

EDWARDSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Edwardstone Parish Council held remotely on Monday 18 January 7.30pm.

Present: P Baker (Chair), D Williams, S Norman, P Clarke, M Gibson, R Jones (Notes)

Guests: J Finch (Suffolk County Council), B Hurren (Babergh District Council)

1. **Apologies for absence** – T Wood

2. **Councillors' Declarations of Interest** - None

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

3.1. Councillor James Finch on behalf of SCC reported the following:

Covid19 – Hopefully, a corner had been turned with numbers of positive tests reduced to 26 over the previous 7 days. Councillor Finch suggested Stoke-by-Nayland Hotel be used as a vaccination centre. This suggestion was welcomed by the Chairman.

Police proportion of Council Tax precept was proposing more officers for Suffolk. A public survey on this proposal was taking place until 28 January.

Primary School Applications – Deadline had now passed but parents should still apply if they hadn't yet done so.

Funds had been allocated to Boxford Food Bank to help families affected financially by the pandemic. Suggestions of families in need should be passed on to Father Rob at St Mary's Church, Boxford.

Virtual Fostering and Adoption sessions were continuing but sadly some families had withdrawn due to the pandemic.

3.2. Councillor Bryn Hurren on behalf of Babergh District Council reported the following:

Council staff were working hard to provide a good service to the public. Housing staff in particular were under a lot of pressure.

Leisure centre at Sudbury and Hadleigh Swimming Pool were now ready for use but unable to open at present due to the lockdown. BDC was supporting both premises through grants and loans.

BDC was attempting to introduce increased parking charges across the district. This would particularly affect Hadleigh and Sudbury where parking was currently free for up to 3 hours. The proposal was to reduce this to ½ hour free with a sliding scale of charges thereafter. Councillor Hurren, with the support of a number of other District Councillors had suggested a free period of at least an hour and a delay in introducing the new rates until 2022.

The Committee supported this suggestion and agreed to write to BDC.

BDC switching to Biofuel for its fleet of refuse collection vehicles in an effort to reduce emissions and maintenance costs.

Still no decision on whether the local elections would take place in May, but it was expected that they would be delayed until July or September.

Christmas House Planning Issue – Fence replaced after retrospective planning permission sought but had been refused on Heritage Grounds. EPC had previously supported the planning application.

4. **Reports and questions from Councillors and Members of the Public** - None

5. **Minutes of the Meeting of 16 November 2020** – approved with one amendment. Item 7.2 Elm Cottage should read 'The Council raised no objection to this application'.

6. **To consider Highway and Footpath matters**

6.1 Footpath Cutting – P Baker presented a proposed schedule of footpaths to be cut following discussion with S Norman and T Wood. The new schedule differed slightly from the one used previously by SCC but better reflected current circumstances. P Baker also presented a draft tender document which would be sent to interested contractors. There was a discussion over the Public Liability aspect of the tender document as it was suggested it should include a clause that staff carrying out the work

should have a suitable level of training and competence. P Baker to discuss with Claire Dixon at SCC and then circulate revised documents for approval.

6.2 Footpath Leaflet – Progress being made. T Wood had been liaising with Nick Bristow and was due to have a zoom meeting with him and Pier Roberts from Groton PC on 19 January to link the Groton and Edwardstone paths.

6.3 Other Highway and Footpath matters – Broken footbridge on Footpath 5 now extremely dangerous and becoming unusable. S Norman to send information to Councillor Finch to take up the matter. Footpath 6 way marker rotted away. To be reported online.

7. Neighbourhood Plan Update

M Gibson reported that he had spoken to Councillor Hurren and Jonathon Ralph, Chair of Aldham PC, who had led on its plan and two consultants; Ian Poole and Andrea Long (Compass Point Planning), who produced the plans for Aldham and Boxford respectively. He had also produced a letter which he and P Baker delivered to every property in the Parish. So far, the letter had produced 6 responses, all in favour of producing a Neighbourhood Plan. The next steps were to fill in an online form to gain approval from BDC, speak to and select a consultant and apply for funding from the Government. M Gibson and P Baker to lead on moving forward with help from Councillor Hurren and D Williams. Councillor Hurren to put M Gibson in touch with the relevant BDC officer. EPC website to be used to publicise updates. M Gibson to provide the Clerk with an invoice for printing costs of letters to residents.

8. To consider Planning Matters:

- 8.1. Planning applications received – Appeal: Outline Planning Application (access to be considered)-
Erection of 2No dwellings Location: Land to The South Of, Daking Avenue, Boxford, Suffolk (Original application discussed on 27 April 2020)

The Council upheld its original decision to support Boxford PC's objection to this application.

DC/21/00148 - Priory Farm, Priory Green, Edwardstone, Part in Parish of Little Waldingfield Sudbury Suffolk. Householder Application. Alterations and refurbishment, including partial demolition and rebuild works, and associated landscaping works as per Schedule of Works.

Whilst the Council had no objections, in principle, to this application, concerns were expressed over the number of heavy goods vehicles using Mill Green to facilitate this work. It was suggested that using the route past Grove Cottages would be more sensible and cause much less nuisance and disturbance.

8.2. Planning decisions received

DC/20/04983 -Christmas House, Sherbourne Street - Application for Planning Permission
Householder application - Erection of a 1.8m boundary fence. (Retention of) – Application withdrawn (see 3.2)

DC/20/04912 - Elm Cottage, Willow Corner Application for Planning Permission - Householder Planning Application - Erection of two new front hipped dormers.– Planning Permission granted

8.3. Other urgent Planning Matters - None

9. Financial Matters:

9.1. The Statement of Finances & Orders for Payments were approved as follows:

Business Savings Account as at 31 December 2020	£2,530.26
Business Current Account as at 30 November 2020	£6,557.82
Total	£9,088.08

Payments received:
Bank Interest £0.06

Cheque no	Amount £	Payee	Purpose
d/d	£60.00	Community Action Suffolk	Website Fee
d/d	£24.07	e-on	Electricity Oct - Dec 20
100929	£258.04	Babergh DC	Litter & Dog Bin Emptying 20-21
100930	£611.32	R J Jones	Clerk's Salary Oct – Dec 20
100931	£67.20	HMRC	Tax on Clerk's Salary
100932	£32.55	R J Jones	Clerk's Expenses Dec – Jan 21

9.2. Adequacy of the budget for 2020/21 – Approved

9.3. The budget for 2021/22 was agreed. As there was no allowance for potential costs for maintenance and grass cutting around the War Memorial, it was suggested that the Clerk write to Stephen Britcher to thank him for carrying out this work and to ascertain whether he was happy to continue doing so.

The Precept for 2021/22 was agreed as £5,995 which will keep the cost to residents the same as in 2020/21.

9.4. Financial Risk Assessment – The Clerk presented a Risk Assessment based on current circumstances which was approved. In view of the Council assuming responsibility for its own footpath cutting in 2021, the Chairman requested a copy of the Council's Insurance Policy to check the Public Liability Insurance. The Clerk to provide this document.

9.5. Appointment of Internal Auditors for 2021/22 - Richard Norman was re-appointed as Internal Auditor for 2021/22

9.6. Any other financial matters – None

10. Chairman's and Clerk's reports and correspondence - None

11. To set future Agenda items – Neighbourhood Plan. Footpath Leaflet

12. Date of Next Meeting – Monday 15th March 2021 7.30pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.12pm