



Caston Parish Council

CHAIRMAN:- Mr. David Blincow VICE CHAIRMAN: - Mrs. Kay Farmbrough

**MINUTES OF
THE MEETING OF CASTON PARISH COUNCIL
MONDAY 5 DECEMBER 2016
CASTON VILLAGE HALL at 7.30 pm**

Councillor's present:- David Blincow, Kay Farmbrough, Brian Brooker, Frank Brown, Rob Lond-Caulk, Peter Chapman,

Also present:- Alan Kennison and Michael Goodrick from Neighbourhood Watch, Members of the Public

1. **Apologies for absence:** Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Porter.
2. **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2016 be signed as a true and correct record. Proposed by Cllr Brown and seconded by Cllr Lond-Caulk.

The Chairman closed the Council Meeting to permit public discussion.

3. **Guest Speakers:**

The Council had invited Norfolk Neighbourhood Watch to provide a presentation to residents. Alan Kennison, Vice Chairman and Michael Goodrick, Treasurer advised that they look after parishes throughout Norfolk and are a self-funding charity. The scheme is now known as Neighbourhood Watch, not Homewatch, and due to a loss of some data, they are currently trying to establish where the schemes are still operating. Caston is not registered on the national database but steps will be taken to ensure registration. There is a new logo and new signs are available to be adhered over the top of existing signs. However, if a new sign is required Highways permission would be required. The new sticky signs are £4 each or new hard back signs are available at £14.50 each. There was some debate regarding size of the signs as it was considered that the signs in Caston are currently smaller. Window stickers and no cold caller stickers are also available.

There are several benefits of the scheme which include Police Connect which alerts a parish of any problems in the neighbouring parishes. There is 'absence cover' which allows a resident to advise of contact details for a keyholder/alarm code if you are away from home and some insurance companies offer a reduction in household insurance.

If the Parish Council sets up the scheme, all residents automatically become members of the scheme. The only costs being the initial set up costs for new signs. There is a co-ordinator within the village who receives alerts and there is a direct link between the co-ordinator and the PCSO.

Colin Bearne, the Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator for Caston, will liaise with the representatives in relation to new stickers and registration.

4. **Participation and questions from the public, session 1:**

A member of the public advised that the noticeboard on Northacre requires some maintenance/repairs and the village sign on the Green also requires repainting.

5. **Caston Speed Watch Co-ordinator Colin Bearne – Contact 01953 483961**

The attached report was provided by Colin Bearne.

6. **Caston Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator Colin Bearne – Contact 01953 483961**

The attached report was provided by the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, Colin Bearne.

CHAIRMAN.....

DATED:

The Chairman reopened the Council meeting.

7. **Declarations of Interest**:- Cllr Lond-Caulk, item 8B.
Dispensations from Council Members: - None

8. **Planning Applications**:-

- A. **3PL/2016/1272/HOU** – 2 The Green – undecided by Breckland.
- B. **3PL/2015/0180/F** – The Barn, Dukes Lane – Cllr Lond-Caulk advised that things were now progressing well with the new site and they were on track to meet the deadline.

9. **To discuss propose and vote on the following subjects**:-

- A. **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Clerk, having completed the six months' trial period of employment as at 18 November 2016, to the satisfaction of the Council, that her permanent employment be ratified and confirmed all pursuant to and in conformity to the Letter of Engagement dated 18 May 2016. Proposed by Cllr Farmbrough, seconded by Cllr Blincow, all present in favour.
- B. A discussion took place as to whether the sum of £5,000 should be paid from the Highway Surveyors Trust to the Village Hall Charitable Trust to aid the refurbishment of the kitchen, toilet and porch areas of the village hall.

Cllr Blincow expressed the view that he felt the monies should not, at this stage, be transferred to the village hall as they are not in a position to utilise the funds in the short term.

Cllr Brooker advised that there are currently insufficient funds to carry out the necessary works however, if funding was obtained from Breckland and/or other charitable organisations, together with the £5,000 from the Highway Surveyors Trust, then this may be possible.

Cllr Brown advised that £5,000 has already been earmarked by the Highways Surveyors Trust for recreational facilities/village hall needs.

Cllr Farmbrough advised that as a village hall committee member she was uncomfortable dealing with this matter and that she would abstain from any vote. The Chairman commented that some other Councillors were also village hall committee members and advice had been received by the Council that as there was no pecuniary interest such Councillors did not have a conflict of interest and were free to discuss and vote on Council business as is related or otherwise connected with the village hall.

Cllr Lond-Caulk advised that he was opposed to earmarking the funds for this purpose as they may be required for alternative competing projects and that in his view the substantial monies presently intended to be invested in the refurbishment of the very old building would not be well spent and that a new build would be a more cost effective alternative project.

Cllr Blincow advised that if the funds are earmarked it is a label and these funds could be allocated elsewhere if required.

It was therefore **PROPOSED** by Cllr Brooker and seconded by Cllr Brown that the £5,000 presently earmarked for recreational facilities/village hall needs be henceforth earmarked for the village hall refurbishment project but subject to disbursement only upon evidence that the village hall had raised sufficient funds and commitments from other donors such as with the aforementioned earmarked funds means that the refurbishment project is fully funded.

A vote was taken with four in favour, one abstention and one against.

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10. **IT WAS RESOLVED** with all in favour, that the following payments should be made:-

- A. Salary payment including holiday pay allowance to the Clerk, Mrs Joanne Blackman, for the month of November 2016 in the sum of £207.61.
- B. Expenses of the Clerk, Mrs Joanne Blackman, for the months of September to November in the sum of £104.28.
- C. Payment to RGM for grass cutting in November - £96.00 incl. VAT.
- D. Payment to Cllr Brooker in reimbursement of the sum of £22.76 incl. VAT in respect of the caston-online.co.uk domain and mailbox.
- E. Payment to Cllr Brooker in reimbursement of the sum of £8.39 incl VAT in respect of additional mailbox for castonparishcouncil.co.uk.

11. **Matters to Report:-**

- A. The defibrillator has been installed at the Village Hall. Consideration is to be given to who is to undertake a weekly check of the defibrillator and box to ensure everything is in order. Cllr Brooker suggested that this is something that could be done at the weekly drop-in coffee morning. This matter will be given some further thought.

The Clerk advised that she had been trying to obtain some prices for informal group training for residents wishing to take part. This has proved quite difficult as most courses are designed with a qualification in mind and are very costly. The Clerk has made enquiries of the Wayland First Responders/East of England Ambulance Service and St John's and is awaiting some prices and/or whether they can offer the training. British Heart Foundation and Red Cross do not offer these types of training. **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Clerk would continue to pursue possible training opportunities and report further in due course.

A suggestion was made that we should have a few village 'first responders' to whom the access code could be given to assist in the event of an emergency. The Clerk advised that contact had been received from Kevin Pell of the Martial Arts Centre who stated he would be interested in this. He has already received some previous training.

- B. The Clerk advised that she had circulated the amended Welcome Brochure to all councillors and with the exception of one small minor amendment to a website address, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Clerk would arrange for six laminated copies to be produced for immediate use.
- C. The Clerk advised that she had written to Hugh Coggles requesting the support of Breckland Council to the felling of the large Beech tree at Coronation Terrace and that to date she had not received a response. **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Clerk would continue to pursue this matter.
- D. The Clerk was advised that the Rangers had visited today and that some of the requested jobs had been undertaken. The Clerk was to be advised if anything remained outstanding.

Cllr Lond-Caulk advised that he had received an email from a resident regarding the oak tree in the garden of Thatched Cottage, next to the drive for Chase Farm. The tree has some low hanging branches which are below head height and pose a danger, especially at night, as they cannot be seen. **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Clerk would write to the residents of Thatched Cottage to request the same and to provide the contact details for Hugh Coggles as the tree is the subject of a TPO and will require consent to do so.

A further concern was raised regarding the puddle that appears, after rainfall, just after the bend at Dukes Lane. The Clerk advised that this matter had been reported previously and Cllr Blincow advised that Highways have advised that there are insufficient funds available to deal with this matter. **IT WAS RESOLVED** that Cllr Lond-Caulk will forward the email to the Clerk and the Parish Council will respond.

CHAIRMAN.....

DATED:

Concern was also raised regarding the reflective signs outside Flaxmoor House. The Clerk advised that these had also been previously reported. **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Clerk would continue to pursue this matter as a matter of urgency.

- E. The Clerk advised that she was experiencing some difficulties in locating a conservation builder who would be happy to quote for the repairs to the Village Cross. The Clerk will continue to seek quotes for consideration.
- F. The Clerk advised that she was awaiting a response from Breckland in relation to the installation of a new dog bin, to be located by the bus shelter, near the school. The Clerk will continue to pursue this matter.
- G. The Clerk advised that she had submitted the application to the Parish Partnership Scheme for a retrospective claim in respect of the village gates recently installed. The application had been acknowledged but we would not know the outcome of this until March.
- H. Cllr Farmbrough advised that the Village Appraisal had been approved ready for printing and these would be delivered in the first week of January. The Appraisal would be completed by the 31 January and would then be analysed and the Appraisal results prepared. There is a free prize draw to encourage residents to complete the Appraisal and this will be drawn at the Parish Council meeting to be held on 6 March 2017.
- I. The Clerk provided an update on the Parish Council financial balances.
- J. The Clerk provided an update on the current position regarding the opening of the new Lloyds Bank accounts for the Highway Surveyors Trust and Caston Parish Council and the closure of the same currently held with Barclays Bank.

The Clerk advised that upon clearance of several outstanding cheques, the balance on the Business Saver (current) account would be £4,725.56. The Clerk therefore advised that she proposed a cheque should be drawn, in favour of Caston Parish Council, in the sum of £4,400, to be paid into the new Lloyds Bank account to enable the account to become operational. Further, upon clearance of all outstanding cheques, a closure letter would be sent to Barclays Bank to transfer any outstanding balance from both the Business Saver account and Business Premium account to the new Caston Parish Council Lloyds Bank account. **IT WAS RESOLVED** therefore that a cheque in the sum of £4,400 be issued in the name of Caston Parish Council from the Barclays Bank Business Saver account to be paid into the new Caston Parish Council Lloyds Bank account and upon clearance of all outstanding cheques on the existing Barclays Bank Business Saver account, the balance of both the Business Saver and Business Premium accounts with Barclays Bank be transferred to the new Caston Parish Council Lloyds Bank account and the existing accounts with Barclays Bank be closed.

In respect of the Cambridge & Counties bank, 45 day notice account, the Clerk advised that this account will be closed on the 6 December and the balance transferred to a new 31 day notice account as agreed at the meeting of 5 November 2016.

- K. The Clerk advised that she had provided Phil Wells with the information she had regarding the possible adoption of the two telephone boxes within the village.
12. Any correspondence and associated information added to the Councillors' Folder for circulation.
13. **To agree the next meeting date Monday 9 January 2017.**

The Chairman closed the Council Meeting to permit public discussion.

CHAIRMAN.....

DATED:

14. **Participation and questions from the public – session 2.**

Phil Wells addressed the council and members of the public to advise that he had made some initial enquiries in relation to the adoption of the telephone box near the Northacre junction as this had been earmarked for removal by BT (as has the phone box on The Green). He advised that it required a Community Group, with charitable status, to be set up to adopt and maintain the box. Interest has been shown from a few residents in adopting the same and he was hoping to organise a meeting to gauge the extent of the interest and consider setting up such a group. Cllr Blincow advised that there was a general interest in both the boxes in Caston and both should be included and suggested that Phil Wells might consider placing notices in the village to canvas support. Phil Wells will update the Council in due course.

A member of the public enquired whether the proposed monies in respect of the Village Hall refurbishment costs were in addition to the £13,000 already paid to the Village Hall Charitable Trust. It was confirmed this is the case. It was suggested that there was a payment to be made following planning approval at the White House site. Cllr Lond-Caulk advised that such payments often form part of planning approval but usually these monies are placed into a fund. Such monies cannot be ring fenced for projects within the village from where the funds originated.

A member of the public advised that the waste bin at the bus shelter, near the school, had not been emptied and was overflowing. This had been reported to the Norfolk County Council for action.

A member of the public advised that he had tried to have a smart meter fitted at his property this week but this was not possible due to the lack of mobile phone signal in the village.

Colin Bearne, the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, asked whether the Parish Council wished to formalise registration to the Neighbourhood Watch scheme and it was agreed to do so. ***Item for next Agenda to consider budget.***

The Chairman reopened the Council Meeting.

15. **Any other business/matters to be noted for next Agenda.** Budget to be discussed in relation to the new Neighbourhood Watch signs.

Meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

Joanne Blackman
Parish Clerk
15.12.2016

CHAIRMAN.....

DATED: