

## GROTON PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Meeting of Groton Parish Council held remotely on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 7.00pm via Video Link

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

Guests: Councillor J Finch (Suffolk County Council), Councillor B Hurren (Babergh DC), D Lamming (Groton PCC)

1. **Apologies for absence** – G Becker
2. **Councillors' Declarations of Interests** - None
3. **Minutes of the Meeting of 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020** - Approved
4. **Reports from Suffolk County Council and Babergh District Council:**

4.1 Suffolk County Council – Councillor J Finch reported the following:

Covid-19 rates increasing across Suffolk and spreading fastest through people mixing with others in their homes. More important than ever to follow the guidance to try to enable people see their families at Christmas.

SCC had provided financial help of £600,000 so far to various schemes across the County to help individuals, communities and businesses in hardship. Suffolk Support and Advice Line set up to offer guidance on 0800 068 3131.

Care Home costs had increased by 15% to £70,000,000 but only £40,000,000 had been committed by the Government so far.

EDF Energy had put forward new plans for its Sizewell C nuclear power station in an attempt to reduce the number of HGV's that would be using the County's roads, following objections from Local Authorities, stakeholders and residents. 30-day consultation process would be taking place from 16<sup>th</sup> November to gauge the reaction to the new proposals.

SCC was launching a campaign to encourage more people to take up Cycling and Walking following the increase in take up in both activities during the coronavirus lockdowns and restrictions.

'Virtual' Fostering and Adoption sessions taking place on 2nd and 3rd December.

It was mentioned that part of Castlings Heath was a broadband 'blank spot'. Councillor Finch to take this up with Peter Ingram.

4.2 Babergh District Council – Councillor B Hurren reported the following:

BDC needed to fill a £1m hole in the budget which meant Council Tax would increase by 3% and other charges may need to be increased or introduced to make up the shortfall. On the positive side, BDC Financial Staff had been extremely diligent in ensuring the Council's funds were invested wisely and this was helping to lessen the blow.

The Council's Joint Local Plan was finally coming to fruition and was being presented to Full Council on 9<sup>th</sup> November. Provided it gets approved and passes the relevant planning inspection in Spring 2021, it should be in place by the end of next year.

As Chairman of the Council's Audit and Standards Committee, Councillor Hurren was responsible for overseeing that the Council's funds were audited, all contracts were tendered correctly and Council business was conducted in a fair and transparent way.

He had spoken to Hastoe Housing regarding the local housing project and they were aiming to start work before Christmas.

## 5. Planning Matters

5.1. Planning Applications - None

5.2 Planning Decisions Received – None

*Richard Jones Clerk to the Council*

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5.3 Other Planning Matters - None

**6. Reports and Questions from Councillors and Members of the Public – None**

**7. Financial Matters**

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

Reserve Account as at 30 September 2020	£3,532.12
Current Account as at 30 September 2020	<u>£5,713.50</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£9,245.62</b>

**Payments received:**

Interest on Reserve Account £0.09  
BDC - 2<sup>nd</sup> Part of Precept £2,187.50

<b>Cheque No</b>	<b>Amount £</b>	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
000831	£439.64	R J Jones	Clerk's Salary Jul – Sept 20
000832	£110.00	HMRC	Tax on Clerk's Salary
000832	£22.80	SALC	6 months payroll provision Apr – Sept 20
000833	£10.00	R J Jones	Clerk's Expenses Oct – Nov 20

7.2 Remembrance Day 'Tommy' – David Lamming spoke on behalf of Groton PCC who had purchased a 'Tommy' at a reduced rate of £300.00 for display at the War Memorial and other points in the village on commemorative occasions; the idea being that the 'Tommy' would belong to the Parish. With this in mind, an application had been previously made to Groton PC for a contribution of 50% of the purchase price. The Parish Council had previously been undecided on whether to make this contribution due to confusion about another 'Tommy' having already been purchased, supposedly, on behalf of the village. The 'Tommy' purchased by the PCC was currently in the possession of someone outside of the village undergoing repair in readiness for Remembrance Day.

It was agreed by Councillors that, whilst in principle, a contribution should be made, the Council needed to be sure that the 'Tommy' was in the sole ownership of Groton Parish and as such, could be available for use or display at any time and not merely 'lent' to the Council annually. D Lamming to report back to confirm this prior to the next meeting.

**7.3 Other Financial Matters**

Clerk's Salary - It was agreed that the Clerk's salary be increased in line with the new National Association of Local Government Pay rates (LC1 7-12) with effect from 1st April 2020 and by one spinal point within the range with effect from 28 August 2020 as per the Clerk's contract.

**8. Highway and Footpath Matters**

Footpath Leaflet – It was agreed to contribute towards the cost of a joint footpath leaflet with Boxford and Edwardstone Parish Councils. A representative to help plan the route would need to be agreed.

**9. Any Other (Urgent) Business - None**

**10. Schedule of Meetings 2021 – Agreed as follows:**

Wednesday 13th January 7.00pm

Wednesday 3rd March 7.00pm

Wednesday 5th May 7.00pm Annual Parish Meeting & AGM

Wednesday 7th July 7.00pm

Wednesday 1st September 7.00pm

Wednesday 3rd November 7.00pm

DRAFT