

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD at 7pm on
WEDNESDAY 2nd AUGUST 2023 IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Attendance: Mr Harris in the Chair, Mrs Jeffreys, Mr Edwards, Ms Johnson, Dr Bacon, Mr Jordan, Mrs Briscoe, Dr Harris, Mrs Plowman, Mr Snelling, Cllr Taylor (District Councillor), Mrs Cunningham (Clerk) and twenty-five members of the public.

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

Meeting started: 19.03

1. Apologies and approval of absences

Apologies received and accepted from Mr Roberson, Cllr Price and Cllr Bayes.

2. Declarations of interests

Mrs Plowman declared an interest in Fenside (9.2), Mrs Briscoe in Ludham Road (7.2) and Dr Bacon and Mr Snelling declared interests in item 6 on the agenda.

3. To approve as accurate minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on 5th July were approved. Chairman duly signed.

4. Public participation session (10 minutes)

4.1 **Public** – A parishioner representing the residents of St Catherines Avenue explained of an issue with dog fouling. He said there are 2 dogs that roam the street and foul in gardens, on verges and in driveways. The owner has previously been approached but they believe they may be regarded as vulnerable. Dr Bacon advised has been approached about this, as part of the CUC, and they will discuss at their meeting next week whether they can provide help to the owner. Mr Harris proposed following the CUC meeting, if they are unable to resolve the problem, which the PC would monitor, and there is still a vulnerability issue, then the PC would consider how that could be addressed. Mrs Jeffreys seconded. All in favour. The parishioner was happy with this proposal. **Action: Dr Bacon to update following CUC meeting.**

4.2 **Cllr Taylor** – Cllr Taylor provided an update on the irregular bin collections. The NNDC Cabinet Member for Waste, Cllr Callum Ringer noted the service is unacceptable. The funding for the new bin lorry will be partly paid for from fines levied from Serco and borrowing. Re Catfield Cllr planning training, he said this will be arranged with the new Assistant Director of planning, following their start date. Work on Wayford Bridge has been rescheduled to October 2024. When questioned, Cllr Taylor advised the Assistant Director for Planning, Phillip Rowson had resigned and said the turnover of planning staff is a major concern. Mr Harris said Cllr Taylor should register the concern regarding the planning staff and asked what is being done to bring some stability to this department.

4.3 **Cllr Price** – No report received.

5. Matters Arising

Report on actions from the previous meeting;

a. Public – Canon Wake Close Name Change – NNDC responded to our email and accepted they should have updated the PC more during the process. Mr Harris said the PC had not been properly consulted and we would hope to see this improved in future. The Cllrs raised concerns regarding the practical implications involved in registering change of addresses with multiple companies and whether £200 was fair compensation. Mr Harris proposed if the residents have any problems, they should contact the PC. Mr Jordan seconded. All in favour.

b. Cllr Taylor – Stalham High Street Taskforce - Ms Johnson & Mrs Jeffreys volunteered to represent PC.

c. Refuse Collections - Cllr Taylor discussed earlier.

- d. Malthouse Lane Planning Application. Clerk emailed Cllr Taylor formally requesting this goes to committee. To be discussed under item 7.1
- e. Mushroom Site - Enforcement Letter re Mushroom Site fencing. To be discussed under item 8.1
- f. Update on Village Hall Information Gathering - Mrs Jeffreys has finished the presentation and to arrange a date for meeting for the Cllrs before having a meeting with the VHMC. She will then arrange to open the presentation to the public. **Action: Mrs Jeffreys to book PC meeting.**
- g. Possible car parking arrangement for playing field - Mr Edwards now has printed signs and due to unforeseen circumstances has not been available but will now install signs & bins and open gates within a week or 2, with Mr Jordan and Mr Snelling's assistance. **Action: Mr Edwards to install signs and bin and open gates.**
- h. Highways – Lea Rd drains - Parishioner has taken photos of drains and sent to Cllr Price directly.
- i. Highways – New Road tarmac - Clerk wrote regarding lack of notice given by the contractor and confirmed the issue of the junction at New Road. To be discussed under item 8.3
- j. Other Highways issues – Hedge opposite the shop grown too wide causing a road safety hazard. Clerk written to resident requesting hedge be trimmed in line with wall. Hedge trimmed. No further action.
- k. Standards Committee Hearing - recommendations made in respect of sanctions - Cllrs to read full report. To be discussed under item 6
- l. Correspondence – Fenside - Mr Harris drafted letter in response to Highways. To be discussed under item 9.2
- m. Correspondence – Lea Rd Hedge/Gate - Clerk emailed landowner for permission to share contents of his email (sent to the PC) with the Lea Rd residents. To be discussed under item 9.3
- n. Correspondence – Dangerous Tree - Clerk wrote advising branches can be trimmed. To be discussed under item 9.1
- o. Correspondence – Noticeboard - Mr Edwards to obtain quote for replacement noticeboard. To be discussed under item 9.5
- p. Magazine article regarding Parish Cllrs - Mrs Jeffreys drafted article for magazine. Actioned.
- q. Recreation report - Mrs Jeffreys to review report & prioritise action - To be discussed under item 11
- r. Bank Accounts – Add Mrs Jeffreys to bank - Clerk sent forms to bank. To be discussed under item 12.1
- s. Bank Accounts – Barclays Closure - Clerk drafted letter for Dr Bacon and Mr Jordan to sign to close all accounts and request bank statements. To be discussed under item 12.1
- t. New Cllr training for Mr Roberson. Clerk booked new Cllr training for Mr Roberson for 5 & 12 Dec.
- u. Policies – Financial Regs. Figures to be reviewed at next meeting. To be discussed under item 13
- v. Policies – Standing Orders - Clerk included protocol re signatures for informal documents to policy, circulated and added to website. Action completed and circulated to all Cllrs.
- w. Policies – Social media policy - Clerk added disclaimer re sharing emails with Cllrs to website.
- x. Filing of PC Records - Mr Harris arranging digitalisation of remaining documents and disposal of old bank statements. To be discussed under item 14

6. Standards Committee Hearing - To discuss recommendations made in respect of sanctions

Mr Harris advised due to the sensitivity of the subject, the Clerk has taken advice from NALC and NNDC. As there is no pecuniary interest, both Dr Bacon and Mr Snelling can be present and speak at the meeting and it was stressed the PC are not to re-try the case, but to consider the Committees recommended sanctions from the hearing, which Mr Harris read aloud. He also added the PC should be fair to Dr Bacon, the complainants and to the process. Dr Bacon said that procedurally the process is incorrect as one sanction recommended he apologise within 28 days of the hearing, which has now passed, but the PC have not yet agreed with the sanctions. He added as he was not on duty at the time of the exchange of words, he is not intending, at any stage, to apologise. Following a long discussion involving most Cllrs, Mr Harris proposed the PC accept all the recommended sanctions by NNDC and the PC to consider the most appropriate and effective training, which it has 6 months to do. Mrs Jeffreys seconded. 2 abstained, 1 against, 7 in agreement. **Action: Clerk to confirm outcome to Monitoring Office.**

7. Planning

- 7.1 **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) – Cllr Taylor advised the case is still being assessed by the Officers and said as the application falls under Ludham ward, if that local Cllr does not call this to Committee, then Cllr Taylor will as he understands there is intense local concern. **Action: Cllr Taylor to update**
- 7.2 **Siting of mobile home on land off School Road/Ludham Road** – A parishioner advised a static caravan has been parked on agricultural land on Ludham Road and no planning application has been registered at this stage. He said the Enforcement Officer at NNDC has visited the site twice and put to the legal team for a decision. People were previously living in touring caravans on the site and are now permanently living in the mobile home. The hedge has also been taken down to make the entrance twice as wide. He said as he lives adjacent to the land, his privacy has been compromised and asked for PC support. Dr Bacon proposed the PC approach the NNDC Enforcement Officer as this is a clear breach of planning regulations as this is on agricultural land with the intent of being a permanent residence, which should have planning permission. Mr Jordan seconded. All in favour with one abstention. **Action: Dr Bacon to draft letter.**
- 7.3 **Retrospective planning and discuss other issues raised regarding Store Galore Containers** – The PC received two letters from parishioners, who were both in attendance at the meeting. With their permission, Mr Harris read the letters aloud. The owner of Store Galore was also present and said he does not have the authority to dictate how people drive on the road and tries to keep the roads in reasonable condition. He said he has offered to split the cost of manufactured speed bumps with the correspondents, but the offer was rejected and said he feels he has done his best to co-operate with the residents. Cllr Taylor said he has been working on this for nearly a year, after being approached by the parishioners and due to the poor condition of NNDC planning, the invitation to the site owner to apply for planning was not issued until today, therefore, there must be a formal submission of planning within the next 28 days, which the owner was unaware of. Mr Harris said the parishioners want clarity as to the planning status of the site and proposed the PC do not take sides but write to Planning asking for confirmation of the sites planning status adding the hours of opening are an issue, query the access onto a public road and the amenity. Mrs Briscoe seconded. One against, with all others in favour. **Action: Mr Harris to draft letter to NNDC Planning and to include the parishioners' letters.** The parishioners also gave permission for their letters to also be shared with the business owner and NNDC.
- 7.4 **Any other planning matters** - None

8. Highways & Road Safety

- 8.1 **Any update of possible pedestrian verge alongside the Mushroom site** – Cllr Price was not present to update but it was agreed the issue appears to have been resolved as the fencing has been moved back. Mrs Jeffreys proposed the PC ask Cllr Price how the PC proceed with the request for a pavement, or if not, a trod along the edge of the site. Dr Bacon seconded. All in favour. **Action: Clerk to ask Cllr Price for guidance how to proceed with pavement/trod.** Mrs Jeffreys also asked regarding maintenance and proposed the PC ask Cllr Price to add this area to the cutting regime. Mrs Plowman seconded. All in favour. **Action: Clerk to action proposal.**
- 8.2 **Update re possible car parking arrangement for playing field** – Discussed earlier (item 5g).
- 8.3 **Any update re New Road tarmac** – Mr Harris proposed as Catfield will have the next Highways inspection w/c 7th Aug, with which he will attend, the PC should draft a comprehensive list of highways issues in writing, to present to the inspector and requested anyone from the public or PC should submit any issues to the Clerk within the next week. New Road tarmac issue to be added to inspection list. **Action: Clerk to collate Highways issues raised & submit to inspector.**
- 8.4 **Any other Highways or road safety issues** – A parishioner had written to advise of an overgrown ditch on the south side of Limes Road, which they have already reported to Highways. **Action: Clerk to add to list to present to Highways inspector and advise parishioner of action.**

9. Correspondence

- 9.1 **Update re Dangerous tree** – A parishioner, who had written to the PC, was present to advise an oak tree on PC land had grown too large and was overhanging their property. Mr Harris said he had visited the property and said he would arrange for a qualified tree cutter to trim the tree, at no cost to the PC. Mrs Briscoe was concerned that if the tree is not dangerous the owner has the right to trim any overhanging branches themselves and Dr Bacon recommended as this will be actioned by Mr Harris as a goodwill gesture, this does not, in any way, set a precedent that the PC will cut back any PC owned trees that are overhanging parishioners' property in future. It was agreed following Mrs Briscoe's suggestion that the PC make a resolution that this action cannot be viewed as a precedent. Mrs Jeffreys proposed Dr Bacon's recommendation. Ms Johnson seconded. All in favour. **Action: Mr Harris to arrange trimming of oak tree.** The parishioner was happy with this outcome.
- 9.2 **To discuss any response from Highways re Fenside** – There has been no response from Highways to the latest PC email. **Action: Mr Harris advised Clerk to wait two weeks, then chase.**
- 9.3 **To discuss any update re Lea Road hedge/gate** – The landowner has given permission for his emailed response to previous issues raised, to be passed onto Lea Road residents. **Action: Mr Snelling to arrange for landowner's email to be passed to Lea Road residents.**
- 9.4 **Update re proposed bus shelter** – Dr Harris asked Cllr Taylor for some guidance regarding emails received from planning re the proposed bus shelter. Cllr Taylor asked Dr Harris to forward the email to him and he would speak to the planning officer directly.
- 9.5 **Request received for possible new Noticeboard** – Mr Edwards advised he will obtain a quote for the noticeboard before the next meeting and will circulate to the PC.
- 9.6 **Any other correspondence** – none received.

10. Environmental

- 10.1 **Catfield Environmental Group updates** – a parishioner advised the planters for the corner of New Road and The Street have been installed and planted and work is underway on the concrete pads for the bench, which should then be installed. They held several maintenance sessions at the playing field in July, and is next scheduled for August, when they will be aiming to cut down the brambles and bracken. The species list at Sandholes is up to 419, including a grass snake. The group held its second footpath walk, which took in paths around Fenside and Wood St. There will be a litter pick on Saturday 2nd September, meeting at the VH from 10-12, targeting litter around the containers in the car park. The next bingo sessions are scheduled at the VH on 15th September, 20th October, 17th November and 15th December. Dr Bacon said the paper bins are now full of cardboard. Mrs Jeffreys asked the PC permission and proposed to provide the CEG with costs incurred and money received for the recycling bins. Mr Snelling seconded. All in favour. **Action: Mrs Jeffreys to pass recycling bin costs to CEG.**
- 10.2 **Clarify responsibility for maintaining area between the playing field hedge and road** – A parishioner said the brambles need to be cut back so the hedge can grow properly. Mr Jordan volunteered to cut back the brambles and suggested the CEG add a mulch to spread wider than the hedge. **Action: Mr Jordan to cut back brambles.**
- 10.3 **Any other Environmental issues** - None

11. **Recreation Ground Inspection Report Findings** – Mrs Jeffreys advised there were 20 items raised this year, as opposed to 32 last year. 8 are medium risk, 11 low and 1 very low risk and 2 of the mediums are strimmer damage only. Mrs Jeffreys proposed to circulate her findings to the PC and then the PC can make suggestions how to proceed at the next meeting. All in favour. Dr Harris asked if the VH report findings will impact on the playground maintenance but due to timings, Mrs Jeffreys recommended the playground inspection should be addressed. **Action: Mrs Jeffreys to proceed with proposal.**

12. Finance

- 12.1 **Any update re Lloyds and Barclays bank accounts** – The Clerk advised Mrs Jeffreys has been added to the Lloyds account as a signatory and she was handed documents from Lloyds. Two

zero-balance Barclays bank accounts have been closed and Dr Bacon hand delivered a closure request for the remaining Barclays account on 28th July. Dr Bacon confirmed the outstanding cheque payable to the VHMC has not been cashed and will be a voided cheque. The PC will issue a replacement from the Lloyds account. A parishioner was concerned that the VHMC could still cash the original cheque but the Clerk advised the replacement cheque will only be made available to the VHMC once she has confirmation the Barclays account has been closed and the statement shows the cheque as unpresented.

- 12.2 **To approve payments** – Payment list supplied to all Cllrs prior to meeting. All in agreement to proceed and cheques duly signed.

Cheque 000010 – Clerk salary for July (including mobile phone)

Cheque 000011 – VHMC (replacement to lost Barclays cheque) - £500.00

Cheque 000012 – Mr Sam Hill (football field hedge cutting) - £75.60

Cheque 000013 – Skippers Print & Design (sign for playing field) - £99.60

- 12.3 **Any other financial matters** – none raised.

13. **Policies - To review existing policy: Financial Regulations** – Mrs Briscoe advised she, and the Clerk, had reviewed the figures on the policy and thought they were still acceptable. All in agreement and policy adopted.

14. **Filing of Parish Council records – update re Catalogue of Records** – Mr Harris confirmed he had submitted a second tranche and contacted the digitalisation company. References for documents already filed have been issued to the Cllrs.

15. **Any Update on the Allotments** – Ms Johnson said the PC need new people interested in taking up the allotments and this will be advertised on Facebook and in the magazine. She also wants to put a working party together to see what else can be done on the plot. **Action: Ms Johnson to arrange working party.**

16. **Progress reports for information**

- 16.1 **All Saints Church** – Dr Bacon said there was nothing to report.

- 16.2 **Poor's Trust** – Dr Bacon advised they have a meeting next week. When asked regarding the next elections, Mr Jordan advised the PC need to advertise in the next magazine for October's elections. **Action: Dr Harris to write a 'job description' what it means to be a Poor's Trust trustee.**

- 16.3 **Village Hall** – Mrs Jeffreys said the VHMC will be meeting soon and she will update after.

- 16.4 **Any other reports** – None.

17. **Matters for next Agenda and information**

Confirmed date of the next meeting, scheduled for **6th September 2023.**

Meeting finished at 9.40pm.

Chairman Signature: _____

Date: _____

Chairman Name: _____