



## **Minutes of Reach Parish Council meeting held on; Wednesday 2nd February 2011**

### **Attendance**

Michael Aves	Vice Chairman	Present
Ross Clark	Chairman	Present
Rita Dunnett	Councillor	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

### **1. Forum for Members of the Public**

No members of the public attended.

### **2. Declaration of Interests**

Councillor Fielding declared an interest in item 5 and since this was deemed to be prejudicial, left the room during those discussions.

### **3. Minutes of Previous Meetings**

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

### **4 (1) Amenity Fund Committee**

No payments were made and no applications received since the last meeting.

### **4 (2) County Council Report**

The Highways Policy Review Group has nearly concluded its report on ways that highways policy could be made more flexible and deliver cost-effective solutions to local issues by working more closely with parishes. The findings of the group will now go through the democratic processes at County.

There have also been a number of member seminars and other meetings to flesh out more details on spending plans at the County Council over the next 5 years. It is intended that there will be no increase in the County Council's element of Council Tax in the next financial year and probably no increase for a further four years. The Integrated Plan covering the next five years aims to save £50.4 million in 2011/12 and £160.6 million over the life of the plan. The proposals were considered by the Cabinet and are the Council's answer to the most difficult financial situation in its history. They are defined by a new set of Council priorities; supporting and protecting vulnerable people when they need it most, helping people to live independent and healthy lives in their communities and developing the local economy for the benefit of all. The savings proposals cover all aspects of the Council's business.

In Children's Services a fundamental shift from universal to targeted services is proposed, which over the next four years would save £1M from youth services, £761K from home to school transport and £600K from children's centres.

Direct support to some children and young people will end, saving £1M from disability services, £527K from specialist teaching, £315K from budgets for educating looked-after children and £301K from the Cambridgeshire Racial Equality and Diversity Service.

Council aims to save £950K from children's social care, £240K from the early year service and £3M from mainstream and special educational needs school transport.

In Libraries, Learning and Culture, the Council will save £282K through operational efficiencies, income generation and new ways of working, £108K from redesigning the mobile library service and £100K from introducing more self-service and using volunteers in libraries. Working in partnership with other councils to provide support services and creating a Trust to run libraries will save a further £29K. In social care, promoting prevention and localism will save £2.9M, adopting a reablement approach a further £4.75M and decreasing the cost of high cost and complex placements will save £1.3M.

In Environment Services, a proposed restructuring of Trading Standards will save £641K over four years, reducing spending on environment and climate change £492K, a proposed restructuring of waste services will save £159K and a proposed reduction in senior management will save £100K. Further efficiencies from the highways services contract will save £2.4M and restructuring Highways and Access £1.1M. In public transport, phasing out subsidised bus services will save £2.7M but there will be an extra £1M invested in supporting community transport schemes over the next five years as well as a summit on how to make public transport more locally focussed and value for money. There will also be a £1.4M saving in revenue funded highways maintenance but there will be an extra £3.85M investment in this area from capital funds.

In Corporate Directorates, over a four-year period, reducing properties and maximizing office space in retained buildings will save over £1M, reducing the contact centre opening hours and standards and moving more services being accessed and delivered online £426K, reducing IT functions and delivering services in different ways will save £989K and reducing communications and marketing activity will save up to £550K.

In response to the above report, Councillor Clark expressed concern regarding the salaries paid to County Council Chief Officers with Chief Executive Mark Lloyd being paid £195,966 per year and six others being paid in excess of £100,000. Councillor Brown stated that all Chief Officers had accepted the pay freeze but that there had been no suggestion of any 5% pay cut as volunteered by the coalition government.

Councillor Clark also asked about the status of the Guided Busway and was informed by County Councillor Brown that it was expected that it would be accepted by the County Council by the end of February but with legal disputes continuing after that.

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

The Council funding to Ely and Newmarket Citizens Advice Bureaus is to be cut by 11% if approved by Full Council.

ECDC will no longer be receiving Government funding for the concessionary bus fares scheme. This will, in future, be given directly to CCC. ECDC made a profit from this scheme, part of which was used to give grants to Ely, Newmarket and Cambridge Dial-a-Ride – these will cease in the next financial year.

There will be a lot of changes to housing benefit from April 1<sup>st</sup>. A.R.P. has produced a leaflet summarising the changes. This can be obtained from A.R.P., from the Council's Reception Desk or by email (housing@eastcambs.gov.uk).

A new site of 29 affordable homes for Fordham village is due to start this Spring.

A total of 206 dwellings were completed in 2009/2010, 38 of which were affordable. This is the lowest level of growth in recent years as a result of the slowdown in the housing market. The proportion of dwelling completions for smaller 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings fell to 32% of the total.

There was a members-only Neighbourhood Panels meeting recently which Reach was not invited to. **Allen Alderson** will investigate why no invitation was made and report back at the next meeting.

Councillor Platt raised the issue of members of ECDC using taxis as transport down to London, as reported in the press. **Allen Alderson** will look into this and report back at the next meeting.

Councillor Platt commented that the latest issue of East Cambridgeshire Magazine, containing information about Diary events to take place in Dec 2010 and January 2011, was delivered only at the end of January 2011. **Allen Alderson** will look into this and report back at the next meeting.

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

The Parish Council is in a financially sound situation and should finish the year with reserves of around £5K.

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

No meetings have taken place since the last meeting. The next meeting will take place on the 30<sup>th</sup> March 2011 at 7.00pm in Kirtling Village Hall. It was agreed that a representative from Reach Parish Council would be identified, if possible, at the next Parish Council meeting.

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

No meetings attended.

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

Spikes to deter birds from alighting on the top of the swings on the Green and in the playground have been acquired and will be put in place shortly.

**The Clerk** will arrange for the wooden boards, put on the playing field by football pitch users prior to the construction of the tennis court, to be removed.

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

A list of landowners has been produced and the Clerk has written to each of them, reminding them of their responsibility to keep hedges under control. As regards the repairing of byways, the Clerk has reminded the County Council of their responsibilities in this area.

The Parish Council has agreed to continue in the P3 scheme for the forthcoming year. The Clerk has communicated this to the County Council.

#### **4 (9) Speedwatch**

There was no activity in the preceding month.

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

The shed has been refurbished and the repointing of the back wall carried out. Reach Fair preparations are making good progress and there will be further discussions regarding making use of the trampoline which has been offered for donation. The repairing of the roof following the theft of the lead has yet to begin.

### **5 Cemetery Mowing Contract Award**

Three suppliers tendered for this contract which, after discussion, was awarded to the incumbent supplier Within Reach Services, David and Debbie Blocksage.

### **6. Cemetery Rainwater Collection**

The Clerk had reported that significant hedge cutting was required to provide access to the shelter for guttering to be put up. The Parish Council agreed that this work should be carried out and the guttering put up by **the Clerk**.

### **7. County Council Cuts Review**

This item was discussed in item 4(2).

### **8. Environment Agency Meeting**

The Parish Council had been contacted by the Environment Agency who had some tree and bushing works to carry out on the left bank facing away from the village and the sewage works looking down the river. The works are to bring the flood bank back into a condition that will protect the area. A meeting took place with the Environment Agency and the Parish Council were satisfied of the necessity of the work which is now underway.

## 9. Land Availability – 24 acres on the Burwell Road

At a village meeting with the National Trust who hope to buy this land, the three main areas of community involvement (1) orchard, (2) horse ménage and (3) cricket/football pitches were reviewed. In addition, the possibility of horticulture therapy will be considered. The National Trust continues to seek funding for this venture and expects a response from one possible donor in February 2011.

## 10. Parish Council Elections

Subject to there being more than seven nominated candidates, the Reach Parish Council elections will take place on May 5<sup>th</sup> 2011. Nomination papers can be downloaded from:

[www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/elections\\_voting/parish\\_council\\_nomination\\_paper\\_12657.pdf](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/elections_voting/parish_council_nomination_paper_12657.pdf) and the Nomination Period is from Friday 25<sup>th</sup> March to Monday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2011. A helpful guide for prospective candidates can be downloaded from:

[www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/elections\\_voting/a\\_guide\\_for\\_candidates\\_at\\_elections\\_to\\_county\\_dis\\_27809.pdf](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/elections_voting/a_guide_for_candidates_at_elections_to_county_dis_27809.pdf).

## 11. Tennis Court Update

The court is now in use with final painting and the formal opening scheduled for some time in April. It was agreed that **the Clerk** will arrange for (a) grass seeding around the court (b) turfing of the most damaged area leading down to the court and the construction of a pathway leading down to the entrance of the court. The Parish Council agreed to a maximum spend of £200 for this work which should be carried out as soon as possible.

## 12. Planning Applications

There were none for consideration.

## 13. Information Items

Our two bus shelters will be refurbished with some tidying up of the surfaces followed by the addition of a suitable preservative. The surface tidying work has begun and the Parish Council wishes to thank Shaun Mayes for carrying this out. **Councillor Platt** will acquire the necessary preservative in due course with this aspect of the work being carried out during early summer.

**The Clerk** will check on the status of street lights repairs in the village.

It was agreed that **Parish Councillors** will check for potholes within the village and inform the Clerk of their specific location. **The Clerk** will then compile a list and get the Council to carry out the necessary repairs.

## 14. Payments

100950	CCC	Street Light Maintenance 2010/2011	£246.09
100952	CCC	3 Saltbins	£327.83

The date of the next meeting will be Wednesday 2nd March 2011 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: