



Minutes of Reach Parish Council meeting held on; Wednesday 2nd December 2009

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	Not Present
Allen Alderson	District Councillor	Not Present
David Brown	County Councillor	Not Present

Forum for Members of the Public

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

Reach Wood review with Jonathan Plowe of the Woodland Trust

Some money has been made available to the Woodland Trust who wish to spend it to improve Reach Wood. Jonathan Plowe of the Woodland Trust came along to discuss options with the Parish Council and interested Reach residents. The preferred way to improve the Wood was to extend it by the acquisition of adjoining land and **Ross Clark** will contact the landowner to see whether he would be prepared to sell it to the Woodland Trust.

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 (which could also be used for other sports, subject to there being sufficient interest). The Clerk has established that a painted porous tarmac court, surrounded by secure fencing would cost up to £30,000. The Parish Council approved the use of Section 106 monies for funding this venture and the Clerk has delivered the necessary application which will be considered on the 18th January (a meeting scheduled for 3rd December was cancelled). Since this source of funding has a limit of £20,000, **the Clerk** is seeking further

funding from various sources (the Amenity Fund has agreed to contribute £1,000) including fund-raising and a small team of five people has been set up for this purpose. Up to date information can be found at www.reach-village.co.uk/tennis.html.

Minutes of Previous Meetings

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 4th November 2009 were reviewed and signed.

County Council Report

I attended a Joint CCC Teaching Unions Panel, which gives the teachers' unions an opportunity to raise any issues of concern. The main issue raised related to the employment of teachers for children with special needs. I also attended a consultation meeting regarding future provision of secondary education in East Cambs. The main conclusions seemed to be to build a new secondary school in Littleport and expand 6th Form provision in Ely. Following the meeting I also met with the Head of Burwell Village College.

Environment and Communities Scrutiny committee met, with the main agenda item being to scrutinise performance of the Highways Contract. Officers and contractors were questioned closely on whether we are getting value for money from the contract and a number of areas for improvement/cost control were identified.

The Adult and Communities Policy Development Group met to consider a number of issues including the ongoing community engagement strategy.

I have been asked to participate in a member-led review into the provision of "affordable housing" in the County and we had the first meeting to agree the terms of reference for the review.

I attended an East Cambs "In Your Patch" meeting hosted by Soham Children's Centre who outlined the work they do with 0-5 year olds and their families. We also had a presentation on the work of locality teams in East Cambs as well as a discussion on the forthcoming consultation paper regarding recommended routes for HCVs.

There has also been a number of meetings and a seminar regarding the forthcoming budget setting.

I also represented CCC at the AGM of Cambridgeshire Young Farmers Clubs.

District Council Report

ECDC are looking at ways to continue to provide core services and plan for future growth whilst facing a funding shortfall of in excess of £1.5M over the next 3 years.

The consultation on the Ely Masterplan has ended. 100 questionnaires were received with another 50 people writing in. The responses will be included in a report to the Strategic Development Committee in January.

The Waterbeach Mechanical Biological Treatment Plant will be visited on the 3rd of December.

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 have been approved.

Play Spaces Officer Report

All OK – no issues.

Police Liaison Committee Report

No report provided.

Speedwatch

There were two sessions undertaken and out of 90 drivers recorded, 6 were exceeding the speed limit.

Village Centre Committee Report

Progress continues to be made on Reach Fair arrangements.

Redecoration of the small hall and fixing the vandalised roof will take place in the short term.

The VCC has funds available currently of some £8,500.

There was agreement for the Amenity Fund to support the proposed tennis court to the level of £1,000.

Matters Arising

1. Farm Animal Loose in the Village - update

The animal is now suitably confined.

2. 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. An email has been received from Kevin Hall, who is in charge of new highway structures for Cambridgeshire County Council. The council has rejected the offer by residents to contribute to two wooden bollards on the pavement outside 2 Great Lane. Moreover, it has withdrawn the offer to erect plastic bollards at the site, on the grounds that a technical analysis of road layout has indicated they would inevitably be crushed by long vehicles. The council has also been swayed by a letter from a local farmer objecting to the erection of bollards. Mr Hall is willing to enter into discussions into other means to reduce the risk of heavy lorries damaging properties on the corner. This might include bollards in other locations or a weight limit through the village. Mr Hall has agreed to attend the parish council meeting in January to discuss this.

3. Mowing in the Village

Contracts have now been signed with C R Contracting (Craig Reader) to mow our green spaces and Within Reach (Debbie Blocksage) to mow the cemetery for the period until 31st March 2011.

4. Overgrown Hedges and Trees in the Cemetery

The Clerk had reminded a resident of their responsibility in keeping hedges and boundaries under control and remedial work was satisfactorily carried out. A summary of these responsibilities will be added to the website and Out of Reach magazine by **the Clerk**.

Three quotations will be sought by **the Clerk** to cut back the hedges on the playing field.

The state of the hedges in the cemetery was also a topic of discussion which will be considered further at the next meeting.

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

5. 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 on the 27th January, starting at 7.30pm in the Village Centre.

6. 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.

7. 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 Centre Committee with a view to implementing a more satisfactory and efficient arrangement. A draft constitution has been compiled and was discussed. Ross Clark will conclude discussions on this with the Chairman of the Village Centre Committee.

8. Exclusive Rights of Burial

It appears that some Exclusive Rights of Burial documents may not have been properly issued for the cemetery. **The Clerk** is in the process of generating these and will distribute them appropriately in due course.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. 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.

12. 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.

13. 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 and they have continued each week since then with good progress being made.

Planning Applications

There were none.

Information Items

There were none.

Payments

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

100896	Moore Stephens	Annual External Audit	£155.25
100897	D. Blocksage	Cemetery Mowing	£65.00
100898	C R Contracting	Mowing of Fair Green	£40.00

The date of the next meeting will be Wednesday 6th January 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).

Chairman:

Date: