

MINUTES of the MEETING of BOXFORD PARISH COUNCIL held on Tuesday 26th January 2021 at 7.30 p.m. by Zoom Video Meeting.

PRESENT: J Fincham-Jacques (Chairman), T Munson, P Edwards, C Britton, 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. M Wooderson and D Warren had sent apologies.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY COUNCILLORS: Nothing was declared.

MINUTES OF 4TH JANUARY 2021: Accepted as correct.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES: Nothing was raised.

PUBLIC FORUM: Nothing was raised.

REVIEW OF ITEMS RAISED BY THE PUBLIC: Not applicable.

COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT: County Cllr J Finch attended and reported on the continued focus on Covid 19 with a third of the total number of Coronavirus cases in Suffolk recorded in the past 2 weeks. There was specific focus on the area including the Parishes of Boxford, Leavenheath and Nayland and surrounding parishes and hamlets. The message is stick with the guidance and it is also noted testing has increased in the County which means more cases are being detected. Details of the Vaccination centres and Hubs in Suffolk have been circulated with others expected to go live. The aim is that everyone lives less than half hour drive away from a centre. Appointments will be made by the centres, people should wait for their invite and not call them in the meantime. The Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner, Tim Passmore has published his proposals for the policing element of the Council Tax Precept for next financial year and he was asking for thoughts via an electronic survey by 28th January. A new digital resource has been launched for home schooling as part of the Keep Moving Suffolk Campaign. The Primary School Application deadline has passed. Further virtual Fostering and Adoption sessions were scheduled. J Finch had allocated some of his Locality Budget to the Church in respect of foodbank/hardship services. The Chairman raised the delay with the yellow lining replacement at Daking Avenue following surfacing. Yellow lines have appeared on Swan Street near the entrance to Cygnet Court which were unexpected. J Finch agreed to investigate upon receipt of a photograph - **Action Chairman.**

DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT: District Cllr B Hurren attended and took the opportunity wish everyone a progressively good new year with the hope of better prospects on the horizon. At the District Council officers and cllrs are back at the coal face managing whatever they can to help the fallout from the coronavirus pandemic together with their usual duties. They have become adept at moving faster to make necessary decisions through working together with other agencies and with virtual meetings across the spectrum now the norm. One grave concern B Hurren has is the motivation of their very dedicated staff due to the lack of an office and team camaraderie. He has raised this with the leadership team who say that they are keeping a watchful eye but it is not a concern at the moment. Housing has been a major problem with some fallout amongst crowded families, especially where several working adults have no job to go to and older relatives shielding and young people away from school and education. The better weather and the distribution of a reliable and safe vaccine will bring hope and relief to so many. B Hurren reported that their housing team

continue to work wonders. Another success is the expansion and refurbishment of swimming pools and leisure centres, much of the work has been carried out during lockdown, which is a credit to their contractors who have worked tirelessly on the new pool at Hadleigh and the expansion of the Kingfisher Leisure Centre and Pool at the Kingfisher at Sudbury. The District Council is having to support these two premises at the moment through the enforced closure with grants and loans to keep them running and ready for when they can be used again. Mental health, sport and recreation is going to be so important to get our district back to fighting fitness and wellbeing in the coming years and they hope to see these facilities well used.

He felt the attempt to increase car parking charges has not been approached in the right way. He felt we must give every support we can to our beleaguered high streets and surviving retail outlets and this was not the way to do it, any tinkering must be left until we are all moving normally again and retail outlets are on a firmer footing. B Hurren updated T Munson who raised the removal of the Sudbury Access point. He confirmed it was relocating to the library and he was due to hear full details later in the week. He understood the Council Tax increase for the District Council's proportion would be 3%. Elections were due in May. B Hurren now has Locality Budget to allocate, so he invited details of any projects which would benefit from his support.

FINANCE: The Bank balances as at 4th January 2021 were **£64138.67** in the Community Account, **£13401.19** in the Deposit Account and **£56190.46** in the Reserve Account making a total of **£133730.32**. However, the December payments had not been made at this stage due to the bank card delay.

The Precept Working Sheet had been amended to include the most up to date taxbase figures and a £531 grant being issued to us to offset the decrease in taxbase contributors. The Parish Council could be liable for significant legal costs as a result of our agreed challenge to the Sand Hill Planning Decision. These worst estimates had been incorporated into the spreadsheet and members considered increasing the Precept to residents by a limited amount to help support these costs in the next financial year. Crowd funding may be sought at the appropriate time and D Warren is investigating the process involved. Following discussion, it was resolved to increase the Precept by **2%** to **£39178**. Members considered the hardship many residents will be facing, however, with our legal challenge some extra funds would be required. It was also noted the Parish Council Precept is only a small part of the Council Tax bill compared to other authorities - **Action Clerk to complete the relevant form for the District Council.**

Attention then turned to the review of the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Some amendments had been issued to members ahead of the meeting from SALC and NALC. Members agreed to update the documents with the recommended changes. It was resolved that the remainder of the content of both documents continue to meet our needs - **Action Clerk to arrange for the documents to be updated on our website.**

The External Audit Report was then discussed - An unpaid debit of £129.99 was included in expenditure due to bank account details being awaited for the funds transfer. This amount has since been paid as agreed. However, as unpaid at the year end, this amount should have been removed. The figures are to be amended in next year's return in respect of the prior year comparatives. All other matters were approved. Another matter brought to our attention but not affecting the Auditors opinion was that the Accounting Return was approved on 1st June 2020, however, the public rights for inspection period did not commence until 1st September 2020. The later date was agreed as a precaution when the Parish Council could not hold meetings due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The following pre-agreed payments for December were made: -

Cheque No.	Payee	Amount	Details
<u>As at January</u>			
Chq's	Employment Costs totalled	1263.30	Salary, ERS NIC & Pension
Chq	Teacher Stern	5000.00	Payment on Account
Chq	PCC of Boxford St Mary's	2500.00	Donation towards ins costs

The Chairman explained that his bank card failed to work when trying to authorise the payments in December. The Bank was contacted to replace the card which led to unacceptable delays and our complaint to the Bank is on-going. Cheques were issued on 5th January to bring us up to date, however, a working bank card was still awaited.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING: H Phillips (joint Chair of the Neighbourhood Planning Group) attended and reported that the Neighbourhood Planning Group have substantially finished gathering evidence. The emerging policy ideas were put before the Parish Council and then circulated to the Village. The responses are being considered. The timetable for the adoption of a Neighbourhood Plan was out-lined and of course once adopted the document will have similar authority to the District Council Joint Local Plan (which is also progressing to adoption). As the Neighbourhood Plan nears completion it will be of increasing influence.

CORRESPONDENCE: The correspondence report had been circulated ahead of the Meeting. Members agreed to welcome the offer of Neighbouring Tree Wardens to take on the voluntary role also in Boxford Parish. The Chairman will circulate details.

CEMETERY: The path has become slippery again and the Clerk has contacted our previous contractors to treat the path on a monthly basis initially for a 3 month period. Members were supportive of these actions. It was agreed to reimburse the grave reservation fee less a £15 admin fee to a resident who has decided to cancel her reservation - **Action Clerk.**

UPDATES FROM THE COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESPONSE: The Chairman and Clerk have made contact again with the Community Response and no further financial support was needed at this stage.

REPORTS AND QUESTIONS FROM CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS: Andrew Good was thanked for providing a witness statement towards our legal challenge. T Munson was concerned about the refusal of a planning application for air source pump/green credentials. It was agreed to add an Agenda item to consider what can be done to support planning with green credentials - **Action Clerk.**

The meeting closed at **9.50 p.m.**

Planning Meeting Held by Boxford Parish Council by Video Conferencing on Tuesday 26th January 2021

The following decisions were advised from the Planning Authority: -

- A) Non material amendment was approved at Green Lawns Bonsai Nursery to enable phased development of the self build plots - **DC/20/05251**
- B) Work can proceed for tree work at Wynne House, Swan Street - **DC/20/05217**
- C) Work can proceed to reduce crown of walnut tree by 4m at 28 Cox Hill - **DC/20/05292**

D) Approved discharge of conditions application for external materials, boundary treatment, highways drainage, construction management and noise insulation at Simbos Gun Dogs and Grooming, Stone Street - **DC/20/04997**

E) Planning Permission was refused for air source heat pump and solar panels at The Old Manse, Swan Street - **DC/20/04924**

F) Planning Permission was granted for dwelling and double garage at Homestead, Hadleigh Road - **DC/20/04286**

G) Planning Permission was granted to convert garage to annex at Box Edge House, 3 Rules Yard - **DC/20/05307**

H) Planning Permission was granted for rear extension, front boundary wall and entrance gates at Richmond Lodge, Calais Street - **DC/20/05346**

The following were discussed: -

1) Between Meetings the following responses were given: -

a) **APP/D3505/W/20/3262125** - Land To The South Of, Daking Avenue. Appeal to refusal of application for 2 dwellings. Members didn't add anything to earlier representations.

b) **DC/20/05733** - 17 Goodlands. Application for single storey rear extensions and part conversion of garage into gym. The Parish Council had **No Objections**.

2) **2 Cherry Ground Cottages, Wash Lane** - Application for single storey side extension with relocation of front door and porch and internal alterations to existing semi-detached cottage - **DC/21/00092**. **The Parish Council had No Objection.**

3) Site of former Green Lawns Bonsai Nursery, Hadleigh Road - Submission of Details following Outline Application for 4 detached dwellings - **DC/21/00361**. **The Parish Council had No Objection.**

4) **Any other urgent planning matters:** In relation to the legal Challenge of the Catesby application, this Council (via our Legal Representatives) has submitted an application for Judicial Review and was awaiting the response from Babergh District Council, the Planning Authority. In order to share the work between meetings in this regard, a sub-committee will be formed including some members of the Parish Council and of the community. So far the Chairman, D Warren, A Good, D Lamming and H Philips have agreed to liaise between meetings in this regard. All Decisions will continue to be made by the full Parish Council. It was agreed to undertake further work in relation to the transport survey between meetings.