



Castle Acre Parish Council

Clerk: Ms Amy Hart, 9 Orchard Lane, Castle Acre, Norfolk, PE32 2BE
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Minutes of Parish Council Meeting, business conducted at Castle Acre Village Hall on 11th January 2024 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr Tim Hubbard - Chairman, Cllr Neil Patrick, Cllr Ilga Chakrabarti, Cllr Andy Collins, Cllr Liam Manson, Cllr Laurie Fisher.

In attendance: No members of the public.

105. Apologies: Cllr Sean Allen, NCC Cllr Jim Moriarty and BCKLWN Cllr Alistair Beales.

106. Declaration of Interests: None

107. Minutes of PC meeting 11th December

-The minutes were proposed for approval by Cllr Fisher and seconded by Cllr Chakrabarti, all were in favour with no further comments.

108. Health & Safety

-Defibrillator update.

Cllr Chakrabarti reported on the current condition of the Defibrillator located at the Budgens Store, Massingham Road. She explained that although fully operational, it is nearing its 7-year life, and the PC should consider potential replacement or refurbishment. A regular schedule of inspection should be conducted (check on the battery status light). Cllr Collins volunteered to conduct this inspection. Cllr Chakrabarti to follow up potential replacement with BHF.

- Trees update. Another tree was down across the South Acre Road, it was promptly reported to Highways and Holkham and was cleared by BCKLWN.

109. Planning

None

110. Updates on actions required from previous meetings:

40c. Castle Acre Visitor Car Park – update.

Several options for sites have been submitted to the BCKLWN Planning Office, (Pre-Planning Application) and are being evaluated. We are expecting an update from BC Planning by the end of January 2024.

42. (2022) South Acre Rd ford, TRO.

The Chairman has received an email from Cllr Moriarty. A report regarding delegated powers has been sent to the legal department for further advice/comment.

01. Non-Conformist Burial Ground.

The team is still trying to source suitable capping stones. General upkeep maintenance will resume in Spring 2024.

02. Minns Meadow to South Acre Road footpath erosion and footbridge repair.

NCC Trails Team have confirmed the maintenance of the footpath and footbridge are their responsibility. The structure has been inspected and a temporary repair carried out by the Norfolk Trails Team. They are currently considering the replacement of the structure, bridge and board walk.

03. Village Map.

CAPC would like to thank the resident who has generously completed the repair to the map display casing. New posts have been purchased and the display will be reinstalled in the Spring of 2024.

04. Biodiversity Duty plan for Castle Acre.

Cllr Manson updated the PC: The plan was added to CA website by the 1st Jan 2024 deadline, this is in-line with the PC's legal requirements. Cllr Manson will meet with the local resident who kindly compiled the report to discuss further action and updates.

05. Castle Acre Village Sign, Stocks Green.

The Chairman reported that the carving of the sign is now complete, and it will shortly be moved to a local Artist who has agreed to do the artwork. The Chairman is currently awaiting quotes regarding works to remove and replace the old signpost from the concrete/flint footing.

06. CAC Bowls Club funding request.

To ensure suitable time for public scrutiny the payment has been moved to February's agenda, accounts for approval and payment.

07. Purchase of Parish Council Laptop.

Following approval 14/12/2023 for the purchase of a PC-owned laptop, research is taking place in options (including software and virus Protection). It was felt that including software the potential expenditure is estimated to be £800-£850. The Chairman confirmed that he and the Clerk would potentially purchase the laptop from Curry's, King's Lynn using his personal credit card with reimbursement to be made to him at the February meeting. He asked for PC approval of this plan.

Proposer (including amended budget) Cllr Collins, Seconder Cllr Manson, all in agreement.

08. Funding opportunities (West Norfolk SPF Programme Team).

Clerk to send the expressions of Interest form regarding bicycle storage unit options to the Village Hall committee and English Heritage. CAPC and CAPFA decided not to express an interest at this time.

111. REPORTS

- Highways:
- Clerk re-reported flooding on Newton Road to NCC Highways on 27/11/2023. Highways confirm that no action is to be taken at this time. Further potholes on Newton Road and Massingham Road to report
- Cllr Manson reported a pothole on the south side Jubilee Bridge on 05/01/2024, Clerk has reported. Highways have added to their schedule of repair.
- Village Hall – None
- School – Executive Headteacher Mrs Neary had requested a potential slot to make a presentation to the PC in February or March.
- CAPFA – Cllr Neil Patrick reported that works on the MUGA (Multi-Use-Games-Area) are now complete. An opening date is being considered for March. CAPFA are discussing and organising appropriate management of the facility and the setting up of a tennis club.

- BCKLWN – None
- NCC – Cllr Moriarty emailed a report on the following:

24/7 free travel for all disabled bus pass holders in Norfolk from 01/02/2024. The scheme will be in operation 24 hours a day and seven days a week for bus pass travel within the county.

Changes to Norfolk County Council DIY Waste Disposal Policy at Recycling Centres including a variety of free allowances. Further information on changes to waste disposal costs and frequently asked questions can be found on www.norfolk.gov.uk/DIYwaste

112. Matters requested by Councillors:

- a) Final discussion; Castle Acre PC, Annual Budget fiscal year 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025 and setting of CA precept figure.

The precept and budget went up for review for the fourth round of discussion.

This year's inflation has seen a significant increase in the quotes from contractors and suppliers for 2024/25, making an increase in the proposed precept inevitable. The Chairman proposed measures to minimise Council expenditure so limiting the increase to parishioners. These include a reduction in grass-cutting services from TTSR (Pales Green Hedges to reduce to one cut, request Holkham assist on cutting permissive path near Priory, reduce cutting of Newton Road Trod to 1 cut). The purchase of a CAPC laptop will be included into the 2023 budget. The Chairman noted the increased tax base now 363.8 up from 351 in 2023/24 mainly due to additional properties in Bricknel Close will also help to spread the overall cost made by individual residencies within the village.

The reduced sum of £20,308.00 total precept was proposed for Castle Acre in 2024/2025.

Proposer (of the new precept total) Cllr Fisher and seconder Cllr Patrick, all in agreement.

- b) Appointment of PC internal auditor for upcoming May 2024 AGAR review.
Richard Price of Price & Co Limited (Accountants) has confirmed his company are prepared to conduct the audit and at a nominal cost confirmed at £50 + £10 VAT = £60.00 total.
- c) Revised TTSR contract 2024 – as discussed above, Chairman asked for the revised 2024 season quote to be confirmed by the contractor.
- d) Streetlights: New quotations now received from SSE; 12-month contracts for all 4 MPAN's 20/12/2023 and 05/01/2024 with new rates and new DD instructions to bank, to be completed before expiry date. The Chairman has been querying the inclusion of two additional MPAN units, after the supplier only initially quoted for two. This resulted in an unexpected demand for £695.91 on 20/11/2023. A refund of £341.56 was credited to the PC account on 19/12/2023. Further discrepancies have appeared in the updated contracts and quotes for the coming year. Chairman will continue to pursue corrected contracts.

Proposer Cllr Manson (further contract negotiations), seconder Cllr Chakrabarti, all in agreement.

- e) Switching of Parish Council May meeting and AGM date from Thursday 9th May to Tuesday 7th May Clerk to confirm Village Hall availability.
Proposer – Cllr Patrick, Seconder Cllr Fisher, all in agreement.
- f) Review of BHIB insurance for Castle Acre Village Volunteers.

As part of PC risk assessment Cllr's Fisher and Collins reviewed the PC's BHIB (Clear Councils) annual insurance policy. Following this review, questions remained as to how comprehensive the cover is regarding volunteers and under 16's. Cllr Fisher proposed writing to BHIB for clarification and sending the policy details to all individuals/groups who volunteer on CAPC tasks in the village.

The Chairman has spoken with the lead of the litter-picking group, and he confirmed that they are an independent group not acting on the direction of the CAPC. Cllr Hubbard thanked the group for all they do in keeping the Village tidy.

g) Health and Safety, risk schedule for Parish Council.

The Chairman requested a review into all council activities, including H&S and financial risks. To start the process, he suggested reviewing and updating the list of all PC owned and rented assets, which form the asset register. Item to be moved into February's agenda for ongoing review and progress.

h) Bus Shelter, Massingham Road.

The Chairman confirmed the first 2024 CIL funding round is currently open, with the next round commencing in July he believed. The wooden Castle Acre Bus Shelter on the Massingham Road is at least 25 years old with rotting panels and a broken window, and needs a large amount of repair or, if practicable / possible, replacement. A replacement shelter would be a suitable option for a CIL application. The Chairman will investigate options for potential ideas/designs for the shelter and will place the item for further review on the February agenda.

113. Correspondence

- a) Email on 13/12/2023 from CIL funding West Norfolk regarding funding applications / criteria and deadlines. All Cllrs aware.
- b) Email on 14/12/2023 from James Ingham, Community Liaison Manager of UPP announcing his departure from the company following the Virgin Media O2 acquisition of UPP. All Cllrs aware.
- c) Email on 14/12/2023 from Sporle's Parish Clerk to confirm the shared SAM2 speed monitor is being taken to Westcotec by their Chair for repair. Clerk to confirm the repair cost of approx. £67 and PC voted on payment.
Proposer Cllr Collins, Seconder Cllr Fisher, all in agreement.
- d) A motorist contacted Clerk on 27/12/2023 to report fly tipping of gas bottles (Oxyacetylene) on the West Acre Road, north of Bricknell Close. Clerk investigated and reported to Police and BCKLWN environmental health due to the volatile nature of gas / dangerous fly tipping. BCKLWN environmental health operatives removed within 24 hours.
- e) Email received from Treasurer of PCC St James Church, on 01/01/2024 regarding PC contribution to 2023 Churchyard Maintenance. They confirmed that they will not be requesting the usual CAPC contribution for churchyard grass-cutting for 2023 (£1,000). However, they wish to continue with the usual PPC/PC agreement in 2024 if possible.
- f) Email received from resident on 02/01/2024 regarding difficulty contacting Holkham Estate. A request to present volunteer work and findings on The Castle Water Meadows to James Beamish of Holkham has been ongoing for several months. The Chairman has requested dates with the aim of trying to assist in the setting up of a meeting and awaits confirmation.

114. Accounts to be paid:

ITEM:	Cost to PC Budget:	Grant funded:
Clerk Salary (January)	£ 382.20	
Clerk Stationery 23/12/2023. Printer ink for PC printer. Viking Order no GB-012230595W	£46.14 VAT £2.95 Delivery: £8.18 Total: £49.09	
HSBC Banking Charges 22/11/2023 (DD)	£10.00	
K&M invoice no. 8442. 16/12/2023 Bailey Street, Streetlight – faulty SOX bulb replaced with 19W LED bulb.	£80 VAT: £16.00 Total: £96.00	
Authorised for online payment by- Date: 11/01/2024 Signatory 1: Tim Hubbard (Chair) Signatory 2: Cllr Neil Patrick		

Credit to PC acc. Of £341.56 from SSE on 19/12/2023

- Cllr Manson proposed the approval of accounts to be paid, seconded Cllr Ilga Chakrabarti, all agreed.

115. Village Maintenance

- A resident reported on 18/12/2023 a streetlight out on North Street, Clerk reported to K&M and to check if this streetlight is still under warranty. Streetlight repaired - Clerk to query invoice.
- UK Power Networks contacted Cllr Hubbard on 29/12/2023 to request access to Playing Field in mid-February 2024 to clear tree branches from power lines along the boundary of the playing field and near Boundary Cottage, Massingham Road. All Cllrs aware.
- The Chairman has written to Harry Wakefield (Head Forester at Holkham) asking again for an update on the planning application required to proceed with the restoration work on East Green, with no response received as yet.
- The Chairman reported that the bag of hardcore left on Stocks Green has been moved to the playing field car park. CAPC have thanked Travis Perkins who kindly assisted.

116. Public questions - none

The meeting closed at 9:00pm

The next full Parish Council meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 8th February 2024** at 7:30pm, at Castle Acre village hall.