



Castlethorpe Parish Council

Minutes of a Parish Council Annual Meeting held on
Monday 5th June at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall

PRESENT: Councillors Ayles, Forgham, Hinds, Sawbridge, Bradbury, Markham, Merritt, Ward Cllr Wardle, Ward Cllr Andrews, the Clerk and 2 members of the public. Others were viewing through YouTube

The Open session commenced 7.30 pm.

- Cllr Ayles gave an overview of the meetings content
- A resident complimented the newly painted street lights
- The poor state of the road out of the village towards the Navigation was highlighted by a resident but unfortunately it's not bad enough to be fixed at this time
- Bullington End Road is also in a bad state and white lines have been chalked around some of the pot holes for some time but no works carried out despite being mentioned several times in the past year
- A resident has reported that the owners of Gobbey's Field have increased the farmers rent by 300% making it uneconomical for him to rent. Concerns were raised that a planning application could be forthcoming. Cllr Ayles commented that at the moment this would be outside the settlement boundary so not permitted and our neighbourhood plan should be sound as MKCC are on track with their housing targets.
- A resident asked whether the Parish Council could influence the owners of Gobbey's Field to consider using the top part of the field along the railway track to house some form of low energy initiative.

The open session concluded at 7.42

1		TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
	1.1	Cllr Alison Andrew	
2		TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST by Councillors in any of the agenda items below	
	2.1	None noted	
3		TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING	
	3.1	Previous minutes from the Annual and General Meeting of 15 th May proposed by Cllr Bradbury seconded by Cllr Forgham and agreed unanimously	
	3.2	Email sent to Councillors in relation to Part 2 of the previous meeting proposed by Cllr Bradbury seconded by Cllr Forgham and agreed unanimously	
4		TO RECEIVE REPORTS	
	4.1	Clerks Report – See Appendix A1. Matters arising: Item 4 - Cllr Merritt will liaise with Richard Bradley (Community First Responder) to arrange a date for the defibrillator training Item 22 – It was agreed to defer the planting of trees in Gobbey's for now. Clerk to respond back to Historic England to thank them Item 24 – Stonewater Neighbourhood team had told Cllr Bradbury that they were unaware of any ongoing responsibility for maintaining the two communal areas at the end of Paddock Close, despite his having previously received an email from the company saying that they would put the areas on a maintenance schedule. He has sent them the email plus photos of the overgrown areas and has raised concerns about their failure to lay and maintain the grass areas as per their submitted landscape plan and about the culvert that has been blocked for many months	Cllr Merritt
	4.1.1		Clerk
	4.1.2		Cllr Bradbury
	4.1.3		
	4.2	Ward Councillors Report	
	4.2.1	Ward Cllr Andrews reporting that the wheelie bin deliveries have started although the new collections don't start until September. Castlethorpe should begin to receive bins in August	
	4.2.2	Cllr Wardle confirmed his reappointment as Vice Chair of the Budget, Resource and Scrutiny committee and is also on the Audit Committee. Cllr Andrews is on the Public Realm and sub planning Committee	

	4.2.3	If any residents are experiencing issues with admissions at Ousedale school, please contact either of the Ward Cllrs.	
	4.3 4.3.1 4.3.2	Meeting with Highways – see Appendix A2. Matters arising: Cllr Ayles has written but no response as yet and if no satisfactory response received Cllr Ayles may need help from Ward Cllr Andrews to progress A response has been received regarding streetlights saying works should be completed by end of July. Cllr Bradbury asked if any payment requests had been made, no requests yet and Cllr Ayles confirmed that he has asked MKCC for a reduction in their charge due to the issues experienced	Cllr Ayles
	4.4 4.4.1	File Note on Double Yellow lines – see Appendix A3. Matters arising: Cllr Sawbridge will contact Karen Russo for her thoughts and if it's felt residents want to progress, we will put as a resolution on next meeting	Cllr Sawbridge
	4.5	Update on Sustrans cycle path – See Appendix A4. No matters arising	
5		TO CONSIDER PLANNING APPLICATIONS (previously viewed on line by Cllrs)	
	5.1	23/00976 – The Pavilion, Thrupp Close, Castlethorpe – extension to existing Cricket Pavilion to include a mixed-use Cricket Pitch/Pavilion, Local Community Hall and ancillary Parish Office and associated interior improvements – No Objections	
6		TO RECEIVE REPORT BACK ON PREVIOUS PLANNING APPLICATION	
	6.1 6.2 6.3 6.4 6.5 6.6	22/01156/FUL - Erection of Cafe building (Class E(b)) with ancillary shower facilities and cycle stands, in an area of existing an unused hardstanding. Lodge Farm Business Centre Wolverton Road Castlethorpe – Application permitted WNS/2022/1741/EIA Application for full planning permission for the erection of 9 x employment units comprising circa 69,744sqm GIA. of floorspace within Class B2 or B8 Uses, with ancillary class E(g)(i) offices and E(g)(ii) research and development, together with country park, ground re-profiling in the country park, new vehicular access from the A508 and associated site infrastructure, including lorry parking – status pending – currently update not available as issue with website see: https://snc.planning-register.co.uk/Planning/Display/WNS/2022/1741/EIA 23/00565/FUL - The construction of four residential dwellings with associated access and parking The Old Rail Yard South Street Castlethorpe Application refused 3/00960/NMA – 21 Lodge Farm Court, Castlethorpe Non-material amendment to permission ref. 22/02702/HOU seeking changes to north (rear) and west (side) fenestration relating to the two-storey rear extension to existing garage to provide gym and home office above for ancillary use to the main properties. Existing garage conversion at 21 to be converted back to garage – details previously circulated and no objections raised, expiry date now exceeded - Application permitted 23/00881/FUL – Lodge Farm House Wolverton Road Castlethorpe -The erection of new agricultural building (comments to be submitted by 19/5/23) – no update 23/00763/CLUP – 18 Bullington End Road, Castlethorpe Certificate of lawfulness for a proposed loft conversion with rear dormer and front rooflights – details previously circulated and no objections raised expiry date now exceeded – Application permitted	Cllr Wardle
7		TO CONSIDER RESOLUTIONS (documentation to be circulated prior to meeting)	
	7.1 7.2 7.3 7.4	To consider & agree to a public excluded part 2 of the meeting to discuss matters in accordance with Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as defined in paragraphs 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act – proposed by Cllr Ayles, seconded by Cllr Sawbridge and agreed unanimously Update on Clubhouse project - see Appendix A5 - Cllr Ayles announced the result of the Parish Poll on whether the project should go ahead. There were 337 votes in favour (85.7%) and 56 against and the turnout was 47%. He asked if any residents still have concerns regarding the planning application to please contact us. With regards to the preparation of the ITT Cllr Bradbury said that we can 15 mins free consultation from a planning consultant through NALC/BALC. Should any additional consultancy be required Cllr Bradbury will liaise with the Clerk who may use her designated financial powers. Cllr Ayles proposed moving to online banking where two Cllr signatures would continue to be required, seconded by Cllr Sawbridge and agreed unanimously Following the tree survey on Castle Field, it was agreed that: Obtain planning permission for the 4 trees identified as needing pollarding Obtain quotes from an arborist to carry out the required work in November. Contact Historic England to see if we are able to replace the dead tree Forward report to the Church as some of their trees are included Cllr Markham to tidy up the dead branch overhanging North Street Proposed by Cllr Ayles, seconded by Cllr Forgham, agreed unanimously	Cllr Bradbury Clerk Clerk Clerk Clerk Cllr Markham Clerk

	7.5	Cllr Sawbridge recommended the Community Infrastructure Fund could be used for CCTV at the Sports Ground. Clerk to contact Hanslope to see who they used	
	7.6	Cllr Forgham had prepared a reply to CAMRA. Cllr Ayles suspended the meeting for a resident to speak and it was asked if we could include a point asking if CAMRA could put any pressure on MKCC to meet their obligations with regard to keeping listed buildings in a good state of repair - see Appendix A6	
	7.7	It was also felt the last paragraph should be amended to read "as things stand it is very likely that the Parish Council would oppose it". With these changes it was agreed by all that Cllr Forgham send the email Cllr Forgham had produced a communication to be sent to the CEO at Network Rail. Clerk to amend the letter to include reference to the fact that a Customer Relations Manager had replied but nothing further since and send - see Appendix A7	Clerk
8		TO CONSIDER FINANCIAL MATTERS (circulated prior to meeting)	
	8.1	RFO payment schedule – approved by Cllr Ayles seconded by Cllr Merritt and agreed unanimously. Matters arising:	
	8.1.2	Cllr Ayles commended Roe Lane on the Castlethorpe News which looks fantastic	
	8.1.3	Tove Landscaping – it needs to be decided how much we charge back to the sports teams. Cllr Forgham will arrange a sports ground committee meeting when Cllr Ayles and Cllr Bradbury are back from holiday in July	Cllr Forgham
	8.2	Recommendations on Internal Audit noted, good report overall and recommendations will be followed up - see Appendix A8	
	8.3	Cllr Ayles proposed annual report is signed, Cllr Forgham seconded and agreed unanimously – see Appendix A9	
9		CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED (circulated prior to meeting)	
	9.1	A resident has written to ask whether water bowls could be placed around the village for dogs, cats and wildlife to use as the warmer weather approaches – No objections to this but it was felt this should be resident driven and not the responsibility of the Parish Council	
	9.2	A request has been received to consider providing a seat/bench outside the bus stop by the village hall so bus users can sit outside whilst waiting for their bus – it was felt there was a bench in close proximity so not needed	
	9.3	A resident contacted Cllr Hinds about a situation with damp in their council house. The proposed solution by MKCC was unsatisfactory and Ward Cllr Alison Andrews is following up.	
10		ANY OTHER BUSINESS (for noting, or for inclusion on a future agenda)	
	10.1	Cllr Markham reported that a resident had complained to him about the sewage smell on Bullington End Road which is being caused by a cracked Anglian Water pipe that keeps getting blocked. The resident has complained to Anglian Water who are due to attend imminently. Cllr Markham to establish whether Anglian Water are giving sufficient support to the resident and if not to let the Clerk know. In that case the Clerk to write to Anglian Water	Cllr Markham
	10.2	Cllr Markham reported on the driveway that has been taken up on Bullington End Road, Cllr Ayles has forwarded photos to MKCC asking if permission was required and if it was needed was it granted and will follow up	Cllr Ayles
	10.3	Cllr Sawbridge asked whether we had received a response from MKCC about the Carrington Close complaint. The street naming complaint has been submitted which falls under planning so has been forwarded accordingly. The other complaint has yet to be submitted due to time constraints	Cllr Ayles
	10.4	An email had been received from MKCC asking for sites to be considered for waste development. It was agreed that we have none	
11		TO AGREE DATE AND ATTENDANCE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS/EVENTS	
	11.1	Next meeting will be held at 7.30 on Monday 3 rd July in the Village Hall	

PART 2

12		RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST by Councillors in any of the agenda items below	
	12.1	None	
13		TO RECEIVE REPORTS	
	13.1	None	
14		TO CONSIDER RESOLUTIONS (all supporting documentation circulated prior to meeting)	
	14.1	Speed Indicator Devices – quotes had been received but there had not been time to evaluate them fully. Deferred to next month	Clerk
	14.2	A quote had been received from M Lever to repair fencing between Castle field and the church and around the village hall garden – proposed by Cllr Ayles, seconded by Cllr Bradbury, agreed unanimously	Clerk
	14.3	A quote had been received to inspect all floodlights at the tennis courts for stability. It was agreed to defer this to a Sports Ground Committee (SGC) meeting where the tennis representative of Castlethorpe Sports Association can be involved in any decisions	Cllr Forgham
	14.4	A quote had been received to stabilise one of the floodlight posts. It was agreed to defer this to the SGC meeting	Cllr Forgham
	14.5	A quote had been received from Tove Landscapes to clear the footpath alongside and along the top of the football pitch – proposed by Cllr Bradbury, seconded by Cllr Forgham, agreed unanimously. Cllr Bradbury to contact Luke Stacey about the state of the footpath leading up to Hanslope	Cllr Bradbury

APPENDIX A1 – CLERK’S REPORT

1	Following election, all paperwork completed and submitted	For info
2	Drew Archer has completed outstanding electric work. Further works identified and quote for these will be submitted.	Clerk
3	Quotes required for other outstanding work at sports ground – SGC meeting to be organised to review outstanding work – late July	Clerk
4	There is an issue with one of the floodlights which has become unstable, quote for repair is still awaited. A structural engineer has responded with advice on columns and this is on the agenda as a resolution	Clerk
5	Quotes received for SID’s, resolution on agenda. Quote required from MKCC for posts, have requested this but out of office until 2/6/23	Clerk
6	Quote received for fencing between Castle Field and the Churchyard and around village hall garden, resolution on agenda	Clerk
7	Report received following survey of trees in Castle Field, resolution on agenda	Clerk
8	Hartwell Safety Services carried out 6 monthly check of village hall fire alarm and annual service of fire extinguishers. One extinguisher had reached its recommended lifespan of 15 years so was replaced and one of the emergency lighting units isn’t working, quote requested.	Clerk
9	End of year financials completed and Internal Audit carried out	For info
10	A bat preliminary roost inspection was carried out at the cricket pavilion, the cost of this was outside of the Clerks discretionary amount so was approved by Cllr Ayles and Cllr Bradbury as per Standing Order. No evidence of bats at the moment so planning application continuing	For info
11	S106 monies approved for see saw/springer and installation planning for 14/6/23	For info
12	Step ladders had been removed from the locked storage area near tennis courts through the open window. Ladders have now been moved to the garage whilst key is located and window boarded up	Clerk

Open Actions

1	MKCC have confirmed that it is likely that if residents in areas where there are no permitted development rights want to build storage areas to accommodate the new recycling bins then they will probably need planning permission – dependent on location, size and appearance Lucy Baxter confirmed in March that there were no specific planning restrictions in the Conservation Area other than on trees.	Cllr Ayles Closed
2	The previous Clerk has now received a reply to his request to re-open the fault raised on Planning Enforcement (ref: CU467274888) about their failure to enforce what they accepted was an unauthorised development at 41 Shepperton Close but has not had time to digest it	Cllr Bradbury
3	Cllr Merritt to arrange for replacement of defibrillator pads	Cllr Merritt
4	AED and CPR training to be arranged with a £250 donation to organisers	Cllr Merritt
5	Floodgate to be selected and purchased for o/s 1 The Chestnuts – all monies to be reclaimed from MKCC. Cllr Ayles asks if someone else could please pick this up?	Cllr Ayles Outstanding
6	Cllr Ayles has asked MKCC Road Safety Officer Keith Wheeler whether the village can be designated as a 20 mph area. He has responded that ‘the 20 mph application process is ready and waiting for sign off’ at which time requests will be considered. No feedback from Keith Wheeler as yet, Clerk to add to monthly meeting list.	Cllr Ayles/Clerk Outstanding
7	Cllr Ayles has re-opened discussions with MKCC about potential purchase of part of garden at land to the side of 6 The Chestnuts as the resident has withdrawn his former objections. Chased and response (24 May) that it has been added to the action list and that they will be in touch.	Cllr Ayles Outstanding
8	Awaiting Land Registry to process request to turn lease for sports ground into full title – have chased 30/5/23. Chased an update 1/6/23	Clerk Outstanding
9	Cllr Bradbury will contact Lee Turnham at Community Speedwatch UK to register and arrange training for the 7 volunteers. To be progressed when weather improves – will organise July	Cllr Bradbury
10	Meeting will be arranged with one of the Duke of Edinburgh Award participants, the other has repeatedly failed to respond to emails as has her mother. Meeting to conclude will be arranged	Cllr Bradbury
11	Still no reply from Network Rail re. carrying static holiday homes over the 5 tonnes weight restricted railway bridge. The Clerk has brought the matter up with a local resident who works for Network Rail ‘track emergency call out’ who said he would take the matter	Cllr Bradbury

	forward. The latest application to introduce 25 new static homes has associated with it a Delivery Plan to take them through Cosgrove village.	
12	MKCC have asked their contractor to see if they can source the 'golden resin' required to replace black tarmac following street repairs. If positive, they will inform both Anglian Water & Gigaclear and work out a way forward to relay the surface with their Streetworks team. Gigaclear have resurfaced with a sand effect which is the best we will get from them. Clerk to raise Anglian Water tarmac in monthly Highways meeting please	Cllr Ayles/Clerk Outstanding
13	Listing' of water tower: The Clerk had written to Newport Pagnell TC asking for advice as they have recently made application for their Police Station to be listed by English Heritage. The Newport Pagnell TC Clerk informed that they had employed a consultant to make the application. The resultant copy has been circulated	Cllr Bradbury
14	Actions from Internal Auditor's report to be resolved: - parish council to produce a Finance Strategy - CCLA investment to be included on Asset Register - improved financial information to be produced for web site Meeting with IA shortly so will update following meeting	Cllr Bradbury Clerk
15	Cllr Markham to purchase a chain and combination lock then provide combination to the landscapers and to nearby neighbours. It was agreed that a combination lock should also be put on the other entrance gate to the Fishponds using the same combination	Cllr Markham Outstanding
17	Litter bins for Shepperton Close. No progress following MKCC's advice not to place a litter bin at the site suggested in Shepperton. Waiting to see what MKCC are doing with public bins once new wheelie bin scheme starts	Carry forward
19	We now have some information about start-up costs for preschool as is required by MKCC but need to review this in advance of furthering our request to MKCC to provide funding from the Early Education S106 planning gain. Organise a call between preschool and planning gain department to progress	Clerk Outstanding
20	Glendale have been awarded the landscaping contract from March 2024. Cllr Merritt and the Clerk met with Glendale and walked around the village to finalise areas within the contract - 10 cuts per season have been agreed but there would be flexibility around additional cuts if required subject to availability. The draft contract has been updated and issued for comment. The wildlife area was also viewed and Glendale are coming back with some ideas and prices.	Clerk Outstanding
21	Cllr Bradbury to resolve with RTM where we are on the cutting schedule and whether we are owed a cut. The hedge cut will also need to be pushed back to September when the nesting season has ended.	Cllr Bradbury
22	Historic England have offered to take part in a video conference to agree the proposal to plant trees in Gobbey's Field. To do so would also require MKCC to attend. Given proposed and committed financial outlays the previous clerk has raised concerns about affordability at this time.	Clerk to ask Cllrs how to proceed
23	MKCC wrote to Cllr Merritt and Clerk saying that Sustrans are once again looking at improving the cycle track from Castlethorpe to the Ouse Valley Park. Video call held with Sustrans where they confirmed they were submitting a planning application shortly. The all length of the cycle track would need to be widened to 3m and talks are in progress with land owners. Funding has still not been secured but if all outcomes are positive, work would hopefully start late Autumn	Cllrs Bradbury/Merritt Carry forward
24	Stonewater have not responded to further requests to cut the swale and opposite grassed area at the top of Paddock Close. It is noted that the grassed area at the bottom of Carrington Grove has lots of weeds growing through and Stonewater obviously have not sown it to grass and maintained it as they said they would do in their landscape plan. There is also now a blocked culvert	Cllr Bradbury
25	The Clerk has contacted Hanslope and Haversham Clerks for their view on approaching Hanslope Park for an ex gratia grant. They are happy to proceed but have no historic data to refer back to. Cllr Merritt will forward a contact of a colleague in the Estates Dept at Hanslope Park	Clerk/Cllr Merritt Outstanding
27	Cllr Ayles has chased the redwood tree for the triangle and it has been recommended that this is planted in the Autumn	Carry forward
28	Ideas required for Community Infrastructure Fund grant – deadline for return to Rachel Munday 31/8	All Cllrs.
29	Cllr Wardle to look into the reason why the transport delivery plans was not included as a condition on the recent permitted Cosgrove Park planning application	Cllr Wardle
30	Cllr Wardle to try and establish the current housing position with MKCC and highlight any risks that may affect our neighbourhood plan	Cllr Wardle
31	A resident raised concerns about the cutting of the cricket outfield which needs additional cuts in between the agreed cutting schedule. This is normally carried out using our own	Cllr Markham

	mower but with the mower currently away for repair and service it is proving difficult to make contact to arrange these additional cuts. Cllr Markham will look to resolve	
32	A resident from South Street reported that part of the footpath in South Street has failed. Cllr Sawbridge is going to investigate securing some monies from a Accessibility Fund that may be available for this and other areas in the village where footpaths need attention. Information has been reviewed and will be pursued further	Cllr Sawbridge Outstanding
33	Cllr Forgham to contact the Fire Service to establish check access requirements for their vehicles following parking issues at the entrance to Maltings Field. Fire Service contacted and advised 3m clearance required. If less they would knock on doors and in extreme urgency push any offending vehicle out of the way even if this damaged it. They don't have any legal right to put up notices or put stickers on cars but they would call the police who do have the power.	Cllr Forgham Closed
34	Cllrs Markham and Hinds to meet with Michael Lever to obtain a quote for installing the bench and altering the chain link fence in The Chequers Contacted Michael for a quote, awaiting reply	Cllr Markham Cllr Hinds Outstanding
35	Cllr Markham has cut back the hedge as you come into the Sports Ground from Lodge Farm Court but the footpath along the bottom and far side of the Sports Ground is very overgrown, Cllr Markham to speak to Jordan	Cllr Markham Outstanding
36	The public footpath in the field behind the Sports Ground going up to Hanslope is also overgrown. Cllr Bradbury to contact Luke Stacey	Cllr Bradbury
37	CAMRA have asked if the Parish Council would be willing to work with them on an initiative involving the Carrington Arms. Response prepared and on agenda for a resolution	Cllr Forgham Closed
38	Cllr Forgham has reported that although Network Rail have assured us that they will issue instructions to workers at Station Yard to not cause noise and light nuisance, this is still happening. Follow up letter prepared and on agenda for a resolution	Cllr Forgham Closed
39	Old doors to the football clubhouse are still propped against the pavilion and need removing Removed	Cllr Markham Closed
40	The mower repair has not yet been completed, it is stripped down but waiting for parts to arrive – Due back w/c 5/6/23	Clerk Outstanding

APPENDIX A2 – meeting with Highways

Dear Graham,

Thank you for coming out to Castlethorpe on Thursday. It was a difficult meeting; on my side because of the issues over the past 6+ months and I cannot imagine it was pleasant for you to receive my email listing these. I would ask you to note that I sent this in order so we could try and resolve it outside the formal complaint procedure and I hope we can look forward to a good working relationship in the future.

Our understanding of the discussion points is:

1. Streetlights Project.

You will ensure that we receive a monthly update from now on. I have normally asked that these be timed for our monthly Council meeting and the next one is on Monday 5th (they are on the first Monday of each month unless there is a Bank Holiday). Councillors are regularly asked about the streetlights and our councillors need to be able to respond as it is a considerable sum we are spending on this project.

I would also like to know why Mark and Chris just stopped responding to me. If you don't want them responding to councillors directly, then the least they could have done was to re-direct me or forward my emails to Rachel.

I specifically raised the point about lights 9SR and 12SR where decisions were required about trenching across the road (3 day road closure), along the footway (5 day closure including driveway access) or a decorative bracket. Given that the lamp posts had already been erected (and have now been painted) and that 16SR had also been moved across the road to the same side, these decisions seem odd as we would not have expected you to install the new posts without access to power. We would appreciate knowing the background to this as we had an explicit discussion about this with Mark and Chris on their site visit.

Although not part of 'our' project, we would also appreciate knowing the timetable for converting the remainder of the existing heritage style lights to LED.

As I wrote, the project is over a year late, we had no communication between 1 Dec and 3 April (after chasing every month) and our response on 4 April has gone another 6 weeks without reply. The management, responsiveness and communication has been extremely poor to non-existent.

The cost of the heritage upgrade project to the Parish Council is approx £54k and I have asked you to consider a substantial rebate and I would suggest at the very least the 19% management fee.

2. Road Safety Process

You said that a process had been introduced a long time ago essentially being CSW -> TVP -> MKCC. I was unaware of this during the 15 months we have been talking to Keith Wheeler and I asked if Rachel could send me the original notification to parishes of this process.

I still disagree with it as the only metric for improvements. CSW is, by its nature, an hour's snapshot and affects driver behaviour on seeing people in hi-viz jackets pointing a speed gun at them but it does give immediate 'enforcement' through a warning letter. SIDs give an objective 24x7 recording and give V85 and speed distribution which is an evidence base for speed reduction measures on the highway (which is the advice Keith had said he was consulting his colleagues about) and possible police enforcement. However, I accept that CSW is the PCC's approach (though I will ask the PCC rep if this is their intent at the next SaferMK meeting) and one of our councillors is in any case trying to set up a CSW group.

3a. Lack of Response from Yourself

You apologised and I of course accept that. As the 'Together We can' document governing the relationship between MKCC and the parishes says "Respond to each other in a timely manner and work together to ensure a regular flow of information, particularly where issues remain outstanding or unresolved."

3b Allowing Local Councils to do Minor Works

You agreed that the statement following the Teams meeting held with our Clerk was incorrect (that it was statutory and would otherwise be illegal) and that the reason for discontinuing previous arrangements that allowed parishes, with MKCC consent, to do minor works is not statutory but to do with the exclusivity clause in your outsourcing contract.

I said that I had understood that and was asking that some provision be made in the new contract now being negotiated. You replied that:

- (a) not providing exclusivity would mean MKCC would get a worse deal. I said that MKCC money would of course be exclusive if that is what you negotiated but that I was suggesting additional money from parish council budgets would be used ie money that your contractor would not expect to get. This should not worsen your negotiating position and would mean that extra work will be done that would otherwise be outside your budget / priorities.
- (b) that the bulk of the MKCC Highways budget is for resurfacing and you wanted to get the cheapest cost for that and were prepared to accept higher costs on the smaller items. I have to say that this strikes me as an odd way to negotiate a contract but it is of course the smaller items that parishes are likely to want (posts, fences, 'white gates'). Parishes are under an obligation to ensure good value for their ratepayers. If you have negotiated higher prices, then this is not good value and parishes cannot proceed.

Going forward as part of the new contract you said you were negotiating added value bits which may take the form of 'local gangs' for instance and would provide ways in which parishes can procure minor services. It is unlikely that parishes would commit to a fixed annual levy as demand is intermittent and there is no mechanism that could oblige all councils to participate. Incidentally, model standing orders, which are used by most parishes, require that three bids are obtained for any procurement over a threshold, usually £2k, so parishes need that option.

I look forward to hearing your ideas and would perhaps suggest that you come to the Parishes Advisory Group at some point.

4. Streetnaming

You said this is in Planning not Highways and you would pass to Jon Palmer. You said it looked like a simple mistake. I agree but that it is not the mistake but the delay and apparently blaming the developer and withholding of material from an FoI request which is the subject of my complaint.

5. Highways Parishes Liaison

You agreed that the reason for not allowing councillors on the call was not because of 'politicising' but because you wanted to move to an officer to officer model and that I am the only councillor in all of MK who has complained.

I suspect that the other councillors are not aware that they may not attend and, in 9 cases out of 10, I would be happy for our clerk to attend on our behalf. Having had misunderstandings in the past (not necessarily with Highways), our

protocol is that two parish representatives attend meetings. However, I will raise this at the next local association meeting and gauge the response of councillors.

I repeated the point that in smaller parishes, councillors do some of the tasks that clerks or other officers do in larger councils.

You have offered to allow me to attend for the next two months but, not only am I away, but this misses the point that there may be times when I need to attend rather than trying to brief our Clerk so she can report on it second hand. I would ask that you reconsider this position - perhaps that normally it is only the Clerk but the Clerk has the option to invite a single councillor for a specific topic.

The other problem is that we do not always get proper answers in the officer to clerk meetings. I mentioned the double depth granite sets (and you said a Highways officer would inspect) but, on reflection, the response suggesting 3-way lights to the other kerb damage at the triangle seems wrong. This is (as its name suggests) a triangle and traffic can be diverted around the triangle to create a safe working area without lights as it has been several times before. In fact,

a protective bollard would likely save MKCC money because it wouldn't have to keep repairing the kerb stones, never mind the aesthetic damage to the verge.

Rachel said that she has forwarded my comments (on streetlighting) to the relevant officers but had not had a reply. It is essential that your officers respond to Rachel in a timely manner otherwise she can't do her job and therefore we can't do ours.

I hope this is in line with your own recollections of our discussion and look forward to responses on the various issues we discussed and a better working relationship in future.

APPENDIX A3 – file note on double yellow lines

Cllr Ayles asked Graham Cox his thoughts on double yellow lines due to our parking issues on the South Street/Maltings Field junction.

GC advised that the first step would be to get support from the residents in the vicinity. If this is positive then the request is passed to a Ward Councillor. The Ward Councillor requests that MKCC look at it and a decision is made. If it is felt that double yellow lines are the best course of action, the works go into a programme to be carried out.

Cllr Ayles asked how enforcement would be made should the lines go ahead. GC explained that they would be enforced by MKCC's contractor. He said that MKCC would not put yellow lines anywhere where they would not intend to enforce. Their contractors enforce all areas on a rota basis and whilst they would concentrate on areas of repeat offences, they would come out to Castlethorpe.

An emergency vehicle would need an access clearance of 2.6 m and are within their rights to push vehicles out the way, and in fact have, when causing an obstruction to them. They would climb a pavement or verge if able to get through without the need for moving vehicles.

APPENDIX A4 – Update on Sustrans initiative for the cycle path

Present: Sustrans: Nigel Brigham (senior engineer), Rita Nykaanen (project manager)
CPC: Steve Bradbury, Darren Matthews (parish cllrs), Jacquie Ladyman (clerk)

1. Nigel introduced the current position with regard to Sustrans' intentions to upgrade National Cycle Route 6 between Castlethorpe and Ouse Valley Park Haversham:
1. Sustrans are about to put in a planning application
2. They have bid for money from the Department of Transport and will hear end July as things stand. They are though 'high on their radar'.
3. The route will need to have a width of 3m throughout and be tarmacked
4. They want to re-grade the steep bit coming up to the railway bridge at Castlethorpe end to make it more accessible to all
5. They want to re-route the Castlethorpe end of the route to run direct down the current farm track direct up to Fox Covert Lane rather than round the field. They will re-surface same.
6. Construction traffic will need to address the site through Lodge Farm Business Centre
7. Sustrans are in discussions with Philip Sawbridge and John Holes about permissions and financial matters
8. They have permission from Network Rail to go over the railway bridge
9. MKCC as land owners are generally happy
10. Steve said that what they are doing is very much in line with what the parish council had asked for. MKCC had launched 3 initiatives to which they had responded broadly as above but each had been a complete waste of everyone's time.
11. Darren raised the problem that Cosgrove Park were transporting extremely heavy units across the rail bridge at Castlethorpe and that may have detrimental impact to any re-surfacing.
12. Steve raised the problem that the Ouse Valley part of the cycle track had been badly overgrown by the adjacent hedging and had asked for the area to go on a regular maintenance schedule. This does not seem to have happened as there are reports that it is starting to grow again.
13. Steve also raised concerns that a lot of cyclists may not know the route is there, that either prevents them from cycling to MK or causes them to cycle along what is an unsuitable road for cyclists.
14. When asked about the proposed cycle track to Hanslope Nigel responded that this route had priority and it would be hard to justify that route without having a good link from MK to Castlethorpe but were hopeful it could eventually be extended to Hanslope Park.
15. Steve said that if Sustrans needed any support from CPC that they contact Jacquie and Darren offered help if they need contacts at Hanslope Park

APPENDIX A5 – update on Clubhouse

Progress since last meeting:

1. The Planning Application has been submitted and validated. The formal decision date is 10th July (statutory 56 days from validation)

2. To date, three households adjacent to the sports ground in Thrupp Close have written letters of objection principally about potential noise.
3. The Parish Advisory Poll results have been published. There were 393 ballot papers returned out of an electorate of 843 which is an excellent turnout of 47%. 8 packs had to be rejected, 4 because no ballot paper was included and 4 because the voter statement was not completed. 337 votes were in favour of the clubhouse (85.7%) and 56 against. This is quite remarkable and a credit to our electorate and the strength of support for the clubhouse project. Due to some minor errors in the Poll pack, MKCC have said that no charges will be made for the Poll.
4. MKCC Ecology asked for a bat roost assessment to be done which the Clerk arranged to be done by an MKCC accredited surveyor. No evidence of bats roosting in the pavilion was found. A further survey will have to be done at the start of building work and bat boxes erected nearby.
5. A site meeting was held with the MKCC Leisure and Community Officer who supports the Committee which gives final approval for the release of S106 funds. The officer was very supportive and we hope for a positive decision when the Committee meets at the end of June. There is a 'Calling In' period of 10 days so the final decision will be issued around 13th July though we should have the unofficial decision on 30th June.
6. Although a first draft of the ITT was discussed at the Project Board on 31st May, it was not ready to be recommended to the Parish Council for issuing. The room specifications and some detail building specifications (to ensure all bids are the same) need some further work as does the procurement requirement. This work is due to be completed by the end of this week and a further review will be held at the Project Board on 12th June. If recommended, the Parish Council will be asked to approve for issue to tenderers either at an Extraordinary Meeting or at the next Ordinary Meeting on 3rd July.
7. Although this is a further delay, in practice, we will have neither planning approval nor S106 funding until w/c 10th July. The ITT is for a 'Phase 1' which is the pavilion being ready for service, including the public toilets, for the start of the cricket season in April 2024. Funding has been mostly identified from Parish Council and S106 funds. The estimate for the pavilion was 46 days so the project is still doable. Phase 2 will be the equipping of the bar, kitchen and lounge area and will be progressed once Phase 1 is underway

APPENDIX A6 – draft letter to Network Rail

Mr Andrew Haines
Chief Executive
Network Rail
1 Eversholt Street
London NW1 2DN

Dear Mr Haines

I am writing to you further to our letter to you of 10 March about the noise and disruption caused by your staff and contractors' staff before, during and after they carry out night-time work on the West Coast main line in the vicinity of Castlethorpe.

We were very grateful for the swift response from Jack Giddings, your Senior Executive Correspondence Manager, but since then we have heard nothing further from your local area team and the noise is still occurring on a regular basis. Our Vice-Chair has spoken to many of the track crews asking them to turn off their engines and lights and they have done so, but apparently none of them have been informed of our complaint, which is extremely disappointing.

We would be grateful, therefore, if you could look into the matter again and ensure that there is no further disruption and loss of sleep to our residents and that all track and maintenance crews are informed of our complaint.

Yours sincerely

APPENDIX A7 – draft letter to CAMRA

Dear Mr McLaughlin

Thank you for your email regarding the Carrington Arms in Castlethorpe. I apologise for the delay in replying but your email arrived too late for inclusion in our last Parish Council meeting and we have had to hold it over until this month's meeting.

As you know the Parish Council has been involved in a long battle to have the pub reopened and it was always our top priority for this to happen. We also endeavoured to have it listed as an Asset of Community Value in our current Neighbourhood Plan but we were unable to do this because of a dispute over the flying freehold owned by the house next door, part of which occupies the first floor over part of the pub.

We were promised by the developer who owns it that he would do so and would refurbish it at the same time as he built a small housing development in the old Station Yard. The houses are now built and he says he now wants to sell the pub and offered the village first option to buy it at market price.

The fabric of the building is in a very poor condition and it has been estimated that it could cost up to £700,000 to rectify this to the proper standard, so for the pub to reopen it could cost something in the region of £1 million, which is way beyond the financial scope of the Parish Council and is a sum unlikely to be successful in crowdfunding. This is why we had to reject the developer's offer.

However a group of village residents are now investigating the possibility of reopening the pub and the Parish Council is supporting their efforts and if you are happy I will pass your contact details on to them so they can discuss things with you.

Finally, like CAMRA, if a planning application was made for change of use to housing, I am sure we would almost certainly oppose it vigorously along with the vast majority of the 1,100 or so people who live in Castlethorpe, and we would welcome your help.

Yours sincerely

APPENDIX A8 – Internal Audit report

Audit undertaken 2nd June 2023

1. Objectives and Scope of the Audit

To review the processes and procedures of Castlethorpe Parish Council in relation to the financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2023. The audit was based on a review of a sample of items appearing in the Cash Book, other documentation, and discussions with the Clerk.

2. Overall Opinion

A generally sound system of controls designed to meet the organisation's objectives is in place.

Only one item in the sample of invoices was of concern as there was no indication as to the tax status of the supplier. The clerk has undertaken to obtain the relevant details.

The asset register was reviewed and was found to be up to date and complete although the financial investments are not recorded. (Noted last year)

All relevant policies audited are being followed. However, it is noted that there is no investment strategy which should be included in Standing Orders or otherwise made available to the public. Where the investments exceed £100,000 Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments (item 18) states: "The guidance includes a new requirement for councils to prepare an investment strategy at least once a year. The format and presentation of this will not be prescribed, so long as it is approved by full council." (Noted last year)

All relevant insurances are in place and cover appears to be adequate.

Bank reconciliations are completed promptly and VAT is claimed correctly.

It is also noted that the Council's website does not include any financial information. Although the Council is below the income/expenditure limit for this to be a requirement, many Parish Councils of similar size do publish some data in the interests of transparency. (Noted last year)

The Standing Orders were found to need updating/reviewing in parts. In particular; SO 17(d) requires full tendering for items over £2,000; SO 17(f) refers to EU regulations which are no longer relevant; and SO 20(a) should refer to the Data Protection Act 2018

3. Recommendations

- That assets should be inspected at intervals to verify existence and condition. Also, that inspections should be documented with date and name of person inspecting noted.
- That Standing orders 17(f) and 20(a) should be amended. EU regulations have been replaced by WTO/GPA regulations. Note that the thresholds include VAT. All items for tender should now be advertised on Find a Tender Service (FTS).
- That consideration should be given to amending Standing Order 17(d) to reflect the prescribed tendering thresholds and that thresholds for requiring quotations should be set.
- That an investment strategy should be devised
- That consideration be given to increased transparency of Council expenditure/income.

4. Conclusion

Overall, the accounts are recorded accurately, expenditure is monitored well and authorities for expenditure complied with. The Clerk has obtained UTR numbers, VAT and Company Registration numbers where applicable

I should like to, once again, record my thanks to the Clerk and Cllr Bradbury for ensuring that all questions were answered and all information requested was made available promptly.

APPENDIX A9 – External Audit forms

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

We acknowledge as the members of:

CASTLETHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023, that:

	Agreed		*Yes* means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

05/06/2023

and recorded as minute reference:

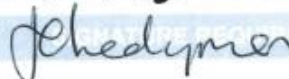
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 5/6/23 - 8.3

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman



Clerk



CASTLETHORPE-PC.GOV.UK

BPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

CASTLETHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	
1. Balances brought forward	154927	157825	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	31944	33470	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	15386	26502	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	10530	8807	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	33902	49273	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	157825	159717	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	157825	159717	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	616984	627655	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)				The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)				The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2023 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

J Heddymer

Date

05/06/2023

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

05/06/2023

as recorded in minute reference:

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 5/6/23-8.3

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

Mike **SIGNED**