

Edwardstone Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 September 2018 at Edwardstone Village Hall

Present: Councillors M Childs (Chair), P Baker, S Norman, S Flack

In Attendance: Councillor J Finch (SCC), Councillor B Hurren (BDC), R Jones (Clerk)

1. **Apologies for Absence** - Councillors C Britcher and P Clarke – approved.

2. **Councillors' Declarations of Interest on any Item on the Agenda** - None

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

3.1 Councillor James Finch reported the following:

GCSE Results had improved across the county and were now above the national average performance. There had been a significant improvement of 9% from Thomas Gainsborough School. In addition, almost 3,000 pupils had taken A-Levels with 98% expected to be awarded pass grades which, again, was above the national average.

Applications for Secondary school places for 2019 needed to be made by October 2018.

A pilot scheme to assist young people leaving care called 'Staying Close' had been launched in the County. The scheme, which had been funded by the Department for Education, was designed to help the young people to plan for their future whilst staying close to their care home. The scheme was initially for three years.

Tourism to the County had grown by 5% in 2017 and was now responsible for over 13% of employment in Suffolk with more than 42,000 people employed in the tourism sector.

The Chair reported that there were still several outstanding Highways issues including a large crater and cracked road between Mill Green and Round Maple.

Councillor Norman reported that the verges had only recently been cut back and asked if it was possible for future cutting to be done earlier in the year.

Councillor Baker asked for an update on the installation of Superfast Broadband. Councillor Finch was under the impression that the local installation was almost complete but asked for the Clerk to collate a list of specific telephone numbers of properties that had yet to be connected so that he could investigate. **Action R Jones, J Finch**

3.2 Councillor Bryn Hurren reported the following:

Following the boundary review Babergh District had been reduced from forty-three wards to thirty-two. Edwardstone would now be a part of a newly created Box Vale Ward.

An application had been made by Landex to build twenty-five new homes on the former Goodlands Farm site. The application had initially been refused by Babergh DC Planning Committee in November 2017 and Councillor Hurren had recently attended an appeal hearing on behalf of the District Council. The result of the appeal was scheduled to be announced on 5 November 2018.

Konings application to expand the Copella factory site to be heard in October 2018.

A meeting to look at the proposed Neighbourhood Plan for Boxford was being held on 25 September and Groton Parish Council members were invited to attend. Councillor David Williams had agreed to attend on behalf of Edwardstone PC.

There was also a Parish Council Liaison meeting being held on 11 October in Ipswich. As the meeting was being held from 10am, there were no Councillors available to attend.

Action – D Williams

4. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 July 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2018 were approved and signed. Proposed S Flack and seconded by S Norman.

5. **Highway and Footpath Matters**

5.1 *Footpath Cutting Issues* – None

5.2 Broken Footpath Signs

The following broken footpath signs were reported:

Adjacent to the 'kissing gate' between Sherbourne Street and Groton Street.

Footpath 9 - Damaged sign laying in hedge adjacent to road

Footpath 5 – Damaged wire mesh needs replacing

Councillor Baker was pleased to report that the broken sign at Tinywent Corner and the broken sleeper in the footbridge at Footpath 10 had been repaired.

5.3 Location of Grit Bins

In view of the cost involved and the difficulty in finding suitable locations, it was agreed to defer this matter to a future meeting.

5.4 Use of Work Parties for Highways Issues (SCC Highways Self-Help)

In view of concerns over insurance implications and possible lack of volunteers, it was agreed not to pursue this.

5.5 Other Highways and Footpath Matters

Overgrown hedge impacting the highway in front of cottage in Mill Green. Clerk to write to the owner requesting he arrange for the hedge to be cut back away from the road. **Action - R Jones**

6. Reports and Questions from Councillors and Members of the Public - None

7. Draft Equality and Diversity Policy

Councillor Baker reported that the Council, as an employer, was required by the Equality Act 2010 to have an Equality and Diversity Policy. The policy set out the way the Council would treat all individuals and groups equally and fairly without any form of discrimination.

The proposed Draft Equality and Diversity Policy was agreed.

Policy to be published on the Council's website. **Action – P Baker, R Jones**

8. Planning Matters

8.1 *Planning Applications Received – DC/18/03793 Walnut Tree Cottage, Sherbourne Street.*

There were no objections to this application

8.2 *Planning Decisions Received - None*

8.3 *Neighbourhood Plan*

It was agreed to wait to receive feedback from Councillor Williams following his attendance at the Boxford Neighbourhood Plan meeting on 25 September before deciding how to proceed.

Councillor Hurren suggested producing a Village 'Statement' as an alternative may be an option.

8.4 *Other Urgent Planning Matters - None*

9. Financial Matters

9.1 *Statement of Finances and Orders for Payment and Accounts to Date*

The Statement of Finances and Orders for Payment were approved. It was suggested that the Orders for Payment should detail the dates for both outgoing and incoming Clerks' salaries.

The Accounts were checked and approved as shown:

Business Savings Account as at 31 July 2018 £2520.72

Business Current Account as at 31 July 2018 £5078.40

Total **£7599.12**

Payments received – None

Cheque no	Amount £	Payee	Purpose
100848	59.99	R J Jones	Renewal of Microsoft 365 account

10049	Cheque cancelled		
10050	328.92	R J Jones	Incoming Clerks Salary 23/7/18 – 30/9/18
10051	11.10	R J Jones	Clerk's Expenses
10052	76.00	HMRC	Tax on Clerk's salary
10053	123.59	Anita Robinson	Outgoing Clerks salary 1/7/18 – 22/7/18

9.2 Register of Assets

The Register of Assets was approved. Location of Grit bin to be confirmed.

9.3 Other Financial Matters - None

10. Draft Grievance and Disciplinary Policy

Councillor Baker reported that the Council, as an employer was required to produce a Grievance and Disciplinary Policy. The policy set out the way the Council would deal with any grievance or disciplinary issues and the steps that would need to be taken to comply with Employment Law. The proposed Grievance and Disciplinary Policy was agreed.

11. Draft Sickness and Absence Policy

Councillor Baker reported that the Council as an employer was required to produce a Sickness and Absence Policy. The policy set out the way the Council would deal with Sickness and Absence and the steps both the Council and members of staff should take in reporting and dealing with sickness and absence. The proposed Sickness and Absence Policy was agreed.

12. Chairman's and Clerk's Reports and Correspondence

The following correspondence had been received:

Consultation from Babergh District Council re: Gambling Act 2005: Statement of Principles

Clerk to send link to consultation to members via e-mail. **Action – R Jones**

Clerk's request to attend SALC 2-day training course on 2 and 9 October was approved. Cost of £103 + vat to be shared with Groton PC. **Action – R Jones**

Clerk to investigate purchase of printer/scanner and advise members of cost for approval before buying. **Action – R Jones**

13. Future Agenda Items

Neighbourhood Plan/Village Statement, Footpath Signs, Grit Bins

14. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 19 November 2018 at 7.30pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.10pm