

CASTLE ACRE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the village hall on Thursday 10 December 2015:

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

In attendance: Ms L Roast (Clerk), 4 members of the public

Apologies: Ms C Williams (CW), Mr J Moriarty (JM), Mr R Read (RR)

91 Minutes of PC meeting Thursday 12 November.

Mr T Hubbard proposed approval, Mr L Fisher seconded. Agreed.

92 Actions from previous meeting:

34 **School Garden allotments boundary update** – still in negotiation
Playground Cottage allotment fence – work completed on 28 November, thanks go to Sean Allen.

61 **Bailey Gate posts** – still waiting for Highways to make a site visit.
Christmas tree lights – one set not working – the Clerk to report failure to supplier.

67 **Rangers visit/ Priory Field verge** – verge has been cut. The Clerk to check the footpath.

73 **Transparency code** – £300 quote received for required alterations to the website. The Clerk has applied for 100% funding from NALC.

84 **Mayor's Civic Award** – application deadline is 15 January. HB to take forward.
Defibrillator funding – online application submitted for a free village defibrillator, CPR training and a cabinet with a key pad locking system.

89 **Ash trees at North Street/Playing field alley** – Two quotes received for removing two or three overhanging branches and dead wood and ivy. TH suggested that the Council proceed in this financial year. Being the lowest price (£260), it was proposed by LF to appoint CP Tree Services, seconded by SA. Agreed.

Pales Green grass strip - MH reported that the grass strip had finally been lodged with Land Registry.

93 **5 Year Action Plan/Through Traffic Plan.** SAM2 flashing speed sign was positioned in Newton Road but is currently in Massingham Road and thereafter at St James Green. It was on loan to Sporle during November.

The Community Speedwatch Group. A resident, Delia Smith, expressed interest in joining – RR to contact on his return.

94 **Health & Safety.** No concerns.

95 Matters requested by Councillors.

Stocks Green/Castle car park waste bins – the Borough Council has found 3 large bins that can house 240 litre green wheelie bins. The Clerk to email round the photos to Councillors. Final decision to accept will be taken at the January PC meeting.

Energy saving – street lights LED bulbs – The contractor has suggested replacing any defective lights with Led bulbs, cutting electricity output by 70% per lamp. Costing £5 more, both the Priory Road light and one in Foxes Meadow have been upgraded to LED. The Council agreed that it would be environmentally prudent to replace all the remaining 32 street lights with LED bulbs but budgetary restraints and the absence of grants preclude this in the

short term. The PC need assurances from the contractor on the quality of the LED bulbs. The Clerk to email K&M and ask for their warranty and assurance. One third of the village street lights are timed to go out at midnight. Clerk to ascertain which ones.

2016 Greens/hedge/verge cutting contract – Cllrs confirmed that they were happy with the work of TTSR who have been cutting the Greens satisfactorily for the past two years. Their 2016 quote allows for a 2% increase which included the same number of strimmings along the North Street alleyway at £5 plus Vat per cut. Cllrs request that this be restricted to six times a year instead of 17 as quoted. They also approved the £78 quote for twice cutting the Priory Road verge in May and October but without removing the grass. The PC to continue retaining TTSR on a yearly contract. Agreed to re-appoint at the revised quoted terms.

96 **Planning**

15/00942/OM hybrid application. Consultation of design changes to dwellings along Massingham Road. - MH reported that the Conservation Officer was unhappy with the four individual designs and had insisted that the developer makes the proposed dwellings No. 3&4 match the dwellings 1&2. Cllrs looked at the plans and discussed. MH summarised: should the PC accept the changes or insist that the original plans be re-instated as they reflect exemplar designs for the eleven dwellings on the land behind? Cllrs reluctantly supported the change from four distinct quality designs to four dwellings very similar in appearance. Cllrs are of the view that the conservation team has shown no imagination or creativity and has missed an opportunity to produce dwellings of real merit.

LDF Inspector's report – due in February and should be completed by July 2016. After February, the report goes out for public consultation.

97 **Correspondence** – none

98 **Reports**

Martin Hickey – Highways – outstanding: Archer Lane verge reduction, St James' Green post, Bailey gate. Pot holes, as reported, have been filled in along North Street and Town Lane. The verge between the new Trod and the road is becoming muddy and ruined by people parking on the grass and driving over the verge. SA has put notes on windscreens asking not to park on the Trod.

Castle Acre School – Chairman of the Governors, Mike Dwyer, reported: 'The transition to become an Academy within the Diocese of Norwich Academy Trust (DNEAT) is now underway and is targeted for completion in the first week of February 2016. We are actually excited at the change-over as everything we have seen and heard of DNEAT is really positive and we believe the support we can get will help us improve even further. Recent HMI/Ofsted review has clearly recognised the growing improvement at all three schools and identifies the positive strength of the Leadership particularly the new Head Teacher and our Deputy Head. This report and another from the Diocese are available on the School web site. So all in all, the Federation and Castle Acre Primary School are doing well'.

Friends of Castle Acre School – no report

Village Hall – the Community Payback Unit will be used to sand the hall floor. The next event on Saturday 12 December is 'A Christmas Carol' by the Keeper's Daughter theatre group.

Castle Acre Playing Field – MH informed Cllrs that BCKLWN has deemed that CAPFA would be liable to pay business rates on the pavilion but with 100% relief as a charity. CAPFA to complete the registration forms in the near future.

Borough Council – no report.

99 Accounts

The following cheques were signed - payments were proposed for approval by Tim Hubbard (TH), Laurie Fisher (LF) seconded. Agreed.

FCC Recycling (UK) Ltd £ 34.90 (inc: VAT 5.82),

E.on Energy (electricity) £ 61.32 (inc £2.92 VAT), K&M Lighting (Back Lane, Priory Road, Foxes Meadow) £228.00 (inc £38 VAT), Glasdon UK Limited (2 grit bins) £309.60 (inc £51.60 VAT), CGM Group (Vert-drain playing field) £342.00(inc £57.00 VAT).

100 Village Maintenance

- Orchard Lane closed for road works.

- Hort Soc have planted bulbs on St James' Green.

- TH reported that the area around the containers on the playing field is messy. Could MH report to CAPFA at their next meeting?

- North Street alleyway: either TH will remove the building rubble from the alleyway entrance or SA will ask the person responsible for dumping it to remove it.

101 Public Question Time – no questions

102 2016/17 Budget and Precept - Cllrs considered the draft budget figures and explanatory notes:

2015/16 estimated income: The 2015/16 forecasted recycling credits at £1,200 are in line with budget. The clothing bank collection rate remains poor. The £1,825 VAT reclaim covers 2014/15 (£885) and 2015/16, six months to 1/11/15 (£940), including £674 for the SAM2 purchase (full VAT payment received on 20/11/15). There will be a refund of £365 for the underspend on the Trod. The final backdated two large agri-allotment rents and the 26 out of 29 school garden allotment £6 rents are paid at 30/11/15. Total income is £958 above budget.

2015/16 estimated expenditure: in line with budget apart from the increase in electricity prices (+ £161) and the addition of SAM2 data capture software (+ £214).

2016/17 budgeted income: the BCKLWN tax base refunding for 2016/17 is reduced to £530 – central government cuts, quoted by BCKLWN – compared to £630 in 2015/16 and £720 in 2014/15. Allotments: the agri-allotment rent and charges ceased on 01/10/15. The £232 income is for 29 school garden allotments at £8 each. Holkham Estate's agreed rent is £200. The £300 VAT refund for 2016/17 covers 01/11/15 to 31/03/16 only (annual refunds in arrears).

2016/17 budgeted expenditure: all main expenses have been uplifted by an inflationary 3%. Tree management has been increased to £750, as minuted. Total expenditure, including new items is £13,019. CAPC 'standard' annual expenditure, without specific one-off capital or operating expenses, totals +/- £11,870 (of which grass/verge/hedge cutting, including church maintenance, equals £4,509 or 34.6%). New items, totalling £1,250, include: a dog poo bin off Bailey Street, litter bins, new bus shelter reserve, Priory Lane verge cutting plus a general maintenance fund.

Cllrs noted the budget figures with minor amendments and agreed to keep in expenditure on litter bins on Stocks Green and at the castle car park until the January meeting when the budget and precept must be agreed to meet the BCKLWN deadline of 31 January 2016. The Clerk to determine if Historic England would agree to grant fund the litter bin at the castle.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm. The next full Parish Council meeting is at 7.30pm on Thursday 14 January in the village hall.