



Caston Parish Council

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

**MINUTES OF
THE MEETING OF CASTON PARISH COUNCIL
MONDAY 4 JULY 2016
CASTON VILLAGE HALL at 7.30 pm**

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

Also present:- Member of the Public, Claire Bowes – County Councillor

1. **Apologies for absence:** None
2. **IT WAS RESOLVED** the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2016 could be signed, by the Chairman, as a true and correct record. Proposed and seconded by Cllr Kay Farmbrough and Cllr Frank Brown.

The Chairman closed the Council Meeting to permit public discussion.

3. **Participation and questions from the public, session 1:** None.
4. **Guest Speakers:** None.
5. **Caston Speed Watch Co-ordinator Colin Bearne – Contact 01953 483961**
The Chairman passed a copy of the Speedwatch Report to the member of public. In the period concerned there have been 3 meetings of the Speedwatch team. 365 vehicles were observed of which 16 were speeding. Our figures for the recent past show that traffic in the village has generally increased considerably.

Though our numbers have increased we are still keen to have even more support. Please join us if you are concerned about speeding in the village. It takes only 1-2 hours of your time every alternate week.

6. **Caston Home Watch Co-ordinator Colin Bearne – Contact 01953 483961**
The Chairman passed a copy of the Homewatch Report to the member of public. Nothing serious to report this month. Enjoy the sunny weather but remember to secure all doors and windows when you are away from the house, also to put away garden tools and machinery in particular sit-on mowers.

The Chairman reopened the Council meeting.

7. **Declarations of Interest:-** Cllr Rob Lond-Caulk item 8D.
Dispensations from Council Members: - None
8. **Planning Applications:-**
 - A. **3/PL/2016/0532/HOU** – Fox Hall Farmhouse, Northacre. Erection of double garage to rear of the property and alterations and extensions. Permission refused.
 - B. **3PL/2016/0519/VAR – 3PL/2014/1002/F** – The White House, The Street. Revised scheme. Permission granted. Cllr Porter enquired as to whether there was any news in relation to the road name to be used. The Clerk confirmed that she was not aware of a decision.
 - C. **3PL/2016/0586/HOU** – Touchstone Cottage, The Street. Extension to rear of property. Permission granted.

CHAIRMAN.....

DATED:

CLERK: Joanne Blackman, Westcroft, Watton Road, Ashill, Norfolk, IP25 7AQ
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- D. **3/PL/2015/0613/F** – Old Coach Depot, Dukes Lane. Residential development of 3 new dwellings (including the removal of a temporary structure used as a site office and store). Permission granted. Cllr Lond-Caulk, the Applicant, confirmed that the temporary structure would be removed by the end of the year.

County Cllr Claire Bowes joined the meeting and the Chairman closed the meeting to permit public discussion.

Cllr Farmbrough expressed her concerns over two structures which had been erected in Northacre, opposite Northacre House. Cllr Bowes confirmed that the Council should, in the first instance, contact the Planning Department. Clerk will contact Planning Department.

Cllr Bowes then went on to explain the current position regarding the Devolution Deal. There is a proposal between Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils which will be going to consultation. The consultation will be a targeted Ipsos MORI style consultation which is expected to take 7 weeks. Every household should receive a leaflet and the County Council would encourage people to take part. Cllr Bowes confirmed that the County Council agreed to take this matter to consultation and the decision of the County Council effectively overrides the decision of the District Council.

Cllr Bowes also confirmed that there is a consultation taking place in relation to the Police & Crime Commission and this can be accessed at www.norfolkpcc.gov.uk.

The second round of verge cutting is scheduled to take place between 11 July and 8 August and the Parish Council should contact Paul Sellick at Highways with any particular concerns.

Cllr Lond-Caulk enquired about the current position regarding Scoulton Crematorium. Cllr Bowes confirmed that to her knowledge the second judicial decision of the High Court was that the decision had been overturned. The matter, she believes, will now be returned to Breckland for further consideration.

The Chairman reopened the Council Meeting.

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

- A. The Chairman advised the meeting of the current donations which are made by the Parish Council. Cllr Brown advised that it was likely the insurance for the Village Hall would increase this year and asked whether this amount could be increased. Cllr Farmbrough advised that the donation made was towards the insurance and was not to pay for the insurance in full. Cllr Chapman suggested that maybe the amount should be increased in line with inflation. Further discussion took place and **IT WAS RESOLVED** that all donations currently made would remain at the current level for further review in due course. Proposed by Cllr Porter and seconded by Cllr Lond-Caulk. The Chairman commented that it was his understanding that any parishioner may, upon decease, be buried in the churchyard and that in acknowledgement thereof the Parish Council make an annual contribution to the Parochial Church Council towards churchyard maintenance. This was confirmed to be accurate by Mrs Jane Horner a member of the public.
- B. Cllr Brown advised the meeting that having considered the advice of the Charity Commission in relation to the Allotment to Former Highway Surveyors Charity, it was his opinion that:-
- The Trustees are free to apply both the income and capital for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Parish.
 - The resources of the Charity may NOT however be used to discharge a statutory obligation of the Parish Council e.g. tree maintenance and safety
 - General benefit would cover e.g. the purchase and installation of a defibrillator or the SAM2 equipment – these benefit most, if not all, the inhabitants of the Parish and the provision of this equipment is not a statutory obligation of the Parish Council.
 - Furthermore, the Trustees should consider and be satisfied that the disbursement of funds benefits as many inhabitants as reasonably possible. It must be questionable therefore if the Charity's resources should be appropriated to narrow or frivolous objectives or courses.

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It was therefore concluded that the Parish Council are free to use the funds within the guidelines set out above.

- C. The Council discussed the proposal that the Agendas and Minutes of each meeting are no longer displayed on the Village Noticeboards. Instead, a list of meeting dates together with contact details of where residents can obtain a copy of the Agendas and Minutes will be displayed. The residents will be directed to either the website or, for those without internet access, the contact details of the Clerk who will provide a printed copy by post. This will be a considerable financial saving for the Parish Council and we will remain compliant with the guidelines. Cllr Lond-Caulk asked whether we should put the question to residents in the Village Appraisal as to who looks at the Village Noticeboards, Cllrs Porter and Farmbrough agreed. Cllr Brown suggested that the dates should be published in the Waylander. Cllr Brooker pointed out that anyone who does look at the Noticeboard will see the Notice and will still be able to obtain a copy from the Clerk.
- D. The Council discussed the disposal of the old Parish Council notebook computer. Cllr Brooker explained that the old computer is very old, it has not been used for a long time and is virtually worthless in terms of resale value. If we were to clear the data, we cannot be certain that some data may still be recoverable. **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the hard drive be removed and the computer destroyed. Proposed by Cllr Brooker and seconded by Cllr Brown.
10. **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the following payments should be made:-
- A. Salary payment including holiday pay allowance to the Clerk, Mrs Joanne Blackman, for the month of June 2016 in the sum of £207.61. Proposed by Cllr Porter and seconded by Cllr Farmbrough.
- B. Expenses payment to the Clerk, Mrs Joanne Blackman, for the purchase of the following for the Council laptop:-
- a. One back-up drive – Samsung M3 Slimline 1TB USB 3 Portable Hard Drive (£55.80)
 - b. Norton anti-virus software (£29.99)
 - c. MS Office – Microsoft Home and Business 2016 – Licence Key (£164.01)
- Proposed by Cllr Blincow and seconded by Cllr Chapman.
- C. RGM for grass cutting for the month of June (£192.00 incl VAT). Proposed by Cllr Blincow and seconded by Cllr Farmbrough.
11. A. The Clerk updated the Council on two quotes received for the tree works at Coronation Terrace. CGM in the sum of £1,535 plus VAT. CGM quoted to crown and strap the Beech Tree, remove the Plum tree and dead wood all other trees. Norfolk Trees quoted £2,510 plus VAT but felt that by removing the weight from the Beech Tree, it would not be necessary to strap it and therefore the quote would reduce by £750. Cllr Blincow had also heard from Adam Green who advised that he felt unable to quote other than to fell the trees and plant new ones in their place as, in his opinion, the trees will fail in due course and it would be a waste of money. He advised an indicative cost for felling the trees would be in the region of £700 but if the timber were sold, this may reduce.
- The Council discussed the trees at some length and it was felt that we were receiving conflicting advice and as we are not specialists, it is very difficult to make a decision. Cllr Blincow commented that notwithstanding the Council has a duty of care and must act.
- After much consideration it was proposed that we approach Adam Green to quote for felling of the Beech tree and Plum tree and to remove dead wood from the Oak and Ash trees. The Clerk and Cllr Blincow to contact Adam Green.
- Whilst discussing Coronation Terrace, the subject of the hedge and verge were raised. The Council agreed that we would seek a quote from RG Maintenance Services Limited to strim the grass verge by the pavement and prune the hedge to a height of 1 metre when they carry out their last cut of the year in October. Clerk to obtain a quote. **Item for next Agenda.**

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- B. Cllr Porter advised that she was awaiting a revised quote and pro forma invoice in relation to the village gates. The updated quote is required as originally we had obtained various quotes from different sources which we were now looking to streamline so it all comes from one source. The estimated date of installation is likely to be the end of July. **Item for next Agenda.**
- C. The Clerk updated the Council in relation to the defibrillator. The Clerk had forwarded the quote for the electrical work to Breckland. However, the lady who had been dealing with the funding application had now left and she had been referred to a generic email. The Clerk telephoned Breckland to enquire and was referred to the Norfolk Community Foundation who have now taken over the processing of such applications. Norfolk Community Foundation advised that our application had remained with Breckland as it was nearing completion but the gentleman who was now dealing with this was on holiday. Clerk to follow up in due course. **Item for next Agenda.**
- D. Cllr Farmbrough provided a draft Welcome Pack document for consideration. It is to include details of what is going on in the village and to provide important telephone numbers. It is proposed that these cards will be laminated and delivered to new residents moving into the village. Cllr Farmbrough will forward the document to the Clerk for refining. **Item for next Agenda.**
- E. Cllr Brown updated the Council in relation to the banking arrangements as follows:-

Electronic Banking - The banking working group and Clerk have been in communication with Barclays Bank in order to implement electronic banking on the basis of payments to be initiated by the Clerk and authorised electronically by any two of three authorised signatories or other acceptable legal and or good practice variation thereof and so far we do not have a satisfactory response. Pending further clarification with the Bank and as an interim step, it is recommended that the Council implement the Bank's current solution of a Simple Servicing Authority to enable the Clerk to access accounts online.

According to our current understanding the Clerk [RFO] cannot be a cheque or electronic signatory – all payments must be signed [electronically or otherwise] by two councillors. These rules may be changing/have changed for the electronic age but this is the current understanding pending further and better particulars.

It is therefore proposed that having considered an update report from the banking working group **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Council execute and deliver to Barclays Bank the Bank's Simple Servicing Authority pursuant to the mandate between the Council and the Bank to enable the Clerk to access electronically all present and future accounts operated by the Council with the Bank. Clerk to obtain Simple Servicing Authority From from the Bank. **Item for next Agenda.**

Disposition of Funds - As at 31 March the Council and Allotment to Former Highway Surveyors has the following funds:

Parish Council [including VAT receivable – now received]: £13,508 of which £5,875 is earmarked and £7,633 held in reserve. Allotment to Former Highway Surveyors: £13,290

The precept for 16/17 is about £8,250 including a grant which attaches to the precept. These monies are paid in two instalments of about £4,125 each and thus current expenditure is being met from the 16/17 precept and reserves have not been appropriated. It is proposed that the net SAM2 investment [about £2,000] and village gate costs [about £2,700] are met from the reserves of £7,633]. Consequently as a first step in relation to increasing the yield on funds it is recommend that £12,000 of the Highway Surveyors funds are placed on 45 day notice account with Cambridge & Counties Bank at 1.30 per cent gross yield – the minimum deposit is £10,000 and the funds are secured under the State backed FSCS.

Having considered an update report from the banking working group **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Council in its capacity as Trustee of the Allotment to Former Highway Surveyors Charity Registration No. 290195 ["Trust"] commence deposit banking arrangements with Cambridge & Counties Bank ["C&C"] in the name of the Trust and execute and deliver to C&C such account opening and mandate documentation and "know your client" material as required by C&C on the basis of any two of Councillors David Blincow; Kay Farmbrough and Frank Brown signing together

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and FURTHER that the Trust place £12,000 on a 45 day notice deposit with C&C on best terms possible. Proposed by Cllr Blincow and seconded by Cllr Brown. **Item for next Agenda.**

Defibrillator - There is also the subject of the defibrillator which evidently has a cost of about £1,300 including installation. Pending further advice as to the status of this matter it is recommended that this project be funded from the unrestricted reserves of the Allotment to Former Highway Surveyors Charity. Proposed by Cllr Blincow and seconded by Cllr Brooker. **Item for the next Agenda.**

- F. Cllrs Farmbrough and Porter updated the Council in relation to the Village Appraisal. The Village Appraisal Working Group has a meeting on Friday and they will be in a better position to update us further at the next meeting. They have one lady who is particularly keen to lead the project and several others who are prepared to deliver and collect the Appraisal forms. Cllr Farmbrough advised that when the last Appraisal was undertaken in 2007, a Grant was made available from Norfolk Rural Community Council (now Community Action Norfolk) and the Wayland Partnership and wondered whether such a Grant was available now. The Clerk to investigate. The timeframe is unknown at this time. **Item for next Agenda.**
- G. Cllr Porter advised the Council that the SAM2 sign had now been ordered and that we expect delivery within 4-6 weeks. The Speedwatch Team will control the movements of the sign. **Item for next Agenda.**
- H. Cllr Blincow advised that the speed signs at Caston Road/Griston Road junction are still facing the wrong way meaning that it indicates the speed through the village is the National Speed Limit. The Clerk advised that this had been reported to Highways and that it was being investigated. **Item for next Agenda.**
12. Any correspondence and associated information added to the Councillors' Folder for circulation.
13. Cllr Blincow proposed that there be no meeting in August unless any urgent business arises. **Next meeting Monday 5 September 2016.**

The Chairman closed the meeting to permit public discussion.

14. A member of the public enquired how many SAM2 signs there would be and was advised one.
15. Cllr Porter advised that the chevrons need to be repainted on the bend outside Flaxmore House.

Joanne Blackman
Parish Clerk
08.07.16

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DATED: