Hinchliffe.**

9. **Policy and procedures review**

Funding services e.g. shrub maintenance that are being cut or reduced by principle authorities. Member's **received** an update containing more information on the conditions that would be set by KCCH&T, including some indication on cost and grants, for additional shrub maintenance in the Walderslade Woods area. After lengthy discussion and with some members expressing reservation about double taxation it was **agreed** that the Clerk would obtain further information on:

- Exact cost for an additional shrub maintenance cut in Walderslade.
- Any liability risks if the parish council took on responsibility.
- Likely grant from KCC and whether an annual grant would be guaranteed.
- Could the maintenance responsibility be returned to KCC.
- The maintenance standards.

Action: Clerk.

Discussion included making additional provision in the budget for ad hoc expenditure. Maintenance would only take place on public amenity land and would not include public rights of way or hedgerows.

10. **KCC consultation on Community Warden Scheme**

After discussion it was **agreed no response would be made.**

11. **Draft Budget 2015/2016**

After discussion the majority of the draft budget was agreed with the Street Maintenance budget to be discussed after a response to item 9 was received from KCC.

12. **Matters for information**

None received.

13. **Next Meeting**

Next full environment meeting 10 November 2014 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.

14. **MBC consultation Transport in Maidstone – alternatives to using the car.**

After discussion it was **agreed** that the response would highlight the following issues:

- The lack of public transport, there and back, to Bearsted and Maidstone rail stations. Public transport needs to also be at the appropriate time so that it is integrated with the train timetable.
- Have the park and ride service stop at rail stations.

In view of the confidential nature of the Enforcement item the Chairman moved that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the item.

15. **Enforcement and Section 106 updates from MBC**

Members' **noted** MBC's response that the unauthorised tiles that were reported would be replaced.

It was **agreed** that this item would only be included on an agenda when there was information to report.

Meeting closed at 9.18 pm.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

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