



Minutes of Reach Parish Council meeting held on; Wednesday 4th November 2009

Attendance

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

Forum for Members of the Public

Members of the public attended and commented on the Great Lane – Fair Green Bend Large Vehicle Access.

Declaration of Interests

There were no Declarations of Interest.

Amenity Fund Applications

There are currently 2 applications ongoing;

1. Cricket Net

A request for funding has come from Joe Acklam for a cricket net for the village, to be sited on the playing field. There was general support for this and Ross Clark, working with Joe has produced an estimate of up to £2,500 for a suitable surface and netting. **Ross Clark** is seeking funding for this venture from various sporting sources, therefore minimising any request for funds from the Amenity Fund. It is expected that some £200 will be raised by the cricket club itself.

2. Tennis Court

A suggestion has been made by a Reach resident that a tennis court, located on the playing field, would be a beneficial amenity for the village. The Clerk has established that a painted porous tarmac court, surrounded by secure fencing would cost up to £30,000 and is seeking three competitive quotations. The Parish Council approved the use of Section 106 monies for funding this venture and the Clerk will complete the necessary application. Since this source of funding has a limit of £20,000, **the Clerk** will seek further funding from various sources and the Parish Council agreed to support the request of £1,000 to be provided by the Amenity Fund, subject to the agreement of the Village Centre Committee. The possibility of this area being used for other sports such as netball and basketball was suggested, subject to there being sufficient interest.

Minutes of Previous Meetings

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 7th October 2009 were reviewed and signed.

County Council Report

Full Council met on 13th October with the main agenda item being the proposed bid for over £510 million to the Transport Innovation Fund to tackle congestion in and around Cambridge City. After much debate it was agreed that the County Council would go ahead with the bid taking a phased approach, starting with an application for funding to build a new railway station at Chesterton to relieve traffic pressure from the north of the city. This will be followed up by a number of infrastructure improvements over the next 5-7 years including improvements to cycleways, dualling Newmarket Road from the Quy roundabout into the city and relocating the Newmarket Road park and ride. Should the planned improvements not limit congestion to an acceptable level (a level to be agreed over the next 12 months as part of the final bid), then the County Council accepts the need to bring in a congestion charge – with details to be discussed over the coming months.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Plan was agreed for public consultation after some discussion. Council also debated a motion concerning climate change but agreed to defer the decision pending further work on the implications of signing up to the so-called 10:10 Scheme calling for a 10% cut in carbon emissions by 2010.

Council received reports from the Police and Fire and Rescue Authorities and had the opportunity to question representatives on non-operational issues. Council also considered annual reports from the pensions and audit and accounts committee.

On waste issues, the new county-wide waste handling facility at Donarbon, Waterbeach is now operational and undergoing test runs. It will be officially opened on 9 November. Permission has been granted for a new, enclosed, household waste recycling centre at Witchford.

The Joint Area Traffic Committee met to consider, amongst other issues, applications for the jointly funded minor highways improvement scheme for next year. It was agreed to fund improvements at the Lode crossroads and works in Soham, Cheveley, Littleport and Witcham. Sutton requested inclusion in funding schemes but the Committee felt that the scoring had been undertaken equitably and rejected the request to change it.

I had a site meeting with County officers, fellow County Councillors and Quy Parish Council about the Quy traffic calming measures. As reported previously, Quy Parish Council is adamant that it wants to keep traffic calming. We discussed some changes to the road markings to try to assist the flow of traffic amongst other ideas. Officers will cost various options and I suspect that the argument over removal of the current measures will continue for some time!

There have also been a number of meetings regarding the early stages of the budget process. The County Council staff at managerial level and above has had a pay freeze this year and it is quite clear that we will have to be very careful in setting budgets for the next few years.

I also attended the Neighbourhood Panel as a County Council representative.

District Council Report

ECDC's new Mobile Play Scheme has been a big success in October, visiting Ely, Bottisham, Soham and Cheveley. It will be visiting further locations in November.

ECDC is looking at options for major improvements to the A142, principally the southern link road round Ely. A link between Angel Drove and Stuntney without a crossing over the river is being considered.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment has identified a need in East Cambridgeshire of 597 new affordable units per year for the foreseeable future. In 2008/2009 134 units were delivered, 2009/2010 will be 100 (with luck) and in 2010/2011 there is a forecast of 130 to 140.

There will be more calls on the Council to deal with people made homeless during the recession. By more efficiently working with partner agencies the Council has been able to reduce the cost of the homelessness service from £235,000 in 2005/2006 to £176,000 in 2008/2009. In addition, costly bed and breakfast accommodation is being used less.

Financial Report

The Parish Council remains in a financially sound situation and is on course to finish the year with a positive contribution to reserves. The year ending 31st March 2009 accounts remain with the auditors but are expected shortly.

Play Spaces Officer Report

None provided.

Police Liaison Committee Report

There has been an increase in cold calling pressure selling. Villagers should resist allowing cold calling salespeople into their houses as it is often extremely difficult to get rid of them.

The police are releasing a short film which shows the diversity of the modern policing role; "Real people, making a real difference". The film, which is just under four minutes long, can be viewed via their website. It demonstrates the roles of the wider policing family and features appearances by the dog unit, force helicopter, custody, neighbourhood policing teams and firearms team.

Following the web launch the film will also be used at recruitment campaigns, panel meetings, community events, school presentations and public areas such as shopping centres.

Cycle thefts and thefts from vehicles have also increased.

Speedwatch

There was no activity last month.

Village Centre Committee Report

Jo Riches and David Parr have joined the Village Centre Committee.

The meeting room is to be redecorated.

Activity continues regarding the 2010 Reach Fair.

Matters Arising

1. Great Lane – Fair Green Bend Large Vehicle Access

The residents of the three houses closest to the bend have expressed their concerns regarding large vehicles trying to navigate the bend and in the process causing direct damage to their properties by way of collision or weakening their houses or walls due to their weight and vibration. The Parish Council asked the Clerk to work with the residents and a meeting took place with the residents and the Highways Department on the 29th April. Following this the residents had written to the Parish Council with their proposals and the Parish Council wrote to the Highways Department in support of these proposals. One issue revolves around two bollards to be erected outside 2 Great Lane which Highways believe need to be plastic whereas the residents, the Parish Council and the local Conservation Officer believe should be made of wood. **The Clerk** was asked to email Highways suggesting that the benefitting residents would fund the extra cost of the wooden posts for Highways to erect.

2. Mowing in the Village

The Parish Council employs two contractors. One mows the cemetery, the other mows the Greens, the playing field, the Hythe and the Wood. The Parish Council was pleased with the performance of both contractors during the last twelve months and felt that, subject to the concluding of a satisfactory financial agreement, they would both be asked to continue through the following twelve months. **The Clerk**, will continue to negotiate with the two contractors and the Parish Council expects agreements to be reached during November.

3. Overgrown Hedges and Trees in the Cemetery

The Clerk had reminded a resident of their responsibility in keeping hedges and boundaries under control and will monitor progress. A summary of these responsibilities will be added to the website and Out of Reach magazine, to remind all villagers.

Trees in the cemetery require some pruning and **the Clerk** will organise a small working party to carry this out.

4. Precept/Budget for Year Ending March 31st 2011

The Precept and Budget for the next financial year was agreed. This will result in an increase of 3.6% in the Precept.

5. RaSP Mast

The granted retrospective planning permission required that work be undertaken to improve the aesthetic appearance of the mast. A proposal for this improvement has now belatedly been received by ECDC and the Parish Council asked to comment. Following input from a local resident affected by the appearance of the mast, the Parish Council asked **the Clerk** to confirm to ECDC that the remedial action was acceptable to them but that should it not prove to be effective, the Parish Council would wish for further remedial action to be required and implemented.

6. Reach Wood

The Woodland Trust has suggested increased planting in the wood and asked interested villagers to comment. A number of comments have been received and it was requested that **the Clerk** invite Jonathan Plowe of the Woodland Trust to come along to a Parish Council meeting and outline his thoughts in detail, thereby allowing villagers to comment directly to him.

7. Rights of Way

These have become overgrown and arrangements were made for a number of people on probation to come along on a regular (Thursday) basis to carry out the necessary work. The first visit took place on Thursday 29th October. The Parish Council will monitor progress over the coming four weeks before discussing this issue again at the next meeting.

8. Standing Orders

These provide procedures and controls for the management of the Parish Council business and are an aid to proper and effective governance. A draft set of Standing Orders, produced by the Clerk with help from other local Parish Clerks, has been provided to Parish Councillors and will be discussed at a special meeting of the Parish Council to take place at a time to be agreed.

9. War Memorial Status

The War Memorial is in need of some level of refurbishment. **The Clerk** has received two quotations and awaits a third at which point a decision will be made by the Parish Council as to what will be done.

10. Allotments in Reach

There had been a request for allotments to be made available in the village. Ross Clark has identified a suitable area for villagers to use.

11. Amenity Fund Committee

It was felt that the current arrangement whereby two organisations, who have no regular meetings together, have to jointly approve Amenity Fund applications, should be reviewed. **Ross Clark** has taken up this issue with the Chairman of the Village Hall Committee with a view to implementing a more satisfactory and efficient arrangement. A draft constitution has been compiled and will be issued to Parish Councillors shortly for discussion at the next meeting.

12. Fair Green Verge Erosion

There is verge erosion outside the properties 21 to 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. Funding from the JFMHI scheme was applied for to kerb the road and contain the soil, preventing any further erosion. It was learnt that this application was unsuccessful and how to proceed on this will be discussed at the next meeting.

13. Great Lane Verge Erosion

In the winter, Great Lane gets very muddy due to vehicles cutting into the grass bank outside 17 and 19 Great Lane. The Parish Council asked the Clerk to work with the residents and a meeting took place with the Highways Department. Funding from the JFMHI scheme was applied for to kerb the road and contain the soil, preventing any further erosion. It was learnt that this application was unsuccessful and how to proceed on this will be discussed at the next meeting.

14. 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 Village Green status (as Fair Green has) or Common Land status if this is not possible, to ensure that they are protected from registration by other parties.

15. Pollution in Agricultural Land

The Parish Council had been contacted by a Scientific Officer from Environmental Services at ECDC regarding a letter sent to the Parish Council in April 2006 regarding this problem. A site visit by the Scientific Officer took place in November 2008 with a representative of the Parish Council in attendance. The Scientific Officer recognized that there was a problem and in conjunction with the landowner, an action plan has been instigated. The situation continues to be closely monitored, especially regarding the new aspect of rubbish coming out of the old pit and falling down into the wood. The Environmental Officer concerned visited the site in October and is comfortable that the necessary actions are underway but will continue to monitor progress.

Planning Applications

The remedial action for the RaSP mast was discussed – see 5. above.

Information Items

There have been a number of complaints regarding a large farm animal being loose in the village, scaring horses and people. **The Clerk** was asked to talk to the owners to ensure that the animal is properly contained in future.

It appears that horses have been using Reach Wood. This issue will be brought to the attention of Jonathan Plowe by **the Clerk** to see whether he feels signage is necessary.

It appears that some Exclusive Rights of Burial documents may not have been properly issued for the cemetery. **The Clerk** was asked to generate these and distribute them appropriately.

Payments

These were made as follows and from the Parish Council's Precept Current Account unless otherwise indicated.

100021	David Parr	Daffodil Day Bulbs	£264.98	Amenity Fund
100895	D. Blocksage	Cemetery Mowing	£65.00	

The date of the next meeting will be Wednesday 2nd December 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).

Chairman:

Date: