

Caston Parish Council

CHAIRMAN: Mr Chris Cook VICE CHAIRMAN: Mrs Mary Howell

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CASTON PARISH COUNCIL
MONDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2025
AT CASTON VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30 PM

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

Also present: Four members of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence**
 Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Sarah Fletcher.
2. **To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 January 2025.**
 The Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 January 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, on the advice of Phil Cowen, she had written to Tom McCabe and various other bodies at Norfolk County Council regarding the culvert near Bridge Farm.

A response had been received, and it was confirmed that the culvert is definitely privately owned and that Norfolk CC are in discussions with the landowner as to the way forward. An inspection was carried out by the 'Bridges Team' on 16th January and it was confirmed that there appears to be a bend in the culvert but it is not clear whether this is a true bend or whether some kind of blockage is causing it to appear that way. It was agreed by Norfolk CC that a camera inspection needs to be carried out.

The member of the public had heard 'through the grapevine' that a plant pot had been recovered from the culvert but it is not clear whether this has made any difference to the flow of water as a significant downpour has not been experienced since its removal.

A full report which was requested in initial correspondence has not been received however, it appears that some progress is being made.

County Councillor Claire Bowes indicated that the Bridges Team did not think that the plant pot was the whole problem and confirmed that it was felt necessary to carry out a camera inspection to determine this. CC Bowes agreed to establish whether the camera inspection has been done or when it is likely to happen. The member of the public will also make further enquiries.

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

4. **Guest Speakers**

CC Claire Bowes reported as follows:-

**“County Councillor Report to Caston Parish Council 3rd February 2025
County Council Extraordinary Meeting**

On 9th January a proposal was put to council to postpone the County Council elections in May. The majority of members voted to postpone the elections with just 7 councillors voting against the proposal, including myself. As I voted against the Conservative Group directive and as your elected representative I therefore feel its my duty to explain my decision. I don't oppose the principle of Devolution but it is important that we get the right model and best deal for Norfolk's residents. Following last year's General Election the new Labour Government scrapped the agreed Devolution deal on the table for Norfolk, on the grounds that it was unaffordable, which would have brought £600 million plus investment over 30 years. It is not clear what the current offer to Norfolk from Government involves. My reservations with this are twofold.

Firstly, a requirement of making the Government's priority list was that the County Council request of Government a postponement of the May elections, the (rather spurious) reason given was so as not to delay the fast track process should Norfolk be successful in being included on the priority list for Devolution. To me, one of the first principles of my party is to uphold freedom and democracy and to enable and protect its process. I therefore felt unable to vote for a move to delay that process for possibly up to two years, or longer.

Secondly to fast track and get to the front of the queue for devolution sounds all well and good, but not so good when, we don't appear to have the important detail of what we're queuing up for. To vote against the whip was not a decision I took lightly but in this instance and given the huge importance to democratic representation in Norfolk of the proposal subject I felt strongly that in all conscience it was my only option.

As yet we are still waiting to hear from Government on whether Norfolk is to be included on the priority fast track list and our May elections postponed. We were supposed to have heard by the end of last week.

Linden Court Closure

You will, I expect, be aware of the news that Norse Care has made the decision to close Linden Court care home in Watton by the end of April. Linden Court has served the Watton and Wayland community well for very many years and I understand the sadness and concern that many in the community are feeling at the news. However unfortunately the facilities offered at the home no longer meet residents growing and complex care needs and a substantial investment would be required of Norse to update and adapt the home with specialised mobility equipment needed. The home has 50 bedrooms, of which only 27 are occupied with five rooms decommissioned due to not being fit for purpose. Whilst the building has historically met the needs of its residents, the growing complexity of people's care means the rooms are too small for the equipment needed to deliver the care many people now require. Norse are working closely with residents and families to ensure everyone finds a new home to suit their needs and they have also pledged to give staff full and necessary support to transition to new employment.

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

The County Council owns the freehold of the Linden Court site and I have had a conversation with the Leader who has assured me that the Council will work to achieve a positive outcome, the vision being to see the current home replaced with a new assisted living facility for the elderly or such like. This is something I would be fully supportive of and will do my best not to see the site just surrendered for standard housing development.

Campaign sees potentially dangerous batteries and chargers removed from sale

More than 1,800 potentially dangerous batteries and chargers were removed from sale recently thanks to a regional campaign by Trading Standards services from nine local authorities, which was led by Norfolk County Council. The work carried out after fire and rescue services in the eastern region reported an increase in the number of fires involving lithium-ion batteries and battery chargers. East of England trading standards tested 22 items, primarily from online marketplaces. All failed to provide the correct information as required by law, with 13 also failing on safety grounds, including risk of electric shock, fire and explosion. People are advised to buy from reputable retailers and always use replacement parts and chargers that are recommended by the manufacturer and to only charge devices for the recommended amount of time and not while they are asleep or out of the house.

Claire Bowes

County Councillor, Watton Division.”

A member of the public enquired whether there will be a problem regarding elections due to the delay. CC Bowes advised that the County Council had been working towards there being an election so they could be prepared if it went ahead.

5. **Speedwatch and SAM2 Report**

Cllr Spanyol advised that there is no Speedwatch data this month and the Speedwatch Team will be resuming checks this coming week.

Cllr Spanyol also advised that there has been an invitation to join forces with Thompson Parish Council. Thompson Parish Council do not currently have a machine nor a Speedwatch Team in place. They are in the process of setting one up but are one member short.

Cllr Spanyol advised that he is taking the views of the members for consideration.

The Clerk reported that Cllr Fetcher will be collecting the repaired SAM2 sign from Westcotec on Thursday.

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

None.

7. **Planning Applications**

- a. **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. *There was no objection to this application but a request would be submitted that traffic associated with the works be directed to enter the site via Thompson Road/A1065 and not through Caston.*

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

- b. **PL/2024/1056/FMIN** - Land To The North Of School View, The Street, Attleborough, NR17 1FP - Proposed 3No bedroom detached house & garage. *Cllr Spanyol advised that there is a .msg document which is the Flood Risk Officer's Comments which is not downloadable. The Flood Risk Assessment concluded that the plot is very likely to flood. It is also noted that flooding pictures which were submitted still do not appear on the portal.*
If anybody is having trouble uploading comments to the portal, these can still be emailed to planning@breckland.gov.uk
There remains the build up of soil issue mentioned at the last meeting. Consideration was given as to whether we should write to the landowner independently in this regard.
Cllr Howell agreed to email some explanatory notes to all Councillors following discussions she has had in relation to this site so a decision could be made.
Cllr Moss raised the question of the site being called Mill View – there is already a property called Mill View in the village and this could become confusing. The Clerk will make enquiries accordingly.
- c. **PL/2024/1077/FMIN** - Land Adjacent To School View , The Street, Caston, NR17 1PF - Proposed change of use from paddock land to garden amenity. **Granted with conditions.** *These can be viewed at [Breckland | Breckland Online | Application | 159273](#)*
- d. **PL/2024/0894/CLOPUD** - Development Site At 595205 298086 The Street, Caston, Norfolk - Erection of 5 residential dwellings and a car park, implemented under pp 3PL/2017/1267/O and 3PL/2021/0223/D (Certificate of Lawfulness for Proposed Development). *Undecided.*
- e. **3DC/2024/0154/DOC** - Land adjacent to Caston Primary School, The Street NR17 1DD - Discharge of condition 5 on 3PL/2021/0223/D. **DOC-COMplete.**
- f. **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. **DOC-COMplete.**
- g. **3DC/2024/0049/DOC** – Land adj School View, The Street, NR17 1FP – Discharge of Conditions 5, 6, 7 & 8 on 3PL/2024/0180/VAR. **DOC-COMplete.**
- h. **3DC/2024/0174/DOC** - Land adjacent to School View, The Street NR17 1FP - Discharge of Conditions 4 & 5 on 3PL/2024/0067/D. *Discharged in part. Prior to first occupation of the development hereby approved, full details of both hard and soft landscape works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*
- 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. **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. *Scheduled to be heard at Breckland District Council Offices, Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke, Dereham NR19 1EE on 11 February 2025 at 10:00*

This application is now scheduled to be heard in Watton Sports Complex. Same date and time.

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

One additional planning application was received prior to the meeting:-

- k. **PL/2025/0044/HOU - Old Barn Cottage The Street, Caston, Attleborough, Norfolk, NR17 1DD** - Proposed single storey rear extension in addition to flat roof placement with additional flat roof light over the existing kitchen. *This property is semi-detached with a long boundary line. The application will not be visible from the street and is not known to be listed. There is no objection from the Parish Council however direct neighbours may have an opinion which should be considered.*

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 January 2025 in the sum of £263.47.
 B. To approve payment to BT for broadband at the Village Hall in the sum of £30.38 (incl VAT) – paid by Direct Debit.

One additional item for payment:-

- C. To reimburse payment to B Booker for 1 year email subscription for Caston On-Line (Namecheap) in the sum of £12.52.

All items were approved for payment.

9. **To consider budget and agree Precept for the financial year 2025/26.**

This was approved at the meeting on 6 January 2025.

10. **Matters to report.**

- A. **Broadband for Village Hall**
 Due to the delays still being experienced with County Broadband the Village Hall would like to continue with the current arrangements.
- B. **Village Planters**
 Deferred to the March meeting.
- C. **Financial Balances**
 Caston Parish Council £11,620.54/Highway Surveyors £15,526.16
- D. **Playground.**
 Nothing to report. Normal inspection will be conducted tomorrow.
- E. **County Broadband**
 No update, County Broadband have gone very quiet again.
- F. **Liaison with School**
 No progress.
- G. **Litterpick**
 The next litterpick will be on Thursday 6th March at 10:30 a.m.
- The litterpick volunteers reported the following:
 “As an aside, we have observed that there are empty Carling Black Label beer cans discarded regularly every few yards on Griston Rd, Northacre and CXarbrooke Rd. I'd like to make a plea to ask anyone who sees the culprit to note their vehicle registration so that it can be reported.”
- H. **Highways – making good the damage caused in Northacre**
 Some work has been completed.
- I. **Mid Norfolk Flood Partnership**
 A report has been received from the Scrutiny Committee which will be placed on the Parish Council website.

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

- 11. **Correspondence**
None.
- 12. **To agree the next meeting date: 3 March 2025.**
Agreed

The Chairman closed the Council Meeting to permit public discussion.

13. Participation and questions from the public – session 2.

A member of the public enquired whether a decision had been made into charging at Breckland Car Parks. CC Bowes advised that no decision has yet been made.

Cllr Spanyol had emailed a query to DC Cowen regarding the number of houses per year that Breckland had been able to deliver. DC Cowen had referred to around 600 per year but a report by the BBC seemed to indicate it was somewhat higher. A response is awaited.

14. Matters for future discussion to be noted

None.

Meeting closed at 8.28pm

Joanne Blackman
Parish Clerk

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