



Minutes of Reach Parish Council meeting held on; Wednesday 6th February 2013

Attendance

Michael Aves	Vice Chairman	Present
Ross Clark	Councillor	Not Present
Rita Dunnett	Councillor	Present
Hilary Fielding	Councillor	Present
Joyce Harrison	Councillor	Present
David Thomas	Chairman	Present
Diana Ward	Councillor	Present
David Parr	Clerk	Present
Allen Alderson	District Councillor	Part Time
David Brown	County Councillor	Part Time

Chairman David Thomas welcomed newly co-opted Councillor Diana Ward.

1. Forum for Members of the Public

Four members of the public attended and contributions were made to items 4 and 6.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

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

4. Discussion with Andy Rankin of Midsummer Energy regarding a potential Solar Farm

The Parish was supportive, in principle, to the project but would wish to reserve final judgement until full details are available.

5 (1) Amenity Fund Committee

There was no activity during the previous month.

5 (2) County Councillor's Report

The new Cabinet met on the 15th January. Amongst the items discussed was a decision to pull out of the proposed business rates pooling system with other authorities in the county on the grounds that the figures did not stack up to the benefit of Cambridgeshire.

The Burwell Masterplan Working Party met to consider the results of the recent consultation. Following amendments to housing infill figures and other issues, the report was agreed for endorsement by ECDC.

The Neighbourhood Panel met at Bottisham Village College, with much discussion about the requirements for declarations of interest under the new Code of Conduct.

Business Planning took up a considerable time during January. Cabinet met on 29th January to consider the proposals and agreed to propose them to Full Council in February. These proposals set a balanced budget for 2013/14. Headline figures include savings of £32 million in the coming year coupled with an increase in Council Tax of 2%. The meeting agreed moves to revisit problems associated with the street lighting PFI contract.

Potholes on Weirs Drove have been reported to Highways.

5 (3) District Councillor's Report

ECDC is in the third year of a medium term financial strategy which should deliver savings of over £2M by 2015. The success of the plan means the authority will not be proposing any new cuts to services or funding for the next financial year.

ECDC Councillors are proposing a 2% increase in Council Tax and this will go to Full Council later in February.

Neighbourhood Panels continue despite attendance by Parish Councillors and members of the public decreasing. Councillor Alderson felt that the value of the meetings is to resolve issues that require cross agency involvement, especially that of the Police.

5 (4) Financial Report

The Parish Council is in a financially stable situation and expects to provide a substantial surplus over the course of the financial year.

It would appear that for the next financial year, the Parish Council will receive its precept of £7,150, less £10 - due to the impact of the new council tax discount scheme. Whilst this was not a concern to councillors in the next Financial Year, they felt it would become a worry should funding compensation, to be provided in the next financial year, not be continued in subsequent financial years.

5 (5) Neighbourhood Panels Report

No members attended any such meetings during the last month.

5 (6) Parish Council Members Meetings

No members attended any such meetings during the last month.

5 (7) Play Spaces Officer Report

There was no activity to report. The ROSPA annual inspection will take place in April 2013.

5 (8) Rights of Way Report

Letters to landowners who have been delinquent in cutting their hedges had been sent. The **Rights of Way Officer** will check whether any of the paths have subsequently been cleared. The matter will then be escalated, by **the Clerk**, to the relevant person at the County Council.

5 (9) Speedwatch

There was no activity during the previous month. Speedwatch Officer Grahame Radford has resigned due to pressure of work. The Clerk was asked to try and recruit a replacement.

The Clerk reported on a conversation with Highways where it was stated that should any traffic calming measures be proposed for the entry to the village on the Swaffham Road, the 30mph signs would need to be moved. **The Clerk** will seek advice from Highways on this possible opportunity.

5 (10) Village Centre Report

The main focus of activity presently is on the forthcoming Fair. Councillor Dunnett reminded other councillors that help prior to and on the day would be required – and much appreciated. Prices for the fairground rides will be as the previous year.

5 (11) 24Acres Committee Report

The cricket pitch and orchard are now fully funded and the orchard trees have been planted. Funding for the Woodland will come from the Forestry Commission but prior to this an archaeological dig will take place on April 21st, supervised by Claire Halpin-McDonald. It is hoped that the 2,900 woodland trees will be planted towards the end of 2013 and the manege constructed during late summer 2013.

6. Avenue of Limes Status

The trees were planted on the 22nd December 2012. However, an issue arose regarding the close proximity of 16 of the trees to the Scheduled Monument, on the left hand side of the Swaffham Road as you leave Reach, just before the railway bridge. A meeting took place between the Clerk, English Heritage and the landowner with Claire Halpin-McDonald also in attendance. Whilst the Parish Council remained unconvinced that it has planted improperly, faced with instructions from English Heritage it resolved that the 16 trees will be removed by the end of February 2013 and replanted elsewhere. The Clerk will communicate this decision on the 7th February to Smiths Gore, the landowner and English Heritage.

7. Land Registration

This item was deferred until a subsequent meeting.

8. Planning Applications

There were none.

9. Information Items

The Clerk announced that the Village Visions Consultation will start on 11th February 2013 and run for six weeks. Further information can be found at: www.eastcambs.gov.uk/local-development-framework/east-cambridgeshire-local-plan or from the ECDC section of the village website.

10. Payments

Wildlife Trust	Subscription	£36.00
David Thomas	Orchard Expenses	£75.26
CR Contracting	Reach Wood Meadow Mowing	£198.00
David Parr	Various Expenses	£50.47
Deacons Nursery	Orchard Trees	£428.20

The date of the next meeting will be Wednesday 6th March 2013 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: