

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD at 7pm on
WEDNESDAY 7th DECEMBER 2022 IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Attendance: Mr Read in the Chair, Mrs Jeffreys, Mr Edwards, Mr Harris, Dr Harris, Ms Johnson, Mr Hill, Dr Bacon, Mr Filgate, Mr Jordan, Cllr Price (County Councillor), Mrs Cunningham (Clerk) and nine members of the public.

The meeting is being recorded for the purpose of producing the minutes.

Meeting started: 19.02

1. Apologies and approval of absences

Apologies received and accepted from Mrs Briscoe, Cllr Grove-Jones and Cllr Taylor.

2. Declarations of interests

None declared.

3. To approve as accurate minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on 2nd November were approved by all, with no amendments. Chairman duly signed.

4. Public participation session (10 minutes)

4.1 Public

A Parishioner handed a printed email to everyone from CPRE (The Countryside Charity) advising that the government conceded to pressure from parliamentarians and the public on a range of planning issues. She also provided in-depth information on Community Land Trusts (CLT) and advised there is currently a housing project being built under this scheme in Cromer. The Parishioner said if anyone were interested, their contact details could be passed to her.

4.2 Cllr Grove-Jones – Although absent had provided an update, which Mr Read advised he had read and there was very little to report, as had Cllr Taylor.

4.3 Cllr Taylor – Absent from meeting.

4.4 Cllr Price – advised he is currently focussing on road safety. He is planning an exhibition event in Sea Palling from 29th-31st January to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the east coast floods and is trying to get all the local schoolchildren involved in the exhibition. The Bishop of Norwich will read the memorial service.

5. Matters Arising

Report on outstanding actions from the previous meeting:

c/f -Tree & sign post damaged after accident near Tesco needs clearing. Mr Edwards said the sign damage has been removed and the site has been tidied, therefore the issue raised is resolved.

c/f - Damaged wooden boards in Noticeboard (corner of New St & New Road). Mr Read continuing to try and source thinner fibre board to make it easier to use.

c/f - Village Hall - Mrs Jeffreys to organise working group and update the PC with any costings, information etc, in 6 months - Ongoing (Mrs Jeffreys to update by Feb 2023).

c/f - Highways inspection parish visit. Being discussed under item 11.1.

6.1 - PF/22/2417 Laurels Farm, Laurels Road – 3 arrays of ground mounted solar PV panels and associated infrastructure. Clerk emailed Senior Planning Officer with PC concerns.

7.4 - Fly-tipping on playing field - Mr Read to assess condition of existing gate. Being discussed under item 7.3.

8 - Offer of Allotments - Ms Johnson to distribute initial agreements between PC and CUC and between PC and tenants to all Cllrs before next meeting. Ms Johnson to update under item 8.

9 - Safety Inspection report - Mrs Jeffreys to advise Cllrs on 'red' items from safety report. Being discussed under item 9.

10 - Replacement of Village bench. Clerk sent dimensions of foundation to all. Mr Read to request cash payment to avoid anonymous donator's identity being revealed. To be discussed under item 10.

12.1&2 Finance – To agree 2023 Budget and Precept. Clerk made amendments as discussed and recirculated for further discussion. To be discussed under item 12.1.

12.3 - New Bank Account. Clerk went to Lloyds Bank and obtained business address verification. Documents posted to Lloyds Business Head Office. Bank received and are processing account.

13 - Grass Cutting Contract 2023. Clerk requested insurance policy from chosen quote and sent to all. To be discussed under item 13.

14 - Policies & Procedures – Amended Grant and Donations Policy sent to all. Action complete.

15.1 - Village Hall -a) Mrs Jeffreys to proceed with ballpark valuations, as part of information gathering process and b) Mr Read to contact Adam to cut hedge outside VH. To be discussed under item 16.1.

15.3 - Poor's Trust. Clerk emailed Poor's Trust to request confirmation date of next elections. To be discussed under item 16.3.

In addition, Dr Bacon and Mr Filgate both advised there was rubbish by the recycling bins and Mr Read said there had also been fly-tipping at Plumsgate Road. Dr Bacon asked if documents had been transferred to the Records Office. Mr Harris confirmed they were reviewing the documents paying careful attention to the past so they can understand the present prior to them being moved.

6. Planning

6.1 Review BA Issues and Options Local Plan.

Mr Harris summarised 3 points from the documentation provided. Over 25% of the UK's conservation priority wildlife are in the Broads, tourism is the main provider of employment in this area with 7500 jobs and agriculture is the predominant business use in terms of land area, if not in numbers employed or monetary value, and has a vital role in maintaining the landscape and its aesthetic and environmental value. Mr Harris proposed the PC respond regarding the local plan for the Broads. Mr Edwards seconded. All in favour with one abstention. **Action: Clerk to email Mr Harris' draft response to BA.**

6.2 Review BA Design Guide – There were no additional comments on the design guide.

6.3 Any other planning matters – none received. Dr Bacon questioned if there had been any response re Laurels Farm, which there hadn't been.

7. Environment

7.1 To discuss new proposal of CEG project at the corner of New Road and The Street

A parishioner had previously emailed the updated plan asking for permission to proceed with the placing of 2 planters and a bench, adjacent to the existing sycamore tree. They will seek funding from NNDC and will ask if any villagers want to sponsor any items. Mrs Jeffreys proposed approval. Mr Jordan seconded. All in agreement. When questioned re ownership, Mr Edwards suggested the CEG be the owners of the bench and planters, but if the group were to 'fold' within 5 years, ownership should pass to the PC, which the parishioner agreed.

Action: Clerk to contact Highways for official approval of bench and planters.

7.2 **Any other Catfield Environmental Group updates** - The parishioner advised they have planted 4k daffodil bulbs in several positions around the village. Previous permission had been granted for a hedge, which was planted at the weekend. They have met with the Norfolk Wildlife Trust at Sandholes and need to do species identification of the area.

They will be decorating the sycamore tree at the corner of New Road and The Street soon.

Action: Clerk to email Highways requesting daffodils not cut until foliage has died.

7.3 **To discuss fly-tipping on playing field** - Mr Read confirmed he walked the area. No excessive dog fouling this time. The gate shuts and will need a chain and lock to close it and as cars have driven deep ruts into the grass, Mr Read recommends the gate should be locked. Mr Hill had also visited the site and said the hanging post is loose in the ground. He said the dog

bin has been broken off and is resting against the post. Mr Read confirmed that, if the gate is locked, people can still walk through there as the restriction is for cars only. A parishioner suggested the PC make the public aware why the gate will be locked, as there has already been criticism on social media. Another parishioner did ask why the village has not re-started a football club and after a long discussion, was advised she should discuss the thoughts with other villagers and if there was interest, they should approach the PC to discuss further. **Action: Mrs Jeffreys to contact the magazine to advise the gate will be locked to protect the playing surface.**

7.4 To discuss any response from EA and NE to PC letters re discharge of polluted water into the Ants Broads and Marshes SSSI

All Cllrs had seen the emailed responses. Mr Harris said he was able to show NE the site under discussion, as it was evident there was sewage going into the marsh. Mr Harris apologised and said he should have declared an interest, although not pecuniary, as he owns part of the Fen, as does the Poor's Trust. Dr Bacon read an email from a farm-owner who had recently met with Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) NE. They confirmed he had no pollution issues on his land. He said they also checked the water in the ditch from the school toward Church Wood and this was confirmed as good quality with no sign of sewage from the school, Catfield House or the Old Rectory. The CSF officers will report back to the EA. The officers asked about the algae problem in the ditches around Catfield Wood and were advised to contact the owner. Mr Read added the run-off from some of the dykes into the SSSI's was shown to the Highways inspector, who noted the subject. Cllr Price asked Mr Harris to email him a description and location of the algae, which he will share with the Broads internal drainage board. **Action: Mr Harris to email requested details to Cllr Price.**

8. Update on Catfield United Charities area of land for possible allotments

Ms Johnson had been unwell and only sent one draft agreement before the meeting. She said there will be two drafts, between the PC and the Trust and another between the PC and the tenants. To be discussed at the next meeting once the Councillors have received both documents. **Action: Ms Johnson to forward the draft agreement between the PC and CUC.**

9. To discuss safety inspection report findings for the Catfield recreation ground

Mrs Jeffreys had emailed the prioritised 'red' items as these are the more urgent items to address. Mr Harris proposed Mrs Jeffreys, Mr Hill and a local builder, known to Mr Hill, to meet to discuss an estimated cost to address these 'red' prioritised items. Once the PC have this information they can then decide, at the next meeting, how to proceed further. Mr Edwards seconded. **Action: Mr Hill and Mrs Jeffreys to meet to discuss guide quotation. Mrs Jeffreys will investigate other contractors to provide alternate quotes in the new year.**

10. To discuss replacement of Village Hall bench

Mr Read passed a sealed envelope to the Clerk to open, which he had received from an anonymous doner. The Clerk counted £800 cash in view of Mr Read. The donator had chosen the bench design, and this had been emailed to the Cllrs. The donator wants the plaque to read in memory of Queen Elizabeth 2, showing the years of birth and death. Mrs Jeffreys proposed they accept the donators bench design. Mr Filgate seconded. All in favour. Mr Read confirmed the doner is passing ownership to the bench to the PC. **Action: Clerk and Mr Read to order bench and plaque.**

11. Highways & Road Safety

11.1 Highways Inspection Parish Visit

Mr Read said he, and Mr Harris accompanied the inspector around the village showing all the issues previously discussed. The inspector advised them to put any issues in writing and said that some roads are prioritised and inspected more frequently than others, but he was unable to advise further. Mr Harris proposed the PC write to Highways to request the schedule of

maintenance for roads in Catfield, to see if there are any modifications that might be helpful. On receipt of the schedule, the PC will respond with any additional areas that need to be reviewed further. Mrs Jeffreys seconded. All in favour. **Action: Clerk to contact Highways.**

11.2 Any other Highways or road safety issues

None received. Mr Filgate brought up the issue of speeding through the village. Mr Read said Cllr Price is trying to arrange 30mph roundels, one coming from Ludham, one on the old Potter Road and one from the bypass coming in, as part of his road safety proposal. Mr Harris proposed agreement to the roundels and accept his offer. All in favour.

12. Finance

12.1 To discuss and agree 2023 Budget

All Cllrs had seen the proposed budget. Mr Harris advised the PC should hold 3-12 months reserve and said there are no substantial items worth capitalising at this stage. He said that it should be clear the PC are not spending to excess but all costs have increased. Mr Hill said that the reserve is being eroded by the same rate of inflation that the expenses are going up by. The Clerk wanted to make everyone aware that currently only £1k is included in the reserve for the playground and any extra costs will drain more from the reserves. Mr Harris recommends and proposes the PC accept the budget and an increase in precept set at £13,400. Mrs Jeffreys seconded. All in favour. **Action: Clerk to advise NNDC of 2023 precept.**

12.2 To discuss and agree the Precept – included in 12.1

12.3 To resolve to transfer funds into earmarked/general reserves

The PC agreed not to transfer any funds into earmarked reserves but retain the funds in general reserves.

12.4 To approve payments

Cheque 101300 - £16.00 - The Broads Society

Cheque 101301 – Clerk salary & expenses

Cheque 101302 – £1848.00 - Garden Guardian Ltd

Mr Harris proposed payments made. All in favour. Cheques duly signed.

13. To discuss and approve insurance policy for the grass cutting contract 2023

All Cllrs had seen the 2022 insurance policy and were happy to proceed. Mr Edwards asked for the Clerk to request sight of the 2023 policy. **Action: Clerk to request 2023 policy.**

14. Review grass cutting on the Rond

The PC received an email from the Conservation Officer for the Norfolk Branch of Butterfly Conservation (BC) advising they need to find a new contractor for cutting the grass on the Rond. Mr Harris said he and the Poor's Trust expressed their interest earlier. He said the Rond was primarily intended to give access to the landowners' Fens on either side and so the BC should pay for grass cutting to the mill, where their land ended but not beyond. Dr Bacon disagreed and said the Rond is the responsibility of the PC and there is an arrangement that the PC currently pay £200, and the BC pay £400, not because it is their responsibility, but they contribute to the cutting because they want people to walk around the site and look in. Dr Bacon advised the current contractor was unable to complete September's cut, as he couldn't get the machinery to there, so will not charge for this. This contractor is unable to continue, so the BC are asking for help to find a replacement to do the work. A parishioner advised they will be slopping out their dykes along their borders, so there is no need to pay to cut the bracken. Mr Harris proposed he would be happy for the status quo to continue but would not create new implications with the BC and suggested the RSPB should be cutting up to the mill. Mr Edwards seconded. All in favour with four abstentions. **Action: Clerk to write to the Butterfly Conservation Officer.**

15. To discuss option of gov.uk domain and email

Mr Edwards proposed we keep the same domain and email for now. Mr Filgate seconded. All in favour with one abstention.

16. Progress reports for information

16.1 Village Hall

Mrs Jeffreys is continuing to obtain ballpark figures for presentation in February 2023. Mr Read advised he spoke to Adam re the hedge cutting and said he will do it as soon as he can. Dr Harris raised the issue of rain coming in through the Village Hall roof during the meeting. The Clerk advised that someone had been mentioned that the VH should have outside lighting, ideally by the front and toward the car park. Mrs Jeffreys proposed the PC contact the VH management committee regarding the roof and lighting. Mr Filgate seconded. All in favour. **Action: Clerk to email the VH Committee.**

16.2 All Saints Church

Dr Bacon said there is an upcoming Christmas tree festival. There is a carol service on 21st December and a Midnight service on Christmas Eve. Gates have been installed in the car park which the landowner has advised should not be used as a general car park, but people can use while visiting the church or churchyard.

16.3 Poor's Trust

Mr Harris said he reviewed previous Minutes, and the re-election of trustees is customarily in April but due to Covid was pushed back to September 2020. Dr Bacon added it's a 3-year appointment, and this is when a trustee is appointed, not elected, and anyone can approach the PC to be appointed as it's the PC that appoint the trustees to the Poor's Trust although the Poor's Trust is not answerable to the PC.

16.4 Any other reports – no other reports

17. Matters for next Agenda and information

Confirmed date of the next meeting, scheduled for 4th January 2023.

Meeting finished at 10.10 pm

Chairman Signature: _____

Date: _____

Chairman Name: _____