

Caston Parish Council

CHAIRMAN: Mrs Jaki Porter

VICE CHAIRMAN: Mrs Kay Farmbrough

**MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF CASTON PARISH COUNCIL
MONDAY 12 APRIL 2021
BY ZOOM CONFERENCE CALL at 7.30 pm**

Councillor's present:- Jaki Porter, Kay Farmbrough, Chris Cook, Mary Howell

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

A minute's silence was observed at the beginning of the meeting in memory of HRH Prince Philip.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Grimsditch.

County Councillor Claire Bowes joined the meeting.

2. To approve the Minutes of the Virtual Meeting held on Monday 1 March 2021

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 1 March 2021 be signed, by the Chairman, as a true and correct record. Proposed by Cllr Farmbrough and seconded by Cllr Cook, all voted in favour.

The Chairman closed the meeting to permit participation from the public.

3. Participation and questions from the public, session 1.

A member of the public advised that there are some branches overhanging the public footpath outside Thatch Cottage. ***Item for next Agenda.***

4. Guest Speakers

CC Bowes reported as follows:-

"The County Council have recently launched a campaign to help drive down single-use product and plastic waste by calling on people to swap2save. By making small everyday changes, like swapping a take-away drink in a plastic bottle for a reusable and refillable water bottle, people will be able to save their money and cut waste. The single-use items targeted by the campaign lead to 30,000 tonnes of waste annually in Norfolk, costing £3.47million to dispose of every year. The campaign will highlight some simple swaps people can make to cut waste such as swapping disposable razors for a bamboo or stainless ones with replaceable blades and switching from disposable wet wipes or cotton wool pads to a washable cotton flannel. There are lots of good examples and ideas and for more information, and great swap ideas, visit www.norfolkrecycles.com/swap2save. We can all do our bit to cut down on waste.

A new project to boost the supply of Norfolk trees will help improve local biodiversity and mitigate aspects of climate change. Nationally, trees outside woodlands have seen accelerating losses, driven by pressures from pests and diseases, and long-term neglect and decline. The Boosting Community Tree Nurseries project will find ways to support existing community-led nurseries in Norfolk and establish the best ways to help new set-ups that involve the community. The project will support nurseries to produce trees that are biosecure - stock that

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is handled responsibly and safely, inspected for pests and diseases regularly and for which records are kept to enable traceability. Using locally collected seed will help retain regional genetic diversity and provide appropriate species to improve tree stock resilience. The project, led by Norfolk County Council, could see a training hub created to provide support for communities interested in getting involved.

The three-year project could tie into the County Council's [1 Million Trees for Norfolk](#) initiative by providing supplies of local seeds and saplings. Boosting Community Tree Nurseries is expected to receive £250,000-300,000 in funding from a Government scheme to establish more trees outside woodlands.

A new cross border grant scheme being launched by Norfolk County Council and Suffolk County Council is set to provide welcome support to businesses contributing to the rural economy. The DRIVE scheme (Delivering Rural Investment, Vital Employment) is a two-year project designed to encourage and support sound business investment decisions. The project has received £3million of funding from the England European Regional Development Fund. Expert mentors will be on hand to help businesses develop strong project and business plans. And to help put those into action, businesses will then be able to apply for

grants of between £5k and £30k. The aim is to help boost jobs as all applicants will need to put forward job creation as a result of their grant application. The scheme is open to existing and new businesses. New businesses looking to apply will have to be aiming to employ 3 new members of staff within the next three years.

Young people in Norfolk who are at risk of exploitation are to benefit from a new Targeted Youth Support service. Run by the County Council, the £1m service is aimed at supporting those who are risk of harm outside of the family home – through criminal or sexual exploitation. It will build on the work already being carried out by the council's detached youth work service in Norwich, as well as support provided across police, social care, the Youth Offending service and voluntary sector services.

From yesterday, non-essential shops, libraries, gyms, hairdressers, self-catering accommodation and other venues have reopened and

Diane Steiner, Norfolk's deputy director of Public Health has asked residents to keep following the basic hygiene and social distancing rules and to only meet people outside and observing the rule of six people or two families. As of last Friday, Norfolk's Covid case rate was 22 per 100,000, down from 38.1 the previous week and we don't want to see it rise.

The Government has announced the expansion of free, rapid testing and is encouraging everyone to take part – especially as one in three people with Covid have no symptoms.

Norfolk County Council's libraries will reopen in two phases over the next fortnight. Further details can be found online."

5. Speedwatch

"There are seven dates planned for the month of April at various times and locations. The volunteers have rallied round, and the checks have four members per check. The duration of each check will be for a minimum of 39 minutes which can be extended to a maximum of 60 minutes if all the volunteers agree.

With all the new residents in the village I am always looking for more volunteers to swell our ranks.

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Should anyone want information on becoming a Speed Watch Volunteer I can be contacted on 488902 and discuss the simple joining process and the training involved”.

The Chairman reopened the Council meeting.

6. To record any Declarations of Interest and to consider any requests for Dispensations from Council Members.

Cllr Farnbrough – 8A, 8C and 8D as a neighbour.

7. Planning Applications

The following updates were provided in relation to current planning applications.

- A. 3OB/2021/0013/OB – Land Adjacent to Caston Primary School Caston Norfolk NR17 1DD – Modify The Application Obligation on 3PL/2017/1267/O The obligation required for the provision of a car park for Caston Primary School. However, since the approval was granted it has become apparent that the school does not wish to have the car park provided.** Cllr Farnbrough read out the original condition and advised that she strongly objected to this application as the outline application would not have been approved if this condition was not included. Cllr Howell agreed and supports the view of Cllr Farnbrough. Cllr Howell enquired as to who had been asked at the school, was it the school or the Diocese, or both, and what were the reasons for not wanting the car park. Cllr Howell felt it is important that we understood the reasons. Cllr Cook advised that the school have not formally turned down the car park but there is nothing in the documents to say that they do want it. Cllr Porter advised that originally the Diocese were keen for the car park to be installed but that the school were concerned regarding maintenance and likely costs which may be required in the future. It was concluded that the school had not said that they did not want the car park.

CC Bowes interrupted the meeting to advise that the Applicant was in the meeting and that he should be permitted to speak. The Applicant had not formally requested to join the meeting.

Cllr Porter permitted the Applicant to speak.

The Applicant advised that the original application included 5 affordable properties which were offered as a community benefit and he felt that it was a good thing to offer a car park for the school. The Applicant confirmed that the Diocese were in support of this offer but the school less so. He has received informal feedback from the school which indicates that they do not want the car park.

The Applicant advised that his agent had re-contacted the school but to date, no response had been received.

As a replacement, the pond was offered to remove water from the site to assist with the flooding issue. This application is now part of the planning response and the Applicant did not wish to debate the application at this meeting.

Cllr Porter asked CC Bowes if she wished to speak. CC Bowes advised that she did not wish to speak but was merely pointing out the Application was in attendance. Further CC Bowes is a member of the Planning Committee, who will ultimately decide the outcome of this matter, and it was not appropriate to comment. CC Bowes advised that we should speak with DC Cowen who is the Breckland representative for the Ward.

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Cllr Howell thanked the Applicant for speaking and asked who at the school had been contacted. The Applicant was unsure as this was dealt with by his Agent, but he assumed it was the Chair of Governors, the Headteacher and the Diocese.

- B. 3PL/2021/0439/VAR – The Barns Attleboroug Road Caston NR17 1DJ – Variation of Condition No. 2 on 3PL/2019/0518/F Amended Design and inclusion of a balcony to the rear (Plot 1 Self-Build).** A no objection comment has already been filed in this matter.
- C. 3PL/2021/0223D – Land adjacent to Caston Primary School Caston NR17 1DD – Reserved matters application for Erection of five dwellings following outline application 3PL/2017/1267/O.** This matter was discussed at length at the last meeting and objections have already been submitted. Nothing further to add.
- D. 3DC/2021/0039/DOC – Land adjacent to Caston Primary School The Street NR17 1DD – Discharge of Condition No 4 & 9 on 3PL/2017/1267/O.** This matter was discussed at length at the last meeting and objections have already been submitted. Nothing further to add.

8. Finance – to approve and report the following expenditure:-

- A. To approve salary payment including holiday allowance to the Clerk, Mrs Joanne Blackman, for the month of March 2021 in the sum of £221.07.
- B. To approve payment to the Clerk, Mrs Joanne Blackman, in respect of 50% Zoom Communications fee for the months of January, February and March in the sum of £21.60.
- C. To approve payment to the Clerk, Mrs Joanne Blackman, in reimbursement of printing expenses for the months of December 2020 (£7.99), January, February and March (£9.99) in the total sum of £37.96.
- D. To approve payment to Norfolk ALC in respect of Annual Subscription in the sum of £131.21 (no VAT).
- E. To ratify payment to Brian Brooker in respect of Voipfone invoice number [], in respect of Caston Community Cars in the sum of £3.60 (incl VAT).
- F. To ratify payment to Plusnet for Broadband at the Village Hall in respect of invoice number 00004758344-020 in the sum of £34.20 (incl VAT).
- G. To ratify payment to 1&1 Internet Ltd in respect of Caston Community Cars in respect of reference [] in the sum of £7.20 (incl VAT).

The above payments were proposed by Cllr Farmbrough, seconded by Cllr Cook, all voted in favour.

9. Matters to Report

- A. Resignation.**
The Clerk advised that Brian Brooker had resigned from the Council. This had been reported and a Notice of Vacancy is awaited.
- B. Co-option**
It was agreed to review this at the July meeting but we should consider bringing this forward.
- C. Financial Balances**
The Clerk reported the current financial balances.

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D. The Rangers

The Clerk advised that she had received no update and enquired of CC Bowes as to any progress. CC Bowes advised that she did not have any updates at the current time. The Clerk reminded CC Bowes that she was going to arrange for the new Manager to visit Caston and meet with us. CC Bowes will follow this up.

E. Play Area

Cllr Porter advised that she had ordered the springer for the play area and this would be installed sometime in the Summer.

F. Flooding

Cllr Howell advised that she had attended a recent webinar and she received an email in which also included the flooding webinar. Cllr Howell will forward the same to the Clerk for possible inclusion on the website.

G. School Parking

Cllr Grimsditch leading, no update.

H. Grass cutting

The Clerk advised that RG Maintenance Services Limited had starting the cutting of the Village Green and Coronation Terrace.

I. Dog bins

A resident had asked why the dog bins were still in the bus shelters. The Clerk advised that finding somebody to remove them was difficult at the start of lockdown as there are protocols, Health & Safety issues and notifications to be made to Breckland to remove them from the collections. It was agreed, at that time, that once lockdown had eased the Clerk would pursue the matter further. Clerk will now make enquiries.

J. Greenway to Green Spaces

Cllr Howell advised that she had attended the Greenway to Green Spaces webinar. It discussed various matters such as cycle routes, circular walks, Rights of Way and initiatives to work with landowners to provide permissive paths. Cllr Howell suggested that maybe it is something that Caston should consider as there are few places to walk in the village. It is also the wish of Norfolk County Council to have more walks available.

It is recognised that County Council's have a resource problem to deal with issues relating to Rights of Way as was recently experienced with the Right of Way at Chase Farm.

CC Bowes agreed. Cllr Howell to make some initial enquiries/suggestions and report to the Council. **Item for next Agenda.**

K. Council Laptop

The Clerk advised that the Council laptop has been looked at and we have been advised, given the age of the existing laptop, to consider purchasing a new one rather than spend money on costly repairs. It was therefore agreed that a new laptop and Windows software should be purchased, proposed by Cllr Cook and seconded by Cllr Farnbrough, all voted in favour. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that the Clerk is to purchase a new Council laptop and Windows software to a maximum budget of £560.

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L. Bank signatories

Cllr Porter advised that given the resignation of Brian Brooker, we are one signatory short. Two signatories are required to authorise all payments. It was therefore proposed that the Clerk should become a signatory to ensure continuity of payments. Proposed by Cllr Cook and seconded by Cllr Farnbrough, all voted in favour. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that the Clerk would be added to the bank mandate as a full signatory.

10. Correspondence

None.

11. To agree the next meeting date

Wednesday 5 May to include the Annual Parish Meeting and Caston Parish Council Annual Meeting.

The Chairman closed the meeting to permit public discussion.

12. Participation and questions from the public – session 2

Cllr Farnbrough advised that the planters were shortly to be planted with flowering plants. There are lots of bulbs in the planters and it was agreed to remove these and plant them on the verge at the front of the planters. The Clerk advised that the budget for this year, as agreed, is up to £450.

Cllr Howell reiterated that she was finding it difficult to understand why, if parishioners/parents want the car park to be installed on the site next to the school, why the school does not. It is important that the reasons are understood and whether concerns can be resolved as clearly this is an asset to the village.

The Applicant advised that he was born in the village, has family in the village and has a good understanding of the issues. He wants to give a contribution back. As feedback on the car park were not positive, he has taken a different approach to deal with the flooding issue. The Applicant advised he would need a clear statement from the school to reconsider. He advised it was not for him to comment on why the school did not respond favourably.

13. Matters for future discussion to be noted

As above.

Meeting closed at 8.49 pm

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