

Groton Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting held at 7.00 pm Wednesday 4th September 2013 at Groton Village Hall, Broad Street, Groton

Present: D Elliott, C Fraulo (in the Chair), J Osborne (Vice- Chair), G Smith & Adam Dixon Smith

In attendance: S Gray (Clerk) & B Hurren (District Councillor)

1) Apologies for Absence:

C Kennedy, & James Finch

2) To Receive Councillors' Declarations of Interest in any item on this agenda:

David Elliott declared an interest in Agenda item 9. Planning Application No: B/13/00862/FUL

The Declarations of Interest book was signed

3) To approve the Minutes of the meeting of the 24th July 2013

Bryn requested that it was noted in the minutes that he had attended the meeting on 3rd July but there was no quorum and consequently due to a prior commitment was unable to attend the re-scheduled meeting on 24th July 2013. With this amendment the Minutes of the 24th July 2013 were approved, proposed by Vice-Chair Jeremy Osborne, seconded by G Smith.

4) To receive a report from Suffolk Constabulary

In the absence of Siobhan Hemmit, the Clerk related to the Council that there had been no crimes reported in the period from 28th June to 4th September 2013. This compares to three crimes for the same period last year.

Siobhan Hemmit arrived at 8.15pm and Councillors expressed their disappointment that the Safer Neighbourhood team could not provide the Clerk with the crime figures for the parish of Edwardstone and Groton. Siobhan said that she would discuss this with Sergeant Horton. The Council agreed for the Clerk to contact the Clerks of Boxford and Edwardstone to arrange the mutual sharing of crime figures. Siobhan explained that red diesel thefts were taking place and that there were burglaries in outbuildings and there had been car damage in Cornard.

The Chairman thanked Siobhan for her attendance and Siobhan stated that she and Sergeant Horton were trying to arrange their shifts to enable one of them to attend Parish Council meetings more regularly.

5) To receive a report from Suffolk County Council

James Finch had circulated his report to the Council prior to the meeting as he was on annual leave. James reported that Suffolk County Council had played a role in securing the debate on Pylons for the first time on a national level in the House of Commons.

In the year to date, £600,000 has been spent on resurfacing roads and James hoped that residents now enjoyed a “pot free” surface in the Boxford area.

In relation to education, James reported early indications that there was an average 5% increase in the number of Suffolk students achieving 5 A*- C grades and A Levels with nearly 30% at A* or A grades.

James will hold his next Councillor Clinics in Mary’s House, Boxford for parishioners from Boxford and villages to the north of Boxford on 11th September 2013.

6) To receive a report from Babergh District Council

Bryn Hurren reported that financial constraints were still a major factor in the running of Babergh District Council who was now working very closely with Mid-Suffolk. This has resulted in Bryn spending more time at Needham Market. There was a move to enable the public to attend more meetings by arranging them in the evenings starting at 5.30pm. Bryn was working with other Councillors in an environment group looking at ways to increase income as well as make savings. At the present time they were looking at using solar panels on properties owned by Babergh. Bryn said that he would keep the Council updated as to progress with this idea.

There had been an increase in large planning applications, notably the disused sugar beet factory at Sproughton and a site at Shotley. Bryn was keen for these applications to include a mixture of employment opportunities and housing as the infrastructure would struggle to cope with people living in an area and travelling to a place of work if these applications only contained plans for housing.

In relation to the notice board at the Fox and Hounds, Bryn said that it would cost a lot to repair. It was noted that the notice board was in a poor state of repair and the Councillors discussed whether it was economically viable to repair it and if it was in the right location. The Clerk informed the Council of the legal notices required to be displayed by the Council and it was agreed for the Notice Board and its location to be an agenda item for the next meeting. It was agreed that the notice board at the Village Hall would be used to display legal notices and the Agenda as usual.

Bryn distributed to the Council the Autumn programme for the Quay theatre.

7) To receive reports and questions from Councillors and Members of the Public

David Elliott reported that he would be attending the next SALC Meeting on Monday 9th September.

The Chairman reported that she and the Clerk had received confirmation from Jayne Foster that the Village Hall had been successful in their bid for a lottery grant for the update of the Kitchen. It was believed that £9,000.00 had been awarded and Jayne thanked the Chairman for her work in renewing the lease on the hall as this had contributed to the success of the bid.

8) Highway & Footpath Matters

- **Speeding Traffic in the Parish of Groton**

It was agreed to ask James Finch to update the Council in relation to the speed signs he had offered at the next meeting.

- **Other Matters**

Councillors commented on the work now completed on Spout Hill. It was also noted that the drain at Castlings Heath had been inadvertently covered over in tarmac. It was agreed for the Clerk to report this as a fault to Suffolk Highways. The Council would also advise James Finch of the error.

Councillors reported that some parishioners had complained that the tree by the Croft and on Church Hill had overgrown and was a hazard to traffic approaching the bend. It was agreed for the Clerk to speak to the residents personally.

9) Planning Matters:

Planning Application no: B/13/00862/FUL Goslings Hall Goslings Green Groton Sudbury CO10 5EX. Change of use of farm building to residential annexe & 1 no. holiday let.

Councillors had discussed the above application having previously had an informal meeting at the site. It was noted that work had started on the building. In terms of income to parishioners, the Council supported this diversification and therefore had no objections.

Gerald Smith voiced his disappointment that he had not been advised of the time of the informal meeting, the Chairman apologized explained that as he lived near and knew the site his attendance was not seen as essential. The planning application would be formally discussed at the September Parish Council meeting. After discussion with the Chairman Gerald Smith tendered his resignation which the Chairman accepted.

Clerks Note: Under the Local Government Act 1972 Section 84 a resignation of a Councillor takes effect once the Chairman has received it in writing.

Housing Needs Survey

The Clerk had circulated the questionnaire from to Councillors for help completing the Rural Housing Needs Community Contextual Information. The Clerk had met with Bryn Hurren prior to the meeting to complete the Housing Needs Section. The Council expressed concern that they had not been informed at the start of the process that this form was needed to be completed by the Council.

10) Financial Matters:

a) Statement of Finances

The Council's financial position as at 24th July 2013 was reported as follows:

Reserve Account: as at 31st March 2013	£2,513.30
Current Account: as at 28th June 2013	<u>£1,957.03</u>
	£4,470.33

The Clerk had received the renewal of the Council Insurance. The premium is £199.08, which is the same as last year. However, if the Council take out the three year Long Term Undertaking it would be £189.13 and if they took the five year Long Term Undertaking it would be £179.17 .The Councillors discussed this and agreed that the five year premium was the best option, proposed by Chairman Carey Fraulo, seconded by David Elliott. The Clerk said that she would check the conditions and speak to Suffolk Acre before paying the premium.

The Councillors authorised the following payments; proposed by Vice-Chair Jeremy Osborne; seconded by Chairman Carey Fraulo

Cheque Number	Amount	Payee	Purpose
000634	£144.14	S Gray	Salary August 13
000635	£144.44	S Gray	Salary September 13
000636	£18.34	S Gray	Expenses (May to July 2013)
000637	£24.84	S Gray	Salary back pay to April 2013

b) Clerks Salary & Contract

The Council reviewed and discussed the Clerk’s Salary and agreed to the Salary increase for SCP 18 as agreed by NALC in association with the Society of Local Council Clerks. Proposed by Vice- Chair Jeremy Osborne; seconded by Adam Dixon-Smith.

The Clerk informed the Council that the 16 hours a month were adequate for the normal duties of a Clerk to the Council but any additional work did mean extra hours. However the Clerk advised the Council that she was keeping a record of hours worked and would take time in lieu.

11) Groton United Charities

Vice- Chair Jeremy Osborne informed that there was nothing to report at this stage.

12) Chairman’s and Clerk’s Reports & Correspondence:

The Clerk reported that no correspondence had been received since the Agenda had been issued.

13) Future Agenda Items

- Local Housing Needs Survey
- Notice Board
- Groton United Charities

14) Dates of Next Meetings:

- 6th November 2013
- 8th January 2014
- 5th March 2014
- **7th May 2014 (AGM & APM)**
- 2nd July 2014
- 3rd September 2014

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

Chairman

Date