



## Minutes of Reach Parish Council meeting held on; Wednesday 4th August 2010

### Attendance

Michael Aves	Vice Chairman	Present
Ross Clark	Chairman	Present
Rita Dunnett	Councillor	Present
Hilary Fielding	Councillor	Not Present
Joyce Harrison	Councillor	Present
Angela King	Councillor	Present
Helen Platt	Councillor	Present
David Parr	Clerk	Present
Allen Alderson	District Councillor	Present
David Brown	County Councillor	Part-time

### 1. Forum for Members of the Public

Two members of the public attended to highlight a problem with the hawthorn hedge at the near end of the football pitch which continues to puncture footballs. In future, this will be protected by the new tennis court but **the Clerk** was asked to look into what might be done to protect the vulnerable areas to the left and right of the court.

### 2. Declaration of Interests

There were none.

### 3. Discussion with Annie Austin our local PCSO

Annie introduced herself and explained her job function and how villagers can help her to help them. Annie would like to hold a monthly surgery in the village and **the Clerk** will work with her to try and make this happen.

### 4. Minutes of Previous Meetings

The Minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting were reviewed and signed.

### 5 (1) Amenity Fund Committee

It has been agreed that the Amenity Fund will pay for new nets for the two sets of goals that the village possesses. **The Clerk** will place the necessary order.

### 5 (2) County Council Report

The Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee met with the County Council's Climate Change Strategy and an update on the Guided Busway the main agenda items.

The Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee held its first meeting, which largely centred around developing a work programme for the coming year for this new committee. We agreed that the first topic for a member-led review should be an in-depth look at how the Integrated Offender Management programme is to operate in future.

Full Council met in July. The major debate regarded the plans to enter into a shared services agreement with Northamptonshire County Council. This way forward was agreed by Council and as time goes on should deliver real savings to council tax payers in both counties. A labour party motion criticising the ability of Schools to apply for academy status was defeated as was a Lib Dem motion about creating publicity to say that Council accounts are available for people to inspect.

I attended member seminars regarding the PFI scheme to replace street lights across the County, academy schools and the school transport system, where we are looking to better co-ordinate activities to deliver savings, whilst still meeting our obligations.

The Neighbourhood Panel hosted a special meeting at Bottisham Village College devoted to the Wicken Vision, which gave members of the public an opportunity to question a range of speakers.

I attended a meeting of the East Cambs Community Safety Partnership. A recent increase in burglaries and vehicle crime across the District was discussed, with the Police indicating that the majority of offences were caused by 3 individuals, recently released from prison, all of whom have been arrested and charged. The CSP felt this highlighted the need for better information-sharing when known offenders are released from prison. The proposed closure of Ely magistrates court was also discussed as was work surrounding under-age sales of alcohol.

I also attended a public meeting at Swaffham Prior regarding ECDC proposals to site a 6-pitch gypsy site on County Council owned land at Heath Road, Swaffham Prior.

### **5 (3) District Council Report**

Everyone will be aware of the proposal for a six pitch traveller's site to be located in Swaffham Prior - which I oppose. I am currently bringing pressure to bear at District Council level. I would hope that we can have a decision on this by the November meeting of the Strategic Development Committee.

Due to the recession, fewer houses are being built so the Council is falling behind its affordable housing targets. I would ask Parish Councils to consider any likely Rural Exception sites within their village.

Free swimming for under 16s and over 60s will cease in August.

### **5 (4) Financial Report**

The Parish Council is in a financially sound situation and the current forecast remains as per budget but plus the £800 income from the sale of the mower.

### **5 (5) Neighbourhood Panels Report**

No report provided.

### **5 (6) Parish Council Members**

No reports.

### **5 (7) Play Spaces Officer Report**

The ROSPA playground inspection report was discussed and is documented in item 14.

### **5 (8) Rights of Way Report**

In the absence of the Rights of Way Officer, the Clerk reported that the ownership of the land required to provide a safe access to Tubney Fen during the period when cattle are grazing is still unclear. **The Clerk** will inform the Rights of Way Officer of this fact and she will endeavour to find the actual owner.

### **5 (9) Speedwatch**

There was no activity in the preceding month.

### **5 (10) Village Centre Committee Report**

The AGM took place in July and the previous committee was reconfirmed plus the addition of Sue Elliott. The fire alarm system remains unrepaired as does the roof. There was no normal monthly meeting in July and there will be no meeting in August.

## **6. Annual Return Comments Review**

The year ending March 31<sup>st</sup> 2010 accounts have been signed off by the auditors. They noted that the original accounts should have been approved at the June meeting as opposed to the July meeting and **the Clerk** will ensure this happens in future. They also suggested that since the Amenity fund is not owned by the Parish Council it should not be included in its Statement of Accounts - this was agreed to by the Parish Council and **the Clerk** will report the Amenity Fund Accounts separately in future.

## **7. Clerk Annual Review**

The performance of the Clerk was reviewed and found to be acceptable. The Parish Council awaits the 2010/2011 National Final Salary Award for Local Council Clerks which should be issued in September 2010 before approving or otherwise any amendment to the Clerk's remuneration.

## **8. Footpaths Review - comments from Councillors on their Village Inspection.**

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

## **9. Land Availability on two areas of the Burwell Road.**

The first area is on the right hand side of the Burwell road as you leave Reach which is used as the car park for Reach Fair. The Chairman has been in discussions with County Farms to ensure that this land is available to Reach Fair for this purpose at a reasonable cost.

The second area is the 24 acres on the left hand side of the Burwell road as you leave Reach. The National Trust is interested in purchasing this land and working with Reach villagers to maximise its utilisation. The National Trust has now received a valuation of the land and is continuing negotiations with County Farms whilst at the same time continuing to seek funding.

## **10. Land Registration**

It has been established that the Hythe and the Drying Ground are not registered. **The Clerk**, working with **Ross Clark**, will endeavour to give them Common Land status when the window of opportunity arrives later this year, to ensure that they are protected from registration by other parties.

## **11. Mobile Library**

The Parish Council has been informed that there is a proposed reduction in the regularity of this service, from every two weeks to four weeks. The Parish Council felt that in the current financial climate this was acceptable.

## **12. Noticeboards on the Bus Shelters**

It was suggested that instead of notices being posted on the exterior of the bus shelters, a board should be placed at the interior back of the shelters. **The Clerk** was asked to look into this and report back to the next meeting.

## **13. Pigeon Poo - What to Do**

A villager had expressed concern over pigeons leaving a mess on the swings - and this is also a problem on the War Memorial. **The Clerk** was asked to investigate potential solutions and report back to the next meeting.

## **14. Playground ROSPA Report**

This was discussed and a number of areas identified which need attention. **The Clerk** will work with the Play Spaces Officer and arrange for the work to be carried out.

## **15. Salt Bins (new) Locations.**

The Parish Council recently heard that it is proposed (but not confirmed) that Reach will be included on the primary gritting route in future. Since the Parish Council has purchased three new salt bins it was proposed that one be placed near the road that dissects the Fair Green and the other two be placed close to the first and the second bends on Great Lane as you leave the village. **The Clerk** will identify specific locations for consideration by the Parish Council at the next meeting.

## **16. Snakehall Farm Bus Shelter**

This is to be erected by Snakehall Farm but will subsequently become the responsibility of the Parish Council. It was agreed that the Parish Council would include the insurance of the shelter within its insurance policy and would not recharge this cost to Snakehall Farm. As regards the maintenance of the shelter, this would be carried out as the Parish Council deemed necessary, at the expense of Snakehall Farm and a letter from Snakehall Farm agreeing to this arrangement is being sought by **the Clerk**.

## **17. Speeding in the Village - what can we do?**

This item was discussed in the presence of Annie Austin PCSO. She stated that any resident who believes they have witnessed speeding should inform the police on 0345 456 4564 with the registration number of the vehicle. The police will not be able to prosecute on this basis but will be able to discuss the issue with the driver.

It was also agreed that further Speedwatch volunteers would be sought and the resident who complained about the speeding would be approached to assist.

#### 18. Tennis Court and Sports Club

Further funding for the tennis court has now been acquired and the total raised should now be sufficient to purchase the court. The Clerk will now get planning permission and go back to suppliers with a tender specification. It is hoped to have planning permission in place by the end of September and the court in place by the end of November.

The previous proposal for the management of the tennis court was reaffirmed by the Parish Council. A proposal from a Reach villager that the Sports Club might take over the management of the tennis court was rejected.

#### 19. Travellers Site and Reclassification of Land on Burwell Raod

The Parish Council agreed that the locating of a travellers site in Swaffham Prior should be resisted. It also agreed that a proposal for using a Greenfield site on the Burwell road for employment should be resisted. A proposed letter from the Chairman was approved and will be sent out by **the Clerk**.

#### 20. Verge Erosion on Fair Green

There is verge erosion outside 28 Fair Green which creates safety and environmental issues due to the mud that is produced during rainfall or discharge of water into the road. Highways recognise the problem and are prepared to provide 10 to 15 metres of kerbing to direct the water flow more efficiently. In addition to this, the drain on the track to the left hand side of the premises will be cleared. Highways states that this work will start on Friday 6th August.

#### 21. Woodland Trust Update

It was agreed that **the Clerk** would invite Michael Ryder from the Woodland Trust to a subsequent meeting.

#### 22. Pollution in Agricultural Land

Remedial action is taking place. The Clerk has spoken to the local contractor involved who is taking the required quality soil to the site. In the next 4 to 8 week period, this soil will be levelled to produce the desired effect and then the project will end. **The Clerk** was asked to get an update on this activity and report back at the next meeting.

#### 23. Planning Applications

Planning application 10/00640/LBC was approved subject to sufficient extra off street parking being provided.

#### 24. Information Items

The tree on Fair Green has been inspected and requires some attention which **the Clerk** will organise.

The Parish Council decided not to pursue the opportunity to apply for Quality Council status.

**The Clerk** will investigate the ownership of the mirror on the wall near Swan corner.

It was suggested that the gate onto the playing field should be locked. This will be considered at the next meeting.

#### 23. Payments

100925	Suffolk ACRE	Insurance (cricket net)	£18.81
100926	D. Blocksage	Cemetery Mowing July	£67.00
100927	Durrant Cricket	Cricket Net	£2,200.09

The date of the next meeting will be Wednesday 1st September 2010 at 7.30pm. The Agenda for the meeting will be issued by the previous Wednesday – and will also be posted in the Parish Council area of the Reach website ([www.reach-village.co.uk](http://www.reach-village.co.uk)).

**Chairman:**

**Date:**