

**Minutes of the Environment Committee on Monday 14 April 2014 at  
Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.32 p.m.**

Councillors present: Mrs Wendy Hinder (Chairman), Mrs P Brooks, Mr Ivor Davies, Mr P Dengate, Mr Bob Hinder, Mr D Hollands, Mr A Springate and Mrs M Waller together with the Clerk and Cllr T Baker, Chairman of Broomfield and Kingswood PC.

**1. Apologies and absences.**

Cllr Spain (convalescing).

**2. Declaration of Interest or Lobbying.**

None declared.

**3. Minutes of the Meetings of 10 March 2014.**

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

Item 7 was taken at this point.

**4. Matters Arising From Minutes.**

4.1 Minute 2631/4.1 Grovewood Drive North crossing improvements: Information is now awaited from KCCH&T. **Noted** and **agreed** that the issue will be returned to the agenda once it progresses.

4.2 Minute 2631/4.2 & 4.5 Bollards at Sandling Village Hall and Boxley Road, Walderslade. A grant application will be put together for submission to County Councillor Carter; the cost of installation is £50 per bollard. **Action: Clerk.**

4.3 Minute 2631/4.4 Verge work at Grovewood Drive South. The work to remove shrubs and grass area will commence when the weather is right. **Noted.**

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

**5. Planning Applications and Appeals for Consideration.**

5.1 MA/13/1532 Internal and external changes to the building including the re-cladding of external elevations in insulated panelling, glazing to new shop front and the formation of a new side balcony within existing gantry framework at Unit C, Aylesford Wharf, Forstal Rd. *Do not wish to object.*

5.2 MA/13/1797. Lordswood Urban Extension. **Ratified**, the Clerk's decision, after consulting committee members, to amend the parish council's response so that the application did not go to the Maidstone Planning Committee.

5.3 MA/14/0389 Erection of a pre-fabricated timber granny annexe for ancillary residential use at 66 Boxley Road, Walderslade.

*Do not wish to object however request a condition that the accommodation is ancillary to the main house and cannot be used as a separate dwelling is requested.*

5.4 MA/14/0419 Change of use of amenity land to garden land and erection of 2m high fencing at 7 Barleyfields, Weaving. *Do not wish to object.*

5.5 MA/14/0426 An application for a single storey front porch at 56 Restharrow Road, Weaving. *Do not wish to object.*

5.6 MA/14/0440 Approval of reserved matters of outlay, appearance, scale and landscaping of planning permission MA/11/0227 (outline planning permission for erection of a hotel with access to be considered at this stage and all other matters reserved for future consideration to allow the approved fixed Eclipse Park access and local highway improvement works to be implemented in advance of approval of the remaining reserved matters and discharge of other conditions) for the erection of a hotel (150 bedrooms) with associated parking (173 spaces) and landscaping at Eclipse Park, Sittingbourne. *Do not wish to object.*

5.7 MA/14/0476 – Erection of single storey kitchen extension to front of property at 29 Camomile Drive, Weavering, Maidstone. *Do not wish to object.*

5.8 MA/14/0493 Erection of a two storey rear extension, first floor side extension and rear conservatory at 17 Grey Wethers, Sandling. *Do not wish to object.*

5.9 TA/0006/14 Tree Preservation Order application: TPO No.1 of 1969: an application for consent to fell 1 (No) Ash Tree at 1 Fagus Close.  
*Do not wish to object defer to the Landscape Officer's views.*

5.10 TA/0067/14 Tree Preservation Order application: TPO No 1 of 1969: an application for consent to undertake a crown thinning of 50% of 1No Hornbeam, and a crown reduction of 40% of 2No Hornbeam at 25 Forestdale Road, Boxley, Chatham.  
*Do not wish to object defer to the Landscape Officer's views.*

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

MA/14/0171\*.

## 7. **Neighbourhood Development Plans.**

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Baker who was invited to address members on Broomfield and Kingswood's experiences in developing a NDP. Areas covered included:

- Need to get the community on-board and involved in the development work for the NDP.
- The plan must be strongly supported by evidence.
- Cost and the need to build into any contract that the parish council can halt any work if it decides not to continue with the project.
- Due diligence.
- Strong working group needed.
- Timeline.
- How to involve the community and the need to keep residents updated on progress.

Members discussed issues with Cllr Baker answering questions.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Baker for sharing his experiences with members. Members considered the need to establish whether Boxley residents would want a NDP and whether they would support the cost of producing the document. It was suggested that a public consultation would be needed in each of the North and South wards. After further discussion it was **agreed** that a pros and cons list for producing a NDP would be submitted to the Local Plan Working Group and for it to make a recommendation to the Parish Council on whether to progress the issue by putting an article in the Downs Mail to gauge the depth of support. **Action: Clerk and LPWG.**

## 8. **Maidstone Borough Local Plan.**

The working group is to meet on 23 April to formulate a respond to the draft Local Plan and the draft Community Infrastructure Levy Preliminary Charing Schedule. **Noted.**

## 9. **Volunteer Groups.**

Reports were **received** from:

- Walderslade Woods Group on their recent task day. A glade and steps had been cleared and volunteers from Hadlow College had assisted in the woods.
- Friends of Boxley Warren on their recent task day and an appeal in the KM for volunteers. It was also reported that the area had been plagued by quad bikes and bikes. **Agreed** the PCSO was to be informed. **Action: Clerk.**

## 10. **Highways and Byways.**

10.1 Old Chatham Road, Sandling. The intention to have a clearway and waiting restrictions was **noted** and **received**.

10.2 Wildfell Close. A resident has complained about lack of maintenance and a site visit with KCCH&T has been arranged for 16 April. **Noted.**

- 10.3 KCC's Safe and Sensible Street Lighting project. The installation of timers to switch off street lights overnight will commence in the Maidstone area on 29 April. **Noted.**
11. **Policy and procedures review.**  
Planning and the parish council explanation leaflet. Review deferred to the May meeting.
12. **Matters for information.**  
**Received and noted**  
12.1 2013 DCLG consultation on Greater Flexibilities for Change of Use. A summary of the 852 responses is available from [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)
13. **Next Meeting.**  
Next full environment meeting 19 May 2014 at Beechen Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.
14. **Enforcement and Section 106 updates from MBC.**  
There were none.
15. **Maidstone council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees suggestions and topics.** Deferred to the committee from the Parish Council meeting 7 April 2014.  
Members **agreed** the following submission for the Planning, Transport and Development. OSC to investigate.  
**Planning, Transport and Development.**
1. Describe the impact the issue [for review] is having;  
*Boxley Parish Council is concerned that some planning decisions by Maidstone are not consistent and in some cases the 'quality' of the decision appears questionable. The parish council does not wish to instigate a 'witch hunt' but feels that there should be some form of internal review procedure to help the department and individuals, if necessary, to develop and learn from experience. The review procedure should allow parish councils to report an application that has resulted, in its opinion, in development that is far removed from what was expected in the way of impact on the street character, materials etc. The parish council is aware that some planning applications are not to everyone's taste however where a local community ends up with a development that sticks out like a 'sore thumb' or is an 'eyesore' then it should be allowed to report it in the understanding that a small group will review the end result against the plans etc. in a procedure that is equivalent to a quality control review. If members wish to understand the impact of what this parish council considers is a 'questionable' decision please drive past The Oaks, Westfield Sole Road, Walderslade ME5 3HE and take note of the design, colour of the materials used and the adverse impact on the surrounding area. The parish council is aware that many issues are taken into account when considering a planning application and that nothing can be done to change the development once permission is given.*
  2. Who is it impacting on?  
*Communities and individuals living adjacent to the development. Within certain areas it may also impact on community safety, tourism, highways etc. There is also impact on MBC as failure to learn whilst working results in a poor service, stagnation in individual staff personal development and also a lack of respect from users of the service.*

Meeting closed at 9.25 pm.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

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