

# Caston Parish Council

CHAIRMAN: Mr Chris Cook    VICE CHAIRMAN: Mrs Mary Howell

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CASTON PARISH COUNCIL  
MONDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2024  
AT CASTON VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30 PM**

Councillor's present:-        Chris Cook, Mary Howell, Sarah Fletcher, Graham Moss, Rob Trown,  
Simon Spanyol

Also present:-                 Five members of the public

1.     **Apologies for absence**  
None.
2.     **To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 June 2024**  
The Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 July 2024 were approved and signed by the Chairman,  
Chris Cook.

**The Chairman closed the Council Meeting to permit public discussion.**

3.     **Participation and questions from the public, session 1 and to discuss item 10I and 10J.**

**10I and 10J**

A resident of Bridge Farm advised that the riparian ownership letter recently sent by the Parish Council had been received and confirmed that the necessary action had been taken, as requested. The resident then asked what happens to the other side of the watercourse and more specifically the blocked culvert at the end of their drive. When the flooding occurred, the main problem was not the water but the cars that were stuck and blocking the drive. The main concern was that if the emergency services were required, they would not have been able to enter the village.

Cllr Cook advised that the Parish Council does not have any powers.

Cllr Howell advised that if there is evidence of anyone not fulfilling their riparian responsibilities, we can refer them to our contact at the Flood and Water Management Team ("FWMT") for them to investigate.

Enforcement is extremely difficult, and the Parish Council has very limited powers. A member of the public asked if individuals can write to the FWMT direct. Cllr Howell advised our contact is Louise Brown and that individuals are encouraged to write to FWMT with their concerns and observations and if they have experienced flooding in their homes or garage (if it is attached to the property).

A resident advised that the Highways Department at Norfolk County Council confirmed that there is a tree root blocking the culvert.

CHAIRMAN.....

DATED: .....

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

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Cllr Spanyol advised that there are four main areas that experience flooding in Caston.

- Opposite the school
- The Old Bakery
- Top end of Northacre
- Bridge Farm entrance

Cllrs Howell and Spanyol met with Hall and Sons mid July and explained to them why the riparian letters had been sent. Hall and Sons confirmed this is the first time they have received a riparian letter from the Parish Council. They explained that farmers take their responsibilities very seriously in relation to watercourses on their land. Hall and Sons had some useful maps of Caston and identified their land.

Hall and Sons advised that since 1968, they are not aware of flooding being an issue at Bridge Farm, until the last two events.

There are four culverts along the Attleborough Road to Northacre.

Hall and Sons will undertake to clear the field edge, after the harvest, and to clear both ends of the culvert to allow it to be seen what may be blocking it. If it is a root and it is removed, the concern of Norfolk County Council was that the culvert could collapse.

It was strongly felt by both the residents and the Parish Council that it should not be the responsibility of the adjoining landowner to maintain a culvert where it passes under a public highway. Mr Hall is a member of the East Harling Drainage Board and was surprised to hear that he may be responsible for the culvert which goes under the public highway, he will make enquiries in this respect. The culvert begins in the verge, not the field. The verges are the responsibility of Norfolk County Council who are usually very sensitive about the grass verges.

One of the residents felt that cameras need to be placed into the culvert to identify the problem and this should be done prior to the bad weather.

It was agreed that the Clerk would write to Hall and Sons and thank them for the meeting and to ask them to prioritise clearance of the entrance and exit of the problematic culvert and to explore responsibilities for and experience of maintenance of culverts under public highways with other members of the East Harling Drainage Board.

A member of the public asked that if residents are unable to fulfil their riparian responsibilities, for whatever reason, is there some kind of volunteer scheme to address this. There is no scheme currently but if problems are identified they need to be reported so they can be addressed.

#### **Public Session**

A member of the public reported a white van which had been seen going so fast through the village that it was thought it may overturn. It was a builders van estimated to be travelling between 60 and 70mph. It was noted that this would not have been picked up by the SAM2 as it was in a different location at the time.

A member of the public reported that the storm drains at Stow Bedon Road are still blocked. The Clerk reported that the Highways report stated that these had been cleared. This is not the case and the Clerk will report them again.

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The same member of the public enquired whether we could ask Highways to raise the storm drains either side of the school. When the road was resurfaced it was done around these drains and they are now at a much lower level.

A member of the public enquired whether the bench at Coronation Terrace could be included in any cleaning of the play area. It was thought that this was to be included in the deep clean last year. There were different recollections in this regard but that it would be included in any future cleans.

A member of public commented on how good the village gates look since their paint refresh but asked if we can paint the phonebox. The Clerk to source an updated price for the paint and to order the same. There was a group of volunteers who offered to clean and paint the same and they should be contacted to set up a working party.

#### **The Chairman reopened the Council Meeting.**

#### **4. Guest Speakers**

None. See reports from County Councillor Claire Bowes and District Councillor Phil Cowen.

#### **5. Speedwatch and SAM2 Report**

No reports are available.

Tony Ash has now stood down as the Speedwatch Co-ordinator and there have been no sessions carried out since. On Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September a meeting is taking place with representatives from Speedwatch and the SAM2 operators to discuss a way forward.

There is a proposal to move the position of the SAM2 at the bend at Griston. A discussion will also take place at the times checks are carried out by Speedwatch.

The SAM2 report from June to August is available on the website which shows approx. 13% of vehicles are travelling over the 35mph speed limit. This is over the 10% threshold which has previously been sufficient to persuade the Police to attend to carry out their own speed checks. It is noticeable as evenings go into night the volume of traffic goes down but the number of speeding vehicles increases. The optimum time is between 6-8am and Speedwatch will discuss arranging some checks at this time.

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

None.

#### **7. Planning Applications**

- a. **3OB/2024/0024/DOB** – Land Adjacent to Caston Primary School NR17 1DD - Application to discharge the planning obligation on Paragraph 1.1 of Schedule 2 relating to the S106 Agreement on pp 3PL/2017/1267/O. **Undecided.** This is in relation to the car park plan. Cllr Spanyol wrote to Breckland Council, in a personal capacity, to express his views as it was a unique opportunity to amend the entrance to the site. The Clerk advised that no comments had been received from Councillors in relation to this matter. Cllr Spanyol advised that he had sent comments however, the Clerk did not receive these. A further check for the email will be made.
- b. **3DC/2024/0154/DOC** - Land adjacent to Caston Primary School, The Street NR17 1DD - Discharge of condition 5 on 3PL/2021/0223/D. **Undecided.** This is in relation to ecology on the site.

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- c. **3DC/2024/0121/DOC** – Homefield House, The Street, NR17 1DD – Discharge of Conditions 3, 4, 5 & 6 on 3PL/2022/0472/D (Approved on Appeal). **Discharged in part.**
- d. **3PL/2024/0344/F** – East View, The Street, NR17 1DD - Proposed Change of use of outbuilding to be used as a beauty therapy room. **Refused.**
- e. **3DC/2023/0322/DOC** - Land to the North of School View NR17 1DD - Discharge of Conditions 5,6,7,8,12 on 3PL/2020/0262/O. This application relates to Condition 5 – Drainage, Condition 6 – Construction Management, Condition 7 – Biodiversity and Ecology, Condition 8 – Trees in Countryside and Condition 12 – Access to site. **Undecided.**
- f. **3DC/2024/0049/DOC** – Land adj School View, The Street,NR17 1FP – Discharge of Conditions 5, 6, 7 & 8 on 3PL/2024/0180/VAR. **Undecided.**
- g. **3PL/2024/0067/D** – Land to the North of School View 10 The Street NR17 1DD - Reserved matters application for erection of 3no. two storey dwellings with associated car parking landscaping and access following outline permission allowed on appeal 3PL/2020/0262/O. **Approved with Conditions.**
- h. **3DC/2024/0051/DOC** – The Gables, 35 Attleborough Road, NR17 1DJ – Discharge of conditions No 3 & 12 on 3PL/2021/0439/VAR. **Discharged.**
- i. **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. Undecided.**
- j. **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. **Refused.**
- k. **3PL/2023/1055/VAR** - Coughtrey Industrial Estate Church Road IP25 6QB - Coughtrey Industrial Estate Church Road IP25 6QB. **Refused.**
- l. **3PL/2023/1054/VAR** - Coughtrey Industrial Estate Church Road IP25 6QB - Removal of planning condition 4 from 3PL/2003/1092/F. **Refused.**  
**7j/kl** – Breckland originally accepted these applications. It was pointed out that this was against the instructions of the Secretary of State and was subsequently withdrawn on this basis.

One additional item for consideration:-

**3PL/2024/0680/HOU** - Caston Lodge Attleborough Road NR17 1DL - Demolition of existing single storey side extension and erection of new two storey side extension. **Undecided.** A discussion took place and it was agreed that Caston Parish Council have no objections to this application.

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 August 2024 in the sum of £252.63.
- b. To ratify salary payment including holiday allowance to the Clerk, Mrs Joanne Blackman, for the month of July 2024 in the sum of £252.63.
- c. To approve payment to BT for broadband at the Village Hall in the sum of £30.38 (incl VAT) – paid by Direct Debit.

All voted in favour.

One additional item for payment, as follows:-

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- d. To ratify payment to Spanglefish for Caston Parish Council website in the sum of £78.00 (incl VAT).

All voted in favour.

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

- a. To consider donation to the Village Hall for insurance for 2024/25 (Renewal cost £1,189.45).  
A discussion took place and the Clerk confirmed that £570 was in budget to assist with these costs. It was therefore **APPROVED** that a payment of £570 would be made to the Village Hall as a contribution towards the insurance costs.

10. **Matters to Report**

- a. **Village Planters including damaged planter**  
Cllr Fletcher advised that the majority of the planters are in a bad state and will continue to deteriorate. In a general conversation with the maker of the new planter on the green, he would be prepared to make some more. The Council asked if he would be prepared to make volume to replace them all and Cllr Fletcher will make enquiries. The Clerk advised that there is currently no provision for this in the budget but the budget for the next financial year will be made in December and it will be included.
- b. **Financial Balances**  
Caston Parish Council £11,200.81/Highway Surveyors £15,273.73
- c. **Tree Report**  
The Clerk had circulated the tree inspection report carried out on 15 August. There are no major concerns at the current time but the middle tree in the play area should be monitored closely.
- d. **County Broadband**  
The Clerk advised that little progress has been made as the first thing the solicitor picked up on was that County Broadband would only pay the legal fees if an agreement was reached in relation to the Wayleave. If for any reason the Wayleave was not signed, they effectively were under no obligation to do so. The solicitor wanted to ensure that the legal fees were covered in either eventuality.  
  
Concern was raised that legal fees were already being incurred and the Clerk agreed to find out what they are to date and would keep a close eye on progress.
- e. **Liaison with School**  
No update available. Cllr Howell to contact school after the summer holidays.
- f. **Litterpick**  
The Clerk advised that Ruth Trown had kindly agreed to undertake the organisation of a litter pick. Further, the equipment can be borrowed from Breckland Council and in so doing, volunteers would also be covered under Breckland Council insurance. The Clerk will ask Ruth Trown to proceed with the organisation of a litterpick and to liaise with Breckland Council directly.

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- g. **Defibrillator**  
The Clerk advised that new pads had been ordered for the defibrillator as they were due to expire shortly. However, the supplier had also notified the Council that the warranty on the defibrillator expires at the end of September. Whilst it is likely that the defibrillator will continue to operate for many years to come, it was suggested that consideration be given to securing funding for a replacement, should this be required. It was agreed that we would earmark £1,000 in reserves on the next budget.
- h. **Highways – making good the damage caused in Northacre**  
This has yet to be completed.
- i. **Mid Norfolk Flood Partnership**  
No updates.
- j. **Riparian ownership letters**  
Please see 3 above.  
Consideration was given to those that do not undertake their riparian responsibilities. Cllr Fletcher advised that it is possible that some people are waiting for the end of September when things have begun to die down and that we can identify any properties in due course which may pose a risk.

11. **Correspondence**  
None.
12. **To agree the next meeting date: 7 October 2024.**  
Agreed.

**The Chairman closed the Council Meeting to permit public participation.**

13. **Participation and questions from the public – session 2.**  
None.
14. **Matters for future discussion to be noted**  
As above.

Meeting closed at 8.57pm

Jo Blackman  
Parish Clerk

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