

MINUTES of the MEETING of BOXFORD PARISH COUNCIL held on Monday 5th October 2020 at 7.30 p.m. by Zoom Video Meeting.

PRESENT: J Fincham-Jacques (Chairman), S Mattocks, M Wooderson, (P Edwards and D Warren joined the meeting following co-option), D Hattrell (Clerk), J Finch (County Cllr), B Hurren (District Cllr) and 2 members of the public.

APOLOGIES: A Sargeant (Vice Chairman) had previously sent his apologies for not attending video conference meetings for medical reasons and this has been accepted.

CO-OPTION OF MEMBERS: Pamela Edwards, Theresa Munson and David Warren had been invited to join the Parish Council following their successful applications. This was officially resolved. P Edwards and D Warren therefore joined the meeting as Councillors. Theresa Munson had sent her apologies. Declaration of Acceptance of Office and Register of Interest Forms were to be sent to the new Councillors via email for completion, signing and scanned versions or hard copies to be returned to the Clerk - **Action All.**

DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY COUNCILLORS: Nothing was declared.

MINUTES OF 7TH SEPTEMBER 2020: Accepted as correct.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES: S Mattocks confirmed her Resignation from the Parish Council and noted that she may apply to return at some stage in the future. Members were supportive of her decision and encouraged her to apply again as soon as possible - **Action Clerk to inform Babergh Council.**

PUBLIC FORUM: Nothing was raised.

REVIEW OF ITEMS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC: Not applicable.

COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT: County Cllr J Finch attended and announced investment into electric vehicle charging points in rural Suffolk. 100 charging points were to be installed. Suffolk's public sector leaders met to agree collective action to start the recovery process as a result of COVID-19. They will invest in economic growth, support the vulnerable and focus on community safety. The County Council is not prepared to support the plans for Sizewell C in its current form. This is due to too many unanswered issues including transport impacts, site design and environmental impact. So far Suffolk has installed 43 sensors on Street Lights to gather data as part of a project funded by the Department of Transport which is now a year since it started. Applications are now invited from parents and carers for next year's school places. A public consultation is being conducted on improving rail capacity at Ely. The Boundary Commission has published proposals for County Councillor divisions in Suffolk which would require 70 Councillors, 5 fewer than the current arrangements. Residents and local organisations are encouraged to take a look at the proposals and share their views: <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/18495>. Further virtual Fostering and Adoption Sessions are taking place: To book email Claire.Gwatkin@suffolk.gov.uk. J Finch stated that it is best to delay resolution at Butchers Lane until the building work is completed. He confirmed the camera seen in Ash Street was not put there by the Highways team at the County Council.

DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT: District Cllr B Hurren attended and welcomed our new Councillors Theresa, Pamela and David. He hoped they enjoy the role and thanked them for their commitment to the village. Babergh mid suffolk have been successful in obtaining a government grant of £100.000 to tackle homelessness in our area, this is especially important at this present time as it would be irresponsible to have people living rough under the present circumstances, although this can be used to provide emergency funding for B & B to house evicted people, it can also be used to keep people in their present accommodation in the hope that individual circumstances change while our housing team work with them.

At a recent meeting, Babergh objected strongly to the government white paper on planning which would almost double the required numbers to be built across our region which do little to address our terrible housing problems in this region.

B Hurren advised in his view we do not so much as have a housing crisis, we have an affordability crisis and building yet more developer led 3/4 bed executive type houses at £ 1/2 million plus does not help those striving to get on the housing ladder for a first time house, or those trying to downsize to free up an already built family house.

Next year the District Council plans to take the public realm services back in house, this entails doing our own grass cutting services, litter picking, rubbish clearance playground maintenance and road sweeping.

One piece of good news amongst the devastation to our local economy is that the old Phillips Avent site at Glemsford has been purchased by a company for the production of Cocoa for the home and world market. The initial labour force will be around 100 in place of the 400 employed by Phillips but they are already talking to our planners and business team about expansion so it is hoped further employment will follow.

As an aside Babergh, at the moment has the lowest recorded cases of Coronavirus of any council in the whole country. This does not mean that we can be complacent, it means we have to work harder to keep it that way.

Locally B Hurren is keeping up with issues around the Croft, Boxwood Hall, the Boxford Neighbourhood Plan and Sandhill.

The Footpath Warden took the opportunity to raise the importance of creating cycle paths around Boxford and particularly along the A1071. J Finch agreed he could investigate further once the Parish Council agrees some priorities in this respect. B Hurren suggested a route under the A1071 at the Stone Street junction may be the most appropriate link. It was agreed to include as an Agenda item for the November Meeting - **Action Clerk**.

FINANCE: The Bank balances as at 1st October were **£75861.67** in the Community Account, **£13400.86** in the Deposit Account and **£55280.08** in the Reserve Account making a total of **£144542.61**.

Members listened to a progress report from the Footpath Warden and the approaches he has made to Groton and Edwardstone Parishes in respect of the walks leaflet project. Members were supportive of the concept and felt the scope of walks should include the centre of Boxford extending to White Street Green, Stone Street, Groton and Edwardstone. It was resolved to contribute up to £320 to meet the shortfall. Members would like to see the leaflet again when a draft is produced to enable constructive feedback to be shared at that stage. It was agreed to communicate this resolution to our Footpath Warden - **Action Clerk**. District Cllr Bryn Hurren agreed to assist the Footpath Warden in bringing together interested parties.

Members then gave consideration to moving meetings to Tuesdays and contributing 50% towards Village Hall broadband/wifi. All agreed subject to our County Cllr and District Cllr being free for the new meeting dates, to book the main Village Hall for all of next year. The fourth Tuesday was selected with a couple of exceptions in August and December. It was agreed for the Clerk to check with the County and District Cllrs and then book the hall as agreed - **Action Clerk**.

The Annual Review of the Internal Control Policy was carried out. Minor amendments had been incorporated to reflect some changes brought about by the COVID-19 situation and Video Conferencing Meetings. It was resolved to approve the new version.

The Insurance Schedule was checked against our Asset Register and all was found to be in order. The Parish Council funds now exceed the Fidelity Guarantee limit so it was agreed to uplift the limit to the next bracket. A new schedule had been produced and it was agreed to go ahead with the change - **Action Clerk**.

Members felt it prudent to continue to have an Agenda item of uses of the COVID 19 Grant for the time being and monitor the situation regarding the second wave of the virus and the potential impacts on Parish Businesses and Organisations - **Action Clerk**.

The following pre-agreed payments were made: -

Cheque No.	Payee	Amount	Details
<u>As at October</u>			
Funds Tr	Vertas	1113.94	Playgd grass contract
Funds Tr's	Employment Costs totalled	1262.19	Salary, ERS NIC & Pension
Funds Tr	Business Services at CAS ltd	402.98	Parish Council Insurance
Funds Tr	M A Crighton	185.00	Cemetery Contract
Funds Tr	Topline Pest Control	30.00	Cemetery Contract

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING: H Phillips (joint Chair of the Neighbourhood Planning Group) attended to update the Parish Council on progress. They are at the evidence gathering stage making significant progress and now need to engage with the community. In view of COVID-19, this process has started on-line with web links available from Facebook, Box River News and Community and Parish Council Websites. Community Engagement is essential to inform the development of the plan and to gain approval for the Referendum Stage. Members thanked H Phillips for all the hard work of the Neighbourhood Planning Group on behalf of the Parish Council and the Village.

CORRESPONDENCE: The correspondence report had been circulated ahead of the Meeting. No action points resulted.

CEMETERY: It was agreed to follow the recommendations of our Vice Chairman and agree to the principle of a new memorial bench suggested by a family member - **Action Clerk to reply to the family**. Members resolved to go ahead with the quote to reduce 6 sycamore trees and fell a dying sycamore tree at the Cemetery as soon as the Conservation Area Tree Notification process is concluded - **Action Clerk**.

UPDATES FROM THE COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESPONSE: The Chairman had received an update from the Community Response. Whilst the need for the support had decreased for

a period, it was being called upon again particularly to support self isolation. The Chairman will make enquiries as to whether further financial support is needed and if so, the treasurer should liaise with the Clerk as before - **Action Chairman.**

REPORTS AND QUESTIONS FROM CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS: It was agreed to chase progress re the white lining by the Churchyard wall - **Action Clerk.** M Wooderson agreed to step in and attend Boxford Society Meetings if required. M Wooderson will follow up a tree/hedge planting offer from an email circulated by the Clerk - **Action M Wooderson.** S Mattocks will follow up an obstructed footpath issue between Cox Hill and Fen Street with our Footpath Warden - **Action S Mattocks.** It was agreed for the Clerk to chase the Environment Agency for their schedule of waterway clearance in the vicinity of Ash Street - **Action Clerk.** It was agreed to contact our previous member, P Wallis, who had agreed to put out the new grit bins he was storing for the Parish Council - **Action Clerk.**

The meeting closed at **9.44 p.m.**

Planning Meeting Held by Boxford Parish Council by Video Conferencing on Monday 5th October 2020

The following decisions were advised from the Planning Authority: -

A) Planning permission had been granted for garage conversion and replacement garden shed at Groton Cottage, 8 Ellis Street - **DC/20/02928.**

B) Planning permission had been granted for a rear garden room extension and landscaping works at 12 Goodlands - **DC/20/03012.**

C) Planning permission had been granted for a storage shed following demolition of existing at 6 Ellis Street - **DC/20/03032.**

D) Consent had been granted to fell and replace walnut tree at Causeway House, The Causeway - **DC/20/03857**. The Parish Council had **No Objections** between Meetings.

E) The District Council does not wish to object to Conservation Area tree and hedge work at 14 The Causeway - **DC/20/03348**. The Parish Council had **No Objections** between Meetings.

The following were discussed: -

1) **Simbos Gun Dogs and Grooming**, Stone Street - Application for single storey dog kennels and reception block - **DC/20/01737**

The following response was agreed: -

"Please note Boxford Parish Council objects to further expansion of the kennels in its tranquil and rural setting. It is in a Conservation Area within a Special Landscape Area.

The sizable proposal would not sit well in its surroundings and would create obvious visual harm. We also suggest the potential to flood is examined. The expanded use as kennels would cause additional noise disturbance and bring more vehicle movements. The traffic and pedestrian safety issues are already recognised in the vicinity of Stone Street Hamlet.

We therefore urge the Planning Authority to refuse this application to overdevelop land in a setting worthy of protection for all the above reasons."

2) **Knoll Gate, School Hill** - Notification for works to trees in Conservation Area to prune row of lime trees due to some decay and to allow light - **DC/20/04213**. **No Objections**

3) **4 Butchers Lane** - Notification of works to trees in Conservation Area to crown reduce silver maple to previous points - **DC/20/04275**. **No Objections**

4) **16 The Causeway** - Tree application - **DC/20/04343**. **No Objections**

5) **Any other urgent planning matters:** The Highways Report produced on the instruction of the Parish Council had just been received relating the footpath/road alterations as part of the Catesby application. It was agreed to pass the report to our Legal Advisers to help inform the next step of this potential challenge to the Planning Decision - **Action Chairman**. It was noted that Kersey have a similar challenge and have offered to support us with information if required.