**Minutes of the Boxley Parish Council Meeting held at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade 25 September 2024, commencing after the Walderslade Woodland Trust meeting starting at 7.25pm**

**Councillors Present**:  B Hinder - Chairman, P Mclean, A Brindle, P Sullivan, I Davies, C Sheppard, M Beckwith, H Bryant (until item 11), M Cox, A Adams and J Akehurst together with Mrs D Baylis – Parish Clerk

1. **Apologies and absences**

Cllrs Macklin, Jones, English and Thompson

1. **Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying**

None

1. **Motion to exclude the press and public from the meeting for all items in the confidential section.**

No members of the public were present.

1. **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 17 July 2024**

All agreed.

1. **Matters Arising From the Minutes**

None raised.

1. **Crime Report and Police Issues**

Report noted. Cllr Hinder reported an incident involving a door knocker asking if his car was for sale as it had a flat tyre. He reported the incident to the police and had a visit from the new Beat Officer who knew the car and individual involved. He advised everyone to be vigilant and aware.

**Public Session at the discretion of the Chairman. Parishioners may address the meeting with regard to any item on the Agenda (time limited to 3 minutes per person). Items not on the Agenda must be submitted to the Clerk in advance of the meeting. Non-parishioners are only able to address the meeting at the invitation of the Chairman.**

There were no members of the public present.

1. **Draft Minutes of Recent Committee Meetings**

 The following have been previously circulated:

7.1 **Finance and General Purposes Committee 4 September 2024**

 Noted

7.3 **Estates Committee Meeting 4 September 2024**

Noted

7.3 **Environment Committee Meetings 5 August and 9 September 2024**

 Noted

1. **Finance**

8.1 **Bank Balances**

 Noted

8.2 **Finance General**

 The Clerk gave an update on the Barclays situation. No responses had been received from the last set of letters sent. It was agreed to raise a complaint through the FCA if this was possible and ask for help from our MP. It was agreed to also look at police involvement.

1. **Policies and Procedures**

9.1 **Pandemic Policy**

 This would be returned at the next meeting with amendments.

9.2 **Community Engagement Policy**

It was proposed by Cllr Sheppard, seconded by Cllr Mclean and all agreed that this policy be Adopted

9.3 **Health and Safety Policy**

 This would be returned at the next meeting with the suggested amendments.

9,4 **Whole Council Risk Assessment**

This would be brought back to the next meeting for decision. It was decided that a graph should be produced with the risks in order of level of risk which should highlight the high risk areas so that these could be concentrated on. This would involve a complete revision of the document. Cllr Cox would send the Clerk a copy of what MBC produce for reference.

1. **Christmas for Disadvantaged families**

It was proposed by Cllr I Davies, seconded by Cllr P McLean and all agreed that a budget of £200 be set to run 2 events. One at Grove Green Hall and one at Beechen Hall. Each event to be on a Saturday for 2 hours. The idea would be for children to bring their letters to Santa, with a photo opportunity and receive a scroll and a bag of sweets.

1. **Complaint from Resident regarding the Grove Green Planters**

A complaint has been received from a resident in Grove Green who did not like the planters that had been installed to commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-Day. They have requested that they be replaced with trees or similar. After discussion and as this was the only complaint received with 137 positive comments it was agreed that the Chairman will respond to the resident.

1. **Reports from Boxley Parish Councillors/Office**

12.1 **Office Staff Report**

Report noted.

12.2 **Councillors Reports**

Cllr Brindle reported on the recent MBC Planning Committee meeting at which Boxley Parish Council’s objection to a TPO being placed on a tree in St Mary and All Saints churchyard following their planning application to remove it to enable the wall to be repaired.  This meeting was also attended by Boxley Parish Councillors Hinder and Akehurst and Cllrs English and Thompson who are also Borough Councillors and on the Planning Committee of MBC.  Cllr Brindle reported that she read her statement but had to pause to allow 2 of the Borough Councillors to finish a private conversation before she could continue.  This delay meant that she could not finish her statement within the 3 minutes allowed.  Cllr Thompson stated that he was speaking as a resident and not as a ward or Parish Councillor.  He spoke for longer than the 3 minutes allowed for residents.  He had also stated that he would always favour a living thing over an inanimate object and it was felt that this made him predetermined.  The Clerk tried telephoning Cllr Thompson on Tuesday 17th September ahead of the 19th September meeting to put forward the Parish Council’s perspective and provide some background to the application but had not received a response as Cllr Thompson had turned his mobile phone off and not realised until the Friday after the meeting.  She had also emailed him on the 18th September but had not had a response.  The Tree Preservation Order was confirmed with both Cllrs Thompson and English voting against the Parish Council’s objection.  The application, plus gaining a faculty from the Diocese had taken 2 years and a lot of money to put together and this would now all have to be redone.

It was agreed that the Clerk would try to arrange a site visit with members of the MBC Planning Committee to see what options they would like put forward as alternatives.  It was agreed that any options put forward would have to be long term solutions and not a quick fix.  Cllr Akehurst would write a letter to the Planning Committee outlining all the issues with the meeting that had been raised plus others that she was unhappy with.

12.3 **Borough/County Councillor Reports**

No Borough Councillors attended and no reports were submitted.

12.4 **KALC Representative**

No meeting had been held.

12.5 **Grove Green Community Hall Representative**

Cllr Mclean reported that there had been no September meeting due to the Chairman being unwell. He was now on the mend. It was proposed by Cllr Mclean, seconded by Cllr Hinder and all agreed that flowers and a card be sent to the Chair of Grove Green Hall wishing him a speedy recovery.

12.6 **Sandling Village Hall Representative**

Cllr Akehurst reported that the Committee had met in August. They were investigating getting a post code for the hall and a larger sign. There had been a complaint from a neighbouring property about overhanging branches. The office had been chasing Landscape Services for this year’s contract to ensure that the maintenance of the village hall had been included. Cllr Jones had got the vegetation on one side of Old Chatham Road cleared but the other side still needed doing urgently. The Clerk would report to KCC requesting action.

12.7 **Vinters Valley Nature Reserve Representative**

Cllr Cox reported that the next management meeting was Friday 27 September. There would be a Trustees meeting on the 16th October. Cllr Cox would give a full report at the next Parish Council meeting.

12.8 **Any other reports**

Cllr Cox said that he was interested in creating a village fair in Mote Park to follow on from the River Festival with all Maidstone Parish Councils having their own stall in a way to bring all the parishes together. He was putting this idea forward to KALC. It was agreed that Boxley Parish Council would be interested in the event.

1. **Sandling**

Report noted.

1. **Grant Applications**

14.1 **Grant Application from We Are Beams**

This was deferred to the next meeting as due to illness their representative could not attend.

14.2 **Grant Application from Kent Air Ambulance**.

It was proposed by Cllr I Davies, seconded by Cllr Cox and all agreed to make a grant donation of £500 to support this vital life saving charity.

1. **Cluster Meetings**

None held.

1. **Lidsing**

The request for a Judicial Review of Lidsing’s inclusion in the Maidstone Local Plan had been turned down. There were no further options and the Local Plan will go forward as agreed.

1. **Matters for Decision**

A request had been received for naming 2 roads in the Gleamingwood Drive development. It was proposed by Cllr Mclean, seconded by Cllr Beckwith and all agreed that the following names would be put forward:

Road 1 – Hinder Drive

Road 2 – Wendy Way

This was to commemorate the enormous contribution the late Borough and Parish Councillor Wendy Hinder had made during 22 years of service to her community.

Cllr Cox asked if purple crocus could be planted by the war memorials. This is a Rotarian initiative to raise awareness of polio. It was proposed by Cllr Hinder, seconded by Cllr Sheppard and all agreed to allow the planting of the bulbs.

1. **Correspondence**

None received.

1. **Matters for Information**
2. **Items for Next Agenda**

Noted

1. **Meetings**

Next Meeting Monday 7 October 2024 at Sandling Village Hall. It was noted that the date of the November meeting has been changed to Wednesday 6 November 2024.

**Confidential Section**

1. **Personnel matters**

The personnel Committee was meeting on Friday 27 September at 2pm at Beechen Hall.

1. **Boxley Village Church**

The item was discussed and it was agreed to remain neutral until more detailed plans were known.

Meeting closed at 21.30 pm.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

Chairman ……………………………………………….. Date ………………………………………………………..