

CASTLE ACRE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the village hall on Thursday 13 February 2020

Present: Mr M Hickey (MH) Chairman
S Allen (SA),
Mrs S Moister (SM)

Mr L Fisher (LF) Vice-Chairman,
Mr N Patrick (NP)
Mr M Tate (MT)

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

Apologies: Mr T Hubbard (TH), Mrs H Breach (HB)

Apologies not received: Cllr G Middleton (NCC)

74. Minutes of PC meeting on Thursday 9 Jan 2020
LF proposed approval of the Minutes, SM seconded.

75. Actions from previous meetings

62. Newton Road speed checks

PC Barnes is awaiting a speed gun training course in February and has confirmed that he will undertake speed checks on Newton Road soon after. Clerk to follow up.

28. Re-installing Bailey Gate portcullis and Bailey Street warning sign

The new Bailey Street warning sign has arrived. MH to contact the landowner and agree a convenient time to install the sign, SA to assist. Once Highways (HW) has completed the previously agreed changes to the traffic signs on the A1065, the Clerk will contact English Heritage to advise that the portcullis can be safely reinstalled.

51. Newton Road Bridge flooding

No new update. MH voiced his fears that Highways will not undertake the required long term corrective measures, but will continue to press for action.

113. Updates on outstanding Highways requests

Extra grips at the top of Orchard Lane and Rougham Road have been completed, the replacement 30 mph repeater sign on St James' Green remains outstanding.

20. Extra litter bin on playing field

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

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

As requested, the Clerk provided the owner of The Old School with contact details for Holkham Estate to confirm access rights of way on the shared driveway behind The Old School. The PC doesn't believe any further action could be taken at this point but will remain vigilant in highlighting possible further damage to the property's crumbling back wall. The Clerk will stay in touch with the Borough's enforcement team on any updates regarding their communications with the owner.

41. Drainage in High Street - update

MT reported: BT has confirmed their repair work is scheduled between 6 to 14 April which will mean closing the High Street to traffic. MT responded to BT pointing out that, given the village is a tourist attraction and pilgrimage route, keeping High Street closed over the Easter weekend would not be sensible. Concurrently, on the 7 or 8 April, Anglian Water (AW) plan to repair the pipe

outside No.18 High Street which was damaged when BT installed its broadband cable. MT asked AW to check why surface water is held back before the circular chamber cover in the High Street and also to confirm whether extra gullies are required, should the system lacks sufficient capacity to cope with surface water flows.

48. Re-painting BT phone box

With the full support of the Borough's Conservation Officer, the Clerk contacted BT to insist that the phone box is repainted now. BT has confirmed that it will be added to their painting schedule within the next 12 months.

55. Repair surface of alleyway off Foxes Meadow

Freebridge, UK Power Network and HW have all denied ownership of the alleyway. Agreed Clerk could spend £30 obtaining the title deeds from the Land Registry.

55. Pales Green memorial bench and signage on Green.

Cllrs approved the cost of £13.36 for a small metal red sign to go onto the Green's gate stating: 'Public access, no dogs allowed'. Clerk to place an order. JM confirmed a local family would be delighted to place a memorial bench on the Green and suggested that the Clerk contacts the family to clarify their wishes. JM to supply contact details.

56. Emergency Response Coordinator - volunteer

Clerk and MH to continue encouraging a volunteer to come forward.

56. English Heritage- charging for parking on Castle car park.

MH read out further e-mails sent to EH from both the village hall and the PC objecting to charging, followed by EH's dismissive response that didn't address the points raised in the e-mails as to whether, as a result of charging, EH has or will conduct a full environmental appraisal of the effect on the Conservation Area - both from additional signage and inappropriate parking on the grass verges. Further, to explain what research was carried to conclude that this car park is being, quote, 'used by a range of people visiting the village as additional free car parking.' EH did note that planning permission is not required for extra signage and stated that the introduction of paid parking will be implemented soon. Cllrs expressed their regret that English Heritage is not prepared to listen and act upon local concerns.

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

Thanks to MT who kindly installed the new sign. Clerk to see if old sign can be recycled.

61. Damaged gate East Green.

Holkham has confirmed their fencing contractor is scheduled in Castle Acre soon and will add repairing the gate to his list. Clerk to follow up.

Damaged footpath sign Back Lane

Scheduled to be repaired at the beginning of March.

66. Pot holes Foxes Meadow

Clerk confirmed that the pot holes on Foxes Meadow outside no.36 and 84, on Massingham Road outside no.91, plus several potholes on Archers and Orchard Lanes, were reported to HW and are scheduled to be repaired in the next six weeks. Clerk to chase up if not done by the end of April.

67. South Acre ford - prohibition of motor vehicles

MH explained that the NCC Highways officer handling the Traffic Restriction Order (TRO) is cooperating with the PC and is currently aiming for the preliminary Consultation to start in April (date TBC).

69. Remaining debris from external hedge trimming at The Grove

Clerk contacted the owner of the hedge row but received no response to date.

72. Tree in river behind Ranrevir,

Clerk has contacted the property owner asking if there are any plans currently in place to have the fallen tree removed from the river. Clerk awaiting response.

Overgrown hedge at A1065 and Newton Road junction

Clerk and MH have both chased the local farmer to have the brambles protruding from the hedge cut back, expressing concerns that drivers are swerving into the middle of the road in order to avoid them.

73. Property's bright external light on Massingham Road.

Clerk has contacted the property owner asking if the brightness of the external light could be reduced or shaded; no response received.

76. Health & Safety matters

Bush protruding into the road from the garden of Lower House on St James Green.

Clerk to ask the property owner to cut it back.

Debris remaining from a traffic incident near Jubilee Bridge

Following a traffic incident from hedge/tree debris blown onto the road after HW cleared the verges by the bridge, the Clerk to contact HW requesting the carriageway is cleared up quickly.

Local van obstructing pavement when parking on North Street.

Clerk to ask the van owner to park elsewhere and not block the footway which is forcing pedestrians onto the busy through road.

77. Matters requested by Councillors

Resignation of Parish Cllr.

Cllrs noted with regret Charlie William's decision last month to resign from the Council with immediate effect. Cllrs wish to record their thanks to Charlie for all her contributions to the Parish Council - her insight and ability to pinpoint possible solutions to village issues will be missed. The PC is now looking to co-opt a village resident to take up this position. MH has instructed the Clerk to start the Borough's process of advertising for a new Cllr for a six week period while also advertising the vacancy in the Nar Valley News. Candidates will be requested to send a brief CV by 6 April explaining why they want to be on the Council and what key issues they are keen to address. MH explained that once one or more applications are received, they will be circulated to Cllrs to vote on their preference at the April PC meeting. The elected candidate immediately comes onto the PC.

VE Day celebrations - 8 May 2020

Report from SM and Pat Clarke: following the advanced notice in February's Nar Valley News, a flyer will also be delivered to all houses in the village with detailed information on the VE Day. HW has approved the road closure for the street party on Stocks Green. Local residents will be warned about parking restrictions. Holkham has agreed that their field off Priory Lane can be used for overflow parking. It is hoped that the whole village will join in with the day's commemorations and festivities with lots of volunteers helping to prepare food, by entertaining - singing, dancing, playing instruments - or in creating something with a 1940s theme. All age groups will be encouraged to be involved. The PC is keen to find an Events Coordinator. The outcome of £100 grant application to the Borough will be known in March.

Holkham – visitor car park off Priory Road.

MH confirmed that Holkham will agree to a long term lease on part of their field to be used as a permanent visitor car park. Holkham is drawing up a draft lease. Cllrs agreed with MH that an application to the Borough for change of use should only be made once the Neighbourhood Plan is made (in force) which will give weight to the change. Discrete directional signage, traffic flows and other measures to be decided at a later date.

78. Planning –

Ref: 20/00094/F - removal of conditions 14 (glazed windows) and 19 (restricted roof access) of planning permission 19/00442/F at The Water Tower, Peddars Way.

MH invited the applicant to explain his reasons for requesting the removal of these two conditions, while members of the public attending expressed their opposition to any change, citing that future owners of the property may make greater use of the roof terrace to the detriment of residents in the vicinity. Not all Cllrs supported the belief that retaining the glazed side windows would give the immediate neighbours a greater assurance of not being overlooked, equally from persons standing on the roof, even for a brief time.

LF proposed that the PC object to the removal of condition 14. SM seconded. Agreed to the proposal by 3 votes to 2. LF then proposed that the PC object to the removal of condition 19, SM seconded. Agreed to the proposal by 3 votes to 2.

Ref: 20/00046/LB - listed building application: replacement of two sliding sash windows to front elevation on ground and first floors. Proposal to double glaze the new window at 2, Baileygate Cottages, Stocks Green.

Cllrs expressed their support for this application. Cllrs consider the plans do not alter the aesthetics of the building and are in keeping with the property, the adjoining houses and is sympathetic to the special qualities and character of the Conservation Area.

Ref 20/00137/F - proposed rebuilding and extension of existing outbuilding at Loke House, Castle Square, Bailey Street.

Cllrs expressed their support for this application. The PC consider that the rebuild and extension of the property will enhance the immediate surroundings and complement the neighbouring buildings.

79. Correspondence

Boundary Commission - consultation on electoral review of Norfolk's division boundaries

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is undertaking an electoral review of Norfolk County Council current and future Ward areas. The Commission is inviting Parishes to comment on changes to Ward boundaries by 24th March 2020. Cllrs do not consider that they are sufficiently informed to comment.

80. Reports

Highways – No new update

School – No new update

Village hall – written report from HB: the hall will be closed for four days during w/c 17 February while the floor is cleaned. The village hall committee has obtained quotations for levelling the parking area to the front of the hall to remove flints that have been causing problems. HW has agreed to repair/ re-instate of the road surface from the village hall's boundary to the existing carriageway.

CAPFA – NP reported: awaiting the decision in March on its major grant application for new play equipment. If successful, the appointed contractor could start work on the play area immediately, with the first new equipment being installed in time for this summer.

Neighbourhood Plan – MT reported: making final tweaks to the text and images before the draft Neighbourhood Plan can be sent out for consultation with stakeholders and village residents. After making any adjustments in response to those observations, the Plan undergoes a formal six week independent examination. Once passed, the Plan will be ready to go through the referendum process when resident parishioners will be able to vote on putting the Plan into force, probably by the late summer of 2020.

Borough Cllr's report – JM confirmed that the average council tax increase from April will be £4.50.

County Council – no report.

81. Accounts to be paid

Berrymans Glass Recycling Ltd (URM UK Ltd)	£37.20(£ 6.20 VAT)
E.on Energy (electricity)	£ 68.29 (£3.25 VAT)
Bailey Gate traffic warning sign (Limelight Signs Ltd)	£189.12 (£31.52)
Clerks expenses - stamps	£8.40
Clerks expenses - printer ink 1x multi pack, 1x black	£60.48 (£10.08)
Compass Point - Neighbourhood Plan	£307.10

Approval of accounts to be paid proposed by LF and seconded by SM.

82. Village Maintenance

Highway and Community Rangers March visit– tasks

Cllrs asked to submit any requests for Clerk asap. Clerk to respond to HW with requests.

Village bus shelter

The bus shelter blew over during Storm Ciara. Cllrs expressed their thanks to a local resident who is kindly prepared to repair it and, with help, to upright the shelter and fix it securely to its concrete base.

83. Public Question Time

Concerns over the planned opening of the overflow car park.

Residents living in Priory Road opposite the Holkham field earmarked as an overflow car park voiced their concerns about possible knock-on effects from its use, namely: increased traffic in the immediate area; more vehicles sharing the road space with the Eagles Coaches; inadequate space for two cars to pass on both Priory Lane and Back Lane; dangers to local children, cyclists, tourists, walkers and dog walkers who regularly use the area; water logged ground throughout the winter; question of security to prevent improper use and unwanted visitors. MH explained that all these points will be carefully addressed before the PC sign a long-term lease with Holkham. Grant funding might meet the cost of laying down plastic ground matting to counteract the soggy ground.

Ground level out-buildings at The Water Tower

A local resident wanted to questioned when these unsightly out-buildings will be hidden by planted hedges, as outlined in the first approved variation to the planning application. MH and the Clerk to follow up on this with property owner.

The meeting closed at 9pm. The next full Parish Council meeting is on **Thursday 12 March** at 7.30pm