MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD at 7pm on WEDNESDAY 27th AUGUST 2025 IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Attendance: Mr Harris (Chairman), Mr Edwards, Dr Harris, Mrs Briscoe, Mr Jordan, Dr Bacon, Mr Snelling, Ms Johnson, Mr Bunting, Mr Roberson, Mrs Cunningham (Clerk), County Cllr Price and four members of the public.

Mr Harris advised the meeting is recorded for the purpose of producing the Minutes.

Meeting started at 7.02pm

1. **Apologies and approval of absences –** Apologies received and accepted from Mrs Plowman, District Cllr Taylor and District Cllr Bayes.

2. **Declarations of interests –** Mr Bunting declared an interest in item 6.1.

3. **To approve as accurate Minutes of the previous meeting** - Mr Harris proposed the Minutes of the 30th July be approved. Mr Snelling seconded. All in favour and the Chairman duly signed.

4. **Public Forum**
   - **4.1 Public** - No items raised.
   - **4.2 Cllr Taylor/Cllr Bayes Report –** Not present at meeting and no report received.
   - **4.3 Cllr Price** advised, following the last meeting, NCC have objected to the proposed development on Catfield Rd, Ludham. He confirmed a site meeting on Elderbush Lane has been scheduled and Anglian Water have reviewed the Lea Road drainage issue, and he awaits their report. He has forwarded Dr Bacon's map of the barbed wire fencing at Malthouse Lane, onto Highways and said Westcotec do not have a solution to the protruding bus shelter nuts and suggested adding a caution sign. Cllr Price advised to upgrade the current SAM2, for 2 years, would cost £1624 plus an ongoing sim-charge or to change to a SAM3 would cost £3445. Following a long discussion, Mr Edwards proposed the PC do not upgrade the current SAM2, as this does not justify spending that much money at this time. Ms Johnson seconded. All in agreement. Re concrete blocks at 18 and 19 Elderbush Lane, Cllr Price advised enforcement notices will be sent.

5. **Matters Arising**
   Report on actions from the previous meeting

July 25 Ref	Item	Action	Completed/Next Steps
C/F	Other Highways Matters	Cllr Price to update re a) enforcement for Concrete blocks on grass verge at 18 and 19 Elderbush Lane b) Full drain at Lea Road – Cllr Price to contact Anglian Water	Both discussed under item 4.3
4.3	Cllr Price	Cllr Price to arrange site meeting for Elderbush Lane drainage works	Actioned. Booked for 5th September. Discussed under item 7.1
C/F 5/7.2	Malthouse Lane	Highways – Action C/F: Dr Bacon to confirm location of barbed wire in writing to Cllr Price.	Dr Bacon sent location. Discussed under item 4.3
C/F12.4	Finance	Action C/F: Ms Johnson to liaise with Mr Jordan to add Clerk to bank account	Discussed under item 11.4
c/f May	Policies	Data Protection – Mrs Briscoe to review. Clerk to diarise for next agenda	Discussed under item 12.1
c/f Apr	Goal Nets	Mr Edwards to provide paint. Cllrs Taylor/Bayes to paint goal posts mid-August	**ACTION C/F:** Cllr Taylor wrote to advise they are planning to do this in September. Mr Edwards to provide paint.
6.1	Store Galore Planning	Mr Harris to draft letter	Actioned. Discussed under item 6.1
6.2	Malthouse Corner	a) Clerk to notify Planning re hearing attendance b) Mrs Briscoe to circulate notes to PC and DC's	Actioned. Discussed under item 6.2
6.3	Plumsgate Rd access Planning	Clerk to notify Planning	Actioned. No further PC action required.
6.4	PC Questionnaire	a) Mr Edwards/Dr Harris to advise Clerk of draft letter typo. b) Clerk to send to all PC's and cc those copied into CEO email	Both actioned. Discussed under item 6.4
6.5	Other Planning – 26 houses, Ludham	Mr Harris to draft letter to Planning – 'Letter to NNDC Planning' with docs	Actioned. Mr Harris advised the PC points re drainage & sewerage were also raised by NCC.
7.2	VH Bus shelter/disabled parking	Mr Edwards to draft letter to Westcotec re bus shelter trip hazard	Discussed under item 8.2
7.3	New NCC Bus shelter funding proposal	Clerk to add to agenda and send details of first application to Dr Harris	Actioned. Discussed under item 8.3
8.2	Environmental – FloGas lighting	Ms Johnson to chase FloGas for meeting. If no response, Clerk to chase	Discussed under item 9.4
9.0	CUC Trustee voting	Clerk to add to agenda for possible amendment to Standing Orders for future voting	Discussed under item 12.3

10.1	Correspondence – Footpath concerns	Clerk to write to landowner	Mr Harris advised the Clerk wrote to landowner & Highways and advised parishioner of outcome. No further PC action at this time.
10.2	Village Hall	Mr Edwards to summarise the PC discussion to VHMC. Mrs Briscoe/Ms Johnson to try to assist re insurance	Discussed under item 7.2
10.3	Purchase of Surveyors Allotment	Clerk to advise parishioner of outcome	Actioned. Discussed under item 11.5
11	Playground	Mrs Briscoe to draft letter re Section 106	Discussed under item 7.1
12.1	Payments	Clerk to defer Norse payment until PC satisfied disabled bay grass area is finished	Following approval from majority. Cheque posted.
12.3	Other financial matters	Clerk to change to new Vodafone mobile phone contract	Discussed under item 11.7
14	Addition of new features to website	Clerk to confirm to NALC	Clerk actioned. No further PC action required
16.4	Allotments	Mr Bunting to help Ms Johnson measure the plots	Discussed under item 13.3
16.6	Other reports	Mr Edwards to collect documents from solicitors	Mrs Plowman collected. **ACTION:** Documents passed to Clerk for copying. Documents to then be archived.
16.3	Church report	Dr Bacon to submit information re Ruth Wenn Memorial Trust/Catfield Parish Trust	Discussed under item 13.2

Cllr Price left the meeting.

6. **Planning**

6.1 **RV/25/1465 & CV/25/1379 – Any update re Store Galore, Ludham Road - Part change of use of existing agricultural machinery workshop/store and haulage depot to incorporate a containerised self-storage facility (B8 storage) (retrospective), without complying to conditions 12 (acoustic fence scheme) and 13 (ceasing of containers along eastern boundary) of planning permission PF/23/2004 to revise the design of the boundary fence to the new design**. Mrs Briscoe advised the decision notice said a security gate must be installed as the CCTV alternative had been rejected and one of the drainage options have been approved, which the PC discussed is an acceptable solution. There had not been an official decision re the acoustic fencing. Mr Harris summarised that the decision is not an unsatisfactory outcome but it's dependant on completion of the work. No action for the PC but it was agreed to keep on the next agenda.

6.2 **PF/23/0861 (AP/25/0010) – Any update re Malthouse Corner, Malthouse Lane - Change of use of land for the formation of 1 Gypsy/Traveller pitch comprising the siting of 1 Mobile Home, and 1 Portacabin for ancillary residential use, associated hardstanding and fencing and installation of a sealed septic tank (part retrospective) and ENF/22/-259 (AP/25/0011) – Appeal - Land to the northeast of Malthouse Lane, Ludham - Appeal against Enforcement Notice for Use of land for residential purposes**. Following attendance with Mr Harris, on behalf of the PC at the hearing, Mrs Briscoe expressed how disappointing NNDC's defence of the case was. She added the PC's representations had been recorded incorrectly and not attributed to the PC, which caused a delay at the hearing and 3rd party representations, including a letter from FloGas, were not made available on the website and she had to contact NNDC, prior to the meeting, to obtain them. The appellants are requesting a temporary permission for 3 years. Since the hearing and site meeting, the PC submitted documents regarding the bund, but this was rejected by the Planning Inspectorate. Due to the concerns raised by the PC regarding the proximity of the home to the blast zone, Mr Harris proposed the PC write to the H&S Executive regarding the FloGas letter, which states any blast could be catastrophic, to ask what level this was considered and approved, who authorised it and whether this has been communicated to NNDC and the relevant authorities. Mr Snelling seconded. All in agreement. **ACTION: Mr Edwards to consult with Mr Harris and draft letter to HSE (cc Mr Blatch)**. On a separate subject, the PC discussed there were numerous fire vehicles seen at the plot. The official update was that the fire was caused by hazardous material on Long Lane. **ACTION: Include photos taken of the incident to HSE.**

6.3 **RV/25/1782 – Milestones Hospital - Removal of condition 13 (fire hydrant) of planning permission PF/21/3414 (Conversion of the former Milestones Hospital to a residential development consisting of 21 dwelling houses and internal renovation works throughout)** Mr Edwards said as the application included a letter from the fire brigade stating their satisfaction regarding the fire hydrants, the PC has no comment on this. Mr Harris continued to discuss item 7.1, as this includes Milestones Section 106, which Mrs Briscoe had pre-drafted a letter. He proposed the PC accept Mrs Briscoe's draft letter but include the anticipated deficit between the expected cost of the VH playground and any potential grants. Ms Johnson seconded. All in favour. **ACTION: Mr Edwards to send Mrs Briscoe financial information for addition to letter (cc letter to Mr Aquarone)**

6.4 Any update re Parish Council's Planning Questionnaire – Mr Edwards confirmed the Clerk sent the questionnaire results to all PC's and there had been one response in return, praising NNDC. It was agreed to remove from the agenda.

6.5 Any other planning matters – None raised

7. Village Hall

7.1 Recreation Ground – to discuss any update re play area – Discussed under item 6.3

7.2 Discuss VHMC extraordinary meeting and update re proposed renovations – Ms Johnson & Mrs Briscoe sought further guidance and clarification from Community Action Norfolk (CAN) and HMRC and it was confirmed, as the VHMC is a charity, it cannot transfer funds to the PC, for the PC to pay for the VH roof repairs and reclaim the VAT. In response to a parishioner's email, who questioned the necessity for a new roof, Mr Edwards arranged for an expert to review. He clarified that although not in need of an imminent replacement, if the long-term project is to refurbish the hall, the roof should be replaced first. It was recognised any work must be paid in full by the VHMC, including VAT and agreed the current lease needs updating, as at the recent VHMC extraordinary meeting, it appears the future of the current VHMC maybe in jeopardy. Following a long discussion Mr Harris proposed 1. The VHMC spend all the money they have on the VH repairs, starting with the roof (inc vat) 2. Ensure the existing charity is quorate and to achieve this, although the PC does not want them to resign, there are Cllrs who would be prepared to assist if necessary and 3. As regards the deficiencies in the existing lease, the PC to take professional advise what the structure should be and how to exit the position the PC is in, in a measured way. Points 1 & 2 are immediate actions and point 3 is longer term. Mrs Briscoe seconded. All in favour. Mr Roberson was thanked for his time spent on the project. **ACTION: Mr Edwards to send Mrs Briscoe summary of builder's comments. Mr Roberson and Mr Jordan to attend VHMC meeting on 8th September.**

8. Highways & Road Safety

8.1 Proposed drainage works at Elderbush Lane – It was confirmed Dr Harris & Dr Bacon will attend an on-site meeting with Highways on 5th September.

8.2 Any update re installed Bus Shelter and/or Disabled Parking Bay at Village Hall – Although, Westcotec will not assist further, the PC feel the protruding nuts are a trip hazard and Mr Bunting offered to cut them to a reasonable height and add plastic caps for safety. Dr Bacon proposed the PC proceed as per Mr Bunting's suggestion. Mr Edwards seconded. All in favour. It was also agreed on completion photos of the remedial work should be sent to Westcotec to make them aware of the repairs. **ACTION: Mr Bunting to resolve. Clerk to send photos.**

8.3 To discuss potential grant funding application for a second Bus Shelter – Dr Harris advised an existing bus stop location had been identified but they will need to consult with the nearby residents before proceeding further. A street licence will also be required, as the shelter would be on highways land. Mr Harris proposed Dr Harris, Mrs Briscoe and Mr Edwards meet to ensure the application can be submitted in time. **ACTION: As per proposal**.

8.4 Any other Highways or road safety issues – Dr Bacon said the PC received an email on behalf of a parishioner regarding overgrown hedges on Potter Heigham Rd that are encroaching on the road. Dr Bacon advised the location and Mr Harris proposed the PC report to Highways and advise the property owners of the PC action. Mrs Briscoe seconded. All in favour. **ACTION: Clerk to advise Highways and update landowner**. Mr Edwards also reported a smashed Sutton Road sign to NNDC street name signs dept around 3 weeks ago. Mr Harris proposed the PC contact the DC to chase. Mrs Briscoe seconded. All in favour. **ACTION: Clerk to email Cllr Taylor**.

9. Environmental

9.1 Catfield Action Team (CAT) Update – A representative from CAT advised the biannual litter pick, will be on 27th September, starting at the VH at 10 am and will finish midday. Volunteers are welcome and children under 16 must be accompanied by a responsible adult. All equipment is provided, just bring gloves and wear sturdy shoes. There will be more bulb-planting around the village starting in October and ideas are welcome. They will be at the school garden to strim, clear the wild area and check the raised beds. The accessible walk on 19th August was successful, and the next bingo session is scheduled for 26th September.

9.2 **CAT request for use of the Rond** – A CAT representative asked the PC whether the middle section of the Rond (running from the Mill to Mud-point on the river) could be cleared and made accessible for members of the public. They explained, CAT has previously cleared a section at the Fenside end but said no further progress could be made without machinery. They spoke to the Butterfly Conservation (BC) contractor who said he could 'give it a go' to try to access the land, at a cost of £350. Mr Harris said the Rond's purpose was to facilitate the management of the Fen by the landowners on either side, and a similar request was made by the BA, and was refused due to variety of reasons, but mainly to wildlife disturbance on the SSSI and added the Rond is not a public right of way. Following a long discussion, Mr Harris suggested the PC cannot make an informed decision until they are aware of the adjacent landowners' views and proposed CAT consult with the 4 landowners on either side (CUC, BC, the Hall Estate & the Boardman Estate) and NE. As members of CAT, Mrs Briscoe and Ms Johnson declared non-pecuniary interests and Mr Harris said he had a non-pecuniary interest. The CAT representative confirmed they will take the advice of the PC and contact those discussed. It was agreed to discuss **Correspondence item 10.1** at this point. Mr Harris read aloud an email from a company whose client owns some of the Fen and uses the Rond, which they say has been damaged by deer trampling and request permission to restore it. Dr Bacon provided useful background information and Mr Harris consulted with environmentalist, Dr Parmeter, who suggested the company should contact NE to discuss. Dr Bacon proposed the PC be happy for the Rond to be repaired, subject to approval from NE. **ACTION: Clerk to respond to company.** Mr Harris had provided photos of a new shooting seat found on the Rond and said he has discussed this with the BC, who are also concerned with potential illicit deer shooting or poaching. Dr Harris proposed the PC advise the Police again. Mr Snelling seconded. All in favour. **ACTION: Clerk**

9.3 **NE Request - Land Access Request for SSSI Survey (Ant Broads & Marshes) –** Mr Harris explained there are concerns with run-off pollution into the Fen, which NE are investigating and proposed approval of the request, and he will be the NE contact. Mr Snelling seconded. All in favour. **ACTION: Clerk to update NE**.

9.4 **To discuss any FloGas Lighting response –** Still no response from FloGas**. ACTION: Ms Johnson to phone FloGas.**

9.5 **Any other Environmental issues –** None raised

10. Correspondence

To note correspondence received;

10.1 **Permission requested to restore section of the Rond** – Discussed under item 9.2

11. Finance

11.1 **To approve payments –** Payment list supplied to all prior to the meeting.
Cheque 000074 – Clerk salary (including refund for monthly mobile phone and recorded delivery postage). It was agreed payment, for the additional 19 hours spent working on the recent SAR, will be paid 2 hours per month, was also included.

11.2 **To review and agree Bank Reconciliation –** The reconciliation was sent to all prior to the meeting. No questions raised.

11.3 **To review and agree Accounts to date -** Accounts sent to all prior to meeting. The Clerk did ask whether the PC wish to transfer funds from the Savings to the bank account but, other than salaries, there are no large payments due until the end of the year, so the PC agreed to leave as is. They are aware notice must be given to transfer funds. Mr Harris proposed acceptance of the financial package (item 11.1-11.3) Payments, Bank Rec and Accounts. Mrs Briscoe seconded. All in agreement and cheques and documents duly signed.

11.4 **Discuss update to add Clerk to account for payment upload –** Although the Clerk now has some additional permissions, the facility to upload payments has not yet been granted. **ACTION: Clerk to review online accessibility**

11.5 **Sandholes rent invoicing –** The Clerk advised the leasers of an area of Sandholes had not been invoiced since 2022. It was agreed the PC should invoice them for 2023, 2024 and 2025. **ACTION: Clerk to issue invoice.**

11.6 **Training course for new Parish Councillor –** Mr Bunting did not wish to receive training.

11.7 **Any other financial matters –** The Clerk advised at the last meeting it was agreed to transfer to a new Vodafone mobile contract (£8pm) but the deal had expired prior to this being actioned. It was agreed the Clerk advise of new deals when available. **ACTION: Clerk**

12. To Review & Accept Policies

12.1 **Data Protection policy –** Agree to defer to next meeting. Mrs Briscoe to review.

12.2 **Grievance policy –** The Clerk advised NALC suggested new content regarding sexual harassment should be introduced into the policy and a copy of the amended policy was provided prior to the meeting. Mr Harris proposed approval. Dr Harris seconded. All in agreement and amended policy adopted.

12.3 **Standing Orders (to include voting procedures) –** There was a differing of opinion within the PC as to whether voting should be by secret ballot or by a show of hands, with valid reasons made for both options. Due to the lateness and importance, it was agreed to defer further discussion to the next meeting. **ACTION: Clerk to add to next agenda.**

13. Progress reports for Information

13.1 **Poor's Trust –** Dr Harris advised they have a new Trustee, and they all received Trustee training. They are receiving compliments for the boatyard improvements, there will be an advert in the magazine for their grants, and they have safety concerns on some paths and trees and will be arranging a tree inspection.

13.2 **All Saints Church –** Dr Bacon advised nothing to report but is still looking into the war memorial.

13.3 **Allotments –** Ms Johnson said new plots were measured and cleared but a couple of small trees will need to be removed, and a digger may be required. A damaged shed has been dismantled.

13.4 **School –** Ms Johnson advised CAT have been there all summer and prior to the holiday, the school held two excellent, well attended, engaging events.

13.5 **Any Other Reports –** None

14. Matters for next Agenda and information

Confirmed the date of the next meeting is scheduled for **24th September 2025**.

Meeting finished at 10.05 pm

Chairman Signature:____________________________ Date:___________________________

Chairman Name:_______________________________