

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD at 7pm on
WEDNESDAY 4th JANUARY 2023 IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Attendance: Mr Read in the Chair, Mrs Jeffreys, Mr Edwards, Mr Harris, Dr Harris, Mr Hill, Dr Bacon, Mrs Briscoe, Mr Jordan, Cllr Taylor (District Councillor), Mrs Cunningham (Clerk) and six members of the public.

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

Meeting started: 19.00

1. Apologies and approval of absences

Apologies received and accepted from Ms Johnson, Mr Filgate, Cllr Grove-Jones and Cllr Price.

2. Declarations of interests

Mr Harris declared an interest in Catfield Fen, although not pecuniary, and said the Catfield United Charities has the same interest.

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

Dr Bacon referred to point 14 when Mr Harris made a proposal and said as Mr Harris declared an interest, he should not have made a proposal. He was unaware of this at the time and only noticed after seeing the Minutes. In view of this, Dr Bacon agreed to accept the proposal but highlighted it is important to note at future meetings. The minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on 7th December were approved by all, with no amendments. Chairman duly signed.

4. Public participation session (10 minutes)

4.1 Public

A Parishioner, referring to the Parish Magazine, asked how the PC responded to the BA re the Local Plan. Mr Harris gave background to the item discussed at the previous meeting and confirmed the PC had written to the BA. She also advised about flooding at the bottom of Lea Road and water works and issues causing them to be 'cut off' on 2nd August. Mr Read advised this is an issue for Anglian Water. Mrs Jeffreys proposed the PC write to Anglian Water asking them to provide their procedures how they would deal with the issue in future, drawing attention to matter on 2nd August 2022. Mr Edwards seconded. All in favour. **Action: Clerk to write to Anglian Water.**

Regarding the water at Lea Rd, she said she spoke to Cllr Price who spoke to the Council, but they did nothing. **Action: Clerk to liaise with Cllr Price.**

4.2 Cllr Grove-Jones – Although absent, Mr Read read her report aloud. No movement re nutrient neutrality but hoping to hear more constructive mitigation issues in the coming weeks. The saline barrier at Potter Heigham to protect the over-wintering fish in Herbert Woods basin, due to reports of dead/dying fish due to saltwater resurgence. Contact the EA if a dramatic increase in dead fish seen. The conditions applied to the Sands new development on the A149 have been completed and building work will recommence in the Spring. No news re Lea Rd.

4.3 Cllr Taylor – Little to report due to Xmas holidays but VH Grant information sent to PC.

4.4 Cllr Price –. Although absent, Mr Read read his report aloud. County progressing their intention to progress to a devolution deal with the Government and recommends everyone participates at the public consultation stage. The old bridge in Potter Heigham is closed to vehicles following a significant hole appearing in the road surface. Investigative work is likely to take until the end of the month.

5. Matters Arising

Report on outstanding actions from the previous meeting:

Filing of old PC records - Mr Read & Mr Harris reviewing documents before filing at NRO – Mr Harris confirmed he has been to the records office and has been through most of the records and there is a lack of correspondence between 2005-2019. Mr Harris will prepare a schedule of documents.

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

Village Hall - Mrs Jeffreys to organise working group and update the PC with any costings, information etc, in 6 months - Ongoing

BA issues & Options Local Plan - Clerk to email Mr Harris draft response to BA - Clerk emailed.

Proposal of CEG project at the corner of New Road and The Street - Clerk to contact Highways for official approval of bench and planters - Clerk emailed. To be discussed under item 7.1

Other CEG updates - Clerk to email Highways requesting daffodils not cut until foliage has died - Clerk emailed. Highways confirmed they will discuss with the contractor prior to cutting.

Fly-tipping on playing field - Mrs Jeffreys to contact the magazine to advise the gate will be locked to protect the playing surface - Mrs Jeffreys notified magazine. Mr Read to chain and lock the gates.

To discuss any response from EA and NE to PC letters re discharge of polluted water into the Ants Broads and Marshes SSSI - Mr Harris to email description and location of algae to Cllr Price, who will share with the Broads Internal drainage board - Mr Harris sent to Cllr Price.

Offer of Allotments - Ms Johnson to distribute draft agreement between PC and CUC - Ms Johnson to update. To be discussed under item 9

Safety Inspection report - Mr Hill and Mrs Jeffreys to meet to discuss guide quotation. Mrs Jeffreys will investigate other contractors to provide alternate quotes. To be discussed under item 10

Replacement of Village bench - Clerk to order bench - Update under item 11

Highways Inspection Parish Visit - Clerk to write to Highways to request schedule of maintenance of roads in Catfield - Clerk requested. To be discussed under item 12.1

Budget and Precept - Clerk to advise NNDC of 2023 precept - Clerk actioned.

Grass Cutting Contract 2023 - Clerk to request 2023 insurance policy from chosen contractor - Clerk actioned and policy sent to all. To be discussed under item 13.3

Grass cutting on the Rond - Clerk to write to the Butterfly Conservation Officer - Clerk actioned. No response. A parishioner said they have asked a contractor to slop out the dyke and Dr Bacon advised that a notice should be put on the Rond.

Village Hall - a) Clerk to email VH Committee re leaking roof and outside lighting and b) Mr Read to update re cutting of hedge outside VH -a) Clerk actioned b) Contractor to action.

6. Planning

6.1 **PA/22/2921 - Laurels Farmhouse, Laurels Farm, Laurels Road, Catfield** - Application to determine if prior approval is required for Installation of 105 kWp roof-mounted solar PV array for generation and use of renewable electricity at the farm. Mrs Briscoe said the website shows there is a separate application for the roof mounted panels under permitted development in addition to planning permission for the ground mounted system. Mr Harris proposed the PC support the panels being put on the roof, but the previous concerns raised regarding loss of agricultural land are still valid. Mrs Jeffreys seconded. All in favour with 1 abstention.

6.2 **PF/22/2897 - 14 Long Lane, Catfield – 2 storey extension to side of house.** Mr Harris proposed there are no objections. All in favour.

6.3 **Any other planning matters - PF/22/2988 – Ludham Water Tower, Watering Piece Lane - removal of existing support poles and 3 antenna & installation of a new 9-metre-high stub tower and 3 replacement antennas and associated ancillary development.** Application received after agenda set, however due to response time and there were no objections to the application, the PC agreed to discuss. Dr Bacon did say the address is incorrect as the site is in Catfield and not in Ludham, as the application states. **Action: Clerk to write to planning to advise of incorrect address.** Mr Read asked if NNDC could write to the Clerk to update the PC on any planning decisions, as the BA currently do. **Action: Clerk to contact NNDC to ask for future updates re planning application decisions.**

7. Environment

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

Mr Edwards provided an update, as there was no CEG representative present. No response yet from Highways regarding the official approval of bench and planters.

7.2 Any other Catfield Environmental Group updates -

Mr Edwards said due to the Christmas holidays, there were no significant updates.

7.3 To discuss fly-tipping on playing field -

Mr Read confirmed he walked the area. No excessive dog fouling this time.

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

Mr Harris read a section aloud from a NE letter he received, 'as one of the most important wetlands sites in the county, Catfield Fen is dependent on high quality water with low levels of nutrients. Hence, we are very concerned about this current incident and its potential impact on the designated site'. He referred to the last Minutes regarding the Catchment Sensitive Farming inspection, as his letter from NE disagreed and read, 'the CSF officer sampled the dyke and found elevated levels of nutrients and a piped discharge into the head of the dyke'. Mr Harris also said there had been less discharge during the school holidays. Mr Harris advised algal bloom has also been spreading. Mr Edwards proposed, the PC need to write to the EA acknowledging the issue, to establish when dye testing will take place and why they have taken so long. Mrs Jeffreys seconded. 4 in agreement with 4 abstentions. **Action: Dr Bacon to forward copy of the CSF report to Clerk. Clerk to write to EA & NCC re date of dye testing and to ensure, prior to testing, the relevant landowners are communicated with.**

8. Correspondence

8.1 To discuss mud on roads on & around Fenside -

2 written complaints have been received. Mr Edwards feels the roads, after the last harvest, are the worst he has seen in 15 years and said offences have been committed under the Highways Act 1980, Section 148. Mr Hill said he drove the streets on Xmas Eve and other roads, where tractors and trailers had not passed, were in equally as bad condition. Dr Harris declared an interest. She said the verge by her property, has eroded because of damage caused. Dr Bacon said the issue has gone on for years and said either the police are involved in incidents involving the highways or civil prosecution if there is a damage to property. Mr Read said he called the police, as the person who complained had mud splattered up their walls and door but has not heard from them. Mr Harris proposed the PC protect the parishioners and write to Highways (Justin Le May) as he is familiar to previous complaints. The PC should seek his advice how to prevent this happening again and ask him to discuss with the landowner regarding accessing his site from the north, as the complainant suggested. Mr Edwards seconded. All in favour with 1 abstention. **Action: Mr Harris to draft letter to Highways.**

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

Mr Read said 2 sets of photos should be taken of the site (1 for the PC and 1 for the Poors Trust) before the PC accept the site and when/if the PC return the site to the Poors Trust, they do the same again to compare. The back of the photos should be signed by both parties. Ms Johnson distributed a draft agreement between the Poors Trust and PC. Mrs Briscoe offered to review the draft agreements. Dr Harris, speaking on behalf of the Poors Trust, said the tenancy agreement should be with the PC not the Poors Trust. **Action: Mrs Briscoe to review draft agreements.**

10. To discuss Safety inspection report findings for the Catfield recreation ground -

Mrs Jeffreys confirmed safety standards EN1176 will be adhered to, and the estimated the cost to be around £1000, which the Cllrs agreed, as had previously been allocated in the finances. Volunteers would help keep labour costs down, however, there haven't been any from the parish. The Cllrs thanked Mrs Jeffreys and Mr Hill for all their work on this so far. Mr Edwards proposed the PC proceed with Mrs

Jeffreys specification, with the work to begin as soon as the weather permits. Mr Harris seconded. All in favour. **Action: Mr Hill to purchase materials in preparation for maintenance work.**

11. Update of replacement Village Hall bench

Mr Read confirmed the new bench has been ordered and should be delivered within 4 weeks.

12. Highways & Road Safety

12.1 Highways Inspection Parish Visit – To discuss any update on previous/future inspection

Mr Read advised the PC has written requesting a schedule showing the priority roads. Regarding the upcoming inspection, Mr Harris said the PC should know when they are coming.

Action: Clerk to chase date of inspection again.

12.2 To discuss possible creation of pedestrian verge alongside the Mushroom site

Mr Harris said the land registry shows there used to be a verge, as do photos and for safety reasons that should be re-opened. Mrs Briscoe confirmed the PC are not wanting to create a new verge but restoring a verge that was already there. Mr Harris said the safety issue was raised by the PC approx. 3 years ago and was advised to take the matter further with County Council. The fence has been erected, by the current owners, in the wrong place and people are having to walk in the road to pass it. Mr Hill said he was fairly confident the first meter is under the control of the highway and if the fence is moved, the edge of the fence feet should be 1m back, not the fence, or this will cause a trip hazard. Dr Bacon advised the term should be footway, not footpath. Mr Hill suggested the owner should be contacted initially and asked to move the fence back. Mrs Jeffreys proposed a letter should be sent to the landowner asking them to reposition the fence to the original highway boundary with photos to be included. Mr Harris advised that if there is no response, the PC will contact NCC. Mrs Briscoe to draft. Mr Jordan seconded. All in favour. **Action: Mrs Briscoe to draft letter to the landowner.**

12.3 Light pollution from the FloGas site on Long Lane (toward Potter Heigham)

Mr Harris said a complaint was brought to him personally, and he had checked the site and it looked like a line of cars. Since then, the lights have been turned down. The PC will monitor in future and if turned up again, this will be an issue, but no action needed for now.

12.4 Any other Highways or road safety issues

Mr Read read an email from Ms Johnson re The Street near the Crown. Her neighbours had asked if hedging was encroaching the road space as it seemed to protrude and force you to walk in the middle of the road. Dr Bacon confirmed the line shown in the accompanying photos is not the road boundary but a concrete round top kerb he had personally installed. He said the hedge could be cut back a few inches in line with the edge of the bank, but otherwise it is the same it has always been. Mr Harris propose the PC write to the owner asking for it to be cut back a little. Mr Edwards seconded. All in favour. **Action: Clerk to write requesting hedge to be cut back.**

13. Finance

13.1 To approve payments

Cheque 101303 – Clerk salary & expenses

Cheque 101304 - £795.59 – Refund to Clerk for payment of VH bench paid on own credit card.

Cheque 101305 - £37.94 – HMRC

Dr Bacon proposed payments made. Mr Hill seconded. All in favour. Cheques duly signed.

13.2 To discuss contribution of lawnmower cost for All Saints Churchyard grass cutting

Dr Bacon confirmed the mower would cut most of the old churchyard, current and future churchyard areas, the paths around the 1929 churchyard and outside the church wall on School Rd but not around the war memorial. He advised at this current time, it is not legally the responsibility of the PC to cut the grass or pay for it, but it is a moral responsibility. Mr Hill questioned the ownership of the mower if the PC contribute, and the request was that it would be the property of the Church Council. Mrs Briscoe referred to the Grants & Donations

policies limit of £250 per application. Although aware of the increasing financial costs of the PC, the Cllrs all agree a contribution to the mower should be paid. Mr Edwards proposed a payment made of £250 to be paid per year for 4year. Mr Harris seconded. 2 abstentions, others in favour. **Action: Clerk to write to advise re contribution.**

13.3 **To review and accept 2023 insurance policy for grass cutting contractor**

All Cllrs had seen the 2023 policy. Mrs Jeffreys proposed policy acceptable. All in favour.

13.4 **To discuss training course for Clerk**

Mrs Jeffrey proposed Clerk can attend the training course, as requested. All in favour.

13.5 **Update of new bank account**

The Clerk advised the account was in its final processing stages and should be finalised by mid-January.

14. To discuss length of Parish Council meetings

Mr Read said that everyone contributes to the meetings, so everyone is equally to blame. Mr Harris referred to the last meeting and the parishioners' section, which extended the allocated time and said with hindsight, the parishioner should have been asked to send the request in writing, prior to the meeting. It was also added that it was not actually relevant to PC business. Mr Harris also said more should be done between meetings. Mrs Jeffreys asked if the Environmental Group could also provide their report in writing prior to the meeting. **Action: Clerk to contact CEG to request report prior to meeting.**

15. Progress reports for information

15.1 **Village Hall** – Mrs Jeffreys proposed the PC allow a one-month extension to the presentation timeline as there is a delay in obtaining information. All in agreement. Mrs Jeffreys also proposed and volunteered to be the PC representative at the VH Committee (VHC) meetings. All in agreement. Ongoing from the last meeting and in response to an email from the VHC, the PC agreed the security lighting would be better if they are controlled from inside the hall, ideally on a timer for a few minutes to allow time to leave the building. Mrs Jeffreys will advise them where the roof was leaking. It was agreed the PC would send the VHC a copy of the lease, as requested. The next VH Committee meeting is 23rd January.

15.2 **All Saints Church** – Dr Bacon said the illuminated star was being taken down.

15.3 **Poor's Trust** – No update to report.

15.4 **Any other reports** – None

16. Matters for next Agenda and information

To confirm the date of the next meeting, scheduled for **1st February 2023.**

No decisions can be under this item, for information purposes only

Meeting finished at 10.20 pm

Chairman Signature: _____

Date: _____

Chairman Name: _____