

Caston Parish Council

CHAIRMAN: Mr Chris Cook VICE CHAIRMAN: Mrs Mary Howell

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CASTON PARISH COUNCIL MONDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2025 AT CASTON VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30 PM

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

Also present: Five members of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence**
None.

2. **To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 July 2025.**
The Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 July 2025 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.**

A member of the public advised that he had been told that a meeting had been held with Breckland Council on the site of the planning application at Fallowfield. The member of the public was concerned that the meeting had been held without residents' knowledge.

Another member of the public advised that the meeting had been requested with Breckland Council and that those that had previously raised objections to the planning application had been notified of the meeting. One of those notified then advertised the meeting on Facebook. The person that requested the meeting wished to have a productive meeting and felt that too many attendees may hinder this. This will be discussed at 7c below.

4. **Guest Speakers**

The Clerk read the September report received from P Cowen, District Councillor.

"District Councillors' report September 2025

LGR

Working with other district councils in Norfolk, Breckland is finalising its submission to the minister to deliver three unitary authorities as the proposal favoured by Breckland, Kings Lynn and West Norfolk, Great Yarmouth, Norwich City, Broadland and North Norfolk councils. This proposal would see three authorities of circa 300,000+ population each with Breckland and Kings Lynn forming a West Norfolk unitary authority with elected members having constituencies of around 3,500 residents. The proposals are to be taken to each of the participating council's September council meeting ahead of being submitted to the minister on the 26th September.

It should be noted that the minister is not obliged to accept any of the submissions received; government may propose a different solution.

CHAIRMAN.....

DATED:

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

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Devolution

The county council are to vote on their decision to appoint or not appoint a mayor in September and this will determine whether a strategic mayoral authority for Norfolk and Suffolk will be established

Waste collections

Serco have been experiencing some staff shortages due to sickness and as a result some bin collection rounds have been affected but this should not be a long-term situation."

5. Speedwatch and SAM2 Report

Cllr Spanyol reported the following:

"Thanks again to John and Courtney for running the SAM2's.

The attached ([linked](#)) report shows that the Stow Bedon Road had around 8% overall vehicles over 35mph but at busy times this goes up to over 10%. The August Speedwatch for this location has already been moved to 4pm to try and deter some of these motorists.

Unfortunately, the 1970's problem persisted for one unit and the data for Coronation Terrace looks wrong in terms of the number of speeders by time but overall at 12% is consistent with previous. An early morning speedwatch is planned for here in August."

SAM2 repair. One of the SAM2 signs appears to be recording data as if stuck in the 70s. Westcotec require the serial number of the machine so they can book it in to be looked at. The SAM2 moving team will provide this in due course.

A member of the public asked at what speed the Speedwatch record at. Cllr Spanyol explained that the machines are set to record data over 35mph. Approximately 1 in 4 exceed the 30mph speed limit.

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

None.

7. Planning Applications

- A. **PL/2025/0683/FMIN** – Caston Primary School, The Street, Caston, Attleborough, Norfolk, NR17 1DD – Proposed flat roof rear single storey extension. Undecided. No objections.
- B. **PL/2025/1106/PAH** – 1 Coronation Terrace, Caston, Attleborough, Norfolk, NR17 1DL – Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: Larger Home Extension The Town and County Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) – Schedule 2, Part 1, Class A – (3.45m, 3.7m height, 2.64m eaves). Undecided. Comments previously submitted.
- C. **PL/2025/1077/PIP** – Fallowfield, Northacre, Caston, Attleborough, Norfolk, NR17 1DG – Permission in principle for a phased development of 4-5 self build dwellings. Undecided. Simon Wood, Director of Planning and Building Control and Sarah Suggitt, Deputy Leader & Executive Member for Housing & Planning attended the site at the request of two local residents. 15 residents attended who reside mainly in Northacre or in close proximity to the application site. Simon Wood and Sarah Suggitt came to inspect the land to get a feel for the layout, the watercourse, relationship to the land, the previous application and listened to residents' concerns regarding flooding.

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The historic information was sent to them both again together with contact details for Stephen Hall/Louise Brown of the Lead Local Flood Authority (previously Flood Authority). It should be noted that the Lead Local Flood Authority are not a statutory consultee.

Additional properties will increase flow into the watercourse. The plot of land becomes very wet and soggy after rainfall and the loss of this natural 'soakaway' will further increase the amount of water.

The current riparian owner is absent from the site and does not maintain the watercourse. The residents of Fallowfield do what they can but it is not their responsibility.

If the application were to be successful, there will be a strip of land next to the watercourse which will make it impossible to properly maintain it.

The land in question is outside of the settlement boundary and is not adjacent to it. This is contrary to policy HOU2 of the Local Plan.

Highways have made reference to the installation of pavements, if the application were to be approved. Planning is not obliged to agree but will consider any comments made by Highways.

Simon Wood advised that he would be contacting the Lead Local Flood Authority. Policies and procedures have to be followed but these are changing all the time.

The deadline for a decision is 2nd September. If Breckland Council are minded to approve the application, it will go to the Planning Committee for a decision to be made.

The residents were very grateful for the meeting.

The maps still only show a small number of flooding incidents as being reported. It is important that all incidents are reported to ensure a true picture of the extent of the flooding is recorded.

- D. **PL/2025/0376/FMIN** - Church Farm The Green, Caston, Attleborough, Norfolk, NR17 1DB - Erection of a stock shed to replace existing temporary structures. Undecided.
- E. **PL/2024/1193/FMAJ** – HM Prison Wayland, Griston, Thetford, Norfolk, IP25 6RL - Full Planning Application for demolition of existing structures and the construction of a four storey (T60) houseblock, new multi-faith/education building, new kitchen and minor extensions to and refurbishment of existing ancillary buildings, energy centre, new internal security fence, creation of an all-weather sports pitch within a secure perimeter fence together with new pedestrian footpath, relocation of horticultural polytunnels, car parking and associated landscaping. Granted with conditions.
- F. **APP/F2605/W/24/3351737 – Appeal on application number 3PL/2022/0368/F-GRISTON** - 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.
The Planning Inspectorate has dismissed the Appeal Application. The Applicant is taking the matter to Judicial Review to establish whether the decision was lawful.
It is felt that the Planning Inspectorate will not waste money defending the decision. A solicitor representing Breckland believes that the decision has been left open to challenge and it would be hard to defend. Matters are complicated.

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Griston representatives have met with Sam Chapman-Allen, Leader Breckland Council at the site to discuss matters.

The Noise Abatement Notices are yet to be complied with.

8. **To approve Clerk salary increase in line with the Local Government Services Pay Agreement 25/26 (backdated to 1 April 2025).**

The Council approved an increase of £0.51 per hour and backdated pay to 1 April 2025 in the sum of £33.96.

9. **To consider donation towards Village Hall Insurance (Renewal cost £1,432.56).**

The Council discussed the renewal costs and approved payment in the sum of £570 towards the insurance as per budget. Cllr Spanyol passed details of an alternative insurance company specialising in these types of insurance for future reference.

10. **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 2025 in the sum of £271.96.
- B. To approve backdated salary payment to the Clerk, Mrs Joanne Blackman, from 1 April 2025 to 31 July 2025 in the sum of £33.96.
- C. To approve payment to Westcotec for replacement post in the sum of £234.00 (incl VAT) invoice number 17089.
- D. To approve payment to BT for broadband at the Village Hall in the sum of £30.38 (incl VAT) – paid by Direct Debit.
 - E. To ratify payment to Arborpro Tree Services Limited in the sum of £1,020 (incl VAT) invoice number ATS25072025.
- F. To ratify payment to Spanglefish for annual website hosting in the sum of £78.00 (incl VAT) – invoice no SP3/1348/2025.
- G. To ratify salary payment including holiday allowance to the Clerk, Mrs Joanne Blackman, for the month of July 2025 in the sum of £263.47.

All payments were approved along with one additional item for payment below.

- H. To approve payment to NGF Play for a replacement bolt for the swing in the sum of £8.16 (incl VAT).

11. **Matters to report:-**

A. **Financial Balances**

Caston Parish Council £11,431.17/Highway Surveyors £15,833.49

B. **Playground**

- Missing Bolt – Cllr Spanyol found the missing bolt and has been able to reinstate it. The Clerk passed the spare bolt to Cllr Spanyol for safe-keeping.
 - Vandalism (nail varnish) – there has been some vandalism in the playground with coloured nail polish. A polite notice will be placed on Facebook.
 - Any other issues – it was reported that there is often a lot of rubbish left in the play area. A polite notice will be placed on Facebook reminding people to place rubbish into the bin or to take it home.
- Since the tree has been removed, a lot more light comes into the play area. Also, the green slide tower is now free of pigeon faeces. The large silver slide however is now covered in pigeon faeces.
- There are two dead branches on the next tree. It was agreed that the Clerk will obtain a quote for removing the same together with any other works that may be considered appropriate. When the contractor was removing the dead tree he made a comment regarding the large beech tree on Coronation Terrace green and the Clerk will ask the arborist to confirm what he advised.

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A discussion took place as to whether we should consider a new piece of equipment for the play area for two or more children to use together. The Clerk will make some enquiries.

C. Village Planters update

The farmer who has volunteered to help remove the old planters and put the new ones in position is not able to assist until after the harvest has finished. He has confirmed that he will contact the Clerk when he is able to assist. In the meantime, Cllr Cook has confirmed the amount of compost which is required to fill the new planters and the Clerk will arrange this once we have a date. It was agreed that the two planters at the Griston end of the village will be the first two to be replaced and the planting team are to advise which other two they would like replaced. Cllr Trown will relay this to the planting team for their attention.

D. Repainting village sign

Cllr Trown has advised that he will arrange for this to be done.

E. Riparian responsibilities

Cllrs Spanyol and Howell have been to see the resident who has placed a sleeper into the watercourse. The reason behind this is to stop the flow of water as when it dries out it smells. It should not be there and is against the riparian rules. The Council is currently preparing new letters to go to residents with riparian responsibilities, and the Council will ask the resident to remove the sleeper at this time.

It was noted however that the watercourse is generally very clear at the moment.

F. Highways issues

- overgrown paths and hedges – the reported paths and hedges appear to have been cleared/cut.
- trees with red dots – these trees have been marked by Norfolk County Council as trees with potential issues where the ownership is currently unknown and investigations are being undertaken.
- request for mirrors at either end of Northacre – following the recent request from a resident the Clerk wrote to Highways to enquire whether installation of mirrors could be considered. The response is as follows:
“We would not authorise the placement of a mirror on the highway to assist with visibility issues.
Mirrors on the highway can dazzle drivers, affect the ability to judge the distance of oncoming traffic, and can be subject to vandalism.
If an unauthorised mirror is found on the public highway it would be treated as an obstruction and removed.”
The Clerk will revert to Highways to see if they have any other suggestions for improving visibility at these junctions.

G. Co-option

No applicants.

H. Liaison with School

No update.

I. Mid Norfolk Flood Partnership

The Mid Norfolk Flood Partnership is now known as the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance. Flood reports and maps have been produced and they show that there have been no incidents of flooding in Caston since 2024. There has been no updated flood report received to date. There are 33 authorities involved which the Alliance pulls together to gather information.

J. Local Government Reform and Devolution

See report of the District Councillor above.

K. Local Plan

See report of the District Councillor above.

12. Correspondence

The Clerk confirmed that the Church had been sent a donation of £450 towards the grounds maintenance at the Church as approved at the last meeting.

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13. **To agree the next meeting date: Monday 6 October 2025.**
Agreed.

The Chairman closed the Council Meeting to permit public discussion.

14. **Participation and questions from the public – session 2.**
A member of the public suggested that it may be better if the bin at the play area was placed inside the fence. The Clerk advised that this was not acceptable, at the time of installation, specifically for health and safety and collection reasons.

15. **Matters for future discussion to be noted**
None.

Meeting closed at 8.53pm

Joanne Blackman
Parish Clerk

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