

CASTLE ACRE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the village hall on Thursday 14 November 2019

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

In attendance: Mrs L Firth (Clerk), Mr James Moriarty (JM) (Borough Councillor).

Apologies: Ms Charlotte Williams (CW), Cllr G Middleton (NCC)

53. Minutes of PC meeting on Thursday 10 Oct 2019

LF proposed approval of the Minutes, SM seconded.

54. Actions from previous meetings

28. Portcullis

Reinstating the Portcullis is on hold. The Council has requested English Heritage and Norfolk Highways to work together to come up with further measures to prevent any future damage from drivers still ignoring all the warning signs. Highways has yet to respond. MH suggested erecting an additional large sign, where Bailey Street bends to the left, stating 'Narrow Archway ahead! All large vehicles turn around here. Ignore your Satnav!' Subject to the landowner's agreement, this could be displayed directly behind his fencing on the south side and in view of the road, opposite No. 64, allowing vehicles to manoeuvre round in the wide area at the bottom of Bailey Street and by Cuckstool Lane. MH also suggested the two width restriction sign on Blind Lane should be moved back about ten metres, so not to confuse drivers with the Bailey Gate width restriction warning signs. TH called for a review of all the road traffic signage on the A1065 and along Lower Lane as the current signage is encouraging vehicles to use this route rather than the wider and safer way up Newton Road.

51. Newton Road Bridge flooding

A new grip has been added to the south side of the road, near the drain grill, which is proving ineffective following recent downpours. MH to continue to press Breckland Highways for the correct long term measures to be taken.

113. Updates on outstanding Highways requests

The requested 'Deep Water' signs on either side of ford are now in place. Extra grips at the top of Orchard Lane and Rougham Road are still outstanding. MH has chased and has been informed that it will happen soon. MH to maintain pressure to get this done.

20. Extra litter bin on playing field

NP to enlarge the picket housing to accommodate the new bin.

Ostrich pub outdoor decking and seating area – update

When contacted by MH on 4 November, Highways responded that the Ostrich pub will remove the decking in three weeks to allow inspection and repair work on the road surface beneath.

Supporting the Borough Council's long term empty homes strategy –The Old School

The owner of The Old School has informed the Clerk that he is aware of the garden's overgrowth and the current state of the external back flint wall but believes that no vehicles have access down that track. SM pointed out that this is incorrect. The Borough Council's

Conservation Officer has offered to make a site visit on 9 November and to decide what enforcement action might be taken. JM also offered to follow up with the conservation team.

41. Drainage in High Street - update

MT to keep the pressure on Highways and Anglian Water to resolve the issue of excess surface water and poor drainage after heavy rain. MH to give MT the contact details of Anglian Water's Engagement Manager.

45. Dog Fouling

The PC thanked the local resident for her efforts in marking uncollected dog poo with bio degradable fluorescent paint. A map highlighting areas in the village where repeat offenders leave their dogs' mess has been passed on to JM who will share with the Borough's Community Safety and Nuisance Officer.

48. Re-painting BT phone box- update

Clerk awaiting update from Borough's Conservation Officer following his site visit.

57. Cuckstool Lane new development- update

Clerk contacted Derek Hales Ltd to find out when the building work is scheduled to commence. The area remains cordoned off with unattractive security fencing which is not in keeping with the Conservation Area, being adjacent to the listed Grade 1 Castle. They responded that they have cleared the site and have completed an archaeological dig. They are currently dealing with pre-commencement conditions and are negotiating with Highways over storm water connections. The contractor intends to get all this sorted before construction starts. The Clerk will be updated.

58. EH directional sign top of Pyes Lane to Priory car park – update

MH read out an e-mail from EH detailing the potential high costs of having another brown sign directing vehicles to the Priory car park. MH proposed a compromise of doubling the size of the existing sign which the PC could order and install, provided EH agrees to pay for the sign cost. Cllrs agreed with this approach. The Clerk to obtain a price quotation.

Closure Little Lane – update

No response from Highways about making a traffic order to close Little Lane to vehicles. Clerk to chase.

Damaged road signs at the end of the Lower Road at the A1065 – update

The signs have been repaired. No further action required.

61. Damaged gate East Green – update.

Clerk contacted Holkham Estate notifying them of the damaged gate; no response so far.

Street light on St. James Green- update

A resident on St. James Green has requested that the street light on the Green goes off at midnight as the bright LED light is shining into her bedroom. A timer will cost £70. Cllrs noted the importance of keeping this street light on all night as it is a through road with parked cars on and around the Green. It is a Health and Safety issue. The Clerk to contact K & L Lighting to seek alternative solutions and costs, such as a light diffuser.

55. Health & Safety matters (including Tree Report)

Tree Inspection Register - TH will complete updating the Tree Inspection Register soon.

- East Green residents advised to contact BT to express their concerns about the potential of

damage to their phone lines from overhanging branches.

- TH requested that the 2021/22 PC budget reflects the cost of reducing the growth of the lime trees on Stocks Green which should be done within the next 18 months.

56. Matters requested by Councillors

Charging for parking on Castle car park.

English Heritage (EH) has informed the PC that they intend to introduce payment for use of their car park at the Castle in the near future. This will involve new signage being erected requiring vehicles that do not display an EH member's sticker to pay a charge by mobile phone. Vehicles that do not comply will potentially be subject to a penalty. Cllrs expressed their complete objection to any charge, citing the knock-on effect on parking congestion elsewhere, the loss of parking in Pyes Lane for village hall events, more signage in the Conservation Area etc. MH to draft a formal request to EH to drop this proposal.

Pre-review of extra expenditure proposals & CIL payments for 2020/21 PC budget:

Cllrs noted the 2020/21 budget review will now be conducted during January's PC meeting. The current forecast indicates a £1,000 surplus of income over expenditure in this financial year to 31 March 2020.

MH had circulated a paper setting out the options for additional expenditure in 2020/21 that could either be funded by increasing the Precept or by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts or a combination of both. CIL is a new charge on any new build in the village that is not for personal use. About £3,500 of CIL is due to be paid to the Council by October 2020. This must be spent on infrastructure within the subsequent 12 months. After reviewing a number of potential projects, Cllrs expressed their preference to spend the CIL funds, or part subsidize, on either replacing the old chain link fencing along the eastern side of Massingham Road protecting the play area and skate park; or on a Trod (type of footway like the one on St James' Green) along the grass verge of Newton Road from East Green to opposite Sandy Lane. Cllrs will make a final decision once firm quotations are in and approval is gained from the NCC Parish Partnership scheme that meets 50% of the Trod's cost.

Other potential extra expenditure such as a two way traffic mirror at the Massingham Road/Back Lane junction or repairing the village sign on Stocks Green could be included in the 2020/21 draft budget for review in January.

Five year Action Plan to 2021 - review of targets not yet actioned:

MH highlighted the following targets for review:

- **Encourage start-up of more clubs and societies and promote the existing village groups.** Cllrs supports this initiative.
- **Youth Club.** Further research required into local clubs and volunteers.
- **Formation of a youth committee to be involved with the Council.** Cllrs support setting up a group of young people meeting bi-annually with the PC to support and promote their needs.
- **Emergency Response Coordinator.** Given the increase in extreme weather conditions, the PC is concerned that there is no formal structure for dealing with calls for help as a result of flooding or weather related damage. Cllrs are considering setting up an Emergency

Response Coordinator within the village. The Clerk to advertise for a volunteer for this post.

- **Village overflow car park.** Cllrs supported the principle of leasing Holkham's field off Priory Road as a visitor's car park with protective grass matting (grant funded) and discrete directional signing. TH queried whether the Borough would grant planning permission. MT to check before a final decision is made.
- **Castle Acre Information Flyer.** Cllrs debated whether a one page village information flyer, circulated twice a year, could benefit residents by highlighting issues that need explaining or promoting. There is only limited space to do so in the monthly Nar Valley News. MT cited the approx. £120 cost of printing and circulating a black and white flyer to all households.

Pales Green 'Green'

SM considers that residents are unaware that the small green area between the road and the allotments is leased by the PC from Holkham and open to the public. However, no dogs are allowed. Agreed to put an appropriate sign on the metal gate and to promote the Green in the Nar Valley News. PC to look into installing a memorial bench.

57. Planning – no new planning applications to consider.

58. Correspondence

Safety door stickers for elderly residents.

Able Community Care Ltd have kindly issued the PC with some free safety door stickers telling cold callers not to knock or disturb. The Clerk to promote and deliver these stickers to any elderly resident who requests one.

59. Reports

Highways – nothing further to report.

School – NP reported: Friends of Castle Acre school autumn quiz was a great success raising approx. £500 towards the school children's request for a garden shed.

Village hall – HB reported: the next event, a Blues evening, will be on Saturday 23 November at 7.30pm.

CAPFA – NP reported: next meeting to be held on Tuesday 26 November. A play equipment fundraising sub-committee has been formed.

Neighbourhood Plan (NP) – MT reported: The Steering Group for the emerging Castle Acre Neighbourhood Development Plan has commissioned a number of assessments necessary to provide evidence to support the Plan's new development policies while also protecting Castle Acre's historic and natural environments. The following assessments are underway:

1. Habitats Regulations Assessment
2. Strategic Environment Assessment
3. Development Site Assessments

It is hoped that these will be completed by the end of the year and that the Group can then adjust the draft Plan in response to these assessments. More importantly, the village and PC will be in a position to use the evidence within the assessments to support future policies and guidelines. Once these statutory checks have been completed and the draft plan reviewed, it will become available for consultation within the village and with stakeholders. After the consultation and any resulting amendments, the Plan will be submitted for a formal

independent examination. Having passed that examination, the Plan will be ready to go through the referendum process where resident parishioners will be able to vote on putting the Neighbourhood Plan into force. The expectation is for a vote in the spring of 2020.

MT also clarified that as part of the consultation process with stakeholders, the Steering Group has attempted to contact the potential new owner of the land to the north of Back Lane and adjacent to the school. This is to keep them abreast of the conversations the PC has had with the former owner, Green King, regarding the intention to designate the area as a Local Green Space and not to support any housing development anywhere on this parcel of land, known locally as Further Pond Close.

Borough Cllr's report – JM reported:

Sifting of Planning Applications

The Borough Council introduced a policy of sifting planning applications in recent years. when a Parish Council's views differed to that of the Planning Officer, the application no longer went to the full Planning Committee automatically but first went to a Sifting Panel. This panel could decide that a decision could still effectively be made by the officer. This change of policy without consulting Parish Councils on the change breached the Borough's code of community involvement. JM moved a motion at full council to now consult. The Conservative group opposed the motion and it was lost. JM intends to bring the issue before the Corporate Performance Panel and will personally consult all Parish Councils in advance of their meeting in early 2020.

Climate Change

Climate Change was brought to the last Full Council but the motion was hijacked by the Leader and referred to be looked at by the Cabinet in 2020.

Recording of council meetings

In the coming week there will be a debate as to whether all future council meetings should be recorded. There is a general election on 12th December.

County Council – no report.

60. Accounts to be paid

Accounts due for payment, proposed by TH, seconded by LF.

Holkham allotments half yearly rent	£100.00
Holkham village Greens and Commons land annual rents	£12.00
Berrymans Glass Recycling Ltd (URM UK Ltd)	£37.20 (£6.20 VAT)
E.on Energy (electricity)	£68.29 (£3.25 VAT)
K&M Lighting Services Ltd – new LED street lights x 2	£152.00 (£26.00 VAT)
Paul Slocombe, litter team - bin bags for bus shelter	£3.00 (£0.50 VAT)
T.T.S.R Ltd - Greens/verges/hedge cutting, balance of yearly charge	£794.35 (£132.39 VAT)
Nigel Drew - replacement metal handrail by steps churchyard to SA Road*	£310.00

(* 50% to be re-charged to PCC)

61. Village Maintenance

Leaf clearance East/Stocks Greens

TH to look into leaf blowers and report back to the PC. MH will also check locally if someone is prepared to clear the leaves manually at a reasonable charge against the PC's unspent maintenance budget.

Highway Rangers

The PC has asked NCC Highway Rangers during their visit in December to clear the mud and repair the pot holes along Orchard Lane as well as sweeping Blind Lane of mud.

62. Public Question Time -

No questions

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

The next full Parish Council meeting is on **Tuesday 10 December** at 7.30pm.