GROTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Groton Parish Council held on Wednesday 3rd November 2021 at 7.00pm in Groton Village Hall

Present: P Roberts (Chair), R Cheeseman, S McGrath, R Jones (Notes)

Guests: J Finch, B Hurren

1. **Apologies for absence** – G Becker, A Dixon-Smith

2. **Councillors' Declarations of Interests in any item on this Agenda** – None

3. **Minutes of the Meeting of 1st September 2021** – Approved. It was pointed out that item 6.3 referred to Groton Lodge and Farm, not Hunters Park.

4. **Reports from Suffolk County Council and Babergh District Council:**

   4.1 Councillor James Finch reported the following on behalf of Suffolk County Council:
   Councillor James Finch on behalf of SCC reported the following: Covid 19 – SCC had expressed concern over the increasing number of cases in the district which were some of the worst in the country. Extra vaccines were being made available including at 'pop up' vaccination centres. Although the infection rate in the immediate area was low, it was recommended that people conduct at least two Rapid Flow Tests per week. New Pylons and Cables – A group of local MPs had been set up to try to protect the area from increased installation of pylons and cables proposed under the Government's Offshore Network Transmission Review. Suffolk Bus Services – SCC was set to bid for £50m from the Government's Bus Back Better national bus strategy fund to help improve bus services across the County, particularly in rural areas. Lorry Route Plan – A review was taking place to look at the impact of lorry routes in the County. Review was running from 22 October – 17 December and Parish Councils were being asked to comment. Review to be completed by Spring 2022. Review of Suffolk Special Educational Needs and Disability Services – Report from Lincolnshire CC published on 20th September made nine recommendations which SCC had used to draft an action plan for improvement. Recycling Centres – Improved booking system now in place which included automatic number plate recognition to reduce the need for staff to conduct vehicle checks.
   4.2 Councillor Bryn Hurren, on behalf of Babergh District Council, reported the following:
   Very high Covid19 numbers in Ipswich had put the return of many Council staff on hold with skeleton staff working in offices. Particularly difficult to maintain the Council's Housing Stock during the pandemic.
   Tree for Life campaign to plant trees for new, still-born or miscarried babies to end on 31 December 2021.
   Environmental Issues - 10,000 new trees to be planted on Hintlesham Golf Course. More LED lights being used to cut light emissions.

5. **Planning Matters**

   5.1. Planning Applications – None

   5.2. Planning decisions received and noted– DC/21/04250 The Forge, Church Street - Erection of detached 3 bay cartlodge – Approved
   DC/21/04249 The Forge Church Street - Full Planning Application - Erection of a single storey detached dwelling (following demolition of existing garage). - Refused

   5.3. Local Housing update – All four homes now allocated and occupied. Three to families from Groton and one from Boxford

5.4. Neighbourhood Plan – In view of the interest shown by some parishioners, it was agreed to invite a representative from BDC to attend the next meeting to speak about how a Neighbourhood Plan would benefit Groton.

6. **Recruitment of New Councillors** – Under the terms of the 1972 Local Government Act, Councillor Crane was no longer a member of the Council, having failed to attend a Council meeting within the past six months without giving apologies or reason for absence. This left two Councillor positions vacant. Interest had been shown by two Parishioners, one of whom was in attendance and the other who would be contacted by the Chairman.

7. **Chairman's and Clerk's reports and correspondence** - None

8. **Highway and Footpath matters**
   8.1 Footpath Cutting – Invoice from A Adams still not received

   8.2 Footpath Leaflet – No further progress had been made

   8.3 Other Highway or Footpath Matters - None

9. **Village Hall Lease** – Chairman advised that he was dealing with this matter.

10. **Groton Recorder** – J Roberts had now taken on this role.

11. **Financial matters:**

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

Reserve Account as at 1 October 2021	£3,532.48
Current Account as at 1 October 2021	£8,303.11
Total	**£11,835.59**

Payments received:
Interest on Reserve Account £0.06
BDC 2nd Part of Precept £2,187.50

Cheque No	Amount £	Payee	Purpose
300001	£22.80	SALC	6 months payroll Apr- Sept 21
300002	£115.20	HMRC	Tax on Clerk's Salary
300003	£36.99	R J Jones	Clerk's Expenses Oct – Nov 21

11.2.Boxford School Library Funding Request – Sally Lewis from Boxford School reported that the required funding had been received from various means and the work carried out, however, the library stock of books needed replenishing. It was agreed that, as the Council had not contributed to the original funding, it would make a donation to help buy new books. After discussion, it was agreed that a donation of £500.00 would be made in this respect.

11.3.Bank Account – The Clerk reported that he had been added to the list of signatories for the Nat West account in order to make the transfer of payments to the new account easier.

11.4.Any other financial matters - None

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

13. Next meeting –Wednesday 12th January 2022 at 7.00pm

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

Richard Jones Clerk to the Council

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