

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD at 7pm on
WEDNESDAY 5th JULY 2023 IN THE VILLAGE HALL

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

2. Declarations of interests

Mr Snelling declared an interest in Lea Road. Mrs Plowman in Fenside. Mr Snelling and Dr Bacon both declared interest in Item 18 on the agenda.

3. To approve as accurate minutes of the previous meeting

Mrs Briscoe queried use of the word 'appendix' but Mr Harris confirmed this was his correct wording. The minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on 7th June were approved. Chairman duly signed.

4. Public participation session (10 minutes)

4.1 **Public** – A parishioner asked if item 18 could be brought forward. Mr Harris agreed this can be discussed after item 7. Another parishioner asked if the PC had been formally informed of Canon Wake Court's name change. Dr Bacon advised the PC were consulted a few years ago and the DC had consulted with the residents regarding the name change. A majority agreed to the change and the resident's received compensation. Mr Harris proposed the PC write to NNDC asking why the PC was not involved in the 2nd consultation, request details of the consultation and to ensure the PC is consulted in future. Mr Edwards seconded. All in favour. **Action: Clerk to contact NNDC re consultation.**

4.2 **Cllr Taylor** – Planning training event for Cllrs has been booked for 20 Councils on 24th August. Wayford Bridge essential repairs now scheduled from 2nd October and expected to take 4 - 5 weeks to complete. The DC have been working on the Stalham High Street Taskforce project and asked for a representative to ensure the voice of Catfield is heard. Dr Bacon said Ms Johnson may have an interest and Mrs Jeffreys also offered. Cllr Bayes attended the Catfield Fun Day and wanted to acknowledge the hard work put into the planning and delivering of such a fine event. **Action: Clerk to confirm if Ms Johnson would like to represent Catfield.**

4.3 **Cllr Price** – Nothing to report from County. Cllr Price referred to the last PC meeting, where he made an inappropriate comment to Mrs Jeffreys and wanted to make a public apology, which he did and Mrs Jeffreys accepted.

5. Matters Arising

Report on actions from the previous meeting;

- a. Refuse Collections - Clerk wrote to NNDC to express concerns raised by the public. Mr Harris read aloud the response. Environmental Services said they have been working to try and improve the service but anyone experiencing problems should report it online at north-norfolk.gov.uk or call Serco. Details to be added to the magazine. Answering the PC questions, Cllr Taylor advised the DC own the bin lorries and funding for 2 new lorries, to enable Serco to meet their contract, come from borrowing and from Serco's fine. Mr Edwards asked how much Serco were fined and why taxpayers are paying to have their bins emptied and then paying again to pay for the vehicles to do the job. **Action: Cllr Taylor to confirm.**
- b. Planning – PF/23/0861 Malthouse Lane – The PC thanked Mrs Briscoe for drafting an excellent letter objecting to the planning. Dr Bacon explained the local member can request this moves to committee

to be decided, as opposed to being decided by the officers. In this case, the address is registered as Ludham, so it would be the Ludham Cllr to ask for this, but Catfield has justification for our members to push because the applicants originally stated the address as Catfield. Mr Harris proposed the PC request Cllr Taylor ensure this goes to committee. Mr Edwards seconded. All in favour. **Action: Clerk to email Cllr Taylor as per proposal.** Cllr Taylor was asked how they can be registered for Council Tax on a property that has no legal right to be there. **Action: Cllr Taylor to confirm.**

c. Planning Dept Training - Cllr Taylor confirmed 24th August. Mr Harris requested a separate training session for Catfield, in addition to the group session on 24th. **Action: Cllr Taylor to confirm date.**

d. Mushroom Site - Enforcement letter regarding Mushroom Site fence expired 31st March. Cllr Price said he was confident work will be undertaken by next meeting. **Action: Cllr Price to update progress.**

e. Update on Village Hall Information Gathering - Mrs Jeffreys will set a date for Cllrs meeting for the end of July. **Action: Mrs Jeffreys to confirm Cllr meeting date.**

f. Donation to Catfield Primary School for Coronation commemorative coins – Invoice received.

g. Highways – New Road tarmac and Lea Rd drains - Clerk to respond to Highways, answering the questions they raised regarding dates and positioning of issues. To be discussed under item 7.3 and 7.4

h. Planning – Malthouse Corner - Mrs Briscoe to draft objection letter. To be discussed under item 6.1

i. Possible car parking arrangement for playing field. Obtain knee-rail fence quote & Mr Edwards to circulate wording for sign and arrange printing. To be discussed under item 7.2

j. Any response from EA/NE - discharge of polluted water into the Ants Broads and Marshes SSSI - Mr Harris to update once results confirmed. To be carried forward to future agenda.

k. Correspondence – Fenside. Await highways response. To be discussed under item 8.1

l. Correspondence – Lea Rd Hedge/Gate - Clerk to email landowner the concerns raised by Lea Rd residents. Landowner responded. To be discussed under item 8.2

m. Correspondence – Bus Shelter. To be discussed under item 8.3

n. Correspondence – Dangerous Tree. Clerk to request location of tree. Item 8.4

o. Correspondence – Noticeboard request. To be discussed under item 8.5

p. Filing of Parish Council Records. To be discussed under item 14

q. Bank Accounts - Dr Bacon to request bank statements. To be discussed under item 12.1

r. Bank Accounts – Add Mrs Jeffreys to Lloyds. To be discussed under item 12.3

s. Bank Accounts – Barclays Closure. Dr Bacon to obtain Mr Jordan signature to close 2 zero balanced accounts. To be discussed under item 12.4

t. Policies – Financial Regs. Figures to be reviewed. To be discussed under item 13.1

u. Policies – Standing Orders. Mrs Briscoe to include protocol re signatures for informal documents. To be discussed under item 13.2

v. Policies – Complaints & Grievance Policies. Clerk to amend wording. Actioned.

w. Training. Clerk to book training sessions. Actioned. 1st session completed. 2nd session booked.

x. Condolence Letter – Clerk to draft condolence letter and post. Actioned.

6. Planning

6.1 **Any update re 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)** – Discussed under item 5, Matters Arising.

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

7. Highways & Road Safety

7.1 **Any update of possible pedestrian verge alongside the Mushroom site** – Discussed under item 5, Matters Arising.

7.2 **Update re possible car parking arrangement for playing field** – Sign wording agreed by the PC. Mr Edwards confirmed cost will be £70-£90. He added, with Mr Jordan's assistance, the signs and litter bin will all be in place, and the gate unlocked before the next meeting. Mr Roberson has measured the area and requested a quote for knee-rail fencing. **Action: Mr Edwards/Mr Jordan to put signs & bin in place. Mr Roberson to obtain quote for fencing.**

- 7.3 **Any update re Lea Rd drain issue** – Mr Harris read aloud the response from Highways, which said they could not find any defect. A parishioner said the issue has not been resolved. Cllr Price asked the parishioner to take photos and send to him to action.
- 7.4 **Any update re New Road tarmac** – Mr Harris read aloud the response from Highways, which said, when vehicles are parked on site during surface dressing treatment these sites will be added to a list for remedial works. This will be actioned accordingly by the contractor at a later date when access is available. Dr Bacon said the main issue is at the eastern end of New Road, near A149 junction. Mr Harris proposed the PC should write regarding the lack of notice given by the contractor and the confirm the issue of the junction at New Road. Mr Edwards seconded. All in favour. **Action: Clerk to write to Highways**
- 7.5 **Any other Highways or road safety issues** – A parishioner said the hedge on the corner, opposite the shop, is growing too wide and is now passed the wall causing a road safety hazard. Mr Harris proposed a letter be sent to the resident. Mrs Jeffreys seconded. All in favour. **Action: Clerk to write to resident requesting hedge be trimmed in line with wall.**

As discussed during item 4.1, item 18 brought forward at request of parishioner.

Standards Committee Hearing - To discuss recommendations made in respect of sanctions -Mr Harris read aloud an email received from NNDC, advising the Standards Committee has considered a Code of Conduct complaint against Cllr Bacon and it determined there was a breach and recommendations were made to the PC. The previous Chairman gave background to the original complaint. Dr Bacon suggested the Cllrs should read the 128-page Standards Committee response and Mr Harris advised the PC are to consider the recommendations only, they are not to 'retry' the case. Mr Harris said it may be premature to discuss tonight, as the PC must be fair to Dr Bacon, the complainants and to the process and proposed to defer to the next meeting. All in favour with 1 abstention. 2 unable to vote due to interest. **Action: Cllrs to read full report prior to next meeting.**

8. Correspondence

- 8.1 **To discuss any response from Highways re Fenside** – Mr Harris read aloud a response received from Highways and said this was not the PC proposal. He read Highways response from 28th April stating Highways would be happy to engage with all concerned to discuss and agree if the farmer can access via the north entrance. After a long discussion, Mr Harris proposed the PC respond to Highways asking for an informal meeting to be called and attended by Mr Alston (Highways) with Mr Le-May, 3 PC representatives and the farmer and any contractors present. Mrs Jeffreys seconded. All in favour with one abstention. **Action: Mr Harris to draft letter.**
- 8.2 **To discuss any update re Lea Road hedge/gate** – Following on from the last meeting, where questions were raised regarding removal of part of the surrounding hedge. The landowner answered the questions at the meeting and was asked to confirm this in writing, which he did. Mr Harris read the landowners response aloud. A parishioner, said she was speaking on behalf of Lea Rd residents, disagreed with one point and presented a plan of Lea Road, dated 1967, which shows an existing hedge to 3 sides of the Lea Road site. **Action: Clerk to ask landowner for permission to share details of email with residents of Lea Rd.**
- 8.3 **Update re proposed bus shelter** – Dr Harris had provided an update advising she is awaiting confirmation whether the PC would need planning permission or not. The Parish Partnership details have been received and the application can be submitted prior to receiving planning permission. Decisions will be notified in March 2024. Mr Edwards asked where the other 50% would come from and Cllr Price suggested asking Trend. A parishioner advised the CEG may be able to donate £500 but this has not yet been approved by the committee.
- 8.4 **Update re Dangerous tree** – Following an email received regarding a potentially dangerous tree, Dr Bacon visited the site and discussed the trees with some neighbours. He said there were complaints regarding 2 trees. A large conifer, which the owners confirmed, is the property of Oakside and there is a small oak tree on the PC-owned Sandholes, which has some overlap over the neighbouring fence, but nothing looks potentially dangerous and recommended the

neighbours can trim any overhanging branches, if they wish. Dr Bacon proposed the Clerk write advising of this. Mr Harris seconded. All in favour. **Action: Clerk to email**

- 8.5 **Request received for possible new Noticeboard** – Mr Edwards advised the noticeboard is in dreadful condition. He is hoping to obtain a reasonable quote for a replacement which he will bring to the next meeting. **Action: Mr Edwards to obtain quote to present at August meeting.**

- 8.6 **Discuss Catfield magazine article regarding Parish Councillors** – Mr Harris read aloud 2 anonymous letters in the magazine criticising the PC and Cllrs. Following a discussion, Mr Harris summarised the PC add in the magazine that all Cllrs live in the village, that the democratically elected Cllrs are happy for residents to contact them on the details printed and everyone is welcome to attend the monthly PC meetings, which are well attended and added only 13 out of around 100 parishes held an election. **Action: Mrs Jeffreys to draft article.**

- 8.7 **Complaint received re Dog Show at Catfield Village Fete** – The PC are satisfied the Clerk responded advising it was not a PC event and passed the complaint onto the event organiser. No further action required by the PC.

- 8.8 **Any other correspondence** – None received.

9. Environmental

- 9.1 **Catfield Environmental Group updates** – A parishioner advised creating viable moorings at Johnny Crowe's Staithe is too big a job for the CEG. No problems identified with any footpaths and a second walk is scheduled for 19th July, which will be open to residents. They met the Norfolk Wildlife Trust at Sandholes and the species list is up to 350. A sycamore over hanging the footpath will be trimmed. Concrete pads for the New Rd/The Street bench will be put in shortly. The playing field hedge maintenance is scheduled on 4th July. There was a good turnout for the fete and a debrief session will be held. The two complaints about the dog show have been responded to and the CEG are confident they made the right decision. They are grateful to everyone for their help at the fete. Monthly bingo sessions to start in September and more daffodil planting in the autumn. The PC thanked the CEG for organising the fete, on behalf of the village.

- 9.2 **Any other Environmental issues** – None received.

10. **Recreation Ground Inspection Report Findings** – Following the recent inspection, Mrs Jeffreys said it highlighted the unprioritized items from the previous report, with the mound being the most problematic but there are no dangerous issues reported this time. She offered to review the findings, prioritise them and report back to the PC. **Action: Mrs Jeffreys to review report and prioritise action.**

11. **Johnny Crowe Staithe** – Mrs Jeffreys asked for public opinion on the staithe and received 8 responses. 8 out of 8 said the staithe should be reinstated, with 5 interested in possible mooring. Mr Harris said this is an asset for the village and the PC should review at a later date. Mr Roberson thanked Mrs Jeffreys.

12. Finance

- 12.1 **To review and approve quarterly Bank Reconciliation** – All approved. Chairman duly signed.
- 12.2 **To review and approve quarterly Accounts** – All approved. Chairman said accounts were orderly and well presented. Chairman duly signed.
- 12.3 **Any update re adding Mrs Jeffreys to Lloyds bank account as a new signatory** – The Clerk advised Lloyds had not received the forms, so Dr Bacon and Mr Jordan signed duplicate forms. **Action: Clerk to send to Lloyds.**
- 12.4 **Update re closure of Barclays Bank accounts** – Dr Bacon hand delivered a letter to Barclays to close two zero-balanced accounts. The Clerk advised the main Barclays account has one uncashed cheque and once this is cleared, the main bank account can be closed. Missing bank statements to be requested. All in agreement with proposed action. **Action: Mrs Jeffreys to ask VHMC re uncashed cheque. Clerk to send letter requesting Barclays closure to Dr Bacon and Mr Jordan for signing.**

- 12.5 **To approve payments** – Payment list supplied to all prior to meeting. Mr Edwards proposed payments made. Mr Jordan seconded. All in agreement to proceed and cheques duly signed.
Cheque 000007 – Clerk salary for June (including mobile phone & stationery)
Cheque 000008 – Playsafety Ltd (playground inspection) - £90.00
Cheque 000009 – Swallowtail Federation of Church Schools (coronation coins) - £233.22
- 12.6 **To approve individual training for new Cllrs unable to attend group session** – Mr Harris proposed Mr Roberson undertake individual training at £30 as unable to attend group session. Mrs Jeffreys seconded. All in favour. **Action: Clerk to book Cllr training for Mr Roberson**
- 12.7 **Any other financial matters** – None raised.

13. Policies

To review existing policies:

- 13.1 **Financial Regulations** – Figures to be reviewed for next meeting. **Action: reschedule for August**
- 13.2 **Standing Orders** - Mrs Briscoe had circulated additional protocol re signatories for informal documents to add to existing policy. Mr Harris proposed acceptance. Mr Edwards seconded. All in favour. **Action: Clerk to add new protocol to policy, circulate to all Cllrs and add to website.**

To consider new policy:

- 13.3 **Social Media Policy** – After a discussion, Mr Harris confirmed the PC was not in a position to agree the policy at this meeting and proposed the Clerk confirm that external emails addressed to the Clerk can be shared with all Cllrs. Disclaimer on website and magazine to be added stating emails received by the Clerk will be shared with all Parish Cllrs. **Action: Clerk to add disclaimer to website and investigate emails further.**

14. **Filing of Parish Council records – update re Catalogue of Records** – Mr Harris advised he has lodged the historic records with the Records Office and will now arrange to digitalise the remaining document at a cost of £250+vat. Old bank statements are not wanted by the Records Office and will be shredded by the PC. Mrs Briscoe thanked Mr Harris for all his work. **Action: Mr Harris to arrange digitalisation of remaining documents and disposal of old bank statements.**

15. **Communication between meetings** – Mr Harris requested all Cllrs respond to emails between meetings. All Cllrs now aware of the process and agreed to respond.

16. **Any Update on the Allotments** – 3 allotments have been paid. No further update received.

17. Progress reports for information

- 17.1 All Saints Church – Nothing to report
- 17.2 Poor's Trust – Nothing to report
- 17.3 Village Hall – Nothing to report
- 17.4 Any other reports – No other reports

18. **Standards Committee Hearing - To discuss recommendations made in respect of sanctions** – item discussed earlier, at request of parishioner.

19. Matters for next Agenda and information

To confirm the date of the next meeting, scheduled for **2nd August 2023** – Confirmed.

Meeting finished at 9.47pm.

Chairman Signature: _____

Date: _____

Chairman Name: _____