

GROTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Groton Parish Council held on Wednesday 7th July 2021 at 6.00pm in Groton Village Hall

Present: P Roberts (Chair), R Cheeseman, A Dixon-Smith, R Jones (Notes)

Guests: J Finch

1. **Apologies for absence** – G Becker, S McGrath, A Crane
2. **Councillors' Declarations of Interests in any item on this Agenda** - None
3. **Minutes of the Meeting of 26th May 2021** - Approved
4. **Reports from Suffolk County Council and Babergh District Council:**

4.1 Councillor James Finch reported the following on behalf of Suffolk County Council:

Covid19 – Infections increasing significantly in Suffolk and residents being encouraged to undertake regular rapid flow tests. Business' being asked to sign up to yes2test scheme committing to workforce testing.

Suffolk Special Educational Needs and Disability Services (SEND) – Independent review of SEND being carried out by a team from Lincolnshire following concerns expressed by a group of parents and carers of children using the service. Review should be completed by mid-August.

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service – Three new 'State of the Art' vehicles purchased at a cost of £360,000 which will help officers manage operations more efficiently from incident scenes.

Fostering and Adoption – Virtual Foster Care events taking place on first Wednesday of every month at 7.00pm and virtual Adoption events on first Thursday, also at 7.00pm. Bookings made via SCC website.

4.2 Due to the meeting start time being brought forward, Councillor Bryn Hurren, on behalf of Babergh District Council, arrived after the close of business and subsequently contacted the Council to say would be forwarding a report.

5. Planning Matters

5.1. Planning Applications - None

5.2. Planning decisions received and Noted - DC/21/02519 Wedgewood, Park Corner
Erection of single storey front porch extension – Planning Permission Granted

5.3. Local Housing update – Good progress being made and the outlines of the buildings were now completed.

5.4. Neighbourhood Plan – In response to an enquiry from a parishioner, it was agreed to again look at the possibility of producing a Neighbourhood Plan. When discussed previously, Councillors had not deemed it necessary as the prospect of any major development had been negligible. As the neighbouring Parish of Edwardstone was in the process of producing a plan, it was agreed to invite the Edwardstone representative along to speak at the next meeting to outline what was involved so that a wider quorum of councilors could consider the Neighbourhood Plan concept and ensure that it is kept under review as it may relate to Groton.'

5.5. Other Planning Matters - None

6. Chairman's and Clerk's reports and correspondence

Groton Recorder – The Chairman had been in contact with the former recorder and had agreed to look after the records until a new recorder could be found.

Richard Jones Clerk to the Council

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7. Highway and Footpath matters

7.1 Footpath Cutting – Latest cut had been carried out but no invoice had been received.

7.2 Other Highway or Footpath Matters - None

8. Financial matters:

8.1.The Statement of Finances and Orders for Payment were approved as follows:

Reserve Account as at 1 June 2021	£3,532.36
Current Account as at 1 June 2021	<u>£7,128.21</u>
Total	£10,660.57

Payments received:

Babergh DC 1st part of precept £4,629.94

Babergh DC Parish Council Grant £98.00

Interest on Reserve Account £0.03

Cheque No	Amount £	Payee	Purpose
000850	£460.96	R J Jones	Clerk's Salary Apr – Jun 21
000851	£48.06	R J Jones	Clerk's Expenses Jun – Jul 21
000852	£115.20	HMRC	Tax on Clerk's Salary

8.2.Boxford School Library Funding Request – A suggestion of a donation of £500.00 was made but it was agreed to defer this matter to the next meeting when attendance would be higher.

8.3.Bank Account – Due to ongoing difficulties with Nat West Bank regarding making changes to signatories and to the Clerk accessing information, the Clerk had been looking into alternative bank accounts. He reported that all of the well-known High-Street Banks presented the same problems as Nat West and that business could no longer be carried out 'in branch'. Following discussions with SALC, it had been suggested that Unity Trust Bank may be a good provider as it was being used by several other Parish Councils. The Clerk had made initial investigations and was satisfied that a Unity Trust account seemed to be the most suitable for the Council's needs as it would enable him to access the account and would provide an internet banking option. It was agreed that the Clerk continue the process of transferring the Council's bank accounts to Unity Trust Bank.

8.4.Any other financial matters

9. To set future Agenda items – New Councillors, Groton Recorder, Neighbourhood Plan

10. Next meeting –Wednesday 1st September 2021 at 7.00pm

The meeting closed at 6.45pm