

Caston Parish Council

CHAIRMAN: Mr Chris Cook VICE CHAIRMAN: Mrs Mary Howell

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

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

Also present: Four members of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence**
Apologies were received and accepted from Rob Trown.
2. **To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 October 2025.**
The Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 October 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.**
None.

4. **Guest Speakers**
District Councillor Phil Cowen reported as follows:-

Local Plan

We have now reached the Regulation 18 stage which contains the preferred options for the Local Plan. Breckland Council are encouraging communities to look at the Plan and submit any comments they may have during the consultation period which ends on the 15th December.

There is a new proposed Intensive Agriculture Policy regarding poultry/pigs/cattle. The Local Plan can be viewed at <https://www.breckland.gov.uk/local-plan-2025>

Devolution

On 16 October 2025, the Norfolk County Council's cabinet voted in favour of devolution, marking a significant step towards establishing a Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA). This will enable local leaders to have greater control over decision making and funding, allowing them to address local needs more effectively.

There will be a migration of services to a combined strategic authority for Norfolk and Suffolk. The Mayor will be responsible for spending across both counties. More information is available on the website. <https://www.norfolksuffolk-cca.gov.uk/>

A brochure will be delivered to all households in Norfolk and Suffolk with the candidate details which is expected to cost in the region of £900,000.

Local Government Reform

The documentation is now with the Minister's office. Towards the end of the year or early next year we will know the outcome for a one, two or three unitary authority.

CHAIRMAN.....

DATED:

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

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7f. Stow Bedon & Breckles Chicken Farm

This is the Hook 2 Sisters, Great Hockham farm. As of today, a retrospective planning application has been submitted which is considered invalid whilst awaiting environmental information. There is to be a full review of the breaches. Hook 2 Sisters have complied with the temporary stop notice.

7e. **APP/F2605/W/24/3351737 – Appeal on application number 3PL/2022/0368/F -**

GRISTON - Coughtrey Industrial Estates (Units 1 - 17) Church Road

This remains with the Planning Inspectorate at the current time. Discussions are ongoing in relation to a possible alternative location.

Cherry Tree Farm, Stow Bedon

The applicant of Cherry Tree Farm was refused planning permission and Enforcement Notice was issued. An Appeal has been filed against both decisions.

Until the Appeal is heard, everything stops. The Appeal is likely to be by way of an enquiry rather than written submissions.

A member of the public enquired about Settlement Boundaries which appear in the current Local Plan. DC Cowen advised that the settlement boundaries will no longer exist.

Objections regarding settlement boundaries will no longer be permitted and the most likely alternative to this will be sustainability. Caston has and will likely be required to produce 2 houses per year. The Call for Sites only highlighted Homefarm, Northacre.

The risks are significant. Large sites can take between 7-10 years to deliver. Only the number of houses built and occupied count towards the required numbers.

If the required number are not built, Government will step in to determine where properties are built.

There are 'windfall developments' where residential developments are built though not expected. There are approximately 150 dwellings built year on year as windfall developments.

A member of the public also enquired about a Police Commissioner for both counties. The current rules prevent the Commissioner merging over two Counties. The Mayor will have responsibility for this and it is unknown as to what will happen in this regard.

5. **Speedwatch and SAM2 Report**

Cllr Spanyol reported the following:

"Three sessions were held in October; they have been reduced from one hour to 45 minutes. 219 vehicles were observed and 23 were reported for travelling at over 35mph (10.5%) Mill House on The Street late on Friday afternoon continues to be a hot spot for speeders with 17% exceeding 35mph. The shorter day light hours are beginning to constrain when Speedwatch is allowed to take place."

Two new Speedwatch operators have now been trained.

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SAM2

A query was raised over the replacement pole near the new development next to School View. The Clerk advised that according to our records, this was replaced on the 6th August. However, on inspection it does not appear to be in place and the location was provided using What Three Words and this has been checked and found to be correct. The Clerk will chase Westcotec to establish the position.

Batteries – the original batteries in the SAM2 signs are no longer holding their charge. A request was put forward by the SAM2 team for replacements. The Clerk advised that when we bought the spare batteries, they were around £175 for the pair. It was therefore agreed that subject to the two batteries costing below £300 the Clerk is authorised to purchase them.

The latest SAM2 reports are available to view on the Council website.

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

None.

7. Planning Applications

- a. **PL/2025/1364/TCA** - Homefield House The Street, Caston, Attleborough, Norfolk, NR17 1DD - T1 Leyland Cypress- Remove T2 Norway Spruce (dead) Remove T3 Leyland Cypress Remove Section of Leyland Cypress hedge to also be removed.
Delegated decision – no objections.
- b. **PL/2025/1369/HOU** - 1 Coronation Terrace, Caston, Attleborough, Norfolk, NR17 1DL - Proposed rear single storey extension to semi detached 2 storey house.
Granted with conditions.
- c. **PL/2025/0683/FMIN** – Caston Primary School The Street, Caston, Attleborough, Norfolk, NR17 1DD - Proposed flat roof rear single storey extension. **Undecided.**
- d. **PL/2025/1077/PIP** - Fallowfield Northacre, Caston, Attleborough, Norfolk, NR17 1DG - Permission in principle for a phased development of 4-5 self build dwellings.
Refused.
- e. **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. **See 3 above,**
- f. Stow Bedon & Breckles Chicken Farm. **See 3 above.**

Additional items:

- g. **PL/2025/0121/FMIN** - School Lodge The Green, Caston, Attleborough, Norfolk, NR17 1DB - Erection of three bedroom dwelling. Appeal reference **APP/F2605/W/25/3370879**. This planning application previously refused has been appealed. The comments of the Parish Council remain the same and will be reiterated on the Appeal application.
- h. **PL/2024/1056/FMIN** - Land To The North Of School View, The Street, Attleborough, NR17 1FP - Proposed 3No bedroom detached house & garage. Appeal reference **APP/F2605/W/25/3373390**. This planning application previously refused has been appealed. The comments of the Parish Council remain the same and will be reiterated on the Appeal application.

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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 October 2025 in the sum of £271.96.
- B. To approve payment to the Clerk, Mrs Joanne Blackman, for reimbursement of printing expenses in the sum of £13.99 per month (incl paper) for the months of February 2025 to September 2025, in the sum of £111.92.
- C. To approve payment to H Lindsey for plants for the Village Green planter in the sum of £13.98.
- D. To approve payment to Spanglefish for Caston Online annual website hosting fees in the sum of £78.00 incl VAT.
- E. To ratify payment to BT for broadband at the Village Hall in the sum of £39.88 (incl VAT) – paid by Direct Debit.

All payments were approved.

9. **Matters to report:-**

- A. **Financial Balances**
Caston Parish Council £15,754.16/Highway Surveyors £15,919.63
- B. **Remembrance Day Wreath**
It was agreed to donate £25 to the Poppy Appeal for the Remembrance Day wreath.
- C. **Playground**
 - New piece of play equipment
No comments in support or otherwise have been received. A further note will be placed in the Waylander and will be reviewed at the next meeting.
 - Additional tree works
The Clerk advised that the tree surgeon had been instructed to undertake the additional works and they will be carried out this week.
- D. **Village Planters update**
Following further discussion, it was agreed that the existing four planters highlighted for replacement should be removed now and the new ones installed when this can be arranged ready for the new season.
- E. **Riparian responsibilities**
The riparian letters have now been prepared and will be delivered in the coming week.
- F. **Property Flood Resilience Questionnaire**
Cllr Howell has completed the questionnaire and it was agreed that Cllr Howell should now submit the same.
- G. **Highways**
The Clerk advised that she had reported the following issues and has been asked to include photographs. Cllr Cook will take pictures of the Flaxmoor House weeds.
 - Flaxmoor House – weeds in the gutter to be cleared
 - First drain in Stow Bedon Road is blocked
 - The Clerk will continue to chase any road safety ideas for the ends of Northacre.
- H. **Co-option**
No applicants. Cllrs Howell and Spanyol have created a poster which will be delivered to all households, along with the Speedwatch poster to try and encourage engagement.
- I. **Liaison with School**
No update.
- J. **Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance**
No update.
- K. **Local Government Reform and Devolution**
See report of the District Councillor above.
- L. **Local Plan**
See report of the District Councillor above.

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10. **Correspondence**

The Clerk reported the following correspondence:

- Letter from Historic England re application to amend the entry for the village cross on the Schedule of Monuments. The Clerk has left messages with the person concerned who may wish to visit the site in due course.

11. **To agree the next meeting date: Monday 1 December 2025.**

Agreed.

The Chairman closed the Council Meeting to permit public discussion.

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

None.

Cllr Spanyol reported on the recent meeting regarding Local Government Reform/Devolution/Local Plan and services.

Breckland Council advised that they have achieved 900 plus houses per year and the figures for 2025 are also encouraging. Small developments have historically been built in Caston and this is likely to continue.

The Leader of the Council admitted that the proposal for a three unitary authority does not conform with Government guidelines though he believed there is justification for the approach.

The number of Councillors will be significantly fewer going forward.

Breckland are on track to deliver a balanced budget.

Breckland have offered some public car parks to Town Councils so they would take over ownership and responsibility for maintenance etc. These have been accepted in some circumstances. The residents of Thetford voted for the Town Council to take over control of some of the car parks and accepted an increase in their Council tax payments, so car parking remains free. Breckland Council are restricted to increase their precept above 5%, Town Councils do not have the same restrictions.

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

None.

Joanne Blackman

Parish Clerk

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