



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 4 July 2022 held at Weaving Village Hall, commencing at 19:30

Present: Mr C Sheppard - Chairman, Mr Ivor Davies, Mr B Hinder, Mrs P Huntingford, Mrs K Macklin (from item 5), D Hubbard, V Davies, A Asseter, P Dengate, P Sullivan, M Beckwith, K Hill (from item 13) and A Brindle (from item 5) together with the Clerk Mrs D Baylis and 2 members of the public.

1. Apologies and absences

CLrs J Willmott and D Hollands.

2. Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying

None.

3. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 6 June 2022

The minutes of the meeting were agreed.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Minute 3612 Item 13. The Clerk was still trying to find a solicitor to advice on both Trusts and the Grant Agreement. The Solicitor used for the Grant Agreement was unable to help.

4.1 Any other matters arising from the minutes.

5. Crime Report and Police Issues

Noted.

CLlr Hinder reported that the PCSO had attended the Bredhurst Parish Council meeting.

Adjournment to enable members of the public to address the meeting

2 members of the public had come to observe the meeting.

6. Draft Minutes of Recent Committee Meetings

Received and **Noted** the following draft minutes.

6.1 Environment Committee Meetings 6 and 13 June 2022. **Noted**

6.2 Estates Committee 20 June 2022. **Noted**

7. Finance

There were no finance reports on the Agenda.

8. Policies and Procedures

10.1 None on this Agenda.

9. Monthly Website update

No changes reported.

10. Reports from Councillors/Office

CLlr V Davies had manned the stand at the St Johns Fete on his own. He was not in a good area so did not get a great deal of footfall. The item of most concern was the Lidsing development.

CLrs C Sheppard and A Brindle had attended the 30th anniversary celebration at Vinters Valley Nature Reserve. It was a well attended day enjoyed by everyone.

11. Reports from Borough and County Councillors

Cllr Hinder reported that Planning Enforcement was at the top of the Agenda for the Borough Council. There is still concern that Borough Councillors are copied into Enforcement Notices, but Parish Clerks are not. The Borough has issues with recruitment, mainly due to salaries and this is impacting services.

Both Cllrs Hinder and Brindle had attended the recent Bredhurst Parish Council meeting and will not be attending future meetings. Bredhurst PC had a clear mandate of no outside involvement in opposing the Lidsing Development. No Parish Councillors spoke at the meeting.

12. Grant Applications

12.1 Bearsted Parish Council – Summer Play Scheme.

It was proposed by Cllr C Sheppard, seconded by Cllr B Hinder and all agreed that a grant of £250 be made.

13. Walderslade Woodlands

A resident at 14 Forestdale was requesting that a large tree to the rear of the property be cut back. This appears to be outside of the woodland owned by BPC. The Clerk would investigate and report back.

14. Cluster Meetings

Cllr Hinder reported that a lot of PCSO's were leaving and no more were being recruited so numbers were becoming increasing low with 95% of their time spent in the town centre. He considered the Cluster meetings a waste of time. The Clerk was to write to the Police and Crime Commissioner to complain about the lack of communication from the PCSO.

15. Matters for Decision

None on this Agenda.

16. Correspondence

A letter had been received by a resident on Boxley Road complaining about increased road noise following cutting down of trees. This was outside of BPC's jurisdiction and the resident would be referred to KCC highways.

17. Matters for Information

None.

18. Items for Next Agenda

To be received by the Clerk on or before the 26 August 2022.

Noted.

19. Next Meeting

5 September 2022 at Beechen Hall.

The Chairman to move that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be considered the press and public be excluded from the meeting.

20. Personnel and Confidential Matters

None on this Agenda.

21. Speedwatch

This had come up during the Cluster Meeting and Cllr Brindle said that it was welcomed. The police would provide training and support but not the equipment. The Clerk said that the sign was still in storage but not the equipment which must have been lent out and not returned. The Clerk was asked to look in to hire charges for the equipment.

22. Lidsing Garden Development

The Chairman had sent the following letter to the Chairman of Bredhurst Parish Council:

Following a meeting today at Boxley Parish Council, the following items were discussed:

1. Boxley Council want to work closely with Bredhurst Parish Council and the Against Lidsing Garden Development Group (ALGD).
2. Our major focus is going to be the transport issues concerning the increased traffic movements from North to South and visa versa from Lidsing to Maidstone down Boxley Hill and through Boxley village. We wish to concentrate on this very specific issue which will affect many of our residents.
3. Further to our conversation of a fortnight ago in which you had concerns about a conflict of interest with Maidstone Borough Council, Bob Hinder and Anne Brindle, have agreed to step down from sitting on ALGD. They have done this voluntarily to help move our relationship forward.
4. Boxley Parish Council wish to nominate Councillor Kevin Hill as a member of the ALGD. He is local and very passionate about the Lidsing Garden Development not going ahead. He wishes to have a chat / meeting with yourself. His details are shown below:

Kevin Hill



5. Kevin has been instrumental in leading on a traffic survey and analysis over the last week in Boxley Village which he will update you on.
6. Boxley Parish Council wish to work with you open and honestly and Kevin will require access to all information that is current shared to yourself and Sue Harwood and will also want access with the Transport Planning Consultant you have engaged with.
7. It is our intention to donate a significant amount of money via a Bank Transfer (not Go Fund Me). This amount is currently in discussion and will be agreed at our full Parish Council next Monday evening.
8. I have also had very positive correspondence with two of our local MPS regarding upgrading Bluebell Hill to the Strategic Road Network under the control of National Highways. We are arranging a meeting with all major Stakeholders including the Department of Transport to look at a completely different funding model outside of Kent County Council to upgrade the A249 and the junctions at the M2 and M20.
9. I reiterate that Boxley Council want to work closely with Bredhurst Parish Council and the Against Lidsing Garden Development Group (ALGD).

Regards

Chris Sheppard
Chairman

On the 4th July he received the following reply:

From: cllrjones@bredhurstpc.org.uk

Date: 4 July 2022 at 16:38:52 BST

To: Boxley Parish Council Chairman <chairman@boxleyparishcouncil.org.uk>

Subject: Lidsing Garden Community

Dear Chris

Further to your letter of 28th June and your conditional offer to donate.

You are probably aware that BPC/ALGD have exceeded our fund-raising target. BPC have now instructed a barrister and various consultants to fight MBCs Local Plan which includes the proposed development at Lidsing. We continue to seek donations as costs could well increase depending on how much new evidence MBC submits to the Inspector in the coming weeks.

Even at this late stage, we would appreciate a donation from you, but our barrister has advised we cannot accept the 'many strings attached' to your offer. With respect to yourself and Boxley Parish Cllrs, it is for our barrister and specialist consultants to decide what areas they wish to focus on and how the case will be presented.

Regarding the work you are undertaking to upgrade motorway junctions / Bluebell Hill, this rang alarm bells with our transport consultant as this could work to MBC's advantage and to the detriment of our case. We are seeking to stop the Lidsing development, not mitigate it.

I realise Boxley PC now wish to work closely with Bredhurst PC and, had this offer been made 2 years ago or even 2 months ago, BPC would have welcomed it. It should have been Boxley PC leading on this from the start, not us. It has been a mammoth task for our small council with limited resources and for me personally.

Should Boxley PC wish to make an unconditional financial contribution, we could advertise the amount of your donation which would demonstrate your level of support to your residents, many of whom have generously donated. This would show you are supporting our work towards a common goal - to stop all development at Lidsing.

Regards

Vanessa

Following discussion of the letter and its reply:

It was proposed by Cllr C Sheppard, seconded by Cllr P Dengate and all agreed that the offer of a substantial donation be withdrawn so that the funds can be used in the best interest of BPC residents in opposing the Lidsing Development.

It was proposed by Cllr C Sheppard, seconded by Cllr K Macklin and all agreed that the sum of money be put into a fighting fund to oppose the Lidsing development.

The working group would continue with preparing their statement for Cllr Sheppard who is registered to speak for BPC at the Examination in Public in September.

The traffic survey carried out had yielded some interesting data and Cllrs Hill, Dengate and Sheppard would work on some traffic modeling.

The meeting closed at 21.17.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

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