



Castle Acre Parish Council
Clerk: Ms Amy Hart, 9 Orchard Lane, Castle Acre, Norfolk, PE32 2BE
Telephone: 07815430777 Email: castleacrepc@gmail.com

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting business conducted at Castle Acre Village Hall on 12th October 2023 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr Tim Hubbard - Chairman, Cllr Neil Patrick, Cllr Liam Manson, Cllr Sean Allen, Cllr Laurie Fisher, Borough Cllr Alistair Beales.

In attendance: four members of the public

70. Apologies: The Council accepted apologies from Cllr Sheila Moister & Cllr Jim Moriarty

71. Declaration of Interests: None.

72. CO-OPTION: There are currently three vacant seats on the Parish Council. Two eligible village residents were interviewed prior to the meeting having offered to join the Council. Andy Collins and Ginny Kerr-Gibson both attending and were invited by The Chair to join the Parish Council as of the date of this meeting.

Proposer – Cllr Laurie Fisher and Seconder – Cllr Liam Manson, all in agreement.

73. Health & Safety

Tree report:

The Chairman reported -

a) The overhanging epicormic growth and basal trunk growth of the five lime trees on Stocks Green needs removing as it is currently restricting parking on the highway side of the green. Planning permission has been received and contractor 'The Norfolk Arborist' has quoted (estimate 1909) £220.00 + £44 VAT for the works.

Proposer for the works – Cllr Laurie Fisher and Seconder – Cllr Neil Patrick, all in agreement.

b) The resident who kindly donated funds towards the maintenance of the Millennium Tree and Hornbeam trees on Stocks Green (The Tree Fund) has agreed to expand the remit to allow the funds to be used on the following additional projects:

- A tree guard for Platinum Jubilee Tree, planted SW corner of the playing field November 2022.
- A tree guard for Queen Elisabeth II Memorial Tree, St James Green.
- Information plaques for three Village Trees.

c) The Head Forester at Holkham Estate, Mr Harry Wakefield, had queried whether East Green was owned by Holkham and if it was their responsibility to maintain trees on the Green. The Clerk located the 1977 East Green lease, which confirms that Holkham Estate is the owner. The Chairman to discuss and agree required tree maintenance work with Harry. Mr Wakefield confirmed that Holkham was conducting maintenance work, such as clearing ivy on the numerous trees located on their land around the village.

74. Planning

VARIATION OF CONDITION 2 OF PLANNING PERMISSION 17/00341/F: Proposed rear extension, various internal and external alterations, including garage conversion to bedroom, reconfiguration of existing fenestration and replacement roof covering. Erection of new detached double open fronted carport at Ran Revir Bailey Street, Castle Acre, King's Lynn Norfolk.

The PC **objected** to the re-consultation on the following grounds, with concerns including Castle Acre Conservation area, Listed buildings, important unlisted buildings, the River Nar SSSI and H&S issues.

- Anomaly of site/roof plan with the eastern aspect roof ridge extending the entire length of the building, whilst the western aspect has a sloping roof adjacent to the northern boundary.
- A new entrance electric gate and wall at least six feet tall would be incongruous to the village conservation area and limit sightlines on a difficult bend.
- Serious concerns over the decking which extends to the edge of the River Nar (SSSI) with potential negative impacts on rare and protected species.
- Work has already occurred on the site without any proof that the planning condition to conduct an archaeological survey at a site of historical significance had been undertaken.
- The original building on site is now roofless and is potentially dangerous. The site is not secure, which is a hazard to both parishioners and visitors to the village. These H&S issues need to be addressed.

Proposer Cllr Sean Allen, Seconder Cllr Laurie Fisher, all in agreement.

75. Updates on actions required from previous meetings:

40b 2023. Visitor Car Park - Planning application for visitor car park off Priory Road.

As the above application has been rejected by BCKLWN, CAPC now needs to explore alternative locations. The Chairman has met with Lynette Fawkes of BCKLWN planning department, who has agreed to provide pre-planning appraisal advice on any potential car park locations submitted by CAPC without charge.

Several options for sites have been suggested and are being evaluated by the BC planning department.

Any viable options, and any further proposals, to be discussed at future meetings prior to progressing.

45 2022. South Acre Rd ford TRO-update

- The PC awaits a decision from Norfolk County Council. Further footage of approx. thirty motorbikes traversing the Ford has been sent to the PC by a concerned resident and the PC has circulated this.

103 2022. Local Plan – examination update

- CAPC has raised concerns regarding contradictory comments and inconsistencies in the scoring system for determining the settlement hierarchy. Castle Acre is still classified as a Key Rural Service Centre and the PC believes that it could not support the associated developmental impact. There is a lack of consideration given to the village to accommodate the

negative impact of a KRSC classification. In particular, damage to the Conservation area, historic assets, SSSI and habitats due to increases in traffic and associated parking, noise, littering and dog fouling.

- The PC response will focus on Castle Acre's lack of infrastructure necessary to accommodate KRSC additional growth and development in this historic village, road widths, lack of car parking and the already inappropriate speed limits and inadequate signage on the A1065.
- Lack of transparency in the Settlement Hierarchy scoring, which also promotes the use of cars.
- Deadline for submission is Friday 20th October 2023.

Proposer (for CAPC submission return) - Cllr Laurie Fisher, Seconder – Cllr Liam Manson, all in agreement.

11a. CA Church grounds- update

The grass cutting schedule continues to be reviewed by the PCC and their contractor. The PCC will continue to investigate ways in which they can improve on the current condition of the Churchyard. The PCC will not be asking the PC for a contribution towards Churchyard Maintenance for the 2023 season.

98. (2023) Queen Elizabeth II Memorial Tree, St James's Green – update

The Chairman confirmed planting will take place on St James Green in late Oct early Nov. He would like approval to purchase two tree-guards. The steel tree guards are approximately 6 ft tall and cost £130 + VAT for unpainted or £160 + VAT for painted plus £85 for delivery.

Proposer (painted guards) Cllr Laurie Fisher, Seconder Cllr Liam Manson, all in agreement.

01.(2023) Non-Conformist Burial Ground – update.

Reconstruction of the left-hand pillar has been completed; however, the original capping stone has not yet been found in the burial ground. A pair of similar capping stones have been found at a local reclaim-yard. Mr Alistair Chadwick has confirmed that he can remove the right-hand capping stone and fit the two reclaimed stones.

The pair of capping stones cost £350.00 plus £100.00 for delivery. 1 x day of work for Mr Chadwick of £150.00. Lifting equipment hire tbc. Total estimated cost: £600-£700. This expenditure is covered by funds remaining in our National Lottery HP fund account.

Proposer (of the works) Cllr Laurie Fisher, Seconder Cllr Liam Manson, all in agreement.

02. (2023) Minns Meadow footpath erosion and footbridge – update.

There is footpath erosion and damage to the wooden bridge near South Acre Road ford. The site of erosion is on Holkham land with Norfolk Trails being responsible for the pathway. The PC will contact Holkham Estate and Norfolk Trails to address both erosion and repair to the bridge.

76. Matters requested by Councillors:

a) External Audit for the year ended 31st March 2023 (AGAR)

The Parish Council has completed an external financial audit and review and is satisfied that all the proper practices have been conducted in accordance with audit regulations. The full Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) is available on request from the Clerk. Accounts are published on completion, on the Castle Acre website. [https://www.castleacre.info/parish news archives accounts.htm](https://www.castleacre.info/parish_news_archives_accounts.htm)

b) Castle Acre Village Sign, Stocks Green, replace – SOS, Save our Sign project - update.

The Castle Acre sign was recently removed by Tim Hubbard, Neil Patrick, and Liam Manson. A skilled woodworker and long-time resident of Castle Acre has offered to carve a new version of the sign and is donating his time and skills for free. The new sign will consider Harry Carter's iconic style but will be presented to the village with a new and refreshed design. Castle Acre PC would also like to thank a generous benefactor for their donation of £250.00 to the project, which has covered the cost of the wood (oak), and further materials.

The PC has also had two artists, both residents of the village volunteering to paint the sign should their skills be needed or required. In addition, the PC has been in touch with a Carpenter/Joiner, who has also volunteered to help with the repair to the signpost and the installation of the completed sign.

£650.00 is currently set-aside for costs of this project.

c) Grit bins not filled on Stocks Green and Pales Green after Highways visit to fill on 27/09/2023 – update.

Following a visit from Highways to fill the grit bins around Castle Acre, the Chairman noted that the bins located at Pales Green, Stocks Green, and North Street (new bin outside Herbs Cottage) were not refilled. The Clerk has written to Highways, 06/10/2023.

d) Grass cutting at CAPF, PC to review the pricing for 2024 contract, last year of five-year contract.

CAPC pays for the cutting of grass on the playing field and is currently engaged in a five-year contract with a local contractor. 2024 is the last year of this contract. Due to the unforeseen increase in inflation, the cost of fuel and additional man hours required to cut around new play equipment, the contractor has requested an additional £150 for 2024. This would bring the total annual cost to £2,800 (5.66% increase above season 2023 cost).

Proposer (additional £150.00 for 2024 season) Cllr Laurie Fisher, seconder Cllr Sean Allen, all in agreement.

e) EV Charging units for Castle Acre inc. CAPF/Priory & Village Hall – update (Cllr Liam Manson)

a) Cllr Liam Manson (traffic rep) met with CAPFA to discuss the NCC EV charging unit scheme. CAPFA were supportive of the scheme, however, felt that the current PF carpark was not a suitable location due to the requirement for the EV charging points to be accessible to the public 24/7 (the PF gates are only open during daylight hours for security purposes). It was suggested that the installation could be immediately outside the main entrance gates on St James Green. Expert advice would be needed to confirm that the electricity supply met the requirements and that it could be metered independently from the Pavilion.

b) English Heritage Head of Sustainability (Ruth Knight) met with NCC (Kurt Booth E-Vehicles Representative and Project engineer). Mr Booth reported to the PC that all the criteria for the EV units at the Priory site were met, except the need for unrestricted access.

c) The Village Hall committee was in support of the scheme, however, felt the limited parking spaces available (2 slots) were needed for events and should not be offered for public access (for EV charging). They also felt there were H&S issues created at the Pyes Lane site.

f) Councillor Training offer, support for PC and new Cllrs – update

The Clerk has been looking into training packages and support for the PC. There is currently a one-day course on offer from Jimmy Miller of NALC (an experienced Parish Councillor and Clerk), which would cover Cllr roles and responsibilities and the legal framework that Cllrs operate under. The NALC-approved course is currently offered at the reduced rate of £180.00 + VAT with an £50.00 surcharge for weekends.

Proposer (for NALC Cllr training) Cllr Neil Patrick, Seconder, Cllr Laurie Fisher, all in agreement.

g) Parish Council Clerk, Salary (adjustment), Training update and membership of SLCC.

The Chairman and Cllr Laurie Fisher noted the Clerk has been undercharging CAPC by two hours pcm, since May 2023. £137.00 of back payment is due to the Clerk. The Chairman proposed this payment be made and that any upcoming training hours be charged at the usual hourly rate (10 hours for NALC training). Further support would be available for annual membership to SLCC (£90.00 + VAT) if required.

Proposer (for underpayment payment adjustment, paid training hours and SLCC membership) Cllr Laurie Fisher, Seconder Cllr Liam Manson, all in agreement.

h) Review initial draft, Parish Council budget for 2024/2025.

The Chairman submitted a draft budget for January's upcoming precept application, the initial budget covers all areas of PC finances for the 2024/25 financial year and takes account of any cost increases such as inflation. Cllrs were sent email and given paper copy to review for November's meeting.

i) Castle Acre Voice, future editions to be discussed.

There is PC interest in the continuation of the CA Voice with future issues to be discussed at November's meeting.

77. Correspondence

a) Castle Acre RBL Remembrance Parade, PC involvement and wreath laying.

Cllr Laurie Fisher requested all Cllrs contribute to the cost of the CAPC annual wreath, which would cost approximately £20.00 and that he had volunteered to lay the wreath at November's ceremony. The ceremony will start on Stocks Green and march to the memorial as RBL services can no longer be held on public highways due to insurance issues. Information leaflets would be delivered to houses on Stocks Green to make sure that parked cars do not impede the march. Cllr Laurie Fisher reported that from 2024 the PC may be called upon to help organise this event and would be willing to act as representative of the PC in this regard.

b) TTSR Grass cutting of Village Greens, request for PC to review pricing for next season.

The review of next year's grass cutting costs will be reviewed as part of the Budget process.

c) Residents report concerning the state of repair of village map display casing, Stocks Green 21/09/2023.

A resident has reported concern over the placement, accessibility, and state of repair of the Village Map display. It is located in front of the old School building on Stocks Green. The Chairman has discussed this issue with the resident and its potential repair with a local carpenter, who has kindly offered to volunteer his time to resolve.

d) Breckland Local Plan is being set for next 25 years, public consultations and drop-in sessions in October (Swaffham/Thetford/Attleborough/Dereham).

The Clerk has circulated the session dates and event posters to Cllrs and placed the poster in the PF noticeboard, so that residents of Castle Acre can attend should they wish to take an active interest in local planning proposals.

- e) **NCC TRO (temporary traffic regulation order - STRO9696) affecting C671 Newton Road for 150m, westwards in the parish of Newton by Castle Acre, to facilitate fibre installation works. Road closure from 09:30am – 13:00 on 16/17th October 2023.**

The Clerk has informed Councillors of the proposed works and posted the notice on the PF noticeboard This is just for information purposes only.

78. Reports

Highways

St James Green, resident reported a pothole outside Moat House and Tower House – update.

The clerk has reported this issue to Highways, who have confirmed that action is required, though are yet to respond.

Wooden protection post, hit by lorry, north end of South Acre Road, junction with Priory Road - update.

The Clerk has reported, and Highways are due to replace the post.

New finger post on East Green, erected by Highways.

The Chairman reported to the Clerk that the Footpath fingerpost on East Green had rotted and fallen, Highways have replaced the post to the side of the Green. This allows better access for grass cutting.

Village Hall – None

School - None

CAPFA – Minutes of their last meeting were placed on the PF noticeboard and circulated to Clerk and Cllrs.

BCKLWN (BC) – Cllr Alistair Beales reported that there is a new, small grants community scheme at BCKLWN which could help fund community initiatives. The discovery at KLAC of the Shakespearean floorboards has garnered support from central government and the potential of private portfolio-holder-investment. Cllr Beales also confirmed that he has ‘called in’ the latest Ran Revir application to BCKLWN planning committee for further discussion.

Norfolk County Council (NCC) – None

79. Accounts to be paid:

ITEM:	Cost to PC Budget:	Grant funded:
PKF Littlejohn, Credit Control: Limited assurance review of AGAR ended March 2023.	£210.00 (VAT £42) Total: £252.00	
Clerk Salary October £356.63 Arrears payments from May to Sept (£137.00)	£493.63	
SSE Electricity Total collected by 21 st September 2023 (DD, Invoice 201906575 007)	£48.63	
HSBC Banking Charges 22/09/2023 (DD)	£8.00	

Reimburse Ronnie Colman, wood (Oak) – New Village Sign	£150.00	£150.00
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-Cllr Neil Patrick proposed the approval of accounts to be paid, seconder Cllr Virginia Ker-Gibson.
All agreed.

80. Village Maintenance

An LED Streetlight on St James Green was reported as not functioning to Clerk on 09/10/2023.
Clerk reported to K&M, who very efficiently repaired it the next day.

81. Public questions.

The meeting closed at 9:24pm

The next full Parish Council meeting is scheduled for **Thursday 9th November 2023** at 7:30pm, at the village hall.