**Minutes of a Meeting of Paston Parish Council held on**

**Thursday March 6th 2025 at 7.00pm in**

**St Margaret`s Church, Paston.**

**Present**: Nick Bardswell (Chairman), Maggie Brett, Pip Clabon, Ashlee Cotter, Denise McKeough, Dee Holroyd (clerk), Ed Maxfield (NCC)Cllr Pauline Porter (NNDC), PC Barrie Cresswell (MoD police, Bacton).

1 **Apologies for Absence**: Jessel Manricks, Boo Tumber.

2 **Declarations of Interest**: none

**4. Cllr EM:** had sent his April report. He outlined proposals for the County Councilto push its proposals for one council for the whole of Norfolk and Suffolk. There would be a meeting to discuss this. A final decision would be made in the autumn. Currently it was not known whether there would be elections. Parish Councils will continue but there will not be a layer between them and the newly formed large councils. More responsibilities will fall to both town and parish councils.

**Cllr PP** had attended the Bacton Summit meeting of all four gas site representatives. Shell’s interest is being bought out by Viaro Energy who will take over in 2026. One projects is carbon capture. Carbon will be coming in from all over the world and specialist workers will be needed. Viaro is working in partnership with a Canadian company. The other project is the production of hydrogen on the site., This will require massive amounts of electricity to generate which the mini nuclear reactor is to be installed. This may involve some local road work.

5. **PC Barrie Cresswell** confirmed that a security meeting was held at Bacton every three months. The change from MOD to civil policing looking after nuclear installations would take place on 1st April. The public would not notice any change. PC BC left the meeting at 7.20pm.

**6. Minutes of the meeting held on 9th January** : were agreed and signed by the chairman, proposed AC, seconded DM.

**7.** **Matters Arising from the Minutes**: none.

8. **Parish Councillors reports:**

DM reported that the streetlight in Pond Road was still not working. DH had reported this to Jones Electrical, who would attend. DM also pointed out that Bears Road had still not been repaired. DH had reminded Highways and would do so again.

PC asked for the ditch opposite Paston Hall to be dug out as it was currently blocked, which caused flooding down the Paston Road. DH to take this up with Highways.

PC also reported, confirmed by NB and AC, that there were a number of potholes in the same road past Paston Hall the largest being just west of the entrance gates. DH to report to Highways.

PC also reported recent sitings of otters in the pond. They were feeding on the fish in the pond.

NB reported that now the County Council had taken responsibility for Sandy Lane, Paston, it was being well maintained.

NB reported by way of update on the alms houses.

The governing document had been amended to regularise the charity as an alms house charity, and to extend it to being able to operate also as a general purpose village charity. The permitted trustees were increased from three to four.

The trustees had much appreciated the guidance they had been receiving from the Alms House Association.

EM and NB had been on an all day training course which was very good.

The trustees had met with their surveyor to plan works hopefully to eliminate damp – particularly in no 1. Specifications and estimated costings were awaited. They were also looking at ways of improving the heating.

Missing accounting for roof works in 2020 had given rise to concerns, as previously reported. The former trustees had received a grant of £25,000 from the Alms House Association for roof repairs, but all the cashbook and bank account showed was just under £27,000 paid to Cris Emberson’s heritage consultancy company – nothing from the builder showing what work was actually done and at what cost. The trustees asked their predecessors for the missing paperwork. Nothing has been handed over. The one response, from Cris Emberson, was not satisfactory.

The trustees had accordingly carried out an investigation and reported to the Charity Commission, which the Alms House Association had advised they were under a legal duty to do.

Following a Charity Commission directive a report is now with the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau for assessment. The NFIB can refer the matter for Police action if they consider the case merits.

The present trustees’ immediate concern is that they have to date taken all steps the law requires, which they believe they have.

7. **Planning: use of land at the holiday village:** the PC had put in their comment to the effect that while they didn’t object to the LPG tanks they had noted that the recent use of the rest of the site for storing and dumping waste did not have planning consent and this application did not apply for it. Neither Natural England nor the NNDC landscape officer had yet given their consultation responses. Enforcement is discretionary and it may be that even if permission is refused no action will follow.

8. **Financial Report:**

The bank reconciliation had been circulated, showing a current credit balance of £10,628.

Spending since the last meeting had been:

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| 05/01/2025 | npower | 60.23 | 2.87 |  |  |  |  |  | 57.36 |  | GB 559 0978 89 | |
| 05/01/2025 | play inspect | 108.30 | 18.05 |  |  |  | 90.25 |  |  |  | 845184023 |  |
| 05/01/2025 | Paston PPC | 500.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  | 500.00 |  |  |  |
| 06/01/2025 | D C Holroyd | 278.70 |  |  | 228.70 | 50.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17/01/2025 | NPTS | 60.00 |  |  |  | 60.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 21/01/2025 | ICO | 35.00 |  |  |  | 35.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 312/01/2025 | Unity | 6.00 |  |  |  | 6.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 06/02/2025 | D C Holroyd | 278.70 |  |  | 228.70 | 50.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 28/02/2025 | Unity | 6.00 |  |  |  | 6.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |

The appointment of Roger Canwell as internal auditor was agreed.

9.  **Next meeting:** Thursday 8th May 2025 at Paston church following the annual village meeting.