**Minutes of the Boxley Parish Council Meeting held at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close on 22 January 2024, commencing at 19:30**

**Councillors Present**:  V Davies - Chairman, P Mclean, A Brindle, P Sullivan, N Zand, I Davies, C Sheppard, K Macklin, P Dengate, S Mayes together with Kent County Councillor Sir Paul Carter (to item 11.4) and Mrs D Baylis – Parish Clerk

1. **Apologies and absences**

Cllrs P Huntingford, B Hinder, M Beckwith and H Bryant - Apologies accepted.

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

None declared

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

It was proposed by Cllr V Davies, seconded by Cllr C Sheppard and all agreed that the press and public be excluded from all items in the Confidential Section.

1. **Minutes of the Parish Council Meetings 4 and 13 December 2023**

All agreed with minor amendments.

1. **Matters Arising From the Minutes**

None.

1. **Crime Report and Police Issues**

Report noted. Cllr Dengate asked the Clerk to see if the graph was available for previous years for comparison of peaks and troughs. The Clerk would investigate.

**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.**

No members of the public were present.

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

The following have been previously circulated:

7.1 **Environment Committee Meeting 11 December 2023.**

Noted.

7.2 **Long Term Investment Working Group Meeting 11 December 2023**

Noted

1. **Finance**

8.1 **Reconciliations**

Cllr Sheppard reported that he had now signed off all the reconciliations up to and including November.

8.2 **Bank Balances**

Noted

8.3 **To set the budget for 2024-2025**

It was proposed by Cllr C Sheppard, seconded by Cllr I Davies and all agreed that the budget put forward by the Finance and General Purposes Committee for 2024-25 be agreed.

.

8.4 **To Set the Precept for 2024-2025**

It was proposed by Cllr V Davies, seconded by Cllr A Brindle and all agreed that the precept for 2024-25 be set at £269,487.

1. **Policies and Procedures**

None on this Agenda.

10 **Monthly Website Update**

Report noted. Cllr Dengate raised a concern over the slow responses from TEEC.

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

11.1 **Office Staff Report**

Report noted.

11.2 **Councillors Reports**

No reports made.

11.3 **Borough/County Councillor Reports**

No Borough Councillors were present

Kent County Councillor Sir Paul Carter reported on the following:

Walderslade Woodlands

He was frustrated at the amount of time it was taking to get the Deed of Variation signed as it has now been 9 month plus. He has been assured that it will be resolved by the end of January and has asked for fortnightly reporting. He had been for a guided walk around the woodland last summer and was very impressed with the work of the volunteers and how good the woodland was looking.

Lidsing

The Inspector has issued another letter for consultation. A main focus now was improvements to junction 3 of the M2. He was encouraging KCC Highways to object on highways grounds. He does not believe that Lidsing is the right choice for a development of this kind. He also noted that Santec are producing reports for both sides and feels that this is unethical.

Highways

KCC looks after 5,000 miles of road in Kent. Most of these are small roads with many built on clay. He was apologetic about lack of maintenance. The Government funding is put in but KCC are still skint. Better value for money was obtained when contractors were paid per job rather than day rates and this is something to look at going back to.

Issues raised by Councillors

Bearsted Road Improvements

Councillors raised concerns at the siting of the pedestrian crossing. It was a bad location and the temporary lights already cause congestion so locating the permanent lights in the same place is not a good idea. The original plans put the lights in a better location but involved the construction of a footpath. The footpath is now not being built on cost grounds. Councillors feel that this is unacceptable and that the original plans should be stuck to.

Highway Improvement Plans

Cllr Sheppard raised issues with the process of the Highway Improvement Plan. Councils have to have one as it is the only way to request highway improvements. Much time is spent looking at areas of concern and adding proposals to the list. BPC has funds for many of the ideas put forward. These are looked at quarterly and nearly every proposal put forward is dismissed with no reasons given.

Stem School

Cllr Sheppard reported that there are still big issues with parking by parents on the surrounding roads at school drop off and pick up times. He had been in contact with MBC parking services and they had attended a couple of times but not enough to cause a deterrent.

11.3 **KALC Representative**

Cllr I Davies reported that the next meeting was on Monday 29 January.

11.5 **Grove Green Community Hall Representative**

Cllr V Davies reported that the AGM had been held on the 5th January and that he was still Chairman. Ann Newman had been elected treasurer.

11.6 **Sandling Village Hall Representative**

No rep present

11.7 **Vinters Valley Nature Reserve Representative**

No meetings had been held since the last Parish Council meeting. The contamination of the lake was not coming from the car wash but from the flushing of the Hockers Lane water treatment tanks by South East Water. The attenuation tanks had been built for the road surface water run off.

11.8 **Parish/Police Liaison Meeting Representative**

No representative present

11.9 **Any other reports**

The Clerk reported that she had helped with a grant application for Weavering Village Hall.

The Clerk was asked to send a thank you to Sir Paul Carter for attending the meeting.

Cllr Sheppard reported that a recent BBC news item was from Boxley which was billed the worst fly tipping area in Kent.

1. **Walderslade Woodlands**

The Clerk was asked to check if the level of fly tipping had increased since the closure of the household waste site and Maidstone Residents not being able to use Medway household waste sites.

It was agreed to set up a joint working group with members of the Woodland Management Committee and Walderslade Woodlands Group for the management of Walderslade woodlands.

1. **Sandling**

No update.

1. **80th Anniversary of D-Day**

No update.

1. **Cluster Meetings**

No representative present.

1. **Matters for Decision**

It was proposed by Cllr V Davies, seconded by Cllr P Dengate and all agreed that the quotation from company 1 for the structural survey of the allotment driveway be accepted.

1. **Correspondence**

None received.

1. **Matters for Information**

None on this Agenda.

1. **Items for Next Agenda**

Noted

1. **Meetings**

Next Meeting Monday 4 March 2024 at Beechen Hall.

**Confidential Section**

1. **Personnel matters**

The personnel matters were discussed.

22. **Vexatious People**

No update.

23. **Reserves**

The allocation of reserves was discussed.

24. **Lidsing Update**

Actions regarding the Inspectors latest letter were discussed.

Meeting closed at 20.55 pm.

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

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