

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD at 7pm on**  
**WEDNESDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2022 IN THE VILLAGE HALL**

**Attendance:** Mr Read in the Chair, Mr Harris, Mr Edwards, Dr Harris, Ms Johnson, Mr Hill, Dr Bacon, Mr Jordan, Mrs Briscoe, Mrs Jeffreys, Cllr Taylor (District Councillor), Cllr Grove-Jones (District Councillor), Cllr Price (County Councillor), Mrs Cunningham (Clerk) and thirteen members of the public.

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

Meeting started: 19.03

**1. Apologies and approval of absences**

Apologies received and accepted from Mr Filgate and Cllr Taylor.

**2. Declarations of interests**

Dr Bacon, Mr Jordan, Dr Harris declared an interest in the Poors Trust.

Mr Harris declared an interest in the Fen, but said he has no pecuniary interest.

**3. Co-option of 2 new parish councillors**

Clerk read out the rules of co-option. All councillors understood but Mr Edwards proposed a secret ballot in place of a show of hands. Ms Johnson and Mr Jordan seconded. 4 voted for proposal, none against and 3 abstained. A secret ballot was agreed by the majority.

Following on from the voting, Mrs Briscoe and Mrs Jeffreys were both co-opted. They signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting.

**4. To approve as accurate minutes of the previous meeting.**

Dr Bacon said 7.3 should say 'accounts book', instead of a 'counts' book. Mr Edwards said Fenn should be spelt with one 'n'. Cllr Price said he did send apologies, however none were received by email. Mr Harris proposed the minutes should be accepted. Chairman signed.

**5. Public participation session (10 minutes)**

**5.1 Public**

- a) A parishioner asked who owns the Sandholes. Dr Bacon advised ownership was transferred to the Parish Council about 20 years ago.
- b) A parishioner said that the footpath on the Fen side to Wood Street had crops growing across it and photographs were provided. Mr Read agreed that there was either sugar beet or maize and no sign of a footpath. Mr Harris proposed the PC write to the farm owner asking him to clear and reinstate the paths and include the photographs. All in agreement. **Action: Clerk to write to landowner.**
- c) With regards to the footpaths above, Mr Read queried the lack of fingerposts. Dr Bacon said there was signage, but twigs were covering it. Cllr Price said he would request an inspection as there is some concern regarding the signage. Mr Harris proposed the NCC look at the signage. Dr Harris seconded. All in agreement. **Action: Cllr Price to check signage with NCC**
- d) A parishioner said they were concerned about the speed of vehicles, especially around the blind bends. The Chairman asked Cllr Price for his input. Cllr Price said County look statistically at the number of accidents and the Norfolk road safety policy was last updated in 2014, which he has asked to be updated. Cllr Price said the estimated cost to change a speed limit is between £4-£10k. He said he will be speaking about road safety in item 5.3. Mr Harris referred to the questionnaire and said the village is concerned about the traffic

and proposed Road Safety is added to the agenda so there is a specific item for discussion.

**Action: Clerk to add to future agenda**

- e) A parishioner asked if we could have 'Highways' added on agenda. He added a few months ago parishioners complained about the condition of the roads (from the Main Road coming into New Road) and the potholes. Another parishioner said there is a large pothole in Hall Road and another badly repaired, in School Road. Cllr Price suggested to have Highways and Footpaths as a heading. **Action: Clerk to add to future agenda**

## 5.2 Cllr Grove-Jones

- Nothing specific re Catfield this month. She said that Wayford Bridge is being closed on 3<sup>rd</sup> October for 3-4 weeks for waterproofing works. One side only will remain open for pedestrians and cyclists. There will be a diversion from Hoveton via Ludham. A parishioner asked why the works were cancelled when originally planned during lockdown and Cllr Grove-Jones confirmed it was cancelled due to Covid19 lockdown.
- In connection to the earlier discussion, she said in Sutton they proposed a 30mph limit but was advised this was not possible as there were not enough houses on the road, so not enough pedestrians.
- Nothing more said about nutrient neutrality and hopefully there would be some litigation proposals put forward by the end of August, but some problems will be carried forward into the new year. All large developers are 'holding fire'.
- Mr Read said two people in the village had a day in Cromer and were horrified at the amount of rats on the paths at top of the cliff's car park down to the town. Cllr Grove-Jones said she will mention it.
- A parishioner asked who is replacing Cllr John Toye. Cllr Grove-Jones confirmed it would be Cllr Andrew Brown.

## 5.3 Cllr Price

- Cllr Price confirmed anyone can report a pothole on the County Council website. Go onto the map, report it and get a reference number. If it is worrying, take a note of the ref number and email Cllr Price to follow up.
- Speeding in rural villages is a priority. Catfield has a SAM2. There are approx. 300 in Norfolk. These cost £3500 each and are Norfolk made by Westcotec. He is campaigning that Catfield and Ludham need a slow speed limit and asking can we have a temporary 30mph speed limit for these villages and will update when he gets a response.
- He had a call from a resident regarding trees in Lime Road and that a lady had to have her lights on 24/7 and another had branches on the roof. He checked and confirmed that the trees are not on highway land but because trees from one tree came across the footpath, they were taking action and on 30<sup>th</sup> June Flagship Victory were given 14 days to cut the branches back to clear the footpath.
- County are tackling the 23/24 budgets early as there is a £16m gap to bridge. They intend to do so without cutting services but by making County Hall more efficient.
- Community Road Safety initiative has £1m fund for Norfolk. In its 2<sup>nd</sup> year, of 4, next year will be for Great Yarmouth, North Norfolk & Broadland. Cllr Price has budget of £11,165 over 13 parishes. Councillors have all been sent the measures that qualify along with cost. Closing date for these measures to Cllr Price is 7<sup>th</sup> October. Approx 2/3 projects per County Councillor will be successful. The measures, received by the Councillors, will be published in August's Catfield magazine.

5.4 **Cllr Taylor** – Apologies received. Absent from meeting.

## 6. Matters Arising

Report on outstanding actions from the previous meeting

Re 7.2 – Area levelled off by Mr Hill. He will top before next meeting.

Re 7.4 – Ms Johnson confirmed new Beat Manager, Matthew Pritty, starts 7<sup>th</sup> July and he will organise a meeting shortly afterwards.

Re 10.3 – Mr Read removed.

Re 11.0 – Mr Harris confirmed Jonathan Cheetham revised the quote and as the majority approved, he was instructed to proceed.

## 7. Planning

### 7.1 **Planning application BA/2022/0184/FUL - Snipe Marsh.** Response from BA re PC letter.

All Councillors confirmed they saw the response from BA. Mr Harris issued 2 draft letters to all councillors. On approval, one to be sent to the BA, to confirm the PC want to be consulted on these issues and the 2<sup>nd</sup> to NNDC asking them to consult with Cheryl Peel (Senior Planning Officer at BA) when they have issues like Lea Road and Sutton. Mr Harris proposed these 2 letters are sent to BA & NNDC, once approved. Mr Edwards seconded. **Action: Clerk to send both letters once majority approved.**

### 7.2 **PPF/21/1749 – Land south of Lea Road**

3 documents put on the website by Flagship and Mr Harris wrote assessment which was distributed to all Councillors prior to the meeting. Mr Harris was disappointed that the issues, their own internal ecologist raised, were not addressed. Addressing Cllr Grove-Jones, Mr Edwards asked at what point does the Council draw a line under the applications to say no more changes are allowed. Cllr Grove-Jones agreed that there was a tremendous push for affordable housing and Stalham and the surrounding areas are being used for affordable housing. A parishioner said when the application came through, it had an end date and asked why should Flagship be given more time. Cllr Grove-Jones said she can't give an answer but will report what is being said she will try to find out what's going on. Mr Harris asked if the documents could be sent to her, Cllr Price and Cllr Taylor. **Action: Clerk to send docs to 3 Cllrs.** Mr Harris said sewage and nitrate run off into the rivers is a very real issue that needs to be addressed but said to block everything with no warning is not correct.

Cllr Price advised that previously all District Councillors got a bonus from government for all new properties built in the year. The rules were changed, and a benchmark figure was added and the bonus was only applied to properties above the baseline.

### 7.3 Any other planning matters – none

## 8. Environment

### 8.1 **To discuss Catfield Environmental Group project at the corner of New Road and The Street**

A parishioner gave background from the last PC meeting re the project and thanked the Clerk for her work on this so far. She confirmed Highways have agreed to the placing of the benches on the site with a number of conditions along with certain restrictions/conditions for the shrubs. Dr Bacon said any street furniture, like benches, need clarification who has ownership, liability etc, so it doesn't become an issue in future. The parishioner confirmed the Catfield Environmental Group are taking out liability insurance, which covers malicious damage etc. She also asked re maintenance, although this should be minimal. After planting, the shrubs may need attending to, once or twice a year. Re the benches, if the PC are not able to check, it is something the Group would do. Dr Bacon added if the CEG were to wind-up, it needs the PC take on the responsibilities. The parishioner said as the applications must be made via the PC, the assumption would be that all liabilities are held by the PC. Mr Edwards suggested, once the Group have the final plan, come back with the proposals for the Clerk to circulate before the meeting, for proper agreement. The parishioner said the next step is to go back to Highways to say we want to go ahead for them to investigate what infrastructure is there or to be avoided. **Action: Clerk to liaise with Highways on CEG behalf.**

## 9. Update on Catfield United Charities area of land for possible allotments

Mr Harris left the meeting to attend a previous engagement.

Mr Read referred to previous meeting where a 5-year term may be too long, but an option of 2 years was discussed. A parishioner, who is trustee for CUC, said after a meeting on the site, that the PC would put a proposal to the Poors Trust which he has not yet received. The parishioner said there are 2 other parties interested in the plot so they would like an agreement in principle, in writing, from the PC before their next meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July. He said there is car parking and the infrastructure is there. After a long discussion regarding clearance of the site, Mr Edwards said providing we get the site rent free, the Parish Council should pay to clear the site to get it to a good order and proposed the PC accept a 5 year term, rent free, the PC set aside £1000 to clear the site to get it up to rentable standards to get tenants in asap and the rest of the site would have to be reviewed regularly to see how much is needed for the next section. He hoped the magazine would be able to help get tenants. Ms Johnson asked Cllr Price if there would be any community funding to help with the development costs. He said it would be worth asking Cllr Grove-Jones for help. Mr Hill was concerned that the PC only have a certain amount of money to spend and looking at the playground report, this would cost a lot and how money is spent must be justified. All agreed to propose a 5-year term, rent free, to the Poors Trust. **Action: Clerk to send proposal to Catfield United Charities before 21<sup>st</sup> July.**

## 10. Old Potter Heigham road/Ludlam road visibility problems

Mr Read said, same as last year, where the Old Potter Road branches off to Ludham, its totally overgrown & you can't see from the footpaths. Last year, one parishioner cut it down himself. The council cut the verges, but approx. 100 yards is overgrown and needs cutting down. Cllr Price said he would put a request in tonight.

## 11. Safety inspection report for the Catfield recreation ground

All Councillors seen the report. Report to be sent to 2 new Councillors. There are issues with a lot of the equipment. Mr Read said it was grim reading, but the playground has been there for approx. 30 years and mostly built by volunteers. Mrs Jeffreys asked that during the discussion regarding the recreation ground, that the Village Hall is taken into consideration. Mr Edwards said safety is the most important thing and if items must be removed, so be it, but to replace it, is a much bigger issue as we need to determine where the money comes from and what is happening with the Village Hall. Referring to the report, Mr Read said there are several recommendations, some low risk, some high risk, the joint in the bottom half of the slide and the mound leading up to it is not safe, the fort is rotten, no safety floor under climbing frame, bits missing, sharps bit sticking out. Mr Edwards suggested, now this has been brought to our attention, a few Councillors meet at the park, with the report to review it along with the equipment in detail. Anything dangerous to be dealt with immediately. **Action: Councillors to meet at the Village Hall recreation park to discuss the report/playground equipment in detail.**

## 12. Correspondence

### 12.1 To discuss update regarding Harry Cox

Mr Read visited property twice again, so 4 times in total, and still unable to make contact with the owners of the property. No more PC can do for now.

### 12.2 To discuss email re tree trimming

Cllr Price referred to email earlier. He and Highways would be looking into. **Action: Clerk to respond to parishioner.**

## 13. Update re tree works at the Village Hall

Provided by Mr Harris earlier in the meeting. Work to proceed

#### 14. Progress reports for information

##### 14.1 Village Hall

Mr Read confirmed that the Parish Council had received an invoice and could not remember the PC agreeing to payment. The email was forwarded to Mrs Gardiner, as part of the VH management committee, but no reply. Dr Bacon said Mr Gardiner had previously instructed an architect to draw up plans for the VH. Dr Bacon spoke to Mrs Gardiner, and she said if the PC does not want to pay, that she would arrange payment from the VH funds. Dr Bacon suggested Mrs Gardiner pay from the VH fund and but need to bear in mind, this is the PC building. Mr Read said he would look back through the previous minutes to try and identify if the PC confirmed they would pay. There is no dispute payment should be made. Dr Bacon proposed the PC accept the VH Committee offer to pay the tradesman, the PC check the earlier minutes to check if PC agreed to pay the cost. Mrs Jeffreys seconded. All agreed. Mrs Briscoe said when it was the Jubilee, she had read that a large amount of money was put aside for VH projects and said she would be happy to try and find more information. **Action: Mr Read to check previous minutes. Request Mrs Gardiner arranges payment initially. Mrs Briscoe to investigate re VH project funding.**

##### 14.2 All Saints Church

Dr Bacon said nothing to report this month. Volunteers cutting the grass and keeping it under control.

##### Poor's Trust

Dr Bacon confirmed nothing else to report. Allotments covered previously.

##### 14.3 Any other reports

No other reports.

#### 15. Policies & Procedures

##### 15.1 Storage of documents

Mr Read said he had accumulated a lot of documents at home and asked how long the Clerk should keep minutes before put in official storage. It was suggested an official signed copy for the year is handed to the Chairman for official storage at the Annual Meeting and the Clerk retain a copy at home. Mr Read said it was suggested 5 or 6 years and after that time they can be destroyed as they will be in official storage. Mr Edwards proposed they be held for 10 years. Mr Read confirmed the PC should contact NALC and ask the records office to ask what they suggest, the procedures to pass to them and to get access. Dr Bacon passed the last documents he held for 1937-1987 to Mr Read. **Action: Clerk to confirm details re storage of documents.**

#### 16. Finance

##### 16.1 To approve payments

101288 – Playsafety Ltd £92.40 for Playground inspection

101289 – NALC £207.63 for Annual Subscription

101290 – NALC £36.00 for S Vergette course (Nov21)

101291 – NNDC £692.64 for Emptying of Dog Bins

101292 – Clerks Salary plus £6 expenses

Signatories present. Mr Edwards proposed payments accepted. Mrs Jeffreys seconded. All agreed.

##### 16.2 Update of banking arrangements/signatures

Dr Bacon confirmed he had taken letter into local branch and letter has been passed onto Leicester. Mr Read confirmed bank statements need to be stopped being sent to previous

clerk, but Dr Bacon said if a second letter is sent to Barclays it will complicate things, so we should wait to hear.

**16.3 Discuss alterations and extension works at Catfield Village Hall**

A parishioner asked how this was moving forward and how many years this is going on. Mr Edwards said a public meeting would be the first step. The parishioner said there should be a sub-committee and have other plans ready to show the public to give them all choices. Mr Edwards agreed the patience of the village is expiring on this. Mrs Jeffreys said we need to give everyone a different option, if we had a public meeting, we could have the idea of development, alterations to existing hall or a new VH and the costs involved, and we need to give the village the options. Mr Edwards confirmed it would not be a PC meeting but would be facilitated by the parish council and it would be an open public meeting. Mrs Briscoe doubted development would be allowed and Dr Bacon agreed because of the issue with ground water and surface draining. Mrs Jeffreys said but we should say why we can't do it, basically to educate the village and if grants are available, it may not cost as much as you think. With reference to a new hall, Mr Hill said it would make sense to sell the site for development as you can get a commission for a VH relatively easy and start somewhere else and give the village a lot of things they have requested, that have been unavailable to them but asked is it viable to do it, as you must be realistic. Dr Bacon said having a committee organising from start to a new village hall is a major operation and can cause all problems. Mr Edwards asked the parishioner if that at the next meeting a sub-committee would be formed, and she was happy that this was moving forward.

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

To confirm the date of the next meeting, scheduled for 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2022.

No decisions can be under this item, for information purposes only

In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 the meeting may resolve to exclude the press and public during the following item due to the confidential nature;

**18. Clerks Salary**

Due to time, Mr Edwards put forward a proposition for the sub-committee to meet and resolve.

Meeting finished at 10.53

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_