

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD at 7pm on
WEDNESDAY 7TH JUNE 2023 IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Attendance: Mr Harris in the Chair, Mrs Jeffreys, Mr Edwards, Dr Harris, Dr Bacon, Mrs Briscoe, Mr Roberson, Mrs Plowman, Mr Snelling, Cllr Price (County Councillor), Cllr Taylor (District Councillor), Cllr Bayes (District Councillor) Mrs Cunningham (Clerk) and thirteen 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 and Mr Jordan.

2. Declarations of interests

Mr Snelling declared an interest, although not pecuniary, in Lea Road and Mrs Plowman in Fenside.

3. To approve as accurate minutes of the previous meeting

Mrs Jeffreys proposed the minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on 17th May were approved. Mrs Briscoe seconded. All in agreement. Chairman duly signed.

4. Public participation session (10 minutes)

- 4.1 **Public** – A parishioner advised of problems regarding the refuse collection and has previously advised Cllr Taylor. She said they are either missing collections or collecting on the wrong day and have been issues since November. Cllr Taylor agrees the situation is unacceptable and he has written a letter to the Council and understands Serco maybe fined. Mr Harris proposed the PC write to NNDC expressing the concern raised by the public regarding the failures of Serco to perform adequately. Mr Roberson seconded. All in agreement. **Action: Clerk to write to NNDC.** Another parishioner said in May's magazine, Mrs Grove-Jones said planning permission for a traveller's site status had been refused and was waiting enforcement. She asked the District Cllrs if a letter from NNDC planning has been sent and asked them to confirm. Another parishioner added there are 26 documents attached to the application on the website, the last 2 being on 3rd March and one is a refusal. Mr Harris asked to defer the discussion until item 7.1.
- 4.2 **Cllr Taylor & Cllr Bayes** – Cllr Bayes introduced himself. Mr Harris requested District & County Council provide written reports, as they have provided previously. Cllr Taylor said he, and Cllr Bayes, would alternate attendance at PC meetings. He also said they will invite planning dept to provide PC training, which was welcomed. Dr Bacon requested they invite the Broads Authority Planning Officers to attend. **Action: Date of training to be confirmed by the District Cllrs.**
- 4.3 **Cllr Price** – Cllr Price advised the County Head of Paid Services, Tom McCabe, is the new Chief Executive. Referring to items on the agenda, he said he was not cc'd into a letter to Highways and asked if all Cllrs had seen the wording before it was sent. Mr Harris confirmed the draft was read aloud and agreed unanimously at the previous meeting, which Cllr Price was in attendance, and the email cc omission was an oversight. Cllr Price asked how the PC acquired a report from Dr Parmenter and if all Cllrs had seen it. Mr Harris confirmed the report had been discussed several meetings ago and the Cllrs confirmed they had seen. Cllr Price said Cllrs who lived in Fenside did not declare an interest at the last meeting and as the new Chair and Cllrs have not had training, he asked for all items regarding Fenside be removed from the agenda until training complete. Mr Harris said he has consistently advised he has no interest in Fenside. Cllr Price had checked Mr Harris's postal address and was of the understanding he lives in Fenside, which Mr Harris confirmed he lives in Hall Road, not in, or near Fenside. Mr Harris confirmed the PC are trying to protect against transit through the appendix of Fenside only. Dr Bacon confirmed Cllrs should declare an interest if the Cllrs live near, on, or close to a site being discussed, own property near the site or work for someone in the discussion and the point is not just financial

but if you can be perceived as having an interest, by the public, then an interest should be declared. Mr Harris observed that unlike in his case, the houses of 6 Parish Cllrs fronted onto Fenside or the agricultural transit routes which were under discussion. He had taken personal legal advice on the subject of when interests should be declared. Mrs Jeffreys expressed her disappointment in Cllr Price and said it feels as though he is trying to put an obstacle in the way of progression. Cllr Price said he is working with Highways to try and find a solution and said, after Dr Bacon's explanation, he was withdrawing the request for Cllrs to have training, so Fenside can be left on the agenda and confirmed he would withdraw the statement made regarding Mr Harris's interest.

5. **Confirm day of future Parish Council meetings** – Due to other use of the Village Hall, it was decided that the days of future PC meetings would remain unchanged.

6. Matters Arising

Report on actions from the previous meeting;

7/4.4 - Mushroom Site fencing - Enforcement letter sent expired 31st March - Cllr Price advised the landowners are unresponsive and the Council are continuing with the legal process. Mrs Jeffreys proposed Cllr Price asks Highways to confirm if this has been passed to the Legal Dept and to provide a guide timescale. Mr Snelling seconded. All in agreement. **Action: Cllr Price to action proposal.**

c/f - Update on VH - Mrs Jeffreys to arrange date for Cllrs meeting – **Action: Mrs Jeffreys to schedule.**

7/7.2 - Light Pollution from FloGas site - Parish Cllrs to check on lighting and update on any changes. Due to light evenings, the Cllrs have been unable to confirm. Will remove from agenda until further notice.

7/7.4 - Possible car parking arrangement for playing field – To obtain print and knee-rail fence quotes. Mr Edwards to circulate wording for sign and arrange printing -To be discussed under item 9.4

7/8.2 - Any response from EA/NE re the discharge of polluted water into the Ants Broads and Marshes SSSI - Mr Harris to update once results confirmed. Dr Bacon advised this has been discussed by the BA full committee and will be discussed by the BA navigation committee. **Action: C/F to future agenda.**

7/9.1 - Car parking at Polker Lodge, Elderbush Lane - To be discussed under item 8.5

7/12.2 Donation to Catfield Primary School for Coronation commemorative coins - Ms Johnson chased invoice but still not received. **Action: Clerk/Ms Johnson to chase invoice**

12.5 - Bank Accounts - Clerk to draft letter to close Barclays accounts - To be discussed under item 12.9

7/16.3 - VH roof leak - Mrs Jeffreys to discuss at VHMC meeting -Mrs Jeffreys to update under item 16.3

8.3 - Other Planning Matters – Malthouse Corner - To be discussed under item 7.1

9.2 - Highways – New Road tarmac and Lea Rd drains - Response received with further question from Highways. Mr Roberson proposed Clerk respond confirming tarmac date was on or about 15th May and the Clerk to provide contact details. Mrs Jeffreys seconded. All in favour. Regarding the drain blocking on Lea Rd, Dr Bacon confirmed the 'bottom' end is the lower end in height, northern end by compass and nearest New Road. **Action: Clerk to respond to Highways re tarmac and drains.**

10.2 - Johnny Crowe Staithe Moorings - Mr Hill invoiced and Mrs Jeffreys drafted an advert for magazine.

11.1 - Muds on roads on/around Fenside - To be discussed under item 9.1

11.3 – NALC - Clerk sent password to Cllrs and training for new Cllrs to be discussed under item 15

13 - Insurance Renewal - Mr Edwards confirmed play equipment covered. Clerk paid.

14 - Playground Inspection - Mr Edwards proposed proceed with inspection only and await outcome of report. Mrs Jeffreys seconded. All in agreement.

15.4 – Banking - Mrs Jeffreys provided information for new signatory - To be discussed under item 12.8

7. Planning

7.1 **PF/23/0861 - Malthouse Corner, Malthouse Lane, Catfield - Change of use of the land to a caravan site for single caravan for Gypsy and Traveller residential use; hard standing, portacabin and installation of cess tank (part retrospective)** – Mr Harris provided photos of additional caravans added to the land and its proximity to FloGas and said there has been considerable concern about this. Mrs Briscoe drafted an objection letter, which had been sent to the PC. The PC also received a report from a planning consultant on behalf of unnamed

clients. Although a PC policy dictates names should be provided before correspondence can be considered, Mr Harris read aloud an anonymous letter received by email. Dr Bacon stressed the address is incorrect as the plot entrance is on Malthouse Lane, Ludham and it is not in BA national park. The PC had also received a separate report, which a parishioner advised local residents requested a local architect to draft the objection report on their behalf. Mr Harris said the PC object to the planning procedures being disregarded and the map, Dr Bacon supplied, showing the danger zone around FloGas is a major safety issue, with which Dr Bacon advised the site is entirely in the major risk zone and on the road, touches the highest risk zone. He also fact-checked some parts of the application regarding church attendance and the descriptive explanation of the site. A parishioner added tree and shrub clearance of the site resulted in a major fire showing a disregard for H&S. Mr Harris confirmed unanimity in views and the PC letter should take on board any additional points raised in the provided report, including the FloGas safety aspect. Mrs Plowman added the applicants work in Great Yarmouth and there are dedicated traveller sites in that area and around Norfolk. Following a long discussion, Mr Harris proposed Mrs Briscoe draft a full objection letter, taking on board all points raised. Mrs Jeffreys seconded. All in agreement. **Action: Mrs Briscoe to draft objection letter. Clerk to send to planning dept, Ludham PC and Ludham Cllr Adam Varley.**

7.2 **Any other planning matters** – None raised.

8. Highways & Road Safety

- 8.1 **Update of possible pedestrian verge alongside the Mushroom site** – Discussed under 6. Matters Arising.
- 8.2 **Update re light pollution from FloGas site** on Long Lane - Discussed under 6. Matters Arising.
- 8.3 **Update re possible car parking arrangement for playing field** – Mr Edwards said he had not received significant PC response to proceed with the sign. Mr Harris proposed the word 'Mum' be dropped from the proposed sign wording. Dr Harris seconded. All in agreement. **Action: Mr Edwards to revise sign and advert. C/f - Mr Roberson to provide quote for knee rail fencing.**
- 8.4 **Discuss D23 20 - Highways Act 1980 Section 31 – Land at Goffins Lane, Ludham** – Dr Bacon explained the location of Goffins Lane and he knows of no registered paths within the area. He said the landowners can register land they own showing recognised rights of way. Mr Harris said as there is little land in Catfield and no footpaths, there is no issue and the PC will note this registration. No further action.
- 8.5 **Any update re car parking at Polker Lodge, Elderbush Lane** – Police Constable Priddy had responded to the email from the Parish Council and confirmed the vehicles are taxed and mot'd and advised the PC to 'leave the situation with him'. Mr Harris proposed the PC take no further action for now and leave this open for discussion again if needed, in the future.
- 8.6 **Any other Highways or road safety issues** – None raised.

9. Correspondence

- 9.1 **To discuss any response from Highways re Fenside** – Mrs Plowman declared an interest. Mr Harris declared no interest and Mr Edwards declared an interest as he lives close to the area but stated it is not a financial interest. Mr Harris clarified that the issue is the appendix at Fenside only and the PC are responding to a complaint raised by a parishioner. The PC have responded to Highways, as Mr Le-May recommended a meeting with all parties to try to resolve the situation. Mr Harris proposed the team to represent and report back to the PC should be Mr Edwards and Mrs Jeffreys, as they witnessed the problem, and Mrs Plowman, as she has an interest. Mrs Plowman reiterated the problems they experienced living in Fenside. Mr Roberson seconded and all in agreement. Cllr Price confirmed he was happy with the situation and would work on it straight away. **Action: Await Highway response and Cllr Price to action proposal.**
- 9.2 **To discuss any update re Lea Road hedge/gate** – Mr Edwards had received concerns from Lea Rd residents regarding removal of a gate and insertion of a gate. They said the hedge had been there since 1886 so maybe classified as an ancient hedge and bird nesting rules were contravened. Because of the raised kerb, the vehicle access should be minimal, and part of the

construction exceeds the height and would require planning permission. The landowner was at the meeting and confirmed he paid a contractor to open the hedge, which had been checked for nesting birds prior to removal. He said he planted the hedge about 50 years ago and in order to secure the area, a gate was erected. Dr Bacon advised planning law says you can make access onto an unclassified road, such as Lea Rd, without planning permission. Regarding the kerb, he said, as the access is to a field only, highways wouldn't need a dropped kerb. Following a few varying suggestions, Mr Harris proposed the PC advise the residents of Highways response and as per Mr Edwards proposal, ask the landowner to respond in writing to the concerns raised, so all are privy to the information. Mrs Jeffreys seconded. All in favour with one abstention. **Action: Clerk to email landowner Lea Rd residents' concerns.**

- 9.3 **Any update re proposed bus shelter** – Dr Harris advised she is waiting for responses from planning and the conservation department and has suggested an on-site meeting, which Mr Jordan will also attend. **Action: Update to be provided at the next meeting.**
- 9.4 **Dangerous tree – New Road.** The PC received an email regarding 2 dangerous trees. The Clerk advised the parishioner, the initial tree was not on PC owned land, but the location of the 2nd potentially dangerous tree was unclear. Mr Harris proposed the Clerk email asking the parishioner to advise of the specific tree. **Action: Clerk to write requesting location of tree.**
- 9.5 **Any other correspondence** – a) A request had been received requesting the possibility of upgrading the noticeboard. **Action: Clerk to add to next agenda.**
 b) Mr Edwards referred to an article in the magazine, where the writer did not know the Parish Cllrs standing for election. Mrs Briscoe suggested they could each provide a short bio to the magazine each month.

10. Environmental

- 10.1 **Catfield Environmental Group updates** - Meeting with Norfolk Wildlife Trust at Sandholes on 29th June for advice on species id and management. The footpath walk is on 14th June. They visited Common Road Smee nature reserve in Martham to get some ideas for projects. Delivery date of the bench and planters is unknown. The Spring Plant Sale was a great success. The village fete will be held on 25th June at the Old Rectory 25th June (11 am to 4 pm)
- 10.2 **Any other Environmental issues** – None raised.

- 11. **Filing of Parish Council records – update re Catalogue of Records & any Issues Arising** – Mr Harris proposed all historic documents, staithes and footpath correspondence be lodged at the Norfolk Records Office. Old financial documents will be offered to the Records Office for advice whether to file or destroy. Working docs, including land registries and leases should be digitalised, at a cost of £250. Mrs Jeffreys seconded. All in agreement. **Action: Mr Harris to action proposal.**

12. Finance

- 12.1 **Approval of the Certificate of Exemption** – All approved. Mr Harris signed the document.
- 12.2 **Approval of the Annual Return Governance Statement** – All approved. Mr Harris signed.
- 12.3 **Approval of the Accounting Statements of the Annual Return** – All approved. Mr Harris signed. **Action: Clerk to send all AGAR forms to external auditors.**
- 12.4 **Sign off approved Year End Accounts** – Previously agreed by the PC. Mr Harris signed.
- 12.5 **Sign off approved YE Bank Reconciliation** - Previously agreed by the PC. Mr Harris signed.
- 12.6 **To review and approve quarterly Bank Reconciliation** – Clerk unable to present for approval, as no access to Barclays statements. **Action: Dr Bacon to request bank statements.**
- 12.7 **To review and approve quarterly Accounts** - Clerk unable to present for approval, as no access to Barclays statements. **Action: Dr Bacon to request bank statements**
- 12.8 **Complete documentation to add Mrs Jeffreys to Lloyds bank account as a new signatory** – Clerk provided forms which were signed by signatories. **Action: Clerk to send form to Lloyds.**
- 12.9 **To sign letter of authority to request closure of all Barclays Bank accounts** – **Action: Dr Bacon to obtain Mr Jordan's signature to close 2 zero-balance Barclays accounts.**
 Mr Harris proposed items 12.1-12.9 be approved. Mr Edwards seconded. All agreed approval.

- 12.10 **To approve payments** – Dr Bacon proposed payments made. Mr Roberson seconded. All in agreement.
Cheque 000004 – Clerk Wages (salary increased by 1 level as agreed with Dr Harris) back pay of April pay rise, mobile phone and bank postage cost refund included.
Cheque 000005 – ME Anderson-Dungar (Internal Auditor) £40.00
Cheque 000006 – Information Commissioner (Data Protection) £40.00
- 12.11 **Any other financial matters** – None raised.

13. Policies

To review existing policies: Mr Harris confirmed these are the

- 13.1 **Data Protection** – No changes. Agreed to adopt.
- 13.2 **Financial Regulations** – Mrs Briscoe asked if the included figures should be reviewed. **Action: Figures to be reviewed for approval at next meeting.**
- 13.3 **Standing Orders** – Mrs Briscoe referred paragraph 23 which refers to formal documents only. **Action: Mrs Briscoe to include protocol re signatories required for informal documents.**

To consider new policies:

- 13.4 **Complaints Procedure** – Clerk had previously provided the Cllrs with policy from Tunstead PC. Mr Roberson proposed acceptance. Mrs Jeffreys seconded. All in agreement.
- 13.5 **Grievance Policy** – Clerk had previously provided the Cllrs with policy from Tunstead PC. Mr Roberson proposed acceptance. Mrs Jeffreys seconded. All in agreement. **Action: Clerk to amend wording to Catfield for both policies.**

14. **Any update on the Allotments** – Mrs Jeffreys advised there are potentially 2 new people interested. Clerk confirmed existing 3 people have been invoiced and 2 have paid.

15. **Discuss options for Councillor training** – All in agreement that training would be good for all Cllrs. Mrs Jeffreys proposed the PC proceed with 2 x 2.5hr face to face evening sessions. Mr Roberson seconded. All in agreement. **Action: Clerk to correspond with trainer and Cllrs to book training sessions.**

16. Progress reports for information

- 16.1 All Saints Church – Dr Bacon reported Judith Gardiner is now qualified as a licensed lay minister and there is a special service on 18th June with the Archdeacon.
- 16.2 Poor's Trust – Dr Bacon and Dr Harris said there were no updates.
- 16.3 Village Hall – Mrs Jeffreys said there was no update on the VH. A parishioner advised they had security lighting but could not get an electrician to install them.
- 16.4 Any other reports – None received.

17. Matters for next Agenda and information

To confirm the date of the next meeting, scheduled for **5th July 2023** - Agreed

The PC agreed a letter of condolence should be sent to Mr Read, following the sudden death of his wife.

Action: Clerk to draft letter.

Mrs Plowman asked if the PC had a designated first aider. Dr Harris confirmed she is trained.

Next agenda item request - Johnny Crowe Staithe

Meeting finished at 10.30 pm.

Chairman Signature: _____

Date: _____

Chairman Name: _____