

# Castle Acre Parish Council

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## **Minuted record of Parish Council business conducted at the village sports pavilion on 14 April 2022 at 7.30pm.**

Present: Mr L Fisher (LF) Chairman, Mr N Patrick (NP) Vice Chairman, Mr T Hubbard (TH), Mrs S Moister (SM), Mr M Tate (MT), Mr L Manson (LM), Mr S Allen (SA), Mr M Hickey (MH)

In attendance: Mrs L Firth (Clerk), Mr J Moriarty (JM) Borough and NCC Councillor and 2 members of the public

**1. Apologies:** Mrs H Breach (HB)

### **2. Minutes of the 10 March 2022 PC meeting**

Items to be corrected-

- Item 121 a, paragraph to be removed as topic covered in better detail later in the minutes under the Highways Report.
- Item 121 b, change 'TH asked to' to 'TH to confirm with Ligna'
- Item 41, 'Western side' to change to 'Northern side'
- Item 125 f, remove word 'for' in 5<sup>th</sup> sentence
- Item 126, Neighbourhood Plan report, in last sentence change 'at' to 'as'

SM proposed approval of the Minutes which was seconded by LM.

### **3. Health & Safety**

a -Cllrs reported that the footbridge leading from from S Acre road to Minns Meadow, has another damaged slat. Clerk to ask a volunteer to repair the damage.

Tree Report:

- TH has received confirmation of the Borough Council's approval to carry out the work required on the 3x Hornbeams on Stocks Green and the Pyes lane non-conformist burial grounds. The CAPFA has also been given a copy of the tree survey which covers the lime tree in the children's play area.

-TH has requested for Greenman Woodland to proceed with work needed on the Whitebeam/Millennium tree on the playing field. The cost of this work will be covered by a benefactor.

-TH now has the requested tree report from the surveyors, Ligna Consultancy, and plans to address the required work over the next 6 months.

\*LM left meeting (on call with work), 7.40pm

### **4.Planning**

Ref: 22/00439/F- Four bay garage with studio/games room in roof space- The Grove, Massingham Road

Following discussion Cllrs were all in support of the planning application and had no further comments.

## **5. Report from National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) project manager**

- Thanks was given to the projects three dedicated volunteers who help run events and attend project meetings.
- Since November there has been 12 workshops with the Aerial Archaeology and Historic Landscape workshops repeated because of demand. Attendance at activities November – end of March has totalled 229. There have been 20 workshops and activities with more from April to September, with new people still joining in. Each workshop has an evaluation form – all 99% excellent. 3 conservation work parties. 8 people bird surveys.
- The Burial Ground has created 8 sessions, with clearing of ivy from gravestones and around trees and inscriptions. Research has been undertaken into local families connected to the grounds. Both primroses and bluebells have been planted and lists of species compiled. A management plan is being drafted and will be presented to PC. The project is holding an open day on 24<sup>th</sup> September and plan to include the burial ground. SA agreed to review the work required on the site's gate posts.
- Swallow, Swift, House Martin and Owl boxes have been installed in 12 locations around village. Nar Valley Ornithological Society advised on locations and two employees of Craven Homes builders installed the boxes as a voluntary contribution to the project.
- Also – working with Hort Soc for nature enhancement. At the Hort Soc Spring Show members suggested areas for wildflower and tree and shrub planting. 8 people are keen to help.

-MH wished to encourage cllrs to consider pledging the pc to provide continued support to the upkeep of the Burial Ground on Pyes Lane, beyond the NLHF project. There are four village volunteers offering to help with the upkeep. Cllrs discussed concerns over the pc's liability and agreed to continue to discuss the issue with a view to agree upon a stewardship relationship with the site. The project manager was asked to attend a later PC meeting to continue the discussion and review an agreement.

## **6. Updates on actions required from previous meetings**

### **54. (2019) Permissive paths on Holkham land and Visitor car park**

-MT has not had any further responses from KLWN HW department, despite repeated attempts to prompt one.

Review meeting with Holkham:

-MH reported to Cllrs on his meeting with Holkham's James Bracey (JB), General Manager, Land & Property and Caitlin Steadman, Estate surveyor, on Friday 8 April. MT was in attendance. MH highlighted Cllrs' concerns at the apparent recent reduction in the level of close cooperation between Holkham and CAPC, e-mails not being answered and past assurances not being kept. JB disputed this, stating in an e-mail, post the PC meeting, 'the Estate has and continues to work very positively with CAPC'. MH and MT then highlighted the following

matters on which MH reported back to Cllrs at the meeting in sequence and are minuted as such:

-New public right of way

Ford to Common Lane, converting the permissive path, maintained by CAPC, into a PROW. First raised in June 2019, agreed verbally subsequently, yet confused by contradictory e-mails from the Estate on Minns Meadow PROW. MH and MT were unable to secure JB's agreement to continue with the simple process of the Estate registering this new PROW with NCC. This is very disappointing.

-Permissive paths.

Holkham's position, as reported in the December 2021 PC Minutes (item 54.) has not changed. JB's view, confirmed in a further e-mail to MH is that 'the permissive right of way provides people with exactly the same practical access. As witnessed by us, there are certain villagers who don't respect public or permissive ROW and therefore, in the short-

term, we agreed to make these clearer' While deploring the prospect of more signage in the countryside, MH expressed to JB his alarm that with the impending changes to the CROW Act and movement by Government not to extend 'rights to roam', relying on future 'positive working' with CAPC may not be sufficient to guarantee long-term access to these footpaths for future generations.

#### **80d. Visitor car park off Priory Lane**

JB confirmed to MH and MT that Holkham will offer the PC a long term lease of the field off Priory Road as a visitor car park. He explained that approval in principle from the Estate's trustees to a lease with CAPC could be achieved within a week from just one trustee rather than waiting for the trustees summer meeting, as stated earlier, MH expressed disappointment that Caitlin hadn't replied to his e-mail 21/12/21 requesting a more reasonable annual rent than the proposed £200 – subsequently followed up by MT on 14/03/22 without success. A reply was promised before the April PC meeting but not received (post meeting, now confirmed at £250 pa).\*

\*LM returned to the meeting, 8pm

Cllrs agreed that the next step is for MH and MT to apply for grant funding for the estimated £25k cost of the field surface matting. Applications could be made to the Borough Council's CIL fund (deadline end July 2022), Lottery Awards for All and other funders. MT considers there should be financial support within the Borough's tourism sector. Cllrs noted that even if permission for change of use was refused, any funds obtained by that point could be returned. In the next few weeks, Holkham will draw up draft heads of terms for lease of the field for Cllrs to consider.

#### **125c. Bricknel Close rental properties priority to village residents**

At his meeting with JB, MH stressed the longstanding agreement with Holkham that when the first new build properties were at a stage to view and for offers of purchase or rent from CA residents to be made, sufficient advance notice would be given. JB concurred and then announced an open launch weekend on 23 and 24 April for the two social houses, one for shared equity and the three semi-detached for sale, plus the three-bedroom property for sale. The remaining eight houses would be marketed in the autumn. To adhere to the priority for local residents, only the afternoon of Thursday 21 April between 3pm and 5pm (working hours) is being allocated. MH pointed out that this is in less than two weeks' time, no written communication to that effect had been received by the PC nor even a notice outside the site. While the next expected Holkham online newsletter with such details will be sent (e-mailed 11 April), villagers need more notice. It was agreed to ask Savills to produce laminated advisory posters for display around the village.

Further to LF's e-mail to JB on 28/02/22 on Broadland HA not appearing to give any priority to families or local CA residents for Holkham's social houses (see March PC Minutes), JB confirmed to MH that it was a commercial decision to allocate the two social houses, plus one for shared equity, to Broadland Housing Association rather than Freebridge HA who manage other social house properties in the village and with whom CAPC has a written agreement that CA residents would be offered priority choice for any new or vacated social house in the village. Subsequently, LF has communicated with the Executive Director of Broadland HA who confirmed that Bricknel Close is not an exception site, it is a section 106 driven affordable provision. The difference is that the exception site is based on proving local need and comes with a local lettings policy which prioritises people from or have a connection to Castle Acre. Under the Section 106 agreement between Holkham and the Borough Council, provision is based on need Borough wide and then does not have a local policy attached to the planning consent.

The Director advised that In terms of the shared ownership property Broadland HA does have more control and is happy to market it to local people.

-Trees and hedges maintenance

MH raised the lack of response from Holkham's head forester to TH's e-mail on 10 March for help with a very overgrown hedge, sapling trees and undergrowth on the margin of East Green as well as looking at the trees on St James' Green. JB promised to chase the head

forester.

-Care of the water meadows

Holkham's farm manager was unable to join the meeting with JB but was passed the concerns of a resident, namely: During the workshop on the historic landscape of the 18th and 19th centuries, a site visit was made to the water-meadows, created by a tenant farmer of Holkham's between 1808 and 1810. They are the best example of an artificial water-meadows system in East Anglia but the channels and leets are in danger of being lost as the vegetation is so dense and overgrown and the three brick aqueducts require repair. Would it be possible for the Parish Council to bring to Holkham Estate's attention the sites mentioned above?

MH has requested a site meeting with the farm manager and interested parties to address this.

### **38. Castle Acre ford - bank repairs**

MH contacted the Operations Manager, Norfolk Rivers Drainage Board who confirmed that in addition to cutting down trees to fall across the Nar to block off-roaders from driving up stream, he will incorporate into the design improvements to the bank side of the Nar between the footbridge and the bench by covering and or replacing the existing concrete bags with gravel to improve its aesthetic appearance. Installing new gabions is costly and beyond NRDB's limited budget for this work. Exact details to be confirmed. The work is scheduled for late summer 2022.

### **67. South Acre Road TRO.**

MH had circulated to Cllrs an e-mail exchange of 6 April with NCC Highways in which astonishment was expressed at their request for such basic evidential documents/images **associated with use of the ford, some** 50 weeks, or about 245 working days, since NCC Highways passed all details to NP Law to draw up the Statutory Consultation notice leading to a TRO. Evidence was requested of: occurrences of motor vehicles through the ford; any incidents or collisions; damage to the riverbed; or vehicles driving up and down the river: environmental impact to the natural environment caused by use of the ford; support of the proposed prohibition from local residents.

MH explained that nearly all of the images/e-mails etc. on the ford were on file and will be sent to NCC Highways shortly. Separately, our County Cllr is enquiring as to the nature of this unacceptable delay.

### **33. Banking update**

Clerk informed by HSBC that the PC's online business bank account will be active by 24<sup>th</sup> April.

### **71a. Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebration June 2022 - update.**

SM waiting to hear if the funding application has been successful. In light of the timings and the need to start purchasing items for the street party cllrs agreed to allocate another £200 from the pc's budget to the event. The clerk has received confirmation from HWs of approval for the road closure of Stocks Green for Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June 9am-9pm. Clerk has also sought permission from Holkham Estate for the use of the overflow car park on the day of the event which has been granted although the pc must ensure the grass is cut and relevant insurance/liability is covered by the pc. Cllr to be asked to cut the grass on the car park field prior to the event and clerk to produce a poster to be erected at the site warning car park users that their vehicles and its content are being left at their own risk and the PC will not be liable. SM and clerk to hold meeting with other volunteers and discuss need for bunting as community bunting is no longer being provided.

\*LM left the meeting (on call for work)

### **112b. Request for Grit bin at De Warrenne Place.**

Clerk researched the cost of purchasing a grit bin with Glasdon UK and found a current price of £108.92. Clerk still awaiting site assessment to be carried out by Andy Wallace at HW.

Cllrs suggested to revisit the current cost of a bin once assessment by HW completed. Clerk to chase up.

#### **125f. Request from playing field maintenance company for alteration to 2022 contract**

-Following the maintenance company's request for an increase to their fees in 2022 (£300 to cover cost to cut new play area and an increase of 5% on the overall annual cost, instead of the 2% that was due in 2022. The PC asked CAPFA if they would consider covering the cost of the £300. Sadly, the CAPFA did not wish to allocate any of their funds to the maintenance of the playing field. Cllrs agreed to take on the requested increase of fees for 2022 and to review once again in 2023. Clerk given permission to pay the first half of the annual fee once invoice received from maintenance company, despite not being an item on the April accounts. During the discussion cllrs were asked to consider if the PC wished to go on paying the CAPFA annual insurance fee and confirmed that the PC's service level agreement was being reviewed and would be an item on a future agenda for discussion.

\*MH left meeting, due to unexpected circumstance.

### **7. Matters requested by Councillors.**

#### **a. Defibrillator training and new equipment required**

Clerk has secured a date of 25 June 2022 at 10am in the village hall for defibrillator training course to be held. To be advertised in the May Nar Valley News to allow for residents to book onto the course. Clerk also to order a new battery and pad for the defibrillator and to note their expiry dates and add alert for when replacements need to be purchased in approx. 2 years' time.

#### **b. Borough consultations**

Cllrs wished to highlight the lack of clarity and confusing questioning style used within the '2022 Winter Tourism survey' that was emailed to the PC from the BCKLWN in March. MT wished to question the technique and processes used by BCKLWN when creating and circulating surveys to parishes and how they consult down the tiers of local government. Attention to the processes has been highlighted by the poor responses that the KLWNBC acknowledges it had to engagements with PCs during the Local Plan review and the Leisure facilities consultations. MT proposed that the PC create a team who would discuss how best to respond to the BCKLWN regarding various surveys that are sent to PCs throughout the year (Winter Tourism, Summer Tourism, Leisure facilities, KRSC, Local Plan, etc). The aim would be for the team to decide:

- how best to respond to BCKLWN surveys
- how to represent the Parish to the best of the PC's ability
- how to disseminate this information to parishioners.

Cllrs approved of MT's proposal and LF agreed to join MT to form a team and meet to discuss and report back to cllrs at a later PC meeting.

#### **c. Finalising content for next edition of the C.A. Voice**

Suggested topics for articles in the next edition of the CA Voice:

- NLHF project update
- Consultation process within the parish, to include possible 'tear off' slip
- Dog management in rural areas
- Express appreciation for village volunteers, such as litter team.

#### **d. New PC meeting dates for 2022**

Cllrs were notified of the PC having to move its Annual Meeting in May to Thursday 5th at 7pm, in the village hall. SM conveyed apologies in advance as would not make that date.

### **8. Correspondence.**

**Filming on Stocks Green, Castle Acre- 11th April 2022, Norfolk Film Company £350 donation to PC**

-Norfolk Film Company have once again been in touch with the PC to give notification of their intention to film in the village, on Stocks Green on the 11 April 2022 and offering the PC a donation of £350. Cllrs agreed to accept the donation and stated that the company informs all local businesses and residents of Stocks Green in advanced. The company also requested to remove the streetlight on the side of the property that is next to the Church entrance gate, for which the pc gave their permission for based on it being replaced once the filming was completed and that any potential damaged would be repaired.

#### **Email from resident with concerns over dogs not on leads in public area.**

The PC received a communication from a concerned resident who wished to report their recent upsetting encounter with a fellow walker and their unruly dog, whilst out on a walk in Castle Acre. The resident was frightened when the dog who was not on a lead aggressively charged at them whilst barking and then jumped up onto them. Thankfully no one was harmed. The resident was understandably concerned and upset over the lack of action taken by the dog owner and is looking to the PCs for assistance asking if *'dogs need to be on a lead at all times during country walks? If so, how can we implement this rule so that everyone can enjoy a walk without worrying?'* Cllrs requested the clerk to inform the resident of BCKLWN policies on dog management and any contact information for dog wardens.

### **9. Reports.**

#### **Highways**

-LM to erect the PCs directional parking signs to the PF Pavilion carpark, along Massingham road.

#### **Village hall**

N/A

#### **School**

-The Friends of Castle Acre School are to host the annual village Duck Race on May 22 2022

#### **CAPFA**

-The next meeting will be the annual AGM, to be held on 26<sup>th</sup> April from 7pm in the village hall.

-The committee confirmed that the suggestion to host the bottle bank inside the PF walls on a concrete base will not be financially viable when considering the installation cost verse the low to uncertain income that may be made from the bank in the new location.

#### **Key Rural Service Center status**

-MT is currently investigating how the villages KRSC status relates to or should aid the response time from local authorities as Highways when the village reports problems.

#### **BCKLWN - JM reported:**

-£200 from Community Grant funding awarded to Castle Acre Bowls Club. Sadly they were unsuccessful in their bid for Community Infrastructure (CIL) monies. There will shortly be a review of the scheme before a final decision is made if it should be continued for 22/23.

-The bin days are changing from the week commencing the 9th May, details to be confirmed.

-The Scrutiny Panel has deferred the report on Tourism and whether on balance it benefits residents, due to pressures on officers brought about by Town Deal Board projects such as the Guildhall.

-Council bodies continue to meet in the daytime despite opposition from councillors that this will mean it will end up after the next election with predominantly white, retired male councillors.

#### **Norfolk County Council (NCC) - JM reported:**

### -New roles created to improve the link between county and local councils

A significant investment has been made into the relationship between Norfolk County Council and the rest of the county with £160,000 committed over the next 2 years.

The county council have funded the Norfolk Association of Local Councils (Norfolk ALC) to employ two members of staff who will be dedicated to improving the link between the county council and Norfolk's town and parish councils.

- **Road Safety Community Fund Application** – One item that CAPC requested out of four was successful, which was for warning signs to be erected at the blind bend on the Old Wicken Road.

-A review to **make Norfolk County Council “match fit”** for the future and save up to £20 million will be considered by the cabinet. Removing duplication, improving performance and being more cost effective are the aims of a proposed organisational review – the council's first for 10 years

-**Norfolk Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans.** Norfolk County Council has secured a revenue grant from central government to support the development of a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Norfolk. The initial Norfolk Cycling and Walking Survey is open from 5 April to 30 May.

### 10. Accounts to be paid:

ITEM:	Cost to PC Budget:	Grant funded:
**Npower Energy (electricity)		
Jan 2022 IN03162452	£90.86 (£4.33 VAT)	
Feb 2022 IN03162567	£78.97 (£3.76 VAT)	
March 2022 IN03159943.	£83.97 (£4.00 VAT)	
NLHF Project- project manager monthly fee, invoice AM6		£780 HLF grant
NLHF Project- Dr A Rogerson, travel expenses 14 Feb and 12 March, 2022, 24 miles at 45p p/m		£10.80 HLF grant
NLHF Project- NCC invoice 1578791- group visit to archive centre 25/2/22		£108 (£18.00vat) HLF grant
Norfolk Rivers Drainage Board, annual fee for Parish drainage rates March2022- April2023	£28.74	
PC's annual contribution to CAPFA Insurance, INVOICE No. 050422	£713.45	
Norfolk ALC, clerk training course - Preparing the Annual Governance and Accountability £25K to £200K income levels	£30.00 (£5.00vat)	
Ligna Consultancy- tree survey on playing field INV-2366. CPFA to reimburse PC for tree within play area £70	£408.00 (£68.00 vat)	
Limelight signs-new signs for pales green and St James green inc post and delivery	£133.73 (£22.29vat)	
Clerk salary, Jan-March 2022	£636.48	
Clerk expenses Printer Ink	***£38.84	
Reimburse clerk for defibrillator pad (last 2 yrs) and CU SP1 battery	£198 inc vat- 1x battery £44.40 inc vat-1x pad	

BCKLWN annual litter bin collection charge, for 2 bins weekly.	£468.06	
Groundwork UK -Neighbourhood Plan Grant- repayment of the underspend. Grant Ref:NPG-12078.		£426.84 NP grant
NP Project- pre referendum printing costs, 500 double sided. To reimburse Cllr MT		£60.00 NP grant

\*\*Npower to credit account for over charges and reinvoice last three months, to review at May meeting.

\*\*\*Clerk purchased ink (2x black) for £62.04 from viking.com but clerk also received partial refund from Land Registry in March as no results found for Pyes Land Burial ground, the refund was for £23.20. Clerk deducted this amount from the cost of the ink and claimed only the outstanding for £38.84.

TH proposed and SM seconded approval of the accounts, all Cllrs were in agreement.

#### **11. Village Maintenance.**

- Resident on Chimney Street has reported the poor condition of the road surface on Chimney street to Highways
- JM chasing up NCC contact for the promised additional litter bin at Castle car park.

#### **12. Public questions.**

- N.A

The meeting closed at 21:30.

The next full Parish Council meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 5 May 2022** at 7pm at the CA village hall.