

GROTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held at 7 pm Wednesday 21 January at Groton Village Hall, Broad Street, Groton

Present: C Fraulo (in the Chair), J Osborne (Vice Chair), R Kelsey, N Cox, A Dixon-Smith

In attendance: A Robinson (Clerk), J Finch (Suffolk County Councillor), B Hurren (Babergh District Councillor)

Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Gerald Smith.

To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest in any item on the Agenda

There were none.

To sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of 5 November 2014

The Minutes of the meeting of 5 November 2014 were approved and signed, proposed by Jeremy Osborne, seconded by Rona Kelsey.

To co-opt a new Councillor to fill the Casual Vacancy

No-one has yet put their name forward so this matter was carried forward to await the election.

To receive reports from:

Suffolk Constabulary

The Police were not in attendance but their report had previously been circulated.

Suffolk County Council

James Finch had circulated his report prior to the meeting, providing information on the truancy sweep in Ipswich, the provision of 9 new gritters by SCC, and the Warm Homes Healthy People Scheme which aims to make it cheaper for vulnerable people to stay warm over winter. He also updated the Council on the push for greater mobile phone coverage and the provision of high speed broadband to Groton.

Babergh District Council

Bryn Hurren said that BDC's budget was being set with a nil increase. There is a desperate shortage of housing at the moment which BDC is trying to address. The solar panels fitted to council housing in the area are now working well. He confirmed that the Sand Hill development was approved in December. He has been involved in discussions regarding the possible closure of Boxford Post Office and hopes that a solution can be reached.

To receive reports and questions from Councillors and members of the public

Jeremy Osborne had been unable to attend the December SALC meeting as he had had flu. The minutes have not yet been received.

Chairman's and Clerk's reports and correspondence

The Chair reported that she had been unable to attend the Community Infrastructure Levy Workshop. She will be attending the next meeting of Chairs of parish councils in James Finch's division. The Clerk confirmed that she had attended election training at SALC this week. She advised Councillors that their nomination papers must be handed into BDC by 4pm on 9 April. The Clerk is to put a notice in the March edition of the BRN and put up posters regarding the election and the fact that there is a vacancy on the Council and seeking people to put their names forward.

To consider adopting the draft Code of Conduct for handling complaints

The Council resolved to adopt the Code as drafted, proposed by Jeremy Osborne, seconded by Nick Cox.

To consider adopting the draft Grant Awarding Policy

Jeremy Osborne proposed an amendment to the policy to incorporate wording regarding the other grant awarding bodies in Groton. The Council resolved to adopt the policy incorporating that wording, proposed by Carey Fraulo, seconded by Adam Dixon-Smith. The Clerk will amend the draft and the Policy will be signed at the next meeting.

To consider the proposals made by County Broadband

The Chair advised that she had not received any proposals and it seems likely that it will not be economically feasible. She will report back once she hears anything further.

Highway and Footpath matters

To consider the issue of speeding traffic and Community Speedwatch

James Finch was thanked again for funding the 30mph roundels, which together with the replaced 30mph sign and improved line painting near the Fox did seem to be helping to reduce speeds. The Chair, Jeremy Osborne and Rona Kelsey were all interested in joining the Community Speedwatch and will take this forward.

Any other Highway and Footpath matters

The Clerk has already reported the potholes in Groton Street and Slabbs Lane to SCC and the large pothole in Groton Street has yellow lines round it so hopefully will be filled shortly. The Clerk was asked to report the potholes and blocked culvert outside Frog Hall. Rona Kelsey advised James Finch that roadworks signs were often left behind for months after work had been completed. James reported that he has a meeting with SCC Highways in February and will mention this.

Planning matters

Local Housing Needs

Councillors have met with BDC planners and will continue to take this matter forward.

To ratify the decision to object to the Goodlands Farm application B/14/01253/FUL due to the removal of the public car parking

The Council resolved to ratify this decision, proposed by Jeremy Osborne, seconded by Rona Kelsey.

Any urgent planning matters

There were none. Planning approval has been granted for the extension at 5 Castlings Heath.

Financial matters

To approve Statement of Finance and Orders for Payment

The proposed cheques were approved, proposed Jeremy Osborne, seconded Rona Kelsey: The letter to Nat West requesting transfer of monies from the current account to the reserve account was signed.

To agree future Agenda items

Local Housing Needs, confirmation of date of Annual Parish Meeting, signature of Grant Awarding Policy, Transparency Code

To confirm the date of the next meeting

4 March 2015

Anita Robinson
Clerk to Groton Parish Council