

CASTLE ACRE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held in the village hall on Thursday 8 January 2015:

Present: Mr T Hubbard (TH) Mr M Hickey (MH) Chairman
Mrs H Breach (HB) Mr J Moriarty (JM)
Mr Sean Allen (SA) Mr M Dwyer (MD)
Ms Charlie Williams (CW)

In attendance: Ms L Roast (Clerk), 1 member of the public

Apologies: PCSO Deborah Pearson, Mrs G Thorneywork (GT), Mr L Fisher (LF) Vice-Chairman.

- 105 Police Crime Report - PCSO Deborah Pearson - No report.**
- 106 Minutes of previous meeting of 11 December 2014**
Mr Tim Hubbard proposed, Mr Jim Moriarty seconded. Agreed
- 107 Actions from previous meeting.**
- 28 Lease for Pales Green grass strip** – Holkham Estate has de-registered their ownership at the Land Registry but had failed to re-register it in the PC’s name. The strip was gifted in the 1970’s. MH to contact James Bracey of Holkham Estate to ask if they would register it to the PC, as previously agreed in a meeting last year.
- 137 Allotment moat trees** – waiting to hear back from the Heritage Historic Environment for grant/funding to thin out the number of trees.
- 24 Bailey Gate damage** – waiting to hear from English Heritage.
- 45 NAT Work Group** - decision on hold until Holkham Estate grants a lease to NAT
- 58 Rubbish Bin at Ford** - sign saying: “ Heritage Site. No Parking. Please take your litter home”. Sign & post delivered and to be erected by SA and MH.
- 59 Stocks Green Trees** – Lime trees have been sympathetically reduced.
- 60 Agri-Allotments** –Waiting for Holkham to advise the PC on the new lease and the rent for the school garden allotments after 11/10/15.
- 65 Castle Acre Village Sign** – SA & TH thanked for taking down the sign. The contractors had been emailed but had yet to reply.
2 new grit bins. The site for the school bin is shown on a map. The Clerk to apply for a Street Furniture license for the school and for Back Lane.
East Green Slap Gates. - Holkham Estate still to replace.
- 85 SA Ford road traffic prohibition** – MH has contacted Natural England.
- 86 Christmas tree on Stocks Green** – Swaffham Town Council purchased their 16ft trees from Cone Tree Nursery in Diss at £45 +VAT. The Clerk to obtain costs of solar lights and other relative costs for a 2015 installation, subject to CAPC final approval.
- 87 Mayor’s Civic Awards** – deadline 18th January. HB and GT to submit.
- 102 East Green trees/telephone lines** – no progress
West Acre Road safety initiative – Holkham Estate is consulting with Manor Farm to look at reducing the height, or making gaps in, the roadside high hedges to improve vehicle visibility.
- 108 5 Year Action Plan.**
- Playing field notice board.** MH proposed purchasing a pre-made coloured aluminium noticeboard, taking 18 x A4 notices, at a cost of £910 (including carriage) that would be within the available funds of £980. The PC still preferred to wait for one more month

for quotes from local joiners for a traditional wooden noticeboard before making a decision.

Through Traffic Plan. MH had drafted an application to the Parish Partnership Scheme Initiative for funding the SAM2 flashing speed sign (which displays the speed of the travelling vehicle) and for the Trod along St James Green, deadline end of January. The support of our County Councillor Toby Coke is required. MH to e-mail the draft to him.

The Community Speedwatch programme: update from SA – arranging a date in January for an instructor to come to the village for volunteers’ training.

109 Health & Safety - no issues reported

110 Matters requested by Councillors - no matter requested

111 2015/16 Budget and Precept

Draft revised spreadsheets were issued to all councillors for consideration.

Key points noted:

- Changes made to through traffic plan income.
- Increase to Clerks salary included.
- Changes to full cost of traffic plan expenditure.
- Allowance made for 2015 Christmas tree expenditure.

TH suggested that the budget for tree work should be increased from £250 to £500 (agreed) and that street lighting might become a cost burden if all the bulbs failed since all were installed at the same time. The draft budget had assumed a 3% increase in the Precept. The PC felt that 3% would be acceptable and that if necessary, the next Precept would be increased by a greater percentage to cover the costs of the funding application for the through traffic plan. MH asked that the budget be adopted and a Precept of £9,642 set. Proposed Mr Jim Moriarty, seconded by Mr Tim Hubbard.

112 Planning

Local Development Framework. The pre- submission consultation document has been received requiring online observations be submitted between 12 January to 23 February. The PC noted that the document stated Castle Acre was south of Swaffham instead of north and near Little not Great Massingham! The document reaffirms that any building development should enhance the heritage and preservation of the conservation area, that standard housing design was unlikely to achieve this and that the scheme should be coordinated over the whole preferred option site. CAPC is pleased the document meets its objectives. MH to point out the geographical errors in his online submission. MD also stated that the document should be amended to state that there were 2 buildings on the proposed site rather than none.

Mr Jim Moriarty opted out of the discussion.

Water Tower – Massingham Road. The Council invited the owner of the Water Tower and his architect to explain their outline plans and to show the PC the model of the proposed changes to the tower. The presentation included comments that the new design would not distract from the water tower’s original function and that the design was sympathetic to the agricultural heritage of the building. The design tries to keep the character of the tower, linking the building into the landscape by encouraging ivy to grow up. The informal proposals were well received by the PC.

Footpath Cottage appeal – Newton Road. The appeal had been dismissed.

113 Correspondence

New Anglia Growth Hub: noted local businesses can get free business advice.

Rural housing Alliance circular: the circular expressed concern at the way rural housing would be allocated and stated its alarm at the recent government policy changing the affordable housing criteria from 3 to 10 dwellings for new developments. JM stated this would not change the LDF proposals for Castle Acre.

VAT Advice circular: MH explained that the PC should be aware that building costs incurring VAT invested by the PC in community buildings i.e. the village hall cannot be reclaimed as HMRC regard this as a commercial venture.

Parish part-funding of PCSO: Norfolk Constabulary is looking at ways to work closer with ‘stake holders’ and to save money by inviting Parish Councils to join a match funded scheme employing the services of a dedicated PCSO by paying half the salary. The PC agreed that Castle Acre was very well represented by their local PCSO and did not need to match fund another. Equally police coverage is and should be funded out of taxation.

114. Reports.

Martin Hickey - Highways. Nothing further to report.

Mike Dwyer – Castle Acre School. The school did not appoint a new head teacher from the 3 candidates who made the short list as they felt that none matched the school’s criteria. A new Deputy Head had been appointed.

Helen Breach – Village Hall. Fixing the puddles on front porch should herald the end of this phase of development. The success of Sponsor A Chair campaign means the village hall can apply for funding for all new chairs and tables. Electricity/lighting would be the next phase of upgrading the interior facilities.

Charlie Williams - Friends of Castle Acre School. Xmas fair had been most successful and the next event would be the Valentines Quiz on Friday 13th February.

115. Accounts.

The following cheques were signed; payments were proposed by Mr Tim Hubbard and seconded by Mrs Helen Breach: FCC Recycling (UK) Ltd £34.90, E.on Energy (electricity) £46.36, Linda Roast (clerks salary) £611.66, K&M Lighting (Pales Green) £72.00

116. Village Maintenance

Massingham Road Light. Light out just opposite the Playing Field. MH asked for someone to fix the bus shelter roof. The telephone box on Stocks Green should be restored and painted. The Clerk to check who owns the box, the Council or BT? Back Lane road is very pot holed and needs re-surfacing. CW commented favourably on the new boardwalk at South Acre Ford.

117. Public Question Time

The Clerk pointed out that perhaps it was not a good idea to adapt any of the village’s roads or corners to accommodate large vehicles as this could be seen as encouraging more to drive through the village when there are already problems with large vehicles.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

The next Parish Council meeting is at 7.30pm. Thursday 12th February in the village hall.