

## CASTLE ACRE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Ostrich Function Room on Thursday 13 April 2017:

Present: Mr M Hickey (MH) Chairman                      Mr L Fisher (LF) Vice-Chairman  
Mr N Patrick (NP)    Mrs H Breach (HB),  
Mr Martin Tate (MT)    Mr T Hubbard (TH)

In attendance: Ms L Roast (Clerk), and one member of the public.

Apologies: Mr S Allen (SA), Ms C Williams (CW), Mrs Sheila Moister (SM), J Moriarty (Borough Councillor),

**1 Minutes of PC meeting Thursday 9 March 2017** proposed by Mr T Hubbard, seconded Mr Laurie Fisher. Agreed.

**2 Actions from previous meeting:**

**28 Bailey Gate damage and signage** – MH expressed his deep frustration at the pedestrian pace shown by Historic England in erecting the new portcullis and effecting repairs to the gate, first requested in February 2014. Highways is no better with no action on the new sign on the A1065 as the department's sign design department was wound up! However, the new posts on the Bailey Street side of Bailey Gate are due for installation soon. MH proposed that CAPC contact the MD of Historic England to expedite matters. Cllrs agreed.

**85 PCC wedding/funeral parking consultation** – in response to the Ostrich's suggestion of a new car park sign, Highways has agreed that a white directional sign can be positioned on the small post opposite Premier Stores which currently has a sign directing drivers to the Priory. Cost to be determined and charged to the Ostrich?

**108 Textile bin** – no update.

**113 Stocks Green lime trees** - following his meeting with SM and TH, Richard Fisher, the Borough Tree Officer e-mailed:

- *All of the trees appear healthy; it would be prudent to assess their continued health over the next 2-3 seasons.*
- *The work carried out as a Parish Council has, in his opinion, shown the PC's duty of care for the trees and the visitors to the village.*
- *A great idea for TH to undertake the level one LANTRA tree inspection s course, which in the long run will save the PC money.*
- *The trees along Stocks Green are an asset to that part of the village and should, in my opinion, be maintained into the future.*

**Orchard Lane enlarging parking bay** – Patrick Grange has kindly offered to use his site mini digger to enlarge the parking bay and to remove the earth. Scheduled for Wednesday 26 April. In response to HB query, MH confirmed that there were no plans at the moment to lay extra gravel.

**3 Health & Safety issues** – none.

**Tree Inspection Register** – TH to re-look at the North Street alley ash trees and to complete the missing details on the register, now he has taken the LANTA course. LF drafted an opening statement to read:

*The Castle Acre Parish Council (CAPC) Tree Register is a living document designed to provide a record of inspections, reports, plans and actions undertaken to proactively manage the health and safety issues of trees located on land owned or leased to CAPC. The health and*

*safety of parishioners and visitors to Castle Acre is the highest priority of CAPC, and as such, it is a standing agenda item at the monthly CAPC meetings. In addition to any tree related Health and Safety issues raised from the standing agenda item, the Tree Register allows for the holistic, long-term management of Castle Acre's trees.*

Councillors agreed the statement.

**Bench at the Ford broken leg** - Cllrs approved the quote of £45 to re-weld the broken bench leg.

#### 4 **Matters requested by Councillors**

**Holkham fencing at Priory Precinct Meadow** – Holkham will continue to manage the meadow around the Priory for the foreseeable future. After consulting with English Heritage (EH), Holkham propose to manage the grasslands through sheep grazing, controlling them within a stock fence around the meadow perimeter. Sheep and dogs do not mix very well and Holkham wish to block the paths used for many years by both dog walkers and visitors, despite there not being a public footpath or open access agreement on the site. Equally, EH want to prevent people climbing over the low wall at the bottom of the Priory and visiting the attraction for free.

MH met with Henry Barringer from Holkham and reached an understanding that the stock fence is erected within the footpath that runs down parallel to South Acre Road and within the ditch parallel to the Nar, thereby allowing walkers to reach the gate at the west end that links to the double fenced path that runs round to Common Lane. Even with this in place, Cllrs feel there would quite a protest from the village at any restriction to using the criss-cross of paths. Various options were debated including the possibility of having gates on the path across the meadow for walkers to access when sheep are put out to graze.

Agreed MH will seek a compromise solution with Holkham which would retain access to the paths on the west and eastern sides of the meadow and add a two metre wide double fenced path along the northern edge of the meadow, as well as round the Priory perimeter, to link, via the bridge, to the path by the Nar. By fencing both sides of the path, the temptation for visitors to climb over the low Priory wall would be prevented and walkers would continue to enjoy access to the meadow without disturbing the sheep.

Cllrs noted Holkham is seeking part funding for the fence from HE. This could take some time to achieve.

#### 5 **Planning**

**Local Plan to 2036, final development sites for consideration** – the deadline date for the call for sites is passed. Noted for Castle Acre: Green King: eight properties on their land behind the new school. Holkham: five dwellings at Lodge Farm site; 20-25 dwellings behind the Massingham Road site. Borough Council officers will consider which sites and how many dwellings for public consultation by the end of the year.

**Premier Stores development** - work to start within two weeks. License for temporary building had to be applied for from the Borough Council.

#### 6 **Correspondence**

**Donation for Stocks Green and Millennium Trees** - Cllrs expressed their gratitude to Mrs Loch for her very generous £2,000 donation for future care and maintenance of the five lime trees on Stocks Green and the Millennium tree on the playing field. MH proposed that the PC set up a new deposit account to ringfence both this donation and the £400 from the Wicken towards a new village sign. Agreed. The Clerk to investigate.

**Donation of £50** – having approached Holkham to use their field by the Priory for car parking

for her wedding guests, Holkham suggested to Kate Hunnan of Minns Farm Barn that she makes a £50 donation to Castle Acre Parish Council in lieu which she has done. The Clerk to thank both parties and to advise Holkham that the PC will use this donation to repair the bench at South Acre ford.

**Extra dog waste bin at Minns Meadow** – e-mail read out from a resident who had a disappointing walk around Castle Acre because of dog faeces and dog poop bags littering the route. Cllrs debated how to convince dog owners to be more responsible and whether an extra bin at one end of Minns Meadow and a bag dispenser at the other would make any difference. Noted there is £150 budget for one new bin in addition to the six around the village at the Priory, St James Green, St James Church, Castle car park, off East Green and by the village hall. The Clerk was asked to look at the costs for the next meeting.

**Bench on Stocks Green** – e-mail read out from Sheila Moister offering to make good the wooden bench on the green. The PC accepted the offer with thanks to both Mr & Mrs Moister.

**CROW ACT footpaths** – e-mail read out from John Roff who has been looking at footpaths in the area. *‘On Saturday 18 March I represented Castle Acre on a workshop for footpaths, byways act at Swaffham community centre. The course was informative and interesting with a lot of detail and legal conformity to digest. With the time scales involved to register footpaths with Norfolk county council (up to 2026) and with budget pressures, communication and agreement with major landowners, residential owners and various councils to consult and negotiate with, I feel I will be unable to complete this project. However having enjoyed walking many footpaths in Castle Acre, I am keen to pass on to future generations this pleasure, and would happy to make a start on this project identifying what Castle Acre has lost and what we can realistically fight to retain’.* Cllrs expressed their thanks to Mr Roff for taking on the project and agreed that any headway made on the project would be welcome.

**CPRE – housing allocation pledge.** – e-mail read out requesting CAPC sign a petition about the Council’s Core Strategy. Cllrs decided not to sign, as doing so would be in opposition to the nascent Neighbourhood Plan.

## 7 Reports

**Highways** – Highways’ work to relieve the flooding on Archer Lane by lengthening the ditch has still not started. Orchard Lane surface is still not leveled.

**School** – new intake in September is over-subscribed – eleven new children are registered. The school may have to refine their catchment area in the future.

**Village Hall** – April’s live music concert very good. The hall has been approached by The Post Office as a temporary location during the Premier Stores rebuild – nothing yet confirmed.

**CAPFA** –AGM 25<sup>th</sup> April.

**Neighbourhood Plan (NP)** – MT explained the funding application will soon be submitted. Consultation event on 2 May: flyers were delivered to all households and posters displayed around the village urging residents to come along and express their views. The results of this consultation will help shape the questionnaire to be distributed on 10 July with a return date of 21 July. From the questionnaire returns, policies can be formulated as part of the final Neighbourhood Plan. MT requested that Cllrs help manage the event. He will circulate the evening’s arrangements.

**Borough Council** – Mr Jim Moriarty e-mail was read out: *‘Kings Lynn & West Norfolk has been selected for a boundary review by the Local Government Boundary Commission. The last one was 2001. In the intervening period disparities have grown in the number of electors per councillor. It averages around the 1800 mark (we have just over 2,000 in Priory Ward) but Brancaster has only 1200. An electoral review determines the total number of councillors on the Borough Council, the number of wards, the boundaries of each ward, the number of*

*councillors elected to each ward and the names of each ward. In 2001 East Winch and West Bilney were added to this ward and its name was changed. There will be no changes to the Parish Council but it will be consulted. As a first step, the Borough had to come up with a preferred number of councillors (it is rare for an increase to be agreed). The whole process will be finished this year and in place for the next elections in 2019. Most wards will be affected as there will be 'ripple' effect as they make changes elsewhere to even out the number of electors per councillor'.*

JM will be sitting on the Task Group which will liaise with the Boundary Commission and will keep CAPC up to date.

## 8 Accounts

Cheques covering the first seven expenses listed below were signed. The balance of five expenses' cheques will be signed when the new cheque book arrives. All twelve payments were proposed for approval by Mr Tim Hubbard, Mr Laurie Fisher seconded. The Clerk to query what Environment Agency and Norfolk Rivers IDB invoices are for.

Berrymans Glass Recycling Ltd (URM UK Ltd)	£34.90 (£2.42 VAT)
E.on Energy (electricity)	£73.58 (£3.50 VAT)
Gary Lake –1st installment playing field grass cutting	£950.00
Justin Anderson – Castle bin installation	£220.00
Borough Council of Kings Lynn & West Norfolk – dog waste collections	£486.72 (81.12 VAT)
Steve Barnfield – Stocks Green weed killer	£ 9.86
Village Hall – Neighbourhood plan 2 /5/17 meeting 4 hrs.	£ 40.00
Village Hall – hall hire May 2017 – March 2018	£200.00
Environment Agency – chargeable land	£ 34.48
Norfolk Rivers IDB – agricultural drainage rates	£ 24.56
K&M Lighting Services – repair outside Old Foundry	£ 78.00 (£13.00 VAT)
Linda Roast – Clerk's salary Jan to March 2017	£488.34

## 9 Village Maintenance

**Nar Valley River walk – Minns Meadow** –The PC agreed to wait until early spring/summer before consulting with NRT and also asking if NRT could extend the boardwalk by a further ten metres to cover the muddy quagmire from the gate to the main path.

**East Green grass patches and brambles** – quote for removing the mass of brambles at the east end is £200 with Mrs Mary-Anne Garry offering £150 towards the cost. TH said that these overgrown areas are important for wildlife. Cllrs agreed to take a look at the area and discuss at the May meeting.

**Paper Bin at Ostrich** – This has now been moved in preparation for building works at Premier Stores.

## 10 Public Question Time

**Statements from the resident attending:**

**East Green grass patches and brambles** – should not be completely cleared to protect wildlife. Dead standing cherry tree is a good habitat for animals and insects.

**Grit Bin Back Lane** – the Clerk to arrange to fill up.

**Status check on closure of part of South Acre Road** – Natural England was not consulted last September and are very disappointed that the closure has not gone through in the SSSI site. They have been sent all correspondence. NE may have legal powers to close the road

**Dog Poop Bin** – agreed that there should be one at the River walk with perhaps a sign at the other end informing dog owners of the bins position at the other end of the walk.

**Priory field grazing and fencing** – would be sad to lose the east section of the boundary walk i.e. along the edge of the Priory boundary. A perimeter walk all the way round is the best option.

**The meeting closed at 9.05pm.**

The next full Parish Council meeting is on Thursday 11 May at 7.30pm in the village hall.