

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD at 7pm ON WEDNESDAY**  
**7<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2021 via ZOOM.**

**Attendance:** Dr Bacon in the Chair, Mr Filgate, Mr Harris, Mr Hill, Ms Johnson, Mr Jordan, Mr Read, Mrs Walker, Mrs Wickens, Richard Price (County Councillor) and sixteen members of the public.

**Apologies for Absence:** Mrs Grove-Jones (District Councillor), Mrs Millership (District Councillor).

Dr Bacon welcomed everyone to the meeting, he stated that the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of producing the minutes. Dr Bacon went on to state that Standing Orders provide for 3 minutes per person to speak in public time.

**Election of Vice-Chairman:** Ms Johnson proposed Mr Read as Vice-Chairman, this was seconded by Mr Harris with all in favour.

**Declaration of Interests:** Mr Harris's standard declaration regarding the legal dispute with A Alston about hedges still applies. The courts at the moment are doing nothing as far as he can see. He asked for this declaration to continue without having to waste time on it each week. He will report if there is any change in the status.

Mr Filgate declared an interest in Item 10 on the Agenda as he is a neighbour.

Mr Jordan declared an interest in the Prior Notification at Wood Street.

**Public Forum:** Dr Bacon stated that the two candidates for Norfolk County Council elections, Cllr Price and Mr Varley should not use this an opportunity for campaigning.

Mr Varley asked if the Parish Council had any thoughts about bus shelters as he had been asked by parishioners. Dr Bacon replied that this had been discussed in the past, people like them unless they are in front their house.

Cllr Price report on the current Covid situation, things are getting better but cases in North Norfolk had risen to 2997 which is an increase of 7 in the last week. The infection rate is down to 9 in every 100,000 and there have been no new deaths in North Norfolk. The heath service is carefully assessing and monitoring the overall position to ensure that they are prepared fully for a third wave particularly when everything opens up from 12<sup>th</sup> April and people come from other areas of the country to visit.

Cllr Price has been in the village with Duncan Baker MP talking to residents. He had driven to Fenside and talked to residents, it is not only residents who use Fenside it is visitors to RSPB and butterfly watchers so there is a huge amount of traffic in the summer. This is the worst road for potholes and flooding he has come across. Cllr Price promised the residents that he would contact Highways. Cllr Price has asked the highway engineer to inspect and report back to him on how they can make the road better. One resident he spoke to have suffered three burst tyres, Highways should maintain the road. Cllr Price went on to say that if residents know of a pothole they should go onto the Highways site and record it, once they have a reference number let him know and he can chase it with Highways.

Some of the members of the public indicated that they would like to speak on Item 10 when it is discussed.

**Minutes of the Previous Meeting:** Mr Harris stated that he was not saying that the minutes were inaccurate but he had misspoken at the previous meeting. Dr Bacon stated that if this is what Mr

Harris said then the minutes are correct. Mr Harris explained that on the third page of the minutes it states that he spoke to the Monitoring Officer, but he had actually spoken to the Independent Officer. Mr Harris had tried to speak to the Monitoring Officer on a number of occasions. Dr Bacon stated that this was not a correction to the minutes, that is what Mr Harris said and that is what is recorded, it may well be a mistake and Mr Harris could raise it as a matter arising but in terms of approving the minutes if that is what was said, that is what is recorded. Mr Harris stated that he was not sure that was correct, he did not believe that is correct you are allowed to make corrections of that nature. Ms Johnson stated that there was one minor thing, something she said had been put down the wrong way round but she was unable to open her minutes, it was a minor thing and does not change the direction of anything. Dr Bacon replied that if that is recorded as how Ms Johnson said it then the minutes are correct. Ms Johnson said it was the negative rather than the positive. Mrs Wickens proposed that the minutes be accepted, this was seconded by Ms Johnson there were four votes to accept, Dr Bacon stated that majority do not accept the minutes therefore they are not adopted, or accepted. Mr Harris clarified if the correction is made he would support the minutes, the purpose of minutes is to try and convey accurately what was said at the meeting but if he made a slip he is allowed to correct it, that would be normal. Dr Bacon stated that this should be a matter arising saying that Mr Harris wants to correct a comment in the last minutes. Mr Harris said that to make clear he did not speak to the Monitoring Officer he made a slip it was the Independent Officer. He said that it is very sensible for Mr Harris him to correct that, you should enable it and then he would support the minutes, if not he could not.

Dr Bacon again asked for those in favour of accepting the minutes, as a record of what was said, there were three accepting, two against and the rest abstaining.

**Matters Arising: Dog Bin in Back Lane.** Mr Harris stated that in the interests of other Councillors also the public knowing what has actually gone on. On page 3 he explained that he talked to the Independent Officer, the reason he had not talked to the Monitoring officer is she never returned his calls. Mr Harris thought as a matter arising he would comment on this. The process unfortunately as discussed last time it is a pity that neither of the District Councillors are at the meeting because the process this Code of Conduct complaint, as Mr Edwards very ably expressed last time, tarnished Mr Harris, Dr Bacon and it tarnished also the whole of the committee and North Norfolk District Council, that is what Mr Edwards said and Mr Harris agreed with him. Mr Harris stated that his lawyers have written to the Council requesting to know exactly what did go on and who was involved because as Mr Edwards made clear last time as soon as it became clear that there was no Code of Conduct in place which became clear after one week the case should have been dismissed at that point on the analysis of the assistant Monitoring Officer presented, it was not, it took over a month more the miraculous appearance of a Code of Conduct and the intervention of lawyers. For that reason it is appropriate and Mr Harris would hope that the District Councillors would agree with this, that this should be explained because the Code of Conduct complaint was made under the Lord Evans consultative document, it was not under any Code of Conduct at all. Mr Harris stated that this arose and that document makes clear, Evans makes clear that transparency in these issues is a priority, it is important that these issues are looked at in a transparent way and therefore Mr Harris hopes and expects that NNDC will provide a proper understanding of what actually happened and who was involved in it.

Dr Bacon stated that it is also in the minutes that the only comment he had to say on this is that he corrected Mr Harris's solicitors who wrote to the District Council and implied that he or the clerk had concocted a Code of Conduct after the event when in fact the Code of Conduct was adopted in July 2012 by this Parish Council.

Mr Harris stated that Dr Bacon had inferred that, they did not imply that but there is absolutely no question, they had never been presented to over half of the Parish Council and they were never referred to, the Code of Conduct complaint was under the Evans thing. It was made clear in the Monitoring officer's report that there are governance issues relating to that and those need to be addressed, what needs to happen now because unfortunately this rather unedifying process has tarnished all of the Council, we now need a clear understanding of what went on and who was involved. Dr Bacon agreed.

Mr Johnson stated that she has just found the point that she mentioned earlier, Dr Bacon was quite right that this needs to be correct here because it was something that Mr Edwards said which he said Ms Johnson had said before and it was when Ms Johnson talked about what constituted bullying. Mr Edwards said "that if I feel bullied then I am bullied" Ms Johnson stated that she did not actually say that, she said that when somebody may feel they are being bullied but that may not actually be the case so it is how two different people see it. Dr Bacon stated that what was recorded in the minutes is what is on the tape, Ms Johnson agreed but it was not what she had said the time before so what Mr Edwards said, she said was incorrect. She had been misquoted by Mr Edwards at the last meeting.

Ms Johnson and Mrs Harris had walked around the area, the dog bin has been on the present site for a long time if it is moved it could impact on someone else's view or position. The amount of people that use that walk around there they wondered if another bin could be considered nearer to the corner of Back Lane and Dale Lane, this would catch the people walking through the loke. The present dog bin could be moved nearer to the fence of the last property in Thorn Road at the end of the footpath. She thought the land would belong to Highways which would mean there would be one bin that would catch people walking from the village towards School Road and Fenside etc. the other dog bin would then capture the people walking down Wood Street and that area and back. The only other area was the electricity compound.

Mr Jordan stated that if the bin is moved it would break the circuit, there is also the cost to consider. Mr Hill stated that introducing another bin would incur costs. The present dog bin could be moved a few metres towards the Church there is a length of fencing there, it might be possible to move it a few metres and still catch people walking out of Back Lane and essentially still be at the junction.

Dr Bacon suggested that Ms Johnson prepares a map and photographs in advance of the next meeting which should be circulated to all councillors and a decision can be made at the next meeting.

**Action Point: Ms Johnson to prepare a map and photographs in advance of the next meeting.**

Mr Harris stated that at the last meeting it had been agreed that Ms Johnson, Mrs Harris and Mr Hill would look at the dog bin, he would like his wife to represent him in this matter. This was agreed.

Dr Bacon reported that the clerk had started training, she had circulated a report regarding the return to face-to-face meetings. Dr Bacon asked councillors to read the report, this would be discussed at the next meeting and a decision made for future meetings. **Action point: All to read report**

Mr Read asked over the last several meetings they have all been taped and recorded which he thought was good idea, when we go back to a proper meeting in the village hall could we continue doing this because over the period of time it has saved a lot of conflict over what was and was not said and he thought it would help the clerk as well because she would have direct access then as to what has been said. Dr Bacon agreed it was a good idea. The clerk stated that it could only be an audio recording. Mr Read replied that it would save the clerk a lot of writing and we have not had so many disputes on what has been put in the minutes, they are now very accurate.

Cllr Price stated that with regard to having real meetings that County have been lobbying everyone to extend the rules and laws to enable virtual meetings to carry on. That has been unsuccessful but County together with the LGA are lodging a legal challenge because it is discriminatory and has a huge financial cost. For example when the first meeting is held at County in May if it has to be held live they have now have officers investigating to hold that meeting at the Norfolk Showground because they cannot social distance to accommodate the 84 members in the Member's Chamber at County Hall so the cost of hiring a large facility, providing the sound and recording, speakers etc is a huge cost which would be passed to the rate payers. Dr Bacon replied that the clerk had circulated a report details about the National and the Norfolk Association of Local Councils who are backing Hertfordshire Council with their legal case against the Government regarding this. Cllr Price said that in reality they are going to stamp their way on this. Dr Bacon stated that after 7<sup>th</sup> May there would be no possibility of councils to have Zoom meetings. Cllr Price stated the problem comes when you have a contentious planning issues when there are many members of the public wishing to attend councils might have to think carefully how they are going to try and accommodate and comply

Ms Johnson stated that she had been asked to contact Norfolk ALC with regard to a self-review and training. She has spoken to Russell who is the chair of the group and the Training Officer who will put together some ideas. There is an opportunity through training to work towards an award scheme which would tie in with making sure the clerk finishes her course as that is one of the criteria that is needed. It would also be supporting the clerk in what she is doing and this would help everyone to be stronger, hear the needs of the local people and do the job to the best of their ability. As blended learning this could be done remotely.

Mr Filgate stated although he gave apologies for the previous meeting, he appreciated that the minutes were very full, and they were very helpful but there were some action points, but he was not sure there were some covering everything and also the minutes do still seem quite long. He did not know how to square that with what Mr Read said earlier about recording minutes and he knew the clerk has a huge job to record everything. There is discussion about a 360 meeting, it might just help to clarify what that means. Dr Bacon thought it was a special meeting or a training meeting. Ms Johnson replied it is looking around the council at how we do things and trying to work out the best way of them working cohesively together and to look at some of the things that are done to make sure that we are following the right policies and doing things properly.

Mr Harris stated that the purpose of the interval performance review, there were problems which everyone has acknowledged and that has been compounded by the Code of Conduct complaint and the idea was that there should have a full and frank meeting where everybody was able to speak their minds in our own circle with an independent invigilator to see fair play. To see if from that we could thrash out a way ahead for the Council so that we don't spend the whole time arguing. This was agreed in November or December and that is the policy and Mr Harris thought it was a very good way ahead because any normal body having the sort of letters we had from a parishioner which was extremely critical as it is recorded in the minutes and with any normal body faced with that sort or criticism would have a meeting among itself and say how can we get our act together better. Part of that is training, Mr Harris went on the first of the training courses the previous day and very good it was. There was a very good invigilator who might suit the Parish Council well. Dr Bacon thought it should be a facilitator rather than an invigilator. Mr Harris stated that this is not going to happen before the AGM but it ought to be done shortly after that, it would be better in the village hall as these things are better done in person, we should make sure this happens. We are still not getting enough action points in the minutes from the discussions. Mr Harris proposed that we now focus on that and if we get this invigilator, Mr Harris asked Ms Johnson who had been recommended to her by NALC? Ms Johnson replied that it was Gabbie, the Training Officer. Mr Harris stated that he was interested in getting someone from outside the immediate area for obvious reasons to get an independent person, he

thought Gabbie was very sensible, very good and he would be happy to have her if she could spare the time to help us. Ms Johnson explained that Gabbie is the Training Officer from Norfolk ALC we have had a lot of discussion but the time now is to try and move forward and with her help and more understanding for all of us. Dr Bacon asked Ms Johnson to contact Gabbie to facilitate a meeting for us. Ms Johnson stated that she wanted to combine it with some training.

Ms Johnson went on to say that she had spoken to the Training Officer regarding the problem with the Parish Magazine. The Training Officers had some ideas on how to deal with this, it comes up a lot with many parishes. The Parish Council is not responsible for the content of the magazine but people often see that the Council is associated with it. We could learn a lot from her and the idea is for everyone to work closely to one aim.

Mr Harris thought they were two different things, first of all need a 'clear the air' meeting to where we think we are wrong and the Code of Conduct report said we have governance issues within our Council which need to be addressed. The Council needs to have a meeting to go through that and sort what the priorities should be and where we are going wrong, that includes on the minutes. Once that has been done then training, he wished he had training when he joined because there were ten people on the course, nine of them were debutantes who had just started. Mr Harris was the only one who had any experience at all and he has only had eighteen month's experience. Training is a good thing and we should do it. Mr Harris stated that he was pleased to hear that the Clerk had started training. First of all the Council should have the 360 degree internal performance review which says this is where we are going wrong and then those are the problems we need to address then we can have the training. The two should not be confused. Mr Harris stated that the meeting should be organised in May when the new team is together. Mr Harris stated that this was what he was proposing, Mr Read seconded this saying it is the right thing to do so that the two issues are not confused at once, if you get the first one cleared up you can then move along and we can discuss the second issue which is training. Mr Read thought is probably very important to everyone. Everyone was in favour.

**Action point: Ms Johnson to arrange a Review Meeting first and then move on to training later.**

**Finance:** The clerk had circulated draft year-end accounts showing income of £13,558.58 and expenditure of £13,214.59. The balanced carried forward is £21,322.62. The accounts are with the Internal Auditor at present. The Annual Governance and Accountability Review needs to be sent to the auditors by 30<sup>th</sup> June.

Mr Harris remarked that the Council had a sum, which is double the Precept, in the bank this could be used for training. The Council may need to pay for a public consultation on planning.

Ms Johnson proposed that the accounts be accepted, this was seconded by Mrs Walker with all in agreement.

Three cheques were presented for payment:

101364 for £176.45 payable to the clerk for reimbursement of books for training and subscription to SLCC

101365 for £93 payable to HMRC for tax

101366 for £423.58 payable to Norfolk ALC for annual subscription, training for Mr Harris and half of the cost of training for the Clerk.

The Clerk's salary will be paid by Standing Order.

Ms Johnson proposed these payments be made; this was seconded by Mrs Walker with all in agreement.

**Flagship Housing Proposals – Lea Road:** Dr Bacon stated the a copy of the letter from Flagship had been circulated, the key points were that Flagship has taken over Victory Housing who previously had a plan for the site and in the third paragraph it says “I would welcome a virtual meeting to discuss the proposals ahead of a planning application submission, to listen to the views of the local community”. In the penultimate paragraph “it is hoped that we can also secure the support of the Parish Council and we would welcome the opportunity to address any questions”. Dr Bacon reiterated that this was from Flagship to the Parish Council, it is not a planning application, this is asking for pre-application advice or opinion from the Parish Council to Flagship. Later on in a few months there will be, presumably, a planning application for which NNDC, the planning authority, will consult the Parish Council for their opinion on the plans that go in.

Dr Bacon thought there were three options:

1. Invite Flagship to a Parish Council meeting with the public present so that the Councillors and public could listen to the proposals and ask questions. The May meeting will be busy, and the June meeting may not happen.
2. Tell Flagship that if they want to get opinions of the local community they should hold their own public meeting where everyone could come along and listen and ask questions.
3. The Parish Council and members of the public could discuss the matter without Flagship being present and make a response from the Parish Council.

Dr Bacon stated that he did not mind which was this was done, it is up to the Parish Council.

Mr Filgate stated that it is implied Flagship now own the land. Dr Bacon replied that ownership of the land is not the issue, anyone can apply for planning permission on anybody’s land as long as they fill in the relevant paperwork with NNDC. Dr Bacon stated that he has no idea who owns the site. Mr Filgate thanked Dr Bacon for his comments and asked if anyone knew who owns the land. The ownership of the land is not relevant because the Parish Council is discussing what Flagship would like to do with the land regardless of whoever happens to own it. Ms Johnson asked if Flagship could be asked who owns the land.

Mr Hill stated that option 2 makes the most sense so that the focus can be entirely on one subject and have enough time to discuss it directly with the people involved. Dr Bacon replied this would mean telling Flagship to arrange a meeting and that could either be after a certain date when they could arrange in somewhere like the village hall or before a certain date but held virtually. Mrs Wickens agreed that Flagship should make their own arrangements.

Mr Jordan asked if Flagship could bypass the public consultation, if it does not happen in a timescale that fits them, and go straight to planning. Dr Bacon stated that they are obliged to carry out public consultation if the development is of a certain size and it would be silly if they went straight to planning because it would mean instead of having advanced notice of any problems they might have, they would get them at the point of the planning application. Mr Jordan agreed that a separate meeting would be best.

Mr Harris stated that he thought the letter was inappropriate, and he did not think the Parish Council should let it lie as it is because when they say in the letter “I welcome a virtual meeting to listen to views of the local community noting that the initial consultation feedback was largely positive”. It was extremely unpositive, there was one of the most direct meetings that Mr Harris had seen in the Parish Council and there was considerable internal debate about it. Mr Harris noticed that the two biggest issues which were raised are not even referred to in the letter and they were access and water. Dr Bacon said that Mr Harris was going into the detail and what needs to be decided is which way the

Parish Council handles the issue and he repeated the options as Mr Harris thought he had lost his connection when it was originally said.

Mr Harris stated that he was putting in a fourth option. Mr Harris stated that the Parish Council cannot allow this letter to lie without responding to it, last time when they came, they did a consultation. The Parish Council wrote a letter saying the consultation was not a proper consultation because there was insufficient notice of it, also the timing was wrong it was held during the working day so working people could not have gone. They have now come and asked for another consultation meeting which there is no point in consulting with people who don't want to consult and whatever route the Parish Council chooses to go they have to say it was not largely positive, it was largely negative. Mr Harris went on to say that the access they have not taken a blind bit of notice over the access or the water issue. It is inappropriate because the conclusion he reached on this, and he has absolutely zero interest in it at all, is that they are trying ride roughshod over the views of local people and Mr Harris finds that is unacceptable. Any response the Parish Council gives has to be making those points completely clear and he is disappointed that the District Councillors are not present to actually act on our behalf on this issue, this is a very important issue for our credibility within the village. There is enormous concern about this issue and to say they were largely positive you need Meghan Markle to actually make that sort of comment, that's an alternative truth.

Ms Johnson agreed that the Parish Council should respond and clarify what our feelings were on the whole situation but she thought before any public meeting that the Parish Council should have a meeting with people in the village, all the Council or perhaps the planning committee. Have an open meeting so that we can start to gather some thoughts because when there is the meeting with Flagship that the Parish Council needs to act in a controlled manner and the people from Lea Road need to be able to speak and be cohesive in what they want to say. We need to make the most of that opportunity because it might only be an hour, if it is on Zoom and they are not in the same room it is very difficult to go to somebody in the corner and put the point across. Ms Johnson thought the Parish Council needs to be well prepared for it and that means that there needs to be a meeting which is not a Parish Council meeting but allows everybody to have their points put forward and gathered.

Dr Bacon asked if was right that Ms Johnson was suggesting that somebody, perhaps the Parish Council, calls a parishioners meeting to discuss the issues without Flagship present so that we are then prepared to have a meeting after that with Flagship but that it is not a Parish Council meeting, it is a meeting perhaps called by and facilitated by the Parish Council for any parishioners who are interested. Ms Johnson replied that was what she meant and it could be lead by the planning committee if it needs to have Parish Council represented.

Dr Bacon stated that we need Parish Councillors to make a decision as to which route is taken.

Cllr Price stated that having spoken with the MP to residents in Lea Road the previous day he hoped the Parish Council appreciate that not all the residents of Lea Road have internet access and therefore a virtual meeting would deny them the basic human right of expressing their views and therefore that must be ruled out straight away.

Mr Harris was supportive of what Ms Johnson said but he thought a pre-condition of anything with Flagship is to say actually your comment in your cover letter is not correct there was no largely positive there is a largely negative response to what they are doing. Dr Bacon asked if all Parish Councillors were agreed on that point – they are. Dr Bacon went on to say this would be part of the response that the Parish Council criticise that point about being positive.

Mr Harris went on to say that the Parish Council has to say why and he thought the Parish Council should listen to the people who have taken the trouble to attend the meeting, their views need to be heard because before the Parish Council concludes what they are going to do, why is it not largely positive. Mr Harris stated that in his view and having read the letter and having heard what has happened before the two issues that he understood one is the access which has not had a blind bit of attention to, they have not even tried to because the sub-committee actually suggested something different from the access point of view. Secondly, the water issue, Mr Snelling was extremely to the point on this before, they don't even listen to him. The Parish Council has to say if you want to have any support from us you have got to recognise that you are going to have to address those issues with the Parish Council and with the residents of Lea Road, they have not done this yet. Mr Harris thought that the Parish Council should listen and give the constituents an opportunity to speak their own minds before the Parish Council propose and come to a conclusion. There is too much top down in all of this and that is what it looks like what Flagship want to do is say a tick box exercise, we have done all this, we have talked to the Council and then put it in for planning. They can put it in for planning but they are going to meet resistance, certainly from Mr Harris because he thought they have behaved badly.

Dr Bacon invited members of the public to speak but remember the Standing Orders say three minutes per person.

Mr Edwards stated that he did not live near Lea Road so he does not have a personal axe to grind but he had strong views on the subject particularly the access. Mr Edwards thought the access appalling to think that people who bought bungalows in a nice little leafy cul-de-sac and suddenly be told this is an access to a large development. He had been told that this land had been allocated for housing many years ago and probably at the end of the day little can be done to stop it but he thought the access is a prime area for concern. The other point Mr Edwards wished to make was that when the public turned up in numbers at the village hall meeting it was sure way of showing what the public opinion was particularly for people in that area. Some of the comments they made understandably would not hold much argument with the planners, whether the doctors or dentist could cope, they are not interested. As a body of people they are going to have to come up with the things that the planners do have to listen to so from a Parish Council point of view, as he understood matters, the only thing that can really happen after all the debating is done, is the Parish Council either approve the idea or go against the idea, either support it or do not support it. Since the lion share of the Parish Councillors are unelected they don't as such have a mandate from the village, he felt that on this occasion they need to listen to the people who live in that area, take note of what they say bases their decision accordingly. Mr Edwards did not think it should be personal views of the Councillors are on the matter they need to represent the parishioners and if a hall full of people say they don't want it he thought the Parish Council is duty bound to say they are taking the mandate of the people here and object to the application. Mr Edwards suggested to the people who live in that area and have a great interest in it, he suggested that they form their own little pressure group, Mr Snelling spoke at the last meeting and was very knowledgeable on these matters he would be a key man to deal with, Mr Harris by now he knows an awful lot about water, if there are water problems in the area Mr Edwards thought he would be a good man to have on their side. Other skills exist within the village that could support them, they need to get their heads together on this form their own pressure group and make sure they listen to them because at the end of the day as Mr Harris said the Parish Council side of it is a bit of a box ticking exercise, he did not want to discredit the Council he was just saying that is part of the process and they will want to go back and say they consulted, move on but they are going to have to listen to the residents.

Dr Bacon stated that before we move to somebody else, he wanted to take exception to Mr Edward's snipe against Parish Councillors not being elected. Dr Bacon has been elected several times onto this Parish Council, last time there was an election there were not enough candidates standing to actually

cause an election. The fact that several people here put their names forward for election but did not need to go through the process because there were not enough competitors does not mean that they should be sniped at as being some lesser species of Parish Councillor because of that and that applies to probably more than half the Parish Councils in Norfolk that they do not get enough people putting their names forward so there is not an election. So by saying the Parish Councillors have not been elected he thought was an unnecessary snipe. Ms Johnson agreed with that.

Debbie Wheeler Osman agreed with the principle of the Parish Council and residents of Lea Road and surrounding people getting together to get a view point on the planning for Flagship. Also, if Flagship agree to have a public meeting could the Parish Council explain to them that it needs to be when people are not at work and also not on Zoom because most of the people in Lea Road are not able to use Zoom. Debbie Wheeler Osman went on to reiterate the access problem which is going to cause a lot of stress, insecurity and noise problems etc. This is a very valid point to be addressed.

Gill Bailey said that the main thing is that this has been dragging on for nearly twelve years, it should never have happened in the first place if they had been able to say what needed to be said at the meeting with the Government Minister. The main issues again are traffic, there would be forty plus cars going up and down the road, there have to be school runs because there is no safe pathway around the village for anyone going to school. School runs are twice a day. Also, there are problems with the high water table and flooding. This is a greenfield site, twelve years ago perhaps people were not so involved in the environment and saving biodiversity but we are now and we should be looking at saving that and not just going ahead and just "stick some more houses up here, that's a nice little field let's get rid of that". Also, what they are doing is not in keeping with the road, how can four or five bedroom properties and houses be in keeping with the small bungalows that are down the rest of the road.

Scott Snelling said a lot has changed since 2007 when there were floods back then, the local Flood Risk Management Strategy review for 2021 is now trying to incorporate more modern and up to date information, we are so out of date. Talking to the Flagship they have actually got to the stage where they don't want to deal with any paperwork now, they have given wrong information. We have asked them would they like to clarify why the information is wrong and they are now saying at one stage they weren't talking to the public they would only talk to business and they were ignoring any emails legal etc so they do want to just not know anything. It has to be raised originally when CAT01 was brought up diversity tests were so small compared to the actual building plot it was legally not sound so the site should not even have come up for any proposals at all. It should have stopped then but Flagship are actually saying that it is a Flood Zone 1, it is incorrect, it is not Flood Zone 1. They don't even know what the term a dry island is and they have not even read the Core Strategy properly because if they had they would have known it is a Zone 3 and they don't take it into consideration what it is. They have said that they did not have enough money in the physical meeting that was held to do any proper SUD work and now you have to, there have been some changes here and in the Flood Risk Management Policy review under UC11 they say that you have to put in high quality multifunctional SUDS which will follow the most up to date guidance in new development, they are not interested in that because they have seen the water coming in from multiple areas and they just want to make a lagoon and forget about it because they don't want to integrate with any other systems which we do not have because we are so out of date. Even their proposed area for an open area which is where the lagoon is going to be they are fencing it off so it is not actually an open area, it is fenced off for people's safety. The water line of that flooding area is actually, on one of their maps, going to the doorstep of someone's house. So if someone buys the house their private drive is now going to be a possible flood area and it is down to the person who bought it. Plus other areas as well. Even the water from Limes Road, one of the developments there is the actual piping system the water comes off into a reservoir on one of the properties in Limes Road and then it comes off and it runs

into CAT01 like a lot of other areas in the village they run to the same point, water will travel there. On the maps they show water in the key area right in the middle where they are going to build so why build in an area that is wet. Even one of the old buildings which was not part of the original biodiversity they are actually going to remove it and people are saying there are bats there. They removed the orchard trees there which had a lot of crustaceans in different parts on the actual tree which was part of biodiversity. There is no proper pavement on their proposed diagram, where are people going to walk? It says there is a little link that says existing footpath to be extended into the site but there is actually no footpath proposed on the site at all. They have literally squeezed in all the buildings they can. Part of the policy with EN10 has been updated and it talks about minor developments so we need to have a look about maximum houses that can be done. Also flood risk assessments will need to be done, there are new properties that have been built here when Mr Snelling spoke to the head of planning in the Environmental Agency they said there should have been flood risk assessments done with those houses and they have not been done. People have a lack of knowledge, every time Mr Snelling spoke to anyone from Victory Housing/Flagship Group they don't know this information. It is all in the book, it is legal it is in the NNDC Core Strategy, it has been updated on the website how come these people don't understand this information. Mr Snelling said he has just spent five minutes reading it and he could understand there are lots of different legal problems. He wished they could give information to the parish and parishioners which is correct. Mr Snelling asked that everyone could keep in communication so knowledge can be shared and so everyone can understand what is going on, please ask if anyone has questions.

Mrs Filgate commented what Mr Snelling had just said because it is the situation, Mrs Filgate thought that many councils across the land now are putting brownfield sites first and it sounds like Jenrick is going to consider some changes to his plans because of the pressure. 55% of Conservative MPs are worried about the plans for planning. Mrs Filgate thought that things should be turned round and say what can we use this site for? There is a fund which we could approach to turn it into a park, a place where people can walk. The Government want people to be able to go on footpaths and cycle routes, we could make a really nice centre to the village. The worry about covering that area in concrete with the climate change and carbon capture being taken out of the soil with all the building. Mrs Filgate felt that there were so many points that could be made and could be coordinated so the idea of a group of people who get together and speak from one voice before we meet the proposers/Flagship the better.

Mr Hyams stated that they live on the boundary. (The recording at this point was not clear but I believe Mr Hyams spoke about the previous public meeting which was called in the afternoon at the village hall.) The officers almost outnumbered the people that attended when questions were asked of them they were very dismissive of the parishioners concerns it was almost a fait accompli. When Mr Hyams asked if they owned the site he did not get a straight answer. It seems that they don't want to listen to members of the public and we were not given the answers they were looking for. Mr Hyams agreed with Mr Hill he thought that the people who are there, the general feeling was that the villagers were against it. Mr Hyams thought that the green space should remain, people would like allotments why could we not have them, neighbouring villages have them.

Debbie Wheeler Osman stated that somebody had been clearing the site from the trees and things, perhaps Flagship own it and they are not owning up to it and also she disagreed with the letter where they say they had a positive feedback, she felt strongly that Flagship are ignoring anything that anyone says and she thought we do need to take this onboard that whatever we say they will not take any notice because that is how she felt when she attended the meeting, they did not want to listen to her at all, they talked over her and not allowing any opinions whatsoever. She strongly felt that they would try and run straight through us regardless.

Cllr Price, in the absence of the District Councillors and having been a District Councillor for twelve years and Deputy Leader at NNDC, reminded the public and Parish Councillors that the planning process, he was not sure whether this gets into the major category but the Planning Officer allocated to a case will consult and liaise with the District Councillors and there are three options; delegated approval, delegated refusal or call in. Cllr Price stated that he had seen enough planning applications where the Parish Council may object, six or a dozen might object but it still goes through under delegated. Cllr Price said every citizen has a right to lodge a rejection or approval comment to the planning committee, secondly, as the County Councillor along with MP Duncan Baker he looked at the junction at the end of Lea Road and with the information from residents about the vehicles having to access the industrial estate opposite he would be making it very clear, when the application comes through, to Highways that does represent a serious hazard to access to the site. There are eleven properties in Lea Road, a quiet cul-de-sac, small houses, and this proposal is for eighteen. That totally dominates and destroys the reason why they bought their properties and one of the attractions are the bats and bats are a precious natural resident of our countryside and any disturbance can cause tremendous harm. This should be taken into consideration. Habitats assessments and as Mr Harris and Mr Snelling both adequately explained the flood assessment is a very real threat, water has to go somewhere and by nature will take the easiest route so any buildings will have an effect and that has been taken into consideration and the important thing is that the residents of the eleven properties in Lea Road must be involved at every stage and be allowed to have their say and express their feelings on it. They have Cllr Price's support and Duncan Baker's as well.

Mrs Snelling stated that they have a legal right to be informed about this and they had no notification of the meeting, so that they could express their views, she spoke to Mr Price the previous day and Duncan Baker MP and she is glad they are on board because there are a lot of people that are retired and they don't have a computer and they would not be able to get to a meeting but Lea Road friends and neighbours and they have to speak for those that are unable to attend a meeting. Mr Richard Price the local councillor, Mr Duncan Baker MP and there is a mention of Lord Richard Dannett that is very high up with floods and flooding as we are a dry island. Mrs Snelling asked if they would be informed next time of the meetings.

Mr Snelling stated that people did not have enough communications to know and some people who do not know how to use technology that is part of the problem to help the parishioners who don't understand who don't have access to information probably the main highlight of this communication.

Dr Bacon replied that, as far as he knew, there is no obligation from anyone, the applicant, the District Council or anybody to notify them other than the fact that the District Council officer will put a notice up at the entrance when there is a planning application. As far as he knew that would be the only formal notification that parishioners would get of anything happening. Mrs Snelling stated that does not cover it because she could not walk that far and there are other people as well that cannot walk that far. Dr Bacon replied that the District Council does not go to individual houses they put a notice up at the entrance to the site, last time this came up Dr Bacon he personally took notices round to everybody in Lea Road and Limes Road but as there was nobody coming to the meeting from Flagship tonight he did not do that because he thought it would be more appropriate when Flagship do come along. Mrs Snelling said it was not made clear, they did not know if it was tonight because the letter was there, they have now seen it and thought it could be tonight so they have to link in. Communications are not very clear, can they be made clearer in the future. Dr Bacon replied that would be up to Flagship and the District Council but the Parish Council can let people know if something is happening, it is not a duty for the Parish Council to do it and last time Dr Bacon did notify everyone.

Mr Read stated that if there was an open meeting at a time when people are not at work, they are able to get there and they are notified early enough the Parish Council should take considerable interest what the local people say because it is the local people of the village who put the Councillors where they are and they are there to serve them and the Parish Council should take note of what they say.

Mr Harris stated that it was very interesting hearing what people had to say and thanked the Chairman for giving the opportunity for people to speak, he thought it was entirely right. Mr Harris went on to say that really Flagship should not be writing things which are not true and the Parish Council should not be party that, we cannot have them saying the meetings were largely positive, they were not and the Parish Council should refute that. Last time the Parish Council wrote a letter back saying the their consultation was a dummy, was not a real consultation. Mr Harris stated that in his view the Parish Council should write back saying there we do not agree, your letter is misleading, inappropriate, wrong headed when it says that the initial consultation was largely positive, it was not, it was largely negative. Mr Harris thought that the major issues are access and secondly water. The water makes a very compelling case, they don't answer because they probably don't understand. This should be put on the record, we should copy in our district Councillors who he thought need to come to these meetings, they need to hear who elects them. When the Parish Council goes back to Flagship before a public meeting, we should say we have had this meeting and these are the issues it is not correct, you are wrong, you are misleading, you are not addressing these issues, you need to. We should be direct about this because they do seem to be not wishing to understand. If they then decide to go ahead and push it straight through planning and hope that NNDC will let it go then fine there may be a planning battle, they don't necessarily win those. You don't win popularity by doing that.

Mr Harris went on to say that the letter should be answered and it should be clear that the Parish Council does not appreciate being taken for fools, it is not correct what was said. The Parish Council have had a good discussion and these points have come through and we do think a meeting will be appropriate in due course when people can attend in proper time. You need to address these issues because at the moment you are just blathering. The other thing he thought we should ask what is the ownership of the land, who owns it? Those points are what Mr Harris proposed with one caveat, we need to understand that we will have to have more housing in this village but what he thought the Parish Council needs to do is to actually have a public consultation about where the village feels most comfortable with housing going so it is not just purely by chance. Villages are allowed to prepared their own Local Plans, we might even consider whether we should spend some of our money doing that but we should certainly listen to the people as Mr Read has just said, we have not done enough of that.

Mr Harris proposed that we do the second thing and he thought and he was going to propose it before we need to talk directly to the planners in NNDC. We have the Mushroom site, we are getting nowhere on that one and we are not clear what the position is, we need to talk directly. If it is Steve Blatch then that's who we need to talk to, Mr Harris was sure that at some stage he would be able to fit a little bit of time for us or he ought to be able to because we need to address, the last time Mrs Grove-Jones came to one of these meetings she said you are going to have to have a lot of houses, what a lot means we need to understand and they need to understand the constraints that we have which is self-evident that no one understands the water constraints it came out on the Sands site.

To propose we cannot allow this letter not to go back unrefuted, we need to say it is not correct, we then indicate that we would want a public meeting but then they should be prepared to answer these specific questions, they need to do that and thirdly have you bought the site, who owns the site? Those would be Mr Harris's suggestions and proposals. Mr Harris said he would like to talk a bit more about the public consultation that he believed his colleagues on the planning sub-committee think are a very good idea and we should get on with as soon as the village hall is open.

Dr Bacon asked what Councillors thought should be done in terms of Flagship meeting parishioners, are we saying that they come to a Parish Council meeting or are we saying that they should arrange a public meeting? This is what the Parish Councillors need to decide. Everyone agrees that the comment about a positive response should be refuted.

Mr Harris stated that he personally would have a meeting of the Parish Council, an open house meeting because as we have heard a lot of interesting views some of which he agrees with and some of which he does not. Unfortunately you are not going to win on the bats issue. The Parish Council ought to try and encourage as much public consultation as we can because that is the only way you will get out of this, so Mr Harris stated that he would take up the proposal which says have a parish meeting with the relevant people advised in advance of what is coming and Flagship told, actually what we want to hear about is not pretty pictures of a few bungalows, we want to know what about the access and the water issue. You have got to handle these issues one by one because they are not doing that at the moment, otherwise we will end up like the Sands site on where you come through and get planning subject to all of these things which makes no sense either and wastes everybody's time. These issues need to be addressed now.

Dr Bacon stated that he was still not getting a clear message from Parish Councillors, are we asking Flagship to attend a Parish Council meeting or are we asking Flagship to arrange a public meeting.

Mr Filgate said that we had heard Mr Harris say something about a Parish Council meeting, Mr Filgate's concern was, and we have heard quite eloquently from some the people who live in Lea Road, that not everybody has access to the technology or can work it so to have as wide a consultation as possible we need to think how we are going to do that and in a sense it would be unfair if Catfield had to fund all the consultation on its own. We need to say something to Flagship about if they want to consult, they have asked us, this is what we would like you to do.

Dr Bacon replied are we asking them to attend a Parish Council meeting or are we asking them to call a public meeting?

Mr Hill said that Flagship should call a public meeting, the Parish Council meetings take long enough as it is and this topic deserves a meeting of its own that allows the time for the people who want to question Flagship and listen to what they have got to say to be able to do that.

Ms Johnson replied and not have a three minute limit, they need freedom of speech to do that.

Dr Bacon replied that he believed earlier it was made clear by several people that if they call a meeting it should be an evening meeting not a daytime meeting.

Mr Snelling asked if the Parish could go there as well to get some information, we are all in it together.

Dr Bacon stated that the idea that Flagship should call a meeting preferably in the village hall rather than Zoom and at that meeting all parishioners can come along, including parish councillors and listen to what they have got to say and ask them questions.

Ms Johnson stated that we should be careful where it is held because of the fact that it will not be possible to have many people in the village hall and not to be contravening the regulations. Do we still have party tents that belong to the village that perhaps could be put up outside so there could be a covered area which might give more space. Dr Bacon replied that the onus is on Flagship to solve the problem if we are saying they need to call a public or a parish meeting to discuss this, it is up to them

to sort out the logistics of it. Ms Johnson stated that there is nothing to stop us providing the equipment if we know we have got it. Dr Bacon did not know of any equipment that we have got. Ms Johnson said there are tents that are used. Mrs Gardiner has them.

Mrs Gardiner stated that she has one marquee but in fact if you think of social distancing it would only be able to sit about ten people, the village hall wants it open as they will also be having to conform to social distancing two metre rule so unless you are with your partner you will be separated and it looks as if at the moment it will be about twenty-four people spaced out because they are looking at re-opening but the rules are very strict.

Dr Bacon believed that Flagship are in a hurry to get this going and therefore the Parish Council needs to be careful that they don't use the excuse that we could not have a zoom meeting, we could not get everybody in the village hall that they tried to avoid a meeting so we need to keep the pressure on there.

Mr Harris stated that there are larger venues which we could get to get over that point, Dr Bacon stated that if the onus is them to. Mr Harris went on to say that he thought the Parish Council wants to involve the Lea Road residents and the whole village but also want to have a hand in how this is structured because so far all they have done is tick box exercise. Mr Harris thought that a proposal is needed from Flagship which the Parish Council would be in attendance and it would be a public meeting involving everybody with minutes, lots of detail and we should, tell them it is not correct they have a largely positive thing, the concerns are these; 1,2,3,4 and they will expect answers to those and we will be in attendance listening to what is said and we will then form a view of our own as a Parish Council. If the District Council decides to override us that is always what they can do but there is a consequence for that in the end because as he said before we need to, as the Council, begin to take a more proactive line on deciding or trying to influence where the extra housing, which we recognise we must have, goes in our village and under what conditions. Mr Harris stated the number one issue on this thing, although the water is less understood, is the access. The access is clearly as Cllr Price said a major problem.

Dr Bacon replied that we do not need to go into the details again now but what we need is that we are going to tell Flagship we don't agree with the sentence, we expect them to organise a parish meeting, they do the logistics, they chair the meeting. We can give them some suggested questions that parishioners want answers to at that meeting but it their meeting, it is up to them to sort it out.

Mr Harris suggested that we have an independent chairman some like Cllr Price, very happy to have Cllr Price. He thought Cllr Price would be a very good chairman and Mr Harris recommended that. That is the only way they are going to get any form of credibility because they have done a Meghan Markle on us here, this "my truths". That causes great loss of credibility so he repeated we need to refute the letter and put down why we refute it, you have not addressed those issues, we do think a meeting involving all of the people should be there, chaired by Cllr Price, if Cllr Price would be prepared to do that Mr Harris thought it would be a tremendous thing or the local MP or Sir Richard Dannatt who is the boss of flooding in Norfolk, he is the number one guy. Cllr Price replied that he was sure Mr Baker would be happy to consider that.

Dr Bacon stated that from a point of view of fairness he would like to mention that after May 6<sup>th</sup> Cllr Price may or may not be the County Councillor. Cllr Price replied that Mr Baker would still be the MP and he was sure he would chair.

Mr Edwards stated that he did not understand, it seems as if the Parish Council is handing control of this event to Flagship, in the position they are in he would be wanting to maintain control. Mr Edwards

stated that he would be saying to Flagship firstly pointing out the items that Mr Harris has referred to; the inaccuracy of the letter but also saying something on the lines of “we will be holding a village meeting for Parish Councillors, parishioners, residents, all those involved, it will be chaired by, at which point you will have already who it will be and we will decide the venue and we will decide when it is going to be subject to COVID restrictions”. Point out to them that we are not prepared to have a meeting while it is still Zoom it excludes too many people, we are not prepared to have a meeting where we are restricted on numbers because of social distancing. We have to choose a venue that gets as many people in as possible but you must maintain control because if you give control to them they will have you laying on backs while they tickle your tummy. Mr Edwards did not understand why control was being passed to them.

Cllr Price that it must be at Flagship’s expense. Mr Edwards replied they should be told that.

Mr Harris stated that Mr Edwards had convinced him, it was a very good proposal, Mr Harris would propose that and he thought the Parish Council should vote on that.

Dr Bacon clarified asking if the Parish Council should organise and call the meeting.

Mr Edwards stated that the village should call the meeting, it could be a committee that Mr Snelling and his buddies could start forming very soon. Someone will be at the top of this saying there will be a meeting and you as Flagship are strongly advised to send your best people down, there are going to be some searching questions and we want some valid answers. We don’t want to be given any waffle and let them know that there is some fire in your belly, let them know this is not going to be easy. They might end up thinking this is just not worth we will go and build some houses somewhere else.

Mr Harris asked who owns the land?

Dr Bacon replied that strictly speaking that is not a planning issue.

Mr Read stated that it was a question we want to ask.

Ms Johnson asked if we would be able to hold this at the Sutton Hotel in the large wedding room? It would give more space with the doors open for people who want to be outside listening.

Dr Bacon asked for a decision.

Mr Harris stated that he would propose what Mr Edwards said. The village would call a meeting, Dr Bacon asked who is the village? Ms Johnson replied the residents, Lea Road anyone who wants to. Dr Bacon stated that clarity is needed is Ms Johnson saying that the residents of Lea Road. Mr Edwards stated that the Parish Council could be the organisers the facilitators but it is not a Parish Council meeting. Ms Johnson stated that it must be a Parish Council meeting. Mr Edwards stated that it would be a good idea if the Parish Council were the people calling it.

Mr Harris said that as the chairman ensures impartiality but then they pay which gets over that and he would say that you must understand when you write the letter the reason we are doing this is because you don’t seem to have taken onboard that there are these issues, you have not responded therefore we propose 1. That there is a meeting called on the terms that Mr Edwards said, we organise it under an independent chairman or our nomination and that we will be in attendance but it will be for the whole village and we would hope that we expect them to pay. If they say no then they have turned done consultation and then they have to take the consequences or we will have to take the consequences. That is the proposal.

Mr Harris stated that the Parish Council should call and organise the meeting, that is what Mr Edwards said. Dr Bacon clarified 'we' being the Parish Council? Mr Read said yes the Parish Council. Ms Johnson said the residents supported by the Parish Council. Dr Bacon stated that Ms Johnson is now saying something different. Mr Harris stated that it should be the Parish Council, they are the village, they represent the village they are just trying to listen to Mr Snelling and his friends. Dr Bacon replied that he was not disagreeing with that, just that some clarity is needed. Mr Harris said that was his proposal.

Dr Bacon stated that Mr Harris was proposing that the Parish Council calls a meeting, arranges the venue etc, invites Flagship, of course the public and Mr Harris was saying that Cllr Price would chair the meeting. Mr Harris said we would nominate an independent chairman. Cllr Price said he would sound Duncan Baker MP on that.

Dr Bacon asked for a vote, on Mr Harris's proposal, is the Parish Council agreed this is what they should do? Mr Harris stated that we need to say that we don't agree with the letter. There were seven in favour and one abstention. Mr Harris stated that he was happy to draft a letter for agreement. If people think they can improve it he would be happy for people to say, as they have before, he is not necessarily right, he is happy to have it changed but then there can be a majority agreement of the letter shortly after the meeting otherwise it will wait until the next meeting which is what Mr Beckley always wanted.

**Action Point: Mr Harris to draft a letter and send to the clerk.**

**Village Hall:** Mrs Gardiner reported that the committee would be holding a meeting the following week, they had sent letters to the groups that use the hall to see who would be returning. There would be strict rules and they would have to change things. It looks like there would be very few returning, and it seems that September would be the earliest.

**Planning:** Mr Harris stated that at the previous meeting he discussed the Sands site, he has been unable to view the plans on the NNDC website, but Mr Jordan said they had been passed on 10<sup>th</sup> February. Mr Harris looked again but was still unable to view the plans, NNDC said they have a problem with their website, a number of people cannot get in. Mr Harris thought that the Parish Council should comment, it is a pity that the two District Councillors are not present because that clearly is a problem. Mr Harris got a link and it was interesting what came out of that link because following the conversations the Parish Council had on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, which ended up in the Code of Conduct complaint, they did quite a lot of work in NNDC including there is a detail habitats assessment regulation assessment report and an ecological report and it made clear that there is a real issue with water pollution, very substantial and although they agreed on the 10<sup>th</sup> February they made certain very strenuous conditions.

Dr Bacon made clear to everybody, this is the site across the A149 where there has been lots of earth moving going on in recent months, strictly speaking in Hickling parish but very close to Catfield. It is the industrial site.

Mr Harris stated that they made very clear the points he made last time, the fact that it is in Hickling makes no relevance to the water and where it goes because it had a very good map showing the three SSSIs which are influenced by this in the habitats assessment report. Mr Harris has drafted a letter which he read out, he proposed that the Parish Council send the letter to NNDC he had hoped that the District Councillors would be at the meeting so they could see that but that is a condition that has been put and what Mr Harris was suggesting is that the Parish Council should see that long-term managing monitoring and maintenance plan because it is such an important issue. Mr Harris reminded Councillors that it was these questions that he was posing in December and got no answer to other

than from Mr Beckley who said this would confuse NNDC, Mr Harris suggested that this letter now needs to be sent.

Mr Harris stated that this arose from something that came up at the last meeting and has been going on for several meetings. It relates to a previous planning which was first brought forward in November, so that is why it is a matter arising. Mr Harris went on to say the fact that just about the understanding, Mr Beckley's point that this would confuse NNDC is really something that the Parish Council need to focus on. Whenever you have any planning issue or housing issue in the village it important that we understand, which is highlighted in the habitats report that was prepared subsequently for this planning, that there are water implications, it is also, as Mr Harris pointed out before, in the actual planning specification for the village and therefore it is something that the Parish Council need to come to terms with which he as afraid what happened before when he asked those questions and there were no answers or they were considered to be confusing would suggest that this was not something that we should settle with. This is why he raised the point because his specific point is he would propose that the Parish Council should send as a Parish Council the letter which he read out.

Mr Hill stated that ground water was discussed when run off water was discussed. The Parish Council was assured in the application that the run off water was going to be treated and that would possibly contain contaminants where they might be working on the spraying machines. Mr Hill understood that rain water is the water that falls on the area of the site that does not then drain into run off water, for example if they had an area of lawn outside the office door that would be ground water. Mr Hill stated that there would be no contaminant on that ground to then contaminate the ground water, the water off the surrounding fields is more likely to be contaminated than the ground water of a site where the run off water and the roof water is treated differently to the ground water which is what he understood to be the case with this application.

Mr Harris replied that it is also talks about pollution, they made a condition for the surface water as well, the Parish Council should see the full conditions for water pollution; ground and surface. He read about the piece about particularly the ground water and of course he read that out because of the comments made before. It also includes they need to present a plan how the surface water will be controlled as well. He read out verbatim the letter.

Mr Hill stated that they presented a plan for the run off water but the issue was brought up over the ground water, he pointed out that the parish Council has never been questioned about ground water in any application before and he could not see where the ground water can be contaminated, he could see where the run off water can be contaminated but he failed to see where there can be any contaminant in what is termed the ground water and he did say at the time there was a difference between ground water and run off water and he thought there were two very different issues to consider. Mr Hill agreed that the run off water should be treated correctly but he failed to see where the ground water could have any contaminant.

Mr Harris stated that he quoted "there should be no commencement of the development hereby permitted until a long-term monitoring and maintenance plan is submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority" and it says to prevent the pollution of the water environment particularly ground water. Mr Harris stated that this is in the planning conditions. It also goes in the conditions to say we want to see that surface water is also controlled before permission is given but the point Mr Harris was making is particularly ground water which is an issue in Catfield. Water as an overall is one of the two main issues in any planning in Catfield. We need to say or understand those issues maybe as a Council we ought to get in someone to talk to us about it because at the moment the idea that it is just confusing NNDC is not what has come out of this planning, that is why he had

raised it, they have made a condition because of the particular concern that they have a long-term monitoring and maintenance plan. Mr Harris said that what he was recommending was one thing that the Parish Council sees that plan because it is our village and he thought it was a very reasonable request and he would propose that the Parish Council agreed to ask for that.

Dr Bacon stated that Mr Harris has proposed something basically that the Parish Council is asking NNDC with the wording that Mr Harris read out to see the details involved, he asked for seconder. Mr Read seconded this with all in favour.

**Action Point: Mr Harris to send the letter to the clerk to send on to NNDC.**

Prior Notification Application for “Wood Street Farm” to erect a steel framed portal building for the storage of manure. Mr Jordan had previously declared an interest in this matter. The application had been circulated. Dr Bacon stated that the nearest neighbour had no problem with it. There had been no adverse comments received from Councillors. Dr Bacon explained that the application was to extend the length of a large barn type building to cover a muck heap in line with Government recommendations to stop rain water percolating through it. Mr Read stated that the building is very large building just to cover muck, he asked how many horses does the place have there are and is it a full livery or DIY livery? Mr Jordan replied that there are twenty-one horses and it is a mixture. Mr Read stated that 9.2 x 8.5 seems rather a large building just for that. How often do they expect the building to be emptied onto a field? How long is it going to be left there? Mr Jordan replied that it is emptied normally every couple of months, six weeks. Mr Read replied that it seemed rather large for that short time for the amount of horses, it seems excessive. Dr Bacon asked if Mr Read was objecting to the application. Mr Read replied that he was querying it as to how many horses and whether that was full livery or DIY and also the siting of it as opposed to smell.

Mr Read stated that he had been looking back in some old paperwork and this was objected in 2010 in the Catfield News, by a neighbour and the Parish Council acted on behalf of people who objected to it. Dr Bacon asked if they objected to covering it? Mr Read read the article “application for the conversion of a hay barn to stables and erection of replacement hay barn. Dr Bacon explained that the application had been made to expand the livery business, this would mean more traffic in the area and more muck being produced. He had spoken to the neighbours who were concerned regarding the possible siting of the muck heap which would smell and bring in flies. The neighbour was also concerned that new part of the building would come out towards his property and would block an open view. It was agreed to object to the application as it stood but suggest the new hay barn should be to the south end as this would be more acceptable and out of site from Wood Street, behind the existing farm buildings and stables.” This was dated 2010.

Dr Bacon replied that the previous muck heap was in front of the buildings up against the road and got moved to that particular site. The neighbour concerned is no longer there, the current neighbour does not have a problem with it.

Mr Harris stated that he believed that since the stables have been set up that the Nitrate Vulnerable Zone now includes the stables, may be that is why the applicant is putting this forward. The applicant is also the guy who said that the major risk to Barton Broad pollution was cattle droppings, clearly there is an issue. Mr Harris stated that he was not saying no to the application but thought a letter should be sent to NNDC reminding them that it is in the Nitrate Vulnerable Zone and that has certain regulations about pollution from manure and run offs. The regulations are very strict on these things.

Dr Bacon replied that he thought this was the purpose of the application and that is why it is happening, the Government wants to reduce the nitrate risk and they are getting people to put covers over muck. Mr Harris went on to say remember Mr Beckley’s comments that these things confuse

NNDC, we should just point out to NNDC that this is a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone and therefore we presume they are looking at the regulations for that. Dr Bacon stated that the Parish Council could reply saying they have no objection to the cover over the muck but they would draw the Council's attention to the Nitrate Vulnerable Zone. Mr Harris stated that with regard to Mr Read's point perhaps if they could put it behind the thing rather than going towards the neighbouring property. Could consideration be given to that? Mr Harris suggested could consideration be given to that and secondly, we note that it is in the Nitrate Vulnerable Zone because that has changed. Nitrate Vulnerable Zones changed quite recently. He presumed they were looking at the pollution because potential pollution. The applicant was very precise about what was causing problem in Barton Broad.

Mr Hill stated that the Parish Council should not suggest they locate it in a different place without knowing more about it, in answer to Mr Read's point obviously they have calculated how large an area they need to store the muck, the longer they will be before they can then spread the muck on the land therefore the more muck they will need to store, the more essential the building will become. There are closed periods for spreading muck, that will all have been calculated and taken into account and the important thing is that they have adequate covered area to serve the purpose of this whole application.

Mr Harris replied that one should not assume those things he would suggest that experience on Sands does not necessarily mean they have been done. He is not against the application, but he said it should go through those steps and the previous neighbour did make the point apparently ten years ago.

It was agreed that the Parish Council were not objecting to the proposal but make two points one is about the Nitrate Vulnerable Zone and the other is that consideration could be given to siting it at the other end of the building

**Action Point: Clerk to write to NNDC.**

Planning Application PF/21/0829 Conversion of former piggery building to five bedroom holiday accommodation at Spinney View, New Road. There were no objections to this application. Mr Harris remarked that it would bring tourism to the area.

**Action Point: Clerk to respond.**

**Industrial Estate:** Mr Harris stated that the Council should try and get a meeting with Mr Blatch, he made two proposals. Mr Harris wrote about a month ago because the Council does not seem to be getting very far and it is confusing where we are on the Mushroom Site. A resolution had been passed that we want to take that forward. Mr Harris proposed that we should try and get a meeting with Mr Blatch to find out where he is on planning issues for Catfield and secondly, we should have a consultation with the village as soon as we can to say what are their views so we can develop our own understanding of where the parishioners think the best place for development is. The sub-committee has discussed this and they have had some interesting conversations with some interesting ideas. Mr Harris thought we ought to listen to the village to see what they think and see if the Council can take it forward. Mr Harris stated that it was a pity Mrs Grove-Jones was not at the meeting, secondly that the Parish Council should agree they are going to have a consultation with the village and if necessary spend a little bit of the two year's Precept on it, was there is £23,000 or so in the bank.

Dr Bacon stated that Mr Harris was stressing the significance of Mr Blatch, he used to be the Economic Development Officer, he is now the Chief Executive. Dr Bacon thought that he might not want to get involved in something like this now. Dr Bacon asked if Mr Harris wanted to press for Mr Blatch or would he like the replacement Rob Young. Mr Harris said that they want both, but he had heard that Mr Blatch is the key person because he understands Catfield. When the letter from a constituent was

received who said that the track in from the A149 is a disaster, Mr Blatch was involved in that as he understood. Mr Blatch's name came up when Mr Monk was discussed last meeting. If Mr Blatch is the chief man then we ought to see him because this is a serious issue from Catfield, we want to take an holistic approach, we understand it is our duty to take extra housing but we would like to get a buy in from the village rather than have "this is what you are going to do".

Dr Bacon stated that the Council can try to get Mr Blatch but he thought they might have to settle for Rob Young because the Chief Executive might decide this is no longer for him to deal with so he was asking if Mr Harris was insisting on Mr Blatch or would he ask for Mr Blatch but accept Rob Young.

Mr Harris replied that it should be discussed with Mrs Grove-Jones because she is our representative, there are a number of planning issues like Lea Road, they can bury their head in the sand in Cromer but there is a developing groundswell of unease in Catfield about it and we are one of the service villages, Mrs Grove-Jones had said we are going to have to take a lot of housing. Mr Harris stated that when they saw Mr Ashwell he said the Council needs to talk about this, we agree all that. Mr Harris stated that his understanding is it was Mr Blatch that who warned the Council off on the Mushroom Site, he said do not do anything now. If that is the case then the Parish Council needs to talk to him to find out if that is really his views. The Parish Council needs to take a more proactive line on planning in the village, getting a buy in and trying to get an understanding of what NNDC want. Mr Harris suggested talking to Mrs Grove-Jones, he is happy to talk to her but she has to actually then attend and the Council should then try and say to Mrs Grove-Jones we would really like to see her and Mr Blatch to have a chat, a constructive chat. The Parish Council wants to do its duty by our community by putting housing but with a buy in from our constituents rather than saying this is what is good for you. Mr Harris thought his colleagues on the sub-committee share a similar view.

The clerk asked if Mr Harris would like her to contact Mrs Grove-Jones to ask her to sort out a meeting. Mr Harris asked what Mr Filgate and Ms Johnson thought. Mr Filgate thought it would be a good idea, he took Mr Harris's point that Mr Blatch is the Chief Executive but he knows quite a bit about it, he could certainly take in interest, it is about inviting both to include the economic development and the Chief Executive so that we are getting it from the horse's mouth.

Cllr Price said that when he was Deputy Leader of NNDC Mr Blatch was working very hard and Cllr Price was pushing him for working with Catfield on the Industrial site and Cllr Price spent many hours working with Rob Young on projects and he has a high regard for Mr Young as well. Mr Blatch however has the knowledge and Cllr thought it entirely feasible that Mr Blatch and Mr Youngs are asked to attend a meeting because this has been going for far too long.

It was agreed to ask Mr Blatch and Mr Young to a meeting.

**Recreation Grounds:** Mr Hill reported that the hedge at the football field is in hand.

**All Saints Church:** Dr Bacon reported that the grass cutting is under control with the volunteers and there are lots of wild flowers. Mr Filgate that it is good to see the repairs in the wall are nearly finished. Mrs Gardiner stated that the church is now open for services as from Easter Sunday. There is an advert for a priest in charge. The church giving day will be 23<sup>rd</sup> April, there has been no income for a year.

**Poors Trust:** Dr Bacon stated that previously Mr Beckley had written to say that anyone wanting information from the Poors Trust should write to the secretary, Mrs Wickens. Mr Harris had asked for a map explaining what the different sites were. Dr Bacon stated that he has no problem if anybody wants a map showing which site is which and link it with the incomes. Mr Harris said he was not sure

he had the email but it would be very kind if Mr Beckley could send it again. Mr Harris stated that he was happy to have a chat with Mr Beckley about this.

**Highways:** Dr Bacon reported potholes in Plumsgate Road near Holly Farm. The edges of the road in Fenside are breaking up badly in places. Mr Filgate thanked the clerk for reporting the holes in Limes Road, these had been mended but were now in a bad state again. There are potholes near Elderbush Cottage (Polka Lodge) on the crossroads there are potholes where cars are being parked on the good piece of the road.

**Action Point: Clerk to report these.**

Mr Jordan stated that Highways had done some of the grups with a rotator type of machine, a converted hedge cutter with an auger on it, rather than a digger and it has not done very well in terms of digging the grups out. Mr Jordan asked if they would come back with a digger, as this could lead to some of the water issues on the road. It has chewed away some of the tarmac on the edge of the roads and in some places it has done nothing to the grup it is still as it was when they were dug out a couple of years ago. Dr Bacon asked for a comment to be sent to Highways that some of the recent work done on opening up the grups have not been done adequately, nor done a big enough job on them. Cllr Price asked to be copied in on the email.

Mr Harris stated that there seems to be someone who is paid per metre of grip, there have been some grips put in recently on Lodge Road which were unnecessary and then going into the bank. Mr Harris thought the issue, where the grips go and whether they serve any purpose other than providing farm income is a real one and it needs to be not just that all grips are great because a lot of them are completely unnecessary and destroy the banks, so Mr Harris does not agree with the fact that grips equal goodness. In some cases, and in some cases they don't, they have to be very careful for example in Fenside any grip puts water straight into an SSSI and if it is run off of a bad type it is illegal. It is not just necessarily a good thing so there needs to be discipline made with where the grips go, they have to perform a function rather than just it is something easy for someone to earn money on. Mr Harris stated that he would disagree any general letter saying we are in favour of grips, not so.

Dr Bacon replied that we are not saying that the ones they have done have not been done adequately. Mr Harris stated that some new ones have been done and they are completely unnecessary. He thought the grips issue would be a good thing, and it is not possible because he had dealt with County Council before on this issue, there needs to be an audit where the grips are and are they serving a function. Those grips should be excavated and they should be looked after, the others seem to be an earner for certain people who do them like cutting of the verges, a lot of the verges it is not necessary for them to be cut they could save money by doing that.

**Action Point: Clerk to write Highways grups**

Mr Read reported a parishioner saw him the other day mentioning that at the junction of the old Potter Heigham Road, Ludham Road, near the crossing point, visibility is blocked by a heap of brambles. Mr Read was told that there was apparent and child going to the school, a car came from the old Potter Heigham road at what was described as very quick, visibility is blocked by the heap of brambles. They could not see anything and stepped out onto the road and nearly got knocked over. There is a danger to pedestrians and to cars. A couple of years ago these were cleared but have grown back. Mr Filgate endorsed these points. Mrs Wickens stated that she had also received the same complaint.

Cllr Price offered to report this to Highways. **Action point Cllr Price.**

**Footpaths, Sandholes & Staithes:** Dr Bacon reported that there is a lot of water in the Sandholes.

**Schools:** Ms Johnson reported that the children are on holiday and will return on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April.

**Any Other Business:** Ms Johnson asked if she could give a mention to the people in the village who over the last year have worked to ensure that parishioners that have been shielding have managed to get prescriptions and food. Mrs Wickens agreed. Ms Johnson thought it was a lady who lives in Back Lane who was coordinating this and the Crown helped, it is commendable the way they have done this for over a year.

Mr Read commented that someone was talking to him about some wording which was in the parish magazine, he wondered who authorised it to go into the magazine. It was concerning the elections coming up, it says "the Parish Council could have co-opted two people to fill these posts but as ten parish electors have requested a ballot for each of these posts then one must now be held at considerable cost to the parish". The person who told Mr Read said that just remember as council tax payers are putting their money into the parish, he said if the parish people want an election, they are entitled to one. He was not impressed by the wording used in the magazine, more or less blaming the people of the parish because they requested an election, that it was going to be a considerable cost because there are a lot of people in the village have got no trust of the Parish Council co-opting people on. He said the people of the village want their own say in it and he asked Mr Read to remind people as a council tax payer his money was going into it and that parishioners deserve to have a say and not be pressurised to make it look like they have made a mistake in asking for a ballot.

Dr Bacon replied that this was not part of what the clerk had put in the magazine. The clerk replied that she had put in that there was going to be an election but she did not write that. Mr Filgate stated that he noticed the wording as well and thanked Mr Read for bringing this up. Mr Filgate stated that he had calculated that 11% of the total expenditure would be on spent on election costs. In comparison, 2% would be spent on dog bins. The democracy of having polling cards all help particularly at this time when leafleting is not possible.

Dr Bacon reiterated that as far as the issue that Mr Read has raised it was not part of the message that the clerk put in so Mr Read and whoever spoke to him their issue is with the magazine not with the Parish Council. Mr Read will take this matter up with the magazine. Mr Read went on to say that if they do not put in what the Council request or you give them in writing they make up their own mind what they put in, perhaps it is better if the Parish Council does not bother the magazine at all with Council issues if they can't get them right. The clerk stated that she was just making everybody aware that there was going to be an election which is what she was asked to do and that is what she did. Mr read stated that he had no query with that, but it was the way that they put it in afterwards, the way it is worded and the person said to him that he pays his council tax and they are making him out as though he is something he is not, he has the right to request it.

Dr Bacon stated that he was not disagreeing with Mr Read, what he was saying is that is not part of the message that the clerk put in the magazine therefore Mr Read needs to speak to the magazine editor about that particular wording not to the clerk, she put in her particular part which is separate.

Mr Edwards stated the issue raised is very simple, the Chairman took him to task earlier with his comment about unelected councillors, he did not mean to cause offence. Mr Read was put forward for co-option but was not voted in as a Councillor. However, when he went to the parish and an election was held Mr Read was voted in by an overwhelming majority which shows that the village's choice of councillor and those that sometimes councillors might like to co-opt on are two entirely different animals. Mr Read thanked Mr Edwards for his comments.

Mr Hill asked how much an election would cost, the clerk replied that last it was £1500 but you have to add in the polling cards this time which are about £300 - £600. This had been budgeted for in November. Mr Hill stated that we have a Precept of £12,000 so in that context what the person said the election is expensive, he is not saying it's right and he is not saying it is wrong, he is saying it is expensive and in the context of the Precept it is expensive, it is a fair comment. Mr Filgate replied that considerable cost is not a good choice of word, considerable is a bit judgemental.

Dr Bacon stated that the issue we are discussing is something that the parish magazine people have done and as Mr Read said he will take it up with them.

**Date of Next Meeting:** The date of the next meeting had been set for Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May, the Annual Parish Meeting will commence at 6.30pm and the Annual Parish Council meeting will follow. The election is the following day.

Mr Edwards asked if it is possible to hold Zoom meetings after 7<sup>th</sup> May and what are the plans for the future, will it mean there could be no meetings at all. Dr Bacon replied that there are rules about what you can and can't do and they are very difficult to comply with. Some of this is explained in the clerk's report to Parish Councillors. After 7<sup>th</sup> May it is not possible to hold Zoom meetings but there are severe restrictions on how you have a live meeting. Many Parish Councils are cancelling their June meeting, they are having an Annual Parish Meeting in May as they have to have, cancelling their June meeting in the hope that by July that things will be changed again to enable to hold Parish Council meetings. It may be what we have to decide at the May meeting whether or not we have a June meeting.

Ms Johnson stated there is nothing to stop us having the Zoom facility for parishioners to join the meeting and suggested that the installation of wifi should be looked at again. Dr Bacon replied that if the Parish Council has a live meeting and parishioners can witness it by Zoom he thought that could be done assuming there are the facilities to do it. Mr Harris stated that long-term there should be a live meetings in the village hall but for people who can't attend there should be a facility for Zoom.

The clerk suggested that if it was decided not to have a Parish Council meeting in June this would be a good time for a training session.

The meeting closed at 21.49

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Chairman

.....  
Date