

Castle Acre Parish Council

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Minuted record of Parish Council business conducted at the Village Hall on June 10 2021 at 7.30pm.

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

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

29. Apologies: N/A

30. Minutes of the 10 June 2021 PC meeting

The following corrections were highlighted by MT: Item.18 -spelling correction of the word 'forty'. Item 6.- spelling correction of the name 'Greene King'. Continued, under item.6, phrase corrected to 'early July to late summer'. Item. 22- letter 's' missing from the word 'housings'.

Approval proposed by LF and seconded by SM.

31. Health & Safety

NP reported the decay of the wooden hand railings on the SA Ford bridge. Clerk to report to the relevant authority, NP to send clerk photos of the railing that require attention.

32. Updates on actions required from previous meetings

41. Surface water flooding and drainage issues Jubilee & Newton Bridges

MT and the Clerk have been collating information on land ownership on areas surrounding both Jubilee and Newton bridges, in order to pass on the information to Highways (HW) contact Jack Griffiths. Mr Griffith will contact the landowners to investigate the ongoing drainage issues relating to their land. Broadly speaking, the main landowners seem to be Holkham and Narstate Ltd.

MT witnessed work being carried out in the village on drains at the bottom of Bailey Street but has not received any communication or updates from HW or Anglia Water on the matter. Holkham has been in touch with an update about the work required on the drainage ditch in Minns Meadow. Following some exploratory work on the meadow to try and find the outlet of the pipe from the Anglian Water outlet, they have found the pipe is silted up from its outfall to the edge of the highway which they will rectify once Natural England gives approval to do so. The ditch across Minns Meadow will not be dug out and cleaned as this ditch does act as a filter system for the AW water coming from the village, before it enters the River Nar. They believe the ditch does not have any impact on the flooding issues in the village as it is much lower and only acts as a part of the natural floodplain on the meadow. Holkham will keep Clerk updated in regard to the AW pipe issue.

29. Damaged bench on St James' Green

The PC expressed their gratitude to SA, who has repaired and reinstalled the damaged bench on St James' Green.

86. Objection to proposed erection of five new BT telegraph poles along St James' Road

The Clerk is yet to receive a response from the Openreach site surveyor. PC requested Clerk to continue to chase Mr. McLachlan for an official response before moving forward with any further objections.

54. New PRO and permissive paths on Holkham land

Holkham Estate has yet to sign their NCC Deposit 31C (6) which means they can add the extra PROW requested and maintained by the PC. This runs north of the ford, left along the southern edge of Priory Precinct Meadow to the metal field gate; right north on the footpath to the next wooden field gate, then both left on the western footpath along the southern edge of Holkham's 10 Acre field to the stile by Common Road; and to the right, on the footpath going north around the western boundary of the Priory grounds up to Priory Barn) Equally, still waiting for Holkham to issue its guarantee to retain the current permissive paths across Holkham land around the village (including the path along Emanuel's Common) for the next fifty years. MH to meet with James Bracey and Caitlin Steadman from Holkham Estate on June 23 to review the paths on site.

JM wished to inform the PC that during a recent meeting with the BC Conservation Officer it became apparent that the Officer did not have the path through Minns Meadow, that runs along the Nar coming from Jubilee Bridge to the SA Ford, on his PROW map. MH is confident that a current PROW map exists with this path included and would send this to JM for him to pass on to the Officer.

6.CIL grant -new fencing playing field

MH confirmed that the Lottery Awards For All bid for £2000 fund was successful, PC expressed their thanks to MH and resident Mark Brenner who assisted in the application. MH will update the PC following July 8 when the result of the BC bid of £5100 will be confirmed. If successful the remaining balance of £1500 is to come from the Holkham CIL funds, with £500+ from PC reserves.

6. Ostrich pub - bottle/paper bank

SM reported that despite some CA residents being confident of there being a new tenant for the pub however the PC is yet to receive any contact from Greene King. Once official confirmation of a new tenant is received the PC will look to resolve the Bottle and Paper bank access issue.

8. English Heritage (EH)- Adventure Out Games at the Castle.

EH have been in touch to inform the PC that the planned launch of the events at the Castle have been postponed and they will be looking to review the situation in 2022.

21. Play area - parking on Massingham Road – signage

LM circulated a potential design for the proposed new directional parking signs that are to be temporarily installed along Massingham road. They would be displayed during peak tourism season, directing drivers to park at the playing field car park entrance via St James' Green. Cllrs approved of the design but agreed additional text should be added to the signs instructing drivers not to block driveways. Clerk to place order for 7 signs, without posts (LM, NP, SA, LF agreed posts could be produced internally) at a cost of £12 each exc. VAT with Luke's Uncles Stickers and Signs Ltd.

18. CA Youth Project

SM has been in further communication with YMCA contact Charlie Smith, following the results of the Youth Survey to discuss the PC's options. SM recommended the PC's best option could be the 'Silver Package' service offered by the YMCA, whereby a regular 2hr supervised activity session is provided at a cost of £7500 per year. As of yet, YMCA have not been able to provide any funding options. Once the funding issue is resolved, Cllrs discussed the option to run for a trial period to review effectiveness of the package versus the cost with the suggestion to charge attendees a small fee to help with running costs. SM to update PC at July's PC meeting.

33. Matters requested by Councillors

Council to consider: internal audit report; Approval of end of year accounts and completed statement of accounts; Exemption of external audit declaration.

Clerk and MH gave a brief overview of internal audit report and end of year accounts for which the documentation had been circulated to Cllrs on email prior to the meeting. MH proposed approval of the audit report and end of year account. SM seconded, with Cllrs all in agreement. LF proposed the declaration for external audit, SM seconded, all Cllrs agreed. Clerk to submit exemption certificate to external authority PFK and publish all relevant AGAR documents on to the PC page on CA website, prior to June 30 2021.

Banking switch report and decision

Clerk circulated a report to all Cllrs that concluded some public research into switching banking to Unity Trust Bank (UTB). Clerk also included an alternative option to UTB of Nationwide. Clerk favored UTB due to the online banking security process and procedures and positive user experience reviews from other Clerks. Cllrs discussed various questions and concluded that Clerk needed to go back to UTB with further questioning before moving forward with the switch. Cllrs wished to know if the monthly £6 account fee would be per account, the PC currently holds three accounts with HSBC. Cllrs also wanted confirmation whether a cheque would still be issued; how long would signatories have to authorise payments once an online notification was sent out and how many signatories would receive payment authorisation request. LF proposed that if the clerk could, at a later date, circulate the answers to the Cllrs' questions by email, then Cllr's may give their support or objection to proceed with the switch. SM seconded the proposal, LF reminded Cllrs that URM glass recycling company would no longer accept cheques from July 2021 and the PC would need to make their monthly payments to them online. Clerk to report back at the July meeting.

Website ownership-information update

LF requested CAPC ask the owner of Castle Acre village website owner to consider updating the website disclaimer to clarify that the Parish Council do not own the site and that other parties also post content. In addition, also confirming that the opinions expressed are not necessarily those of CAPC, and no liability can be accepted by CAPC for inaccuracies of any kind. All Cllr's were in support of the suggestion. LF to send revised text for the new disclaimer to the Clerk. The proprietors of Wittles Café kindly offered their assistance if the PC should wish to look into creating and hosting their own website in the future, to which the PC were thankful and would certainly consider.

Cattle on Castle Meadow

MH and NP reported that a resident had been knocked down by cattle whilst walking on one of the PROWs across Castle Meadow, thankfully the resident was not seriously harmed. In reaction to this NP installed temporary warning signs at some entrance gates onto the meadow reminding users of the PROW that 'inquisitive young cows' are grazing and asking for dogs to be kept on leads. TH reminded the Council that this is the duty of the landowner. Clerk to contact Holkham estate manager to inform them of the incident and request they install the appropriate signage to all entry points.

Parking report - overflow car park-

MH revisited the topic of the need for an overflow visitor's car park in the village, reminding Cllr's that Holkham had previously agreed to lease the PC the field off the western end of Priory Road and believe that they were still content to do so. Cllrs discussed a planning application for such a site in the same location had been denied in the past. MH suggested that the past planning application had been denied on the basis of the landowner's proposal of concrete surfacing. TH offered to circulate said past planning application which included residents' complaints, to Cllr's. Two potential overflow car parks have been included in the Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) which, if approved, will strengthen the case for such a facility. MH, LM and MT will broach the subject at the meeting with Holkham Estate in CA on 23rd June. Cllrs to revisit the topic and discuss the next steps if NHP approved.

Pales Green access

Clerk reported having had confirmation on email from the Swaffham Fire Brigade Watch Manager, who is also CA resident, that they are confident that they would be able to access all properties on Pales Green. However, they also advised that because of the limited access residents or visitors parking their vehicles on the highway would have to be mindful that in the event of a fire they could hinder the brigade's progress. In particular, the public must also be careful not to park vehicles over hydrants.

Castle car park

JM confirmed that English Heritage (EH) are to remove their parking fee from the Castle car park.

Cuckstool Lane

JM had communication from residents of Cuckstool lane whose properties are being damaged by HGVs that are using Cuckstool lane to turn around in. JM urges PC to address this issue as it is affecting residents.

Stocks Green parking

SM requested that the PC consider getting the white lines on Stocks Green repainted to help address inappropriate, illegal or dangerous parking around the green. Cllrs advised that where the road has a solid, unbroken white line running along the side, parking is considered legal. In some cases, the single white line is there to indicate that there is no pavement – if this is the case then it's illegal to park there. Clerk to contact local beat officer for advice on the matter.

34. Planning

New house on Cuckstool Lane - boundary alteration

Cllrs received reports from parishioners of a boundary alteration at the new property that is being built on Cuckstool lane. This alteration had upset some locals as it closed an access point to the Castle grounds. The PC felt no need to take any further action following investigative work from JM proving that EH had given their consent for this boundary update and alterations which have restored an access point.

Glamping site update

MH reported a new document from the assigned planning officer on the website portal for the glamping site application at Further Pond Close. The document explained that they not yet had the time to fully review the application but they were currently minded to refuse the application. Further update requested at the next PC meeting.

35. Correspondence

Bridge at The Mill, Newton-By-Castle Acre- information from resident

Owners of The Mill property in Newton-By-Castle Acre have been in contact with the Clerk to report on their current frustrations with NCC Highway and the management of the bridge that adjoins their property. The bridge is owned by the resident, although the road across it is managed by HW. The property owners are seeking CAPC's assistance in asking for an introduction of a weight restriction for the bridge. Also requesting that the road be 'access only'. The owners feel the current 40-tonnes limit is damaging to their property and their own safety. Clerk asked to seek advice from various authorities regarding how to support the objection.

Strimming of grass verges in the village- residents' concerns

PC received several complaints from concerned residents regarding the latest round of verge trimming in the village, which were carried out by HW. Clerk has contacted HW to request their schedule for cutting and a detailed map outlining which verges they cut. HW to be appraised of PC concerns and areas of particular importance due to wild flowers etc. (noting that road users' vision will be HW primary concern) and a request to delay cutting until mid-June if possible. Cllrs also expressed support to continue with the 'No Mow May' initiative in 2022. TH pointed out that HW also appears to possibly be using glyphosate

spray within the village. JM expressed concerns and asked TH to report to him directly on the matter as HW are not allowed to be using such chemicals in the village.

Clay pigeon shooting, SA, possible noise pollution

Concerned South Acre residents reported a new clay pigeon shooting facility in South Acre and suggested there might be a knock-on effect of noise pollution in the village, although none reported as of yet.

Request for support from PC to consider pressing for a speed reduction on Newton by Castle Acre and Castle Acre section of A1065.

A local farmer contacted clerk to request support from CAPC to seek a speed reduction on the stretch of the A1065 that runs through Newton-by-Castle Acre and close to Castle Acre, based on the danger that is created when trying to turn out onto or off the A1065 with the numerous adjoining roads. They also questioned why most of the A1065 through Fakenham to Swaffham is already under a 50mph speed limit but not this section. All Cllrs were in full support of the suggestion.

Church yard mowing and ragwort infestation- resident concerns

Clerk received contact from a resident highlighting ragwort plants growing in the Church yard, Castle grounds and Priory meadow. Clerk to inform the relevant authorities requesting they have the plants removed under Weeds Act 1959 - farmers and landowners have legal obligations to treat and remove ragwort from their land because it is a harmful weed and poisonous to animals & can damage crops.

Littering- response from Wittles Cafe, following PC request for advice.

LF welcomed Wittles Cafe owners to the meeting thanking them for taking the time to attend and for their response to the PC's letter asking for their thoughts on how the PC might best tackle the increase in littering. Wittles Cafe keenly supports recycling and uses compostable products where possible. They encourage customers to dispose of any take away cups, bags and carriers responsibly and welcome the use of reusable cups. Additionally, they are considering adding another litter bin outside the shop and the cost of emptying it. They also suggested reaching out to other similar tourist parishes that may share littering issues to see how they are tackling littering. They thought that the litter bins on Stocks Green do not appear to get full and that the PC could consider additional litter bins at other problem locations co-locating with dog waste bins.

36. Reports

Highways

-Blind Lane scraping has been issued to the contractor on 13/05/21 and they have until 05/08/21 to complete the work. Orchard Lane to be completed at the same time.

-Small broken posts on Newton Road were issued to the contractor on the 13/05/21 to be completed by 05/08/21

-The large broken post on St James Green was issued to the contractor on the 13/05/21 to be completed by the 05/08/21

-Orchard Lane gully is scheduled for replacement with an oversize gully with some kerbing behind, on the 28/06/21. This road will be closed under a road closure order while the work is carried out and will take a few hours.

Village hall

The hall is open and ready for bookings. Max of 30 people for weddings, max of 6 for choir. Pye's Lane carriageway repair and extension to the village hall entrance is due to be completed on the 29/06/21. This will be completed under a road closure and again will only take a few hours.

School

NP to chase for a report update. Currently they are looking to secure a new head of school for CA.

CAPFA

NP reported:

- Committee discussing possible dates for the next CA Fete to be September 2021 tbc.
- A date for AGM to be fixed for the committee to meet.
- TH asked if there could be confirmation as to whether the chain fencing to the south of the bus shelter is owned by CAPFA or the property owner. NP to confirm.

Neighbourhood Plan

MT reported:

- Still waiting for a formal response from the examiner to the local authority.
- Grant secured for costs of consultancy and ongoing expenditure on leaflets and Plan printing

BCKLWN

JM reported:

- New council leader Stuart Dark was elected at recent AGM. JM believed the change will be good for West Norfolk over the next two years when combined with a new and improved cabinet.
- The new Borough Council housing development on the edge of Kings Lynn (Parkway) is to be significantly reduced in size.
- A bid to develop the Town Centre for £25 million of government funding had been successful.
- Local plan meeting to be held, via Zoom, on Monday 14th June from 6.30pm JM strongly advised PC to attend. Cllrs questioned whether the PC could put their case forward to change CA's status of 'Key Rural Service Centre'. JM advised it would be difficult to change status, but that attending the Local Plan meeting could be an opportunity to begin the process. MT confirmed his intention to attend the meeting.
- JM informed the PC of a conversation with EH, who have stated that they wish to be more cooperative. The newly refurbished toilets at the priory will be open to the public from 1st April until the end of October, 10am-5pm for seven days a week and that EH would be advertising the toilets at the Castle. JM intends to enter communication with the Borough Council (BC) regarding the cost of tourism and leisure to villages such as CA and will push matters such as emptying of dog waste and litter bins and seek support from the BC.

Norfolk County Council (NCC):

JM reported:

- Highway Rangers are currently due back on their rounds once again in August.
- Request for any CA residents that are unable to get at least 20MB internet speed to inform him directly. This will help to create supporting evidence as to whether CA's internet service meets the minimum requirements.
- Reminding Cllr's of the latest news from Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance, clerk to circulate email newsletter.
- AGM held at the Norfolk Showground, EGM voted to connect NDR
- Recycling centers will be accepting up to three extra bags of litter from members of the public
- Request support from Cllr's for the QE hospital, sharing leaflets and postcards with information on how to lend support.

37. Accounts to be paid:

Berrymans Glass Recycling Ltd (URM UK Ltd)	£37.20 (£6.20 VAT)
E.on Energy (electricity)	£80.01 (£3.81 VAT)
Clerk's expenses – dog waste chalk marker spray	£6.50
CAPFA annual insurance reimbursement	£1682.61
7xA3 directional signs, Uncle Luke's	£ 100.80 (£16.80 VAT)
Norfolk Rivers Internal Drainage Board	£27.21

annual fee	
Gladson, 2x wheelie bin housing	£1429.25 (£238.21 VAT)

*Clerk to reimburse PC for one month's Zoom account fee charge of £14.39, paid to clerk in error as Zoom account was cancelled for the month of August 2020 but clerk still received a reimbursement for this month.

Clerk to ask Uncle Luke's Ltd to re-quote for an additional sign, totaling 7 and no posts as LM and NP offered to provide some. Cllrs also agreed to add further text to the signs to ask driver to not park on the verge or block driveways.

TH proposed approval of the accounts and NP seconded.

38. Village Maintenance

SA Ford has ongoing need for repair MH chasing relevant authority and will report at future PC meeting.

TH reported that the Nar Valley Way section from the end of Common Lane to South Acre is in need of maintenance and repair. In some places the path is not usable and there is posing a danger to users creating a trip/fall risk. Clerk to report to appropriate authority.

39. Public questions

A member of the public wished to request that JM would be acting on his campaign promise to address the village's need for further improved public toilet facilities. JM advised that the impact of the newly improved toilets at the Priory would require monitoring as to its effectiveness.

Meeting closed at 9.55pm

The next full Parish Council meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 8th July 2021** at 7.30pm at the CA Village Hall. Those wishing to attend must inform the Clerk and wear a face mask and adhere to Government Covid safety guidelines.