GROTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held at 7 pm Wednesday 4 March at Groton Village Hall, Broad Street, Groton

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

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

1. **Apologies for absence**
   Apologies were received from Nick Cox.
2. **To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest in any item on the Agenda**
   Gerald Smith declared an interest in item 11.2.
3. **To sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of 21 January 2015**
   The Minutes of the meeting of 21 January 2015 were approved and signed, proposed by Jeremy Osborne, seconded by Rona Kelsey.
4. **To receive reports from:**
   4.1. Suffolk Constabulary
   PC Marshall reported that the Police Direct system is being replaced with Police Connect, and he left application forms. Parishioners can receive alerts as well as crime statistics. Jeremy Osborne said that the new monthly police reports were much more useful.
   4.2. Suffolk County Council
   James Finch had circulated his report prior to the meeting, providing information on changes to children's centres, applications for grants from the Leading Lives Benefit Fund and Suffolk Autism service which has been nominated for a national award.
   4.3. Babergh District Council
   Bryn Hurren said that BDC had set a budget with a nil increase. 12 council houses in Boxford are being fitted with solar panels. The result of the Rogers Farm solar farm appeal should be received within the next 5 weeks. A lot of work is being carried out to try to retain Boxford Post Office. Bryn said that Boxford Annual Parish Meeting is on 1 April at 7pm and councillors from Groton are invited to attend to listen to a presentation from Babergh/Mid Suffolk's planning officer Peter Freer on Neighbourhood Plans.
5. **To receive reports and questions from Councillors and members of the public**
   Jeremy Osborne attended the SALC meeting in December where there was a presentation on SCC's budget by Jenny Antill. He also attended the March meeting where there was a presentation by Timothy Passmore and Police Inspector Jennifer Powell regarding the police budget. Jeremy also reported that Groton United Charities had donated £400 to the Boxford Post Office fund. An owl box has been installed on The Croft and rescued hedgehogs are due to be released later this month. Rona Kelsey said that she had not heard back regarding the Community Speedwatch.

6. **Chairman's and Clerk's reports and correspondence**
   Carey Fraulo reported that she had visited the Energy from Waste incinerator plant at Great Blakenham with James Finch, which was very interesting and it would be worth arranging a visit for others later in the year. She also attended James Finch's meeting of chairs of parish councils within his division when the head of Suffolk Highways gave a presentation. She suggested that as the meeting is very useful, if she is unable to attend another councillor should attend in her place. Gerald Smith advised that he would not be standing for re-election as a Councillor and he was thanked for all he had done for the Council over many years.
7. **To approve and sign the amended Grant Awarding Policy**
   The Council had previously resolved to adopt the Policy and the amended document was signed.
8. **To consider the implications of the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities**
   The Clerk drew Councillors' attention to the changes due to be made by the code.
9. **To consider Highway and Footpath matters**
   It was noted that very little, if any, sand had been delivered and the Clerk will ask SCC to ensure that deliveries are made. Gerald Smith said that there were potholes at Hole Farm Road, outside The Spong and in Church Street near the church gate. There are others between the top of Hole Farm Road and Groton Manor Farm. There are also deep water filled ruts on the side of the road between Groton Manor Farm and Groton Wood. The Clerk will report all these. Carey Fraulo advised that the new SCC pothole reporting website was up and running. Anyone can report potholes easily on the site which is at http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/environment-and-transport/highways/report-a-highways-problem-in-suffolk/ . Alternatively pothole or other highway problems can be reported by email customer.service@suffolk.gov.uk or phone on 0345 606 6171.
10. **To consider Planning matters**
    10.1. Local Housing Needs
    Carey Fraulo reported that BDC had considered the suggested sites for affordable housing and identified a site, but the landowner was not willing to sell the land. She is waiting to hear from BDC as to what, if anything, can be done next and Bryn Hurren agreed to chase this up.
    10.2. Any urgent planning matters
    There were none.
11. **Financial matters**
    11.1. To approve Statement of Finance and Orders for Payment
    The Council's financial position as at 30 January 2015 was reported as follows:

Reserve Account	£2515.41
Current Account	£4228.50
Total	£6803.91

The following cheques were approved, proposed Rona Kelsey, seconded Jeremy Osborne.

Cheque no	Amount	Payee	Purpose

672	£22.44	Anita Robinson	Clerk's expenses Jan-Feb 2015
673	£12.00	SALC	Half cost of Clerk's Election Briefing 21.1.15
674	£49.55	BDC	Litter & Dog bin emptying 2014

A further letter to Nat West requesting transfer of monies from the current account to the reserve account was signed as this had not yet been carried out by the bank.
Carey Fraulo said that she had obtained a quote for £60 to repair the noticeboard and the Council resolved that she could put this work in hand, proposed Jeremy Osborne, seconded Gerald Smith.

11.2. To consider donations and s137 payments

Carey Fraulo proposed and Adam Dixon-Smith seconded that the following donations be made:

S137	East Anglian Air Ambulance	£100
Donations	Boxford Playing Fields	£320
	Groton PCC	£330
	Sudbury CAB	£150

11.3. To consider the Clerk's salary following CiLCA qualification

The Clerk's salary was due for review as from 1 April 2015 and the Council resolved, proposed by Jeremy Osborne and seconded by Adam Dixon-Smith, that her salary be increased by 2 SCPs on Scale LC1 as she had also now passed her CiLCA.

11.4. To check the accounts to date

Two Councillors checked the accounts to date and countersigned the Accounts Book.
The Council reviewed the internal control systems and found them satisfactory.

12. To agree future Agenda items

Local Housing Needs

13. To confirm the date of the next meetings

- 13 May 2015 – Annual Meeting of the Parish Council at 7pm, Annual Parish Meeting at 8pm
- 1 July 2015
- 2 September 2015
- 4 November 2015

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

Chairman Date