**Minutes of the Boxley Parish Council Meeting held at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade 17 July 2024, commencing at 19:30**

**Councillors Present**:  B Hinder - Chairman, P Mclean, A Brindle, P Sullivan, I Davies, C Sheppard, M Beckwith, H Bryant (until item 13.1), J Akehurst, M Cox with Mrs D Baylis – Parish Clerk and 1 member of the public

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.**

It was proposed by Cllr B Hinder, seconded by Cllr A Brindle and all agreed that the press and public be excluded from all items in the Confidential Section.

1. **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 5 June 2024**

All agreed.

1. **Matters Arising From the Minutes**

None raised.

1. **Co-option of a new Councillor**

There were 2 candidates for co-option. One was not present at the meeting. A vote was taken and Alan Adams who had the majority vote was duly co-opted as a Councillor for Boxley Parish Council’s Grove Green Ward. He signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office. The Clerk would meet with him the following week to go through all the other paperwork and Councillor Information Folder.

1. **Crime Report and Police Issues**

Report noted.

**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:

8.1 **Finance and General Purposes Committee 1 July 2024**

Noted

8.3 **Estates Committee Meeting 1 July 2024**

Noted

1. **Finance**

9.1 **Bank Balances**

Noted

9.2 **Finance General**

The Clerk gave an update on the Barclays situation. It was agreed that the Clerk would make an appointment with the Manager of the Maidstone Branch for herself and Cllrs Hinder and Brindle. The Clerk was also to email the Managing Director of Barclays, Matt Hammerstein.

9.3 **Receipts and Payments – 1-30 June 2024**

Report noted.

1. **Policies and Procedures**

None on this Agenda.

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

11.1 **Office Staff Report**

Report noted. Cllr Sheppard thanked the office staff for their work in organising Cllr Vic Davies retirement party held on the 12 July at Grove Green Village Hall.

11.2 **Councillors Reports**

Cllr Brindle reported that she had attended the KALC quarterly Parish Liaison Committee meeting. The Gypsy and Traveller DPD was still ongoing. There was a presentation on the 5 year housing supply. There would not be enough supply by the end of the Local Plan period.

There were 2 judicial reviews regarding the Local Plan. The one for Heathlands is not going ahead. The one for Lidsing is going to the second stage. An agreement had been made to cap costs.

There were still some issues with refuse collections but the new contractors were getting there.

The MBC discretionary business rate relief for village halls was ambiguous. A new call would be made for those wishing to be considered for the discretionary relief.

The Code of Conduct was on the MBC Agenda for its 17 July meeting. It was going back to KALC for review to make it a better fit for parish councils.

There was a move to get MBC to reinstate the strategic play areas grants.

Cllr Bryant reported that following the incident with the digger and dumper in Walderslade Woodlands doing work on a garden for a house in Alexandra Glen she had given a police statement and charges were being considered. The Clerk was also being asked to give a statement.

11.3 **Borough/County Councillor Reports**

Reports noted.

11.4 **KALC Representative**

No meeting had been held.

11.5 **Grove Green Community Hall Representative**

It was proposed by Cllr I Davies, seconded by Cllr B Hinder and all agreed that Cllr Mclean would be the new parish council representative.

11.6 **Sandling Village Hall Representative**

Cllr Akehurst reported that there were no issues to report on.

11.7 **Vinters Valley Nature Reserve Representative**

Cllr Cox reported that the open day had been held on the 14th July. The 2 new gazebos donated by BPC had been used. They had been printed with the new logo. The AGM had also been held. There had been pond dipping, tree walks and history walks. The number of visitors to the reserve has doubled since Covid. There were problems with the paths and they were receiving donations of stone from Gallaghers which was being put on the paths. A new sensory garden was being created. Nottcutts were creating and planting some raised planters for this. An Easter egg hunt was being planned for next year.

11.8 **Any other reports**

None presented

1. **Sandling**

It was proposed by Cllr Sheppard, seconded by Cllr Brindle and all agreed to purchase a new noticeboard for Sandling for village news. It was agreed that the header board should read ‘Sandling Village News’.

1. **Grant Applications**

13.1 Grant Application from We Are Beams

This was deferred to a later date due to a lack of information that answered Councillors questions.

13.2 Bearsted Parish Council summer play scheme

It was proposed by Cllr Sheppard, seconded by Cllr Brindle and all agreed to grant the £250 requested for the summer play scheme.

It was agreed to amend the Grant Application policy to include a sentence to the effect that it may be necessary to attend the meeting at which your grant is being decided to provide answers to any questions Councillors may have. The Clerk will draft the amendment for agreement at the next Parish Council meeting.

1. **Cluster Meetings**

Cllr Hinder had tried to join the Teams meeting without success. Other people had also been unable to join the meeting. He was contacting Martyn Jeynes to see why the link had not worked. He had not sent apologies for the meeting as he was fully intending to join but had been unable to.

There was a shortage of beat officers. Our beat officer has left and Boxley is not likely to get a new one until Autumn.

1. **Matters for Decision**

None on this Agenda.

1. **Correspondence**

None received.

1. **Matters for Information**

17.1  **Rural Services Network**

It was proposed by Cllr Mclean, seconded by Cllr Sheppard and all agreed to join the rural services network for one year and review.

Cllr Sheppard reported that he had filled in the Spaces for Nature form and submitted it but had not had any acknowledgement. It was decided that more information was needed as to the use of the data being provided.

Cllr Cox reported that he had been dealing with the resident regarding the planning application at Restharrow. He had been in contact with the head of Planning regarding BPC’s revised stance on the application and liaising with the resident concerned. He would be following up with enforcement to see if there is any update and would contact Rob Jarman about any new planning training courses.

Cllr Cox asked if BPC ever did anything about Christmas for disadvantaged families. It was agreed to make this an agenda item for the next meeting.

Cllr Cox asked about the noticeboards. It was agreed that a posted date would be added to all documents. A QR code would be put in that links to the parish council website.

1. **Items for Next Agenda**

Noted

1. **Meetings**

Next Meeting Wednesday 25 September 2024 at Beechen Hall.

**Confidential Section**

1. **Personnel matters**

The personnel Committee had held 2 meetings. There had been a few issues requiring resolution in the past few weeks. Another meeting was being held on 23 July at 6.30pm.

Appraisals would be held in August. Cllrs Sheppard and Hinder would do the Clerks and the Clerk would do all other staff.

The office had had 2 young men doing work experience during the past 2 weeks. Both had been a great help and had hopefully found the experience beneficial.

Meeting closed at 21.05 pm.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

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