

CASTLE RISING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an extraordinary Castle Rising Parish Council meeting held in the Cricket Club on Thursday 11th January 2024 commencing at 6pm

Present

Cllr. J. Taylor (Chair)	Cllr D. Webb (Vice-Chair)
Cllr G. Cheney	Cllr C. Curtis
Cllr S. Savage	Cllr C. Smith
Cllr S. Smith (RFO)	

In Attendance

Cllr J. Crofts	Residents (3)
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Apologies

Cllr S. Ring	Ms C. Brook
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Declarations of Interest

None

Minutes of Previous Meetings

Minutes from the previous meetings held on 22nd November and 14th December were approved unanimously and signed by the Chair.

The Parish Council considered rescinding approval of previous minutes of the 6th October (insufficient detail), and 3rd November (factual errors) to enable amendments to be made. Cllrs voted two for the motion but with five abstentions. Cllrs that abstained expressed a view that the Parish Council should draw a line under these events and positively move forward. The Parish Council agreed to seek further advice on the validity of this vote.

Matters Arising

Street lighting continues to be an ongoing issue. K&M Lighting, the contractor responsible for lighting maintenance, is proving difficult to contact and arrange repairs. Cllr Webb will continue to pursue this issue.

Finance

a. Finance Report. The RFO distributed the current balance sheet. The account stands at £597.35 with an additional £431.16 in the CIL fund. The balance is sufficient to pay for the expected lighting bill for the remainder of the financial year. A cheque for £28 was signed for payment of the Council's NALC membership.

b. Precept for FY 24/25. The Chair noted that it appeared that no financial planning was conducted when the previous precept for FY 23/24 was considered in Jan 23, and

the setting of a £0 precept without financial planning resulted in a difficult financial situation for the Parish Council in the current FY. There was full agreement that this should not happen in future and proper financial planning must be undertaken. The Clerk and RFO had prepared and circulated a spreadsheet that considered expected and contingency expenditure together with the repayment of outstanding accounts from FY 23/24. After further careful consideration, it was agreed that a total income of £7,000 would be necessary in FY 24/25 equating to an approximate precept of £62 for a Band D property. This amount is consistent with the average precept for villages in North West Norfolk for the last financial year.

c. CIL Funding Applications. The Borough Council window for additional CIL funding applications is now open, and closes at the end of January. The main CIL application being prepared in conjunction with Norfolk County Council Highways will be for Glasdon village entrance gates to replace the existing wooden gate at the eastern village entrance (in very poor repair), and the existing metal entrance gate at the western village entrance. Glasdon gates are industry standard as seen in almost all neighbouring villages including South Wootton.

Traffic Working Group Update

Cllr Smith provided an update on the recent meeting of the Traffic Working Group. A walk through the village was completed and a number of observations made in preparation for discussion at a forthcoming meeting with NCC Highways that will lead to the basis for the forthcoming Feasibility Study. The CIL funding application for Glasdon gates is the immediate priority for the Working Group.

Governance

a. Overview. The Chair noted that prior to the 3rd November meeting, the Parish Council had no written governance or policy documents. Since that meeting, a Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and an Election and Co-option Policy have been introduced and adopted. Further work in conjunction with the Norfolk Association of Local Councils is ongoing to ensure that the Parish Council meets its legal requirements, providing clear guidance to Cllrs and openness to residents.

b. Communications Policy. A draft communications policy was unanimously adopted with immediate effect.

Open Forum

Dr Blades raised two issues, both of which relate to the ongoing issue of the village's majority wish for a 30mph speed limit. The main points were the erection of the false 30mph signs on the roads leading into Castle Rising prior to the ordinary election in May 2023, creating the impression of a speed limit for Castle Rising, and the previous provision of the current blue entry gates as a substitute for an actual speed limit for the village.

Cllr Crofts gave an update on the agreement with Government known as the County Deal. This agreement brings new powers to elect a Council Leader and funding of £600m over 30 years to invest in areas such as transport, skills and job opportunities,

housing and regeneration, tailored to the needs of local people. However, this funding provision of £20m each year is not currently index linked, and therefore its purchasing power will be reduced each year by annual inflation.

AOB

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7:05pm.

DRAFT