

CASTLE ACRE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the village hall on Thursday 13 December 2018

Present: Mr M Hickey (MH) Chairman Mr L Fisher (LF) Vice–Chairman
Mr S Allen (SA) Mrs H Breach (HB)
Mr T Hubbard (TH) Mrs S Moister (SM)
Mr M Tate (MT)

In attendance: Ms L Roast (Clerk), Mr J Moriarty (JM) (Borough Councillor)

Apologies: Ms C Williams (CW), Mr N Patrick (NP)

86. Minutes of PC meeting on Thursday 8 November 2018

Correction to the section on Neighbourhood Plan funding , recorded as £5,040 instead of £5,440. Mr Tim Hubbard proposed adoption of the amended Minutes and Mrs Sheila Moister seconded. Agreed.

87. Actions from previous meetings

28. Bailey Gate – noted that the two posts on the Stocks Green side were moved closer together to match the 2.7 m width between those on the Bailey Street side. SM suggested Day-Glo strips to be added to improve visibility for pedestrians at night. Agreed. English Heritage was requested on 14 November to re-instate the portcullis.

49. County Council Highways funding – Highways will soon assess the layout of the traffic island and signage at the Town Lane/ Massingham Road junction which will include a double sided directional sign to the Ostrich car park and paid for out of Highways funding.

51. Newton Road Bridge flooding – MH continues to chase Highways to re-dig out the silted drainage channels. The road surface on the west side has been repaired, yet the drain grill is still above the road surface.

99. Overflowing village litterbins – noted that the Borough Council can supply an extra green bin for the playing field but insists on an extra annual emptying charge of £110 and £40 to purchase.

28. Directional sign on Stocks Green to the Ostrich car park – waiting for Highways to make a draft design incorporating the wording within the dimensions of the existing sign.

56 South Acre Ford road closure consultation in September 2016 – our NCC County Cllr supplied Highways’ documentation which confirmed that at the time only 15 consultees were approached, some of which had no relevance to Castle Acre, in particular the Breckland Land Rover Club. This may explain the many objections from off-roaders! Not consulted were: Holkham, Narford Estate, West Acre Estate, English Heritage, Historic England, Natural England, RSPB, Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Norfolk Rivers Trust, the Internal Drainage Board, Castle Acre Fishing Club, Norfolk Archaeology Trust, our Borough Cllr, Eagles Bus Services, Anglian Water, Castle Acre Primary school, Castle Acre Horticultural Society – all of whom would have had a firm view on this matter. Cllrs agreed with MH that our County Cllr must now call for a second consultation to be undertaken and to be run properly.

SAM 2 – Data downloaded over 22 days in November recorded that there were 14,100 vehicle movements up and down Newton Road averaging out at 640 movements per day of which up

to 48% were recorded as being over the speed limit. SAM 2 returns to the village in January and will be placed in three different locations to collect volume data for the Neighbourhood Plan traffic survey. Further speed data collection will underpin an approach to the police for speed checks.

60 Hedges along south side of Bailey Street - MH checked out the hedges and thought that because of the time of year they did not pose a problem. Agreed that the hedges along the first ¼ mile after Jubilee bridge should nevertheless be cut back now. The Clerk to remind the landowner and also ask him to cut back asap the south facing hedges on Newton Road between the A1065 junction and the bridge.

66. Rights of way and open access land – no further update from Holkham.

69. Mayors Civic Awards – no nominations.

70. Pot holes in De Warrenne Place – the Clerk has chased Highways to complete the work following her original instructions last September. These were mislaid. Highways has re-instructed the contractor and the work should be finished in January.

80. Grass footway along Newton Road – The Clerk has contacted Holkham and is awaiting a reply.

81. LED street lights on Massingham Road – the light opposite the skate park has been fixed and changed to LED. MH proposed that the light near The Grove is changed now to LED to improve visibility around the Massingham Road junction. Agreed.

88. Health & Safety matters (including tree report)

TH met with the Borough Tree Officer to review the ash trees adjacent to the North Street/playing field alley. The officer is reluctant to grant permissions to pollard or thin out these trees that could result in damaging rot on the open cuts. He suggested just removing excess ivy and general tidying up. TH explained that adjacent residents do have the right to cut any overhanging branches on their side of the boundary. TH confirmed that both the oak on Pales Green and the lime at the west end of Stocks Green are in a satisfactory condition. TH to remove the sapling growing in the lime's branch crevice.

89. Matters requested by Councillors

2019/20 Parish Budget & Precept review. MH e-mailed both the budget spreadsheet and explanatory notes prior to the meeting and highlighted the key elements for Cllrs approval.

Total income in 2018/19 is forecasted at £16,140 which very close to budget with only recycling credits at +/- £1,000 below budget reflecting the lower recycling income from the paperbank, now it is in the less visible position at the Ostrich car park. Expenditure to 31/03/19 is forecast to be £350 below budget.

Without an increase in next year's £13,130 Precept, total gross income to 31/03/20 is budgeted at £15,102, reflecting that the BCKLWN tax base refunding for 2019/20 is reduced from £259 to £120 as a result of central government cuts. The £600 VAT refund covers a 12 month claim to 31/03/20 (paid in by February 2020). There is no budget for future CIL payments due to uncertainty as to their transfer to CAPC. CIL must be spent within 12 months of receipt on infrastructure projects only.

Changes to regular expenditure amounts budgeted for 2019/20: all fixed expenses have been uplifted by an inflationary 3% , unless stated. The budget for the street lights' electricity price

is set mid-way between the current supplier's advisory 23.4% price increase and the reduced rates from two other suppliers (still under negotiation). Clerk's salary – uplifted from spinal point 19 to 21 – a well-deserved 5.6% increase. CAPC's Greens cutting contractor (plus Pales Green hedge and Priory Road verge) hasn't increased his rates over 2018/19. Cllrs approved a further one year contract. £144 for an extra 'green' litter bin on the playing field next to the one by the play equipment, comprising of £102 annual emptying charge-and £40 purchase cost – both approved by Cllrs. A further £200 funding reserve to cover unforeseen expenses not covered by the £5,440 Locality grant prior to completing the Neighbourhood Plan. £300 is budgeted for new Cllrs training, post the Council elections next May. No budget for the Ostrich directional sign at the MR/Town Lane junction (paid from NCC scheme?).

Net regular budgetary expenditure to 31/03/20 will increase by £100 over the estimated expenditure to 31/03/19, mainly due to an underspend of £600 on tree maintenance in 2018/19.

New expenditure 2019/20:

Due to uncertainty, agreed not to include any reserve for land rental or maintenance on Holkham's five parcels of land under review for leasing to CAPC. Cllrs questioned the implications for Holkham's High Level Stewardship and its management of these areas of land. What about the knock on effect to CAPC of more management costs? Or would the land leasing rents be the only charge? The Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire indicated strong support for open access and public rights of way - would residents be prepared to pay a little more on their Council Tax to guarantee their continued use (5% on the Precept would only be about £5 on the Council Tax)? If just Priory Field were leased to the PC, would this include South Acre Road tree management? Agreed that the PC needs to look into all the implications carefully.

Cllrs did agree to add the following into the 2019/20 budget:

£400 grant to CAPFA for drainage work on the playing field to assist with costs for verti-draining and shock wave treatment. These charges have been paid so far by CAPFA but in March 2019 there will be a £400 shortfall. On behalf of CAPFA, MH asked whether Cllrs would agree to pay for this specialized treatment, which, if successful, could be repeated for another four years. TH stated that the initial treatment this November doesn't seem to have made much impact so far and felt it prudent not to agree to pay for treatments in advance when the length of the payment term is not yet confirmed. Concerned that the football club have not offered any funds in support of the treatment. LF suggested that by putting £400 in next budget the PC might be seen as managing the problem rather than fixing it. Cllrs agreed to leave £400 in the budget for the moment and requested that the CAPFA Chairman and grounds committee member make a presentation at the January PC meeting on the effectiveness of this treatment and potential longer term costs.

£180 for an annual trim, in early summer, of the paths from the ford to the Priory and onto Common Lane.

PC election costs. The Borough Council can't supply an accurate figure until after the Local Government elections on 1 May 2019. Their estimate is a charge of £770 for an contested election but only £100 if nine nominations or fewer are received. Agreed to budget £200 pa over next four years.

The HLF £50,000 bid - Bringing our heritage landscape alive!- is submitted with a decision by end January 2019. Applicants are required to show a nominal financial commitment (CAPC in this case). £500 is budgeted in case the bid is successful. Noted that at present no other village organisations have been asked to pledge money.

Traffic mirror at MR/Town Lane junction. No budget. Any new safety measures should be made by Highways or paid by the shop owner, not parishioners. Cllrs agreed that the right course of action will be to ask Highways to come and look at the problem and sort it out completely.

Agreed to add a Defibrillator refresher course for new Cllrs/residents - £120 spread over three years - £40 pa.

MH to re-work the budget figures to reflect the decisions taken. The final draft budget and level of Precept will be approved at the January PC meeting.

90. Planning

Holkham Massingham Road - no updates have been received from Holkham. The PC will wait for the official planning application before considering this development further.

91 Correspondence

New bus timetables from April 2019.

Castle Acre direct services to King's Lynn and back - Flexibus to pick up at Castle Acre at 9.30 and 12.30 going all the way to King's Lynn bus terminal without needing to change at Swaffham. Return journeys at 10.35 and 13.15 from King's Lynn go through to Castle Acre, again without having to change at Swaffham.

Other Castle Acre services to King's Lynn - the 07.30 Castle Acre service will go to Narborough Green where passengers can change onto the X1 to King's Lynn. The 14.30 Castle Acre service will finish at Pentney so any passengers going onto King's Lynn or Norwich will have to change at Swaffham.

Other Castle Acre services from King's Lynn – the 1710 service connecting with the X1 at Narborough will not stop at Swaffham and go straight to Castle Acre.

College day 1745 from Narborough – remains a request stop at Castle Acre.

Dog fouling

New anti-social behaviour Public Spaces Protection Orders received from the Borough Council, in force from 1 December 2018, making it an offence to fail to clear up after a dog that defecates on any land to which the public have access, with or without payment, within the administrative area of the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. Also an offence to take a dog onto any land defined in Schedule 1 of the order (including Castle Acre playing field) and failing to keep a dog on a lead of no more than 6ft on land defined in Schedule 2 of the order. The full Order can be viewed on www.west-norfolk.gov.uk

Email received from the litter picking team that someone is ripping down the 'Do not let your dog foul' signage from posts at both ends of Minns Meadow and at the gate to the Water Meadows from the path behind De Warenne Place. Cllrs deplored these unsociable actions and will place a strongly worded protest in the next Nar Valley News.

Trees at Dyke Hills – the landowner advises that six to eight trees will soon be felled as part of the tree management restoration project on the Ancient Monument.

Nar River restoration – the river restoration work at Castle Acre Common, planned for this summer, has been postponed as the ground conditions on the Common were far too wet to proceed due to high water levels and exceptional weed growth. The restoration work will now take place during July/August 2019. In the new year there will be an informative notice board

on site to give the community the opportunity to comment on the project. Any tree, mitigation and other enabling works will be done before the bird nesting season. Local schools will be contacted to discuss educational opportunities.

92. Reports

Highways – nothing to report.

School – best ever review from an Ofsted inspection. A full report to follow in time for the January meeting.

Village hall – HB reported: new spot lights are in place, external pediment bricks are now safe and the tree growing on the roof has been removed. The Ceilidh was a great success.

CAPFA – MH reported: CAPFA is getting three quotes for new play equipment, though this process is taking too long. SM was asked by mothers when improvements to the playground equipment are due as facilities are not as good as surrounding villages. Cllrs suggested the bats for the table tennis table should be chained to the table rather held elsewhere. MH is attending the next CAPFA meeting.

Neighbourhood Plan (NP) – MT reported: the full grant of £5,040 from the Locality Fund has been received and will be held in the PC accounts but as a separate item. The housing needs assessment by an external agency and traffic survey undertaken by the steering group, with assistance from a Norwich based company, should both be completed by end of February. Registering three parcels of land as Green Open Spaces will be assimilated into the NP. MT stated that the draft Plan has moved on quickly in the last couple of months. The public referendum on the final Plan is aimed for June 2019.

BCKLWN – JM reported: JM is no longer on the Borough Planning Committee. As a result of the new NPPF, the number of new builds required by 2036 will now be fewer than originally projected. JM will continue attending the Local Plan meetings and believes that decisions on the different site options will be made by February 2019

County Council – no report.

93. Accounts to be paid

Mr Tim Hubbard proposed the payments, Mr Laurie Fisher seconded.

ACCOUNTS to be paid:

Berrymans Glass Recycling Ltd (URM UK Ltd)	£ 34.20 (£5.70 VAT)
E.on Energy (electricity)	£ 82.69 (£3.94 VAT)
Holkham Estates allotment s 2 nd payment	£100.00
K&M Lighting – LED bulbs for 9006, 9024, 9028 lights	£234.00 (£39.00 VAT)
TTSR Limited – Greens grass cutting 2 nd instalment	£894.48 (£149.08 VAT)
Castle Acre village hall hire April 2018 – March 2019	£220.00
Compass Point Planning & Rural Consultants – NP charge	£373.56 (62.26 VAT)

94. Village Maintenance

Noticeboards - MH called for both the Parish and playing field noticeboards to be re-varnished. He suggested that rather than paying a contractor, this and other minor repairs or grounds works around the village could be undertaken by a group of village volunteers, an arrangement suggested in the amended Five Year Action Plan. Agreed to place a call in the next Nar Valley News to encourage a spirit of voluntary help.

Back Lane Road surface – Highways has agreed to re- sweep the loose chippings early in the new year.

Newton Road potholes – several large potholes reported along south side of road. The Clerk to report.

Foxes Meadow potholes – new potholes have appeared. The Clerk to report.

Allotment path – the Clerk to ask allotment holders for help in clearing the path through the allotments.

Brambles out over the Jubilee Bridge railings – MH volunteered to cut these back to aid traffic safety.

Holkham owned hedges along Orchard Lane and Archer Lane – The Clerk to ask for these to be cut back.

Ostrich pub - the concrete outside at the front is lifting and is a trip hazard. The Clerk to mention this to the landlord/manager.

Water Tower railings – some residents have expressed concerns that the upmarket quality of the new balustrade roof railings give the appearance that they are not just for safely maintaining the solar panels but will encourage visitors onto the roof. MH to investigate with the applicant.

95 Public Question Time – a resident commented that raising funds for new play equipment was a community effort last time, not just by CAPFA. He suggested that the new bus timetables might be advertised in advance in the Nar Valley News.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm.

The next full Parish Council meeting is on Thursday 10 January at 7.30pm.