

Castle Acre Parish Council

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Minuted record of Parish Council business conducted at the village hall on 9 December 2021 at 7.30pm.

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

In attendance: Mrs L Firth (Clerk), Mr J Moriarty (JM) Borough and NCC Councillor

87. Apologies: Mr L Fisher (LF) Chairman, Mrs H Breach (HB), Mr S Allen (SA), Mr T Hubbard (TH) sent notice in advance of a late arrival time.

88. Minutes of the 11 November 2021 PC meeting

Following corrections made:

- Item. 6 'verse' to 'versus'.
- Item. 83 under Highways Report - road name required, 'Old Wicken road' and missing full stop after 'restricted vision'.

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

89. Health & Safety

- Pothole reported on Massingham Road at junction with Town Lane, clerk has reported the hole but will chase up the current ticket with NCC HW.
- SM highlighted possible requirement for Stocks Green debris to be cleared before the imminent tree work. Clerk to report and request an NCC road sweeper, if needed.

90. Updates on actions required from previous meetings

41 Surface water flooding and drainage issues.

- Clerk to contact Jack Griffith at NCC HW, Breckland to request further update on the outstanding required work at both village bridges.

54. Permissive paths on Holkham land and Visitor car park

MH explained that the expected definitive statement from Holkham that the remaining permissive paths on Holkham land around Castle Acre would not be withdrawn for 50 years, thus securing them for future generations, has still not been sent. This is despite giving such verbal assurance to the PC over two years ago. Holkham now states that 'the Estate is committed to the provision of these permissive paths for the benefit and enjoyment of the Castle Acre community, to be confirmed as much in a covering letter' and that 'we are allowing the public to use it not as of right, but with Estate permission, which can be withdrawn at any time. Consequently, we should close all permissive paths (by means of locked gates, perhaps) at least once a year. The reason for closing a permissive route periodically is that a key test used in law to determine whether an access route has become a right of way is that it has been available for use on a continuous basis for at least twenty years. By closing it, ideally on the same day each month or each year, we eliminate this possibility'.

MH has advised Holkham that the PC would consider this to be a very weak assurance and is still looking for a more robust form of wording. Cllrs agreed and wondered if this important principle should be escalated up Holkham's management, possibly to Lord Leicester to adjudicate?

This could also be an option should the leasing of the Holkham field off Priory Road as a visitor car park not be resolved. Holkham is proposing an annual lease of £500 which MH explained may be arrived at on the assumption that the PC would charge for parking which is impractical. The PC would also face annual maintenance costs and additional third-party insurance as well as new signage. Cllrs proposed a more reasonable £50 a year rent in line with other leasing rents around the village and reflecting earlier assurances from Holkham that the charge would only be set at a 'peppercorn' rent.

MT clarified that it may be possible to reduce the area of land to be leased and still accommodate up to 40 vehicles. Much will depend on professional assessments from suppliers of surface matting and their related cost. MT/MH to follow up on this.

*TH joined the meeting at 7.50pm

6. Ostrich pub - bottle and paper bank.

LF will discuss the issue further with The Ostrich management in the hope that they might agree to support this facility for the benefit of the Parish. Following a review of the cost of hiring the bottle bank versus the recycling credits received, Cllrs agreed it was worth keeping the banks in place, if possible. URM has agreed to hold the account and stop charging, given that the bottle bank can't be accessed.

33. CAPC banking switch.

The Clerk is completing the HSBC online banking application that requires three named Cllrs signatures plus a new mandate form to ensure the account is set up under that of a 'Local Authority'. This is in response to HSBC's sudden decision without notice in December to convert the PC's account into a business account and a subsequent £26 charge for clearing PC's cheques that month. The revised mandate should cancel out this charge.

57b. Massingham Road fencing - update.

The new fencing has been erected and the contractor's invoice is for approval. The amount is covered by payments received from CAPFA's contribution, from the recent VAT claim and the BC CIL funding. Cllrs thanked MH for his efforts, all were in agreement that the new fencing is a vast improvement. TH also reported having received several pleasing comments from local residents.

62a. Pales Green hedges maintenance.

TTSR has supplied its quote for the additional hedge work at Pales Green which is included in their full submission for 2022/23 to be reviewed by Cllrs at the January 2022 PC meeting. Clerk to circulate the quote on email.

69b. Priory Toilets signage.

Clerk passed round images and a quote break down of the proposed amendments to the existing directional signage to the 'Priory Toilets', where the 'WC' symbol is to be added to the signs at Pyes Lane, Priory Court, Drury Lane and Stocks Green, along with a new sign for the playing field play area. Cllrs approved with the following amendments: remove the 'P' symbol from the play area sign; add a 'P' symbol on the Priory Court sign. Clerk to pass the quote, once amended, onto the BC Regeneration and Economic Development Support Officer who agreed in an email to JM that this signage cost will be covered by their 'Welcome Back Fund'.

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

SM and the clerk plan to attend the FOCAC's Flower Festival meeting on 12 January to determine the PC's level of involvement. Clerk and SM to contact various village groups to ascertain the scope of the village's celebrations, possibly a street party on Stocks Green?

Cllrs discussed possible financial contribution towards these street celebrations, £250 to be added to the 2022/23 budget.

91. Matters requested by Councillors.

PC 2022/23 Budget and Precept

Along with the accompanying explanatory notes, MH reviewed the draft income & expenditure figures for both this current financial year and the proposed budget, along with new expenditure proposals. Cllrs made several adjustments which will be reflected in a revised budget for presentation to, and approval by, Cllrs at the January PC meeting when the new Precept charge will be set. The January Minutes will contain a full report on the deliberations and decisions behind the agreed 2022/23 income & expenditure figures. A copy of the approved budget spreadsheet can be requested from the clerk.

92. Planning.

- NA

93. Correspondence.

- N/A

94. Reports.

Highways

-No further updates

Village hall.

- N/A

School.

-N/A

CAPFA.

- No further updates

Tree report.

TH reported:

- The horse chestnut tree on St James' Green requires some tidy up work.
- The ash trees on the eastern side of the playing field, where the alleyway leads to North Street, need assessing.
- Equally the hornbeam on Stocks Green, the cost of which might be met from an earlier donation.

Neighbourhood Plan.

MT reported: The BC's Senior Planning Team reviewed and approved the Plan which can now go to referendum. A provisional referendum date has been set for 27 January 2022. The next stage will be for BC officers to organise the referendum. The Plan is considered as temporarily 'made/in power' until the referendum has taken place, meaning that it can be used in the relevant planning processes. The NHP Steering Group will meet soon to review any minor changes that may have arisen such as out-of-date information and to prepare pre-referendum publicity within the regulatory guidelines for distribution to all households.

BCKLWN.

-N/A

Norfolk County Council (NCC).

-Developing an overarching Policy for the use of glyphosate-based herbicides by NCC.

Glyphosate-based herbicides are used widely by local authorities, for example to control excess vegetation on roadsides and public open spaces. A Policy for the use of Glyphosate-Based Herbicides by NCC (The Policy) is required by March 2022. The Policy will apply to all departments (and third parties) which use herbicides and

will include measures on how the use of glyphosate-based herbicides will be minimised to achieve the necessary result across the NCC estate.

-Household Support Fund - Member Briefing

The Government announced its Household Support Fund (HSF) on 30 September 2021, allocating a one-off £6.69 million to Norfolk County Council to be spent by the end of March 2022 to alleviate winter hardship while the economy recovers. Norfolk County Council has distributed the UK Government's Household Support Fund to a range of organisations and support services who are best placed to give support to those who need it most.

-Norfolk Assistance Scheme (NAS) £1.2million

NAS already provides hardship support to Norfolk residents who are struggling with their living costs. This year the service will receive additional funds to be able to support more people over the winter months.

-Support targeted to voluntary and community groups £1,000,000

Norfolk Community Foundation has set up a fund so that frontline voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations can deliver vital winter aid to the people they support. Norfolk VCSE organisations, as well as town and parish councils and faith groups, will be able to apply for funding to deliver £50 vouchers for groceries / household essentials (supplied through Edenred). Where vouchers can't be used because someone lives in a very rural area or does not have access to the internet, groups can offer a grant of £50 cash instead.

-Food support £500,000

We will work with local councils to ensure that local foodbanks are provided with support where needed to meet additional needs of residents over the winter. Many foodbanks are reporting that they are well funded and seek to find longer term solutions for people to eradicate the need for foodbanks in the future.

-Support available from libraries £132,000

From the 21 December Norfolk's network of 47 libraries will offer free hygiene packs with essential toiletry and sanitary products, as well as 'warm and well' packs including things like blankets and warm socks. People will be able to go to libraries and pick up these packs in a discreet way when they need them.

95. Accounts to be paid:

Berrymans Glass Recycling Ltd (URM UK Ltd) November 2021 P117027 Reimbursement to clerk URM no longer accepting cheques	£36.00 (£6.00 VAT)
E.on Energy (electricity) -November 2021	£77.43 (£3.69 VAT)
NLHF project t- XL Display Ltd invoice – reimbursement to MH	£206.40 (£34.40 VAT)
NLHF project - CJ Wildlife- nest boxes	£419.83 (£83.97)
NLHF Project SPC Printers Ltd invoice 31289- Posters	£276.00 (£46.00 VAT)
NLHF Project - Project manager monthly fee- Anne Mason Invoice AM2	£780.00
NLHF Project – Village Hall hire invoice PC2021/002	£335
NLHF Project- Hand sanitizer- reimbursement to MH	£11
NLHF Project - invoice for padlock and chain for burial grounds gates- reimbursement to MH	£21.65 (£3.61 VAT)

Massingham Road fencing - G&G Ltd invoice 11425	£12127.20 (£2021.20 VAT)
Clerk expenses- stamps x12 1 st class	£10.20
K&M Lighting Services- De Warrenne Place street lights 9021,9022 LED fitted invoice 6673	£168.00 (£28.00 VAT)
Village hall hire PC meetings 2022 invoice PC2021/001	£180
The Voice - autumn edition- printing costs	£148
Clearing leaves on East Green 2021 - RAM Enterprises	£100

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

96. Village Maintenance.

- a) Potholes reported on Newton Road, Back Lane, Pyes Lane, Foxes Meadow and High Street near junction to Town Lane. Clerk to chase up all outstanding potholes for Highway Rangers' December visit.
- b) Holkham has approved the use of weed killer on the verges adjoining the trod. TH to action.
- c) Request for the cherry trees on Foxes Meadow at Meadow End to be assessed. Clerk to contact Freebridge

97. Public questions.

- a) SM reported residents concerned about small children in particular facing danger when crossing Massingham Road from the playing field. Clerk to contact Andy Wallace asking for advice on whether anything further can be done in terms of pedestrian safety at this junction.

The meeting closed at 20.50.

The next full Parish Council meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 13th January 2021** at 7.30pm at the CA village hall. Those wishing to attend are asked to inform the Clerk and adhere to Government Covid safety guidelines.