

EDWARDSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Edwardstone Parish Council held at Edwardstone Parish Hall on Monday 20 September 2021 at 7.30pm.

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

Guests: B Hurren

1. Apologies for Absence – None

2. Councillors' Declarations of Interests in any item on this Agenda –
Councillor Norman declared an interest in item 5.1 as a personal friend of the applicant.

3. Reports from Suffolk County Council and Babergh District Council

3.1 Councillor James Finch on behalf of SCC sent his apologies and tabled a report that was read and noted.

3.2 Councillor Bryn Hurren reported the following on behalf of BDC:
Car Parking - New charges in operation from January 2022. Free parking reduced from 3 hours to 1 and other charges amended. This was due to the large amount the Council had to pay for Business Rates on Car Parks with no help from Central Government.

Council Vehicles – As part of the District Council's drive to reduce emissions, Council vehicles, including lorries and 'pool cars', had been converted to run on Hydrated Vegetable Oil.

Devolution – The Council was looking into the possibility of becoming a Unitary Authority.

Local Needs Housing in Groton – Building almost complete. Now carrying out assessments of suitable applicants with those currently living in Groton given priority, followed by people from Edwardstone and other neighbouring parishes.

4. Minutes of the Meeting of 26 July 2021 – Approved. It was pointed out that a brief discussion had taken place regarding changing the Council's banking arrangements and it had been agreed to include this for discussion at tonight's meeting.

5. Planning Matters:

5.1 Planning applications received DC/21/04540 - Tudor Cottage, Mill Green
Householder Application - Construction of outdoor swimming pool and installation of air source heat pump/plant cupboard – No Objection.

5.2 Planning decisions received and noted - DC/21/00412 Edwardstone Lodge, Sherbourne Street. Condition 6 (Rooflights), Condition 7 (Floor) Discharge of Condition(s)

5.3 Other urgent planning matters - None

6. Neighbourhood Plan Update

Mike Gibson gave the following update:

A meeting took place on 29th July to set up a steering group to progress the plan. 12 residents attended and a steering group of 4 was formed. The steering group met on 1st September to look at procedural matters and was looking at ways of consulting with parishioners. The next meeting was due to take place on 21st

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October and consultant, Andrea Long, would be attending.

The Clerk reported that he had received correspondence from members of the steering group regarding financial arrangements such as how payments would be processed. It was agreed that the funds set aside for the Neighbourhood Plan would be shown separately on accounting reports and that the steering group would keep its own accounting records. Invoices would need to be supplied for payments from EPC accounts to be made in the usual way and arrangements would be made for cheques to be signed outside of EPC scheduled meetings to enable expediency.

7. Highway & Footpath Matters

7.1 Footpath Cutting – Garden Arbs had now carried out the second cut with the third due in August. Councillor Norman pointed out that a fourth cut had taken place which was not part of the agreement. The Clerk to contact Garden Arbs to discuss this.

7.2 Footpath Leaflet – Councillor Wood apologised for the lack of progress and resolved to move forward with this.

7.3 Other Highways & Footpath Matters

Footpath 16 – The Clerk had written to Kevin Verlander at SCC asking for a resolution to this matter but had been told that it was not high priority. The Chairman agreed to write to Claire Dickson, SCC Area Rights of Way Manager, to request a letter be sent to the owner of Priory Farm, asking that the footpath be restored and re-opened as per SCC's ruling on the matter.

Footpath 10 – Now cleared by landowner.

Councillor Williams reported that there was an initiative taking place to find and register historic footpaths and rights of way which were, at present, not shown on public maps. Councillor Williams to investigate and report back to the next meeting.

Councillor Wood expressed gratitude to BDC for dealing with a camper van that had been left unmoved in Mill Green.

8. Chairman's & Clerk's reports and correspondence - None

9. Financial Matters:

9.1. Statement of Finances & Orders for Payment were approved and the cheques signed as follows:

Business Savings Account as of 31 August 2021	£2,530.38
Business Current Account as of 31 August 2021	£14,199.37* (£4,299.37)
Total	£16,729.75* (£6,829.75)

*Current Account includes grant of £9,900 towards cost of Neighbourhood Plan which is for this purpose only. Balance minus this amount in brackets.

Cheque no	Amount £	Payee	Purpose
d/d	£35.00	Information Commissioner	Data Protection Fee
100950	£24.97	R J Jones	Clerk's Expenses Aug – Sept 21
100951	£60.40	HMRC	Tax on Clerk's Salary Apr – Jun 21

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100952	£554.16	R J Jones	Clerk's Salary Jul – Sept 21
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9.2. Review of Charitable Donations – The Clerk presented a draft Charitable Donation Policy and Application Form for discussion. Councillors looked at how the Council currently agreed charitable donations which were based on historical agreements and discussed the best way for the Council to decide which local groups should receive donations and how and when the donations should be made.

After discussion, it was agreed that applications should be made to coincide with the Annual Parish Meeting held every May with applicants encouraged to attend the meeting to report on the activities of their group and to outline how a donation would benefit them. The Council would then decide on successful applications at the subsequent Annual General Meeting held straight after the Parish Meeting. The Clerk to amend the Policy and Application Form and circulate to Councillors.

9.3. Other Financial Matters

Banking Arrangements – Following increased difficulties with the banking service provided by Barclays Bank, it was agreed to look at alternative banking arrangements. The Clerk had current dealings with Unity Trust Bank through another Parish Council and reported that he had found them easy to deal with and helpful. The Chairman added that a Unity Trust Current Account was geared towards Parish Councils and similar organisations. It was agreed that the Clerk pursue the opening of a Current Account with Unity Trust.

With regards to the Savings Account, The Chairman reported that Unity Trust did not pay interest and an alternative could be The Charity Bank which was a similar bank but paid interest on savings accounts. It was agreed that the Clerk look at opening a Savings Account with The Charity Bank.

10. Future Agenda Items – Banking.

11. Date of next meeting – Monday 22nd November 2021 at 7.30pm

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.