



Minutes of Annual Reach Parish meeting held on; Wednesday 7th May 2014.

Attendance

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

Plus members of the Reach public

Police Report

As you can see, total reported crime for the period 01.04.2013 – 01.04.2014 is in line with previous years

	Burglary Dwelling	Burglary Other	Theft	Other
01.04.2013 – 01.04.2014	1	4	7	
01.04.2012 – 01.04.2013	5	6	3	
01.04.2011 – 01.04.2012		1	8	4

- Other includes domestic related crimes and drugs related crimes.

I and my colleagues have conducted patrols in the village, some of which were overnight and some were in unmarked vehicles.

Reach, like the majority of East Cambs is a safe area to live and work, it is a low crime area which is something I and my Police colleagues hope to help maintain in the future.

Crime prevention is something which everybody, residents and Police are responsible for, we always encourage residents to take relevant steps to ensure the safety of their property.

For those who are not already signed up, ECOPs is an email based alert system where you can get regular updates on what is going on in your area as well as receiving crime prevention advice and other information, it is free and you can sign up at the Cambridgeshire Constabulary website

Finally, I am always only a phone call or an email away should anybody need some advice or help. You can contact me either by calling 101 and asking for me or you can email me via the Cambridgeshire Constabulary website. Please continue to report crimes on 101 and in an emergency always dial 999.

Chairman's Report

Development of the 24Acres has continued apace in the last 12 months. Approval of a funding request to the Forestry Commission allowed the planting of the woodland to go ahead. Following careful planning by Nick Acklam and Steve Boreham a sunny weekend saw a good turnout by the village for the planting, and most of the mixed native woodland was planted up. The execution of this project has received some incredible support from many individuals, too numerous to mention.

The cricket field got off to a slow start during 2013, a result of the wet spring and dry summer. However, the grass is now looking good, ready for the inaugural match on 1st June. Installation of a storage container and a composting toilet are further additions to this project.

A colourful information board for the orchard, designed by Jon Cane, has been installed at the

entrance to the 24Acres, and oak benches made by local carpenter Jamie Cakebread have been put in place.

We are still hoping to find funding for development of the Manege – applications to Sport England have now twice been refused. However, we won't give up.

Many people in the village were alarmed by proposals to develop a large solar farm on land close to the village – a pre-submission screening application was submitted by Solar Associates Ltd. The Parish Council wrote to ECDC with its recommendation that a full environmental impact assessment was needed, and members of the Parish Council made clear their opposition to the proposal, its scale (the largest such scheme in the UK) and the way the scheme had been announced. Information was widely distributed and many people wrote to ECDC. Whether or not the various actions taken were the reason, the developer decided not to take the scheme any further, to the evident relief of many in our community.

To commemorate the birth of the first child of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, the Parish Council approved a proposal from Councillor Harrison for commemorative mugs to be purchased by the Parish Council and given to the children of the village. Funding for the mugs was received from the Amenity Fund.

Refuse collection in the village saw some changes – wheelie bins were introduced as part of the efforts to increase the amount of recycling which takes place in Cambridgeshire with the aim being to achieve a rate of 50% by the year 2020 (from a baseline of 37%). By March this year the local authority had already reached that target - recycling 54% of its rubbish.

After several years in the position of Parish Clerk, David Parr retired 'to spend more time with his family'. We are all grateful for the service he has provided. We are glad to welcome Susan Bailey as the new Parish Clerk.

Financially, it was, yet again, a very successful year for the village with the Parish Council having a surplus from its normal activities of over £1,300 (which goes into our reserves).

A budget for YE 2015 was approved which allowed the Parish Council to freeze the precept for the fourth year running at the level of £7,150.

Financial Report

Based on unaudited accounts YE 2014

The Parish Council has achieved a very good financial result this year and expects to provide a surplus of nearly £1,400 from its normal business for the year ending March 2014. (This excludes projects 24Acres). This figure may increase slightly once the accounts are finalised and audited.

Income from normal business was at £10,159 compared to a budget of £8,270. This is mainly due to a larger than expected income received by the cemetery.

Certain expenditure forecasts which did not occur, for instance we budgeted £400 for hedge cutting which was not necessary this year.

Unrestricted reserves (money not allocated to certain projects) are at £6,909, which is 79% of annual normal, spend.

The budget for YE2015, which has the precept held at last year's level, shows a small surplus of £15.

County Council Report

It was a huge honour to be re-elected as Conservative County Councillor for Burwell Division (covering Burwell, Reach, Swaffham Bulbeck and Swaffham Prior) at the elections on 2nd May 2013. Thank you to all who voted for me and gave me the opportunity to continue to represent you all. The overall County elections resulted in Cambridgeshire County Council becoming a Council with no overall control. The Conservative Party remains the single largest party on the Council with 32 of the 69 seats. One of the first acts of the new Council was to change from a Cabinet system of governance to a Committee system from the next Annual Meeting, the earliest timing the law allows. This change will take effect on 13 May 2014. One of those to lose their seat at the election was Nick Clarke, then Leader of the Council. Cllr Martin Curtis from Whittlesey was elected the new Leader of the Council. I had the honour of being appointed as Cabinet member for Children and Young People.

As a member of Cabinet, wrestling with the Business Plan for the next 4 years has taken up considerable time. Wrestling with the financial challenges of ever increasing demand and tightening budgets saw us proposing a Council Tax increase of 1.99%, whilst still delivering savings of £32 million in the

coming year. Looking back over the year we have made good progress in a number of areas. We have secured funding for the A14 upgrade without the use of tolling; we are making good progress with delivering the Ely Southern Crossing and with the new Science Park station. We achieved a significant repayment from the contractors for the Guided Busway. We are also delivering new schools to meet the growing demands of living in the fastest growing County in the Country. We are also re-designing how we deliver services to make them more targeted as well as delivering the required savings and looking at new ways of generating income so we are less reliant on Central Government funding. Examples in these areas including the re-configuring of Children's Centres to reduce management; increasingly working with other Local Authorities through sharing services; work through the Troubled families Initiative; and exploring the possibility for the County Council to develop affordable housing on County Council land.

I have sat on a number of committees and groups during the year to help deliver these issues. These include: Constitution and Ethics Committee; Appointments and Remuneration Committee; the Local Safeguarding Children Board; Children's Trust; East of England Portfolio Holders for Children and Young People; North Ely Growth Working Party; Burwell Masterplan Working Party; the Local Government Association Rural Commission and Rural Policy Review Group; the Children in Care Council; Cambridgeshire Improvement Board; as well as Cabinet and Full Council.

I have also been approached for help and guidance by a number of local groups and residents on a wide range of topics from individual issues over social care to securing the roll-over of funding for a new road crossing in Swaffham Bulbeck.

It has been a busy and varied year and I am sure the coming year will be no different.

District Council

See attached.

Swaffham Prior Parochial Charities

See attached.

Amenity Fund

The committee this year made grants towards restoration of the church (£500) and mugs to celebrate the birth of Prince George (£300). In addition, sums were paid out to the following projects, payments to which had been agreed the previous year: orchard (£250), woodland (£250), cricket pitch (£500), avenue of limes (£250). In addition there remains an outstanding commitment to pay £500 towards a manege, should the leaders of that project be successful in securing other funding.

The fund currently stands at £2616.09, which is expected to be embellished by money from a very good fair.

The committee looks forward to receiving applications for either facilities or events which benefit members of the parish

Village Centre

No report received.

District Councillor's Annual Report - 2014

(1)

The Council's budget

By making savings last year and this year we have produced a balanced budget without increasing council tax.

Waste collection details

In March 2012\13 we recycled 30.13% of our waste. In March 2013\14 this had risen to 55.12%

For the 2012\13 year East Cambs was in 286th position out of 352 English authorities. Since the service change we have risen to 51st position and are the top performer of Cambridge shire authorities

Housing figures

16 new Housing Association homes were built in 2013\14, builds and applications in the pipeline suggest 79 rented and shared equity homes will be built in 2014\15

There will also be two new GLT developments started this year, at Soham and Swaffham Prior.

Ely Southern Bypass

This was given planning permission by ECDC in February of this year. But because English Heritage are now objecting, Sir James Paice MP, the Dean of Ely Cathedral, James Palmer leader of ECDC, and Paul Day managing director of Turners of Soham have called the bypass to be decided by Mr Eric Pickles, the governments communities minister

Ely's Markets

Ely Markets are operated by ECDC and are recognised as among the best in our region and are a popular attraction for residents, visitors and tourists alike

They are expected to generate over £170,000 income in 2014\15 well in excess of its budgeted costs and will make an anticipated contribution to the Council's budget of £77,000

(2)

Ely's new cinema

Turnstone are expected to put in a planning application for a Cineworld six screen cinema on the eastern by-pass by downham Road in about six weeks.

They will provide a 500 car carpark and an underpass under the A142 for access by pedestrians and cyclists.

Also included will be six food outlets and a family pub.

ECDC are currently working with Sport England to produce a sports centre and swimming pool on adjoining land.

Neighbourhood Panels

These were ceased from 31st March 2014, as it was felt they no longer served their purpose and had been overtaken by other means of communication such as 'Shape your Place', which uses the internet

New Committees

At the moment ECDC has two statutory regulatory committees (Planning and Licencing) and five other committees. From this next municipal year we will be reducing the five to three and combining their workloads, this should result in financial savings.

Committees, ect

During the last year I have been a member of the Licencing and Environment committees.

Also vice chairman of the Development + Transport committee, the last 3 months as its Chairman.

I was also a member of the Neighbourhood Panel Review Group, plus the Swaffham Internal Drainage Board, in which capacity I attended the Association of Drainage Authorities Annual meeting in London and a seminar in Peterborough.

(3)

Locally

I have been involved in monitoring fly-tipping and Traveller activity, we have seen a reduction in both of these in the last year

I also continue to promote our last shop and post office (at Swaitham Bulbeck) this is a most important facility for the community, we must make sure that we don't lose it

Lastly I have been involved in several housing and planning issues in the ward

Allen Alderson

Swaffham Charity Report

It was a small request this year for financial help among the two villages. We have however been able to with disabled equipment that is not available from NHS.

The charity is looking into the prospect of helping with a skateboard facility at the Swaffham prior youth club.

Christmas payments to those eligible were distributed. Money available for distribution is raised from rents from allotments and also from investments. The amounts vary according to interest rates.

The John Norris seat is to be erected on the green behind the church on the green in front of Swaffham Prior cemetery.

Donations as usual are given to Swaffham Prior school usually about £500.

John Norris

Report collated by Susan Bailey – Parish Clerk.