

Caston Parish Council

CHAIRMAN: Mr Chris Cook VICE CHAIRMAN: Mrs Kay Farmbrough

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CASTON PARISH COUNCIL
MONDAY 6 MARCH 2023
AT CASTON VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30 PM**

Councillor's present:- Chris Cook, Kay Farmbrough, Graham Moss, John Hill, Richard Ives

Also present:- 3 Members of the public

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Howell.

2. To approve the Minutes of the Meetings held on 6 February 2023.

All voted in favour.

The Chairman closed the meeting to permit public discussion.

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

A member of the public thanked us for the new bin on the Village Green. A member of the public asked if the wire is going to be removed from the Wheelwrights to behind the bus shelter. The Council believes this to be connected with the County Broadband Wayleave agreement.

The Chairman reopened the Council meeting.

4. Guest speakers.

DC Cowan was pleased to report that Breckland have an agreed budget.

Breckland Council have agreed that Council Tax for a Band D property will increase by £4.95 per year. It is important to note that if they did not increase the Council Tax within two years they would incur £1m debt. It was felt that it was not too much to ask residents and it is important to protect finances moving forward. Most residents (67%) are under Band D and will be paying £1.80 per week. The rest of the Council Tax is made up by the County Council and other services. Vulnerable people are well supported which is important and programmes have been put in place for sustainability.

Local Plan – is in process of being worked through for next phase. Reviewed every 5 years – Call for Sites is now closed. Notified all Parish Councils of land within their boundary that individuals have put forward for development. The first sift through will be in the Summer together with parts which Councils may wish to protect.

Elections are in May – for the first time, electors will need to provide photo ID by way of a driving licence, passport or bus pass. If an elector has no ID, the Government will be issuing details with a validation certificate to enable people to still vote. There is a concern that there is a lot of work involved. Breckland Democratic Services will be issuing the certificates. Postal votes are fine and ID is not required.

CHAIRMAN.....

DATED:

CLERK: Joanne Blackman, Daisy Barn, 42 Long Lane, Feltwell, Norfolk, IP26 4BJ

Tel: 01842 829821 Email: parish.clerk@castonparishcouncil.gov.uk www.castonparishcouncil.gov.uk

DC Cowan made the following comments on planning applications on the Agenda:

7F. Coughtrey Industrial Estate – has not been decided as they are awaiting drainage information which has yet to be supplied. It is likely to be approved but the confusion arises because this is a new application, now varied.

7A. Cherry Tree Farm – this is a real problem for Stow Bedon and could become a problem for Caston in the fullness of time. The site used to be a traditional pig farm which was acquired by Wayland Farms who subsequently secured permission for an intensive unit of 7,000 pigs. An Environmental permit has been issued by the Environment Agency. Wayland Farms have not complied with the permit, buildings have not been built as designed and for what consent was sought. The permit trumps planning issues unless we can provide evidence otherwise. The Environment Agency only concern is environment, not the effect on people.

The Environment Agency will not enforce because the owner is working with them. Ammonia emissions are of major concern and permission sought is for 50 flues. It will pump the ammonia and other pollutants to a higher level which means the dispersal will be further reaching. One of the questions is, is it visible from the road? The answer is no, however it is very much visible and should have failed at this point.

Stow Bedon residents are continuously reporting to the Environment Agency. There will be substantial landscape damage. Applications are not a requirement of the Environment Agency and they will not give advice. They wait for the operator to provide information and they then check the situation. Liz Truss is drafting a letter from her to DEFRA pointing out the problems the operatives are creating.

Stow Bedon are trying to get their MP to push things further and we should consider getting our MP involved. There is a risk Caston will be affected as the dispersal pattern changes. The flues are not a solution and do not work properly in this country. The only way is to use scrubbers in the units to remove substances etc.

Ideally residents would like it shut down. DC Cowen lives a mile away and some mornings he cannot sit outside, people cannot hang out washing, the noise is awful and they cannot use their gardens. If built as designed, then it may have been ok. The unit drains into a chalk stream. It is a permitted scheme and the Environment Agency are the relevant authority and they hide behind it.

Chimneys do not solve the problem. The reason behind this current application is because they have seen it done elsewhere and this has set a precedent.

Wider picture, Sarah Suggitt has been talking to planners as to how to develop policies to address some of these issues. There are two operators at the moment and food is important but we need to derive policy so the farmers know what they have to do when a permit application goes in months, if not a year, before the planning application is made. The Environment Agency should talk to planners before.

There has been an extension of time and comments are now due by 6 April. Communication from Cranswick has been appalling. If the Environment Agency do not wish to engage that is a bigger problem.

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7b. Refused.

Elections are in May and DC Cowen said it has been good working with us and who knows what will happen. There is an awful lot to be done, the rural community is changing and needs to work in partnership with everyone who lives in and works in the area.

5. **Speedwatch and SAM2 Report.**

“During February the volunteers undertook four checks, one other was rained off.

A total of 195 vehicles were assessed and 20 were reported to the constabulary for exceeding 35 mph. The abusive driver encountered in January has been served with a Community Resolution Order. He was apologetic and contrite and sent his apologies to the volunteers concerned. There are five checks scheduled for March”.

Cllr Ives reported that both units now appear to be working ok so has not taken them for inspection. January readings were lower than normal. Griston Road location – outside our Parish Boundary – picks up traffic coming up the road from Griston, not from vehicles coming round the corner. The one at the school is a far better placement. Should we look to re-site it somewhere else within the village as may be a better place. Clerk to enquire of Highways whether there is a better/alternative location.

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

Cllr Moss – 7e

7. **Planning Applications: -**

- A. **3PL/2021/0932/VAR** - Cherry Tree Farm Cherry Tree Lane Stow Bedon - Variation of Condition No2 on 3PL/2017/0878/F : Variation to reflect the as-built appearance and layout of the pig sheds, feed silos and manure store cover and proposed amendments including revised external materials and the addition of chimneys. **Stow Bedon application.**

See 4 above.

The Clerk to draft a response to the application and then write to our MP, George Freeman. Our response is to be in support of and around the issues raised by Stow Bedon PC. The levels are concerning and could become a problem in the future.

- B. **3PL/2022/0472/F** – Appeal No. APP/F2605/W/22/3308149 – Homefield House, The Street, Caston – Proposed new dwelling.
Clerk to reiterate our previous comments made in the original application. The Parish Council object to this application.
- C. **3PL/2023/0072/F** – Land at Chase Farm, The Street, NR17 1DD- Erection of Farm Bungalow.
Comments previously submitted.
- D. **3PL/2023/0003/LB** – The Mill, The Street, NR17 1DD – Continuation of temporary permission for removal of the windmill cap to carry out repairs to the windmill cap approved under 3PL/2020/1431/LB.
Comments previously submitted.
- E. **3PL/2022/1385/F** - Home Farm, Northacre NR17 1DG - Conversion of redundant farm buildings (with link extension) into a single storey dwelling house plus detached double garage building. Approved.

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- F. **3PL/2022/0368/F** - Coughtrey Industrial Estates (Units 1 - 17) Church Road - The demolition of Units 1-6 (whole block Western boundary) and Units 7-13 (part of North Block), extensions to units 14 and 15 (large extension to North block), extension to unit 16 (small extension to South Block), external fascia changes, refurbishment to Unit 17. Change of use of whole site to mixed B2 and Class E (offices). The reconfiguration of parking and creation of a new loading and unloading area. See 4 above.

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 February 2023 in the sum of £236.02.
- b. To ratify payment to Plusnet for Broadband at the Village Hall for the month of December in respect of invoice number 00004758344-044 in the sum of £26.40 (incl VAT).
- c. To ratify payment to Hostworld Internet Limited for https encryption of the village website in the sum of £28.80.

Proposed by Cllr Cook, seconded by Cllr Farmbrough, all voted in favour.

9. **Matters to report:-**

a. **County Broadband update.**

Wayleave – Councillors do not think the amount offered is sufficient. Clerk to respond and suggest payment should be reconsidered and should be an annual payment rather than one-off. £100 compensation for the unauthorised works is not acceptable.

Cllr Moss expressed concern that we are slowing up the installation and residents may get upset that they are not getting the service they have signed up for.

b. **Financial Balances.**

Caston Parish Council £7,054.91
Highway Surveyors £14,427.97

c. **New bin for Village Green/Dog Waste Bin.**

The Clerk explained that the new bin was in addition to the dog bin, not in place of. A discussion took place and it was agreed that the one bin is sufficient and the Clerk will notify Serco accordingly.

d. **Communications Policy/Social Media Policy.**

Deferred to next month to allow further time for comments.

e. **Village Gates.**

The Village gates at Griston have been knocked down by a vehicle. Cllr Ives has the gate at home and will reinstate as soon as possible.

Cllr Ives reported that the Northacre gate is too big to fit in his vehicle and cannot be moved so he will take some posts down to reinstate it in situ.

Posts will be required (approx £4.50 per post) for all gates.

The Attleborough Road sign, on left as you leave village, also needs looking at again. Ivy obscuring signs in Stow Bedon Road. Cllr Ives will report.

The new sign in Rayners Falgate highlighting the bends are in place as are the playground signs.

10. **Correspondence**

None.

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11. **The next meeting date: 3 April 2023.** Cllr Ives gave his apologies for the next meeting.

The Chairman closed the Council Meeting to permit public discussion.

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

A member of the public enquired whether we would appeal Highways decision re the 40mph limit – there is no appeal process, and we did question the logic at the time.

13. **Matters for future discussion to be noted.**

As above.

Jo Blackman
Parish Clerk

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