



## Minutes of Reach Parish Council meeting held on; Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

### Attendance

Charlotte Cane	Chair	Present
Hilary Fielding	Vice Chair	Present
Alex de Giorgio-Miller	Councillor	Not Present
Diana Ward	Councillor	Present
Andrew Trump	Councillor	Present
David McMillan	Councillor	Not Present
Nathan Bridgeman	Councillor	Present
Susan Bailey	Clerk	Present
Allen Alderson	District Councillor	Present
Joshua Schumann	County Councillor	Not Present

### Apologies for absence

Received and approved

### Forum for members of the public.

A member of the public asked for an update on the Dykes End Pub situation. The PC are continuing with the process of confirming that insurance cover is in place and repairs as requested are carried out.

A member of the public voiced concern about the pathway along Fair Green and the Swaffham Road. The overgrown verge and hedges are encroaching on the path making it more and more difficult to use.

### 1. Declaration of Interests

Councillor Cane declared an interest in the broadband discussion.

### 2. Guest speaker – Andrew Glover - Fibre Assets Ltd.

“Fibre Assets Ltd, in collaboration with Air Broadband, have submitted a street works application in order to install fibre optic broadband to the majority of premises in the village. This will significantly enhance the internet speeds (100Mbps and upwards), reliability and performance. It is hoped that works will start in mid-late September and last for 1-2months. 4 connection boxes will be needed around the village. Most of the village will be able to connect to this service, from and including Ditchfield, the 30mph sign on Burwell Road and the Blackberry Drove bend on Great Lane because the road narrows there and would need to be closed to allow trenching. The PC were disappointed the entire village would not be connected. Andrew Glover stated that they would work towards connecting the remaining houses. Other areas of the village can be included, the pub, church, village centre. The idea of the entire green being covered was also discussed. More information will be provided shortly including a village meeting and every house will be contacted to determine if, where and how they may wish to be connected. They will also work to minimise the disruption as much as possible

### 3. The Dykes End Pub

Discussion took place during the confidential session.

#### **4. Planning Applications**

There were none.

It was noted that now there is no local plan, the re submission of refused applications is expected. It was also noted that the Barston Drove site had submitted driveway and landscaping plans to discharge their conditions 7 & 8.

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#### **5. County Councillor Report**

None received.

#### **6. District Councillor Report**

The Frustrations of being a Local Planning Authority

Until the Town and Country Planning Act 1947, owners of land could essentially build whatever they wanted on their own land. The Act established that planning permission was now required to build on land regardless of ownership.

Local planning authorities, of which East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) is one, control development through the local plan. The Local Plan sets out the policies against which applications are judged and either refused or given permission. One of those policies is the "Development Envelope" around villages and settlements - basically a line, outside of which planning permission is not normally given. If an application is refused planning permission they have the right to appeal that decision to the government through a national planning inspector; interestingly, third parties can't appeal.

Local planning authorities have targets for new housing numbers over the planning period – the government basically tells ECDC how many houses it must try to get the market to deliver. ECDCs local planning focuses development on the bigger areas such as Ely, Littleport, Soham and Burwell, with less land being allocated for development in the villages and smaller settlements.

The District Council have just lost an appeal in Fordham, brought forward by a company called Gladmans, for a site of about 100 houses outside of the development envelope. The National Inspector ruled that the council could no longer "Demonstrate a 5-year land supply". Basically, what it means is that the inspector decided that there are not enough houses being built in the district to reach targets.

The effect of this legal ruling is that applications cannot now be refused only for the reason of being outside the development envelope. Applications will still be judged against, and have to comply with, other relevant planning policies in the local plan, but for now, the development envelopes effectively disappear.

Many residents don't like this situation as it means that people can apply for planning permission anywhere – it is fair to say that the district council is not that pleased about it either!

The frustration for the District Council is that it can give all the planning permission it likes, but it has no powers to actually force developers to build the houses. The irony of the Gladmans appeal is that it was the same company who put the council into the same situation a couple of years ago with a site at Witchford for around 140 houses, where it won the same argument and put the council into the same situation of having no 5-year land supply. There are still no houses built on that land at Witchford, which helps Gladmans legal case in the Fordham appeal – It is perverse!

Cynics might say it is a deliberate tactic on the part of a big national developer (who, in my humble opinion, appears not to be interested whatsoever in building homes for people, but is interested in turning land that is not the best land to be built on into development land and selling it off).

All is not lost however, as the council foresaw this situation and has been working with a new local plan which we hope to be able to adopt after it has been through the national inspection process later this year or early next year. This will wipe the slate clean on the past lack of delivery and will regain control of our 5-year land supply once again, meaning the development envelope will be back in place. Given that the development of a new local plan is such a lengthy process, I suspect that we will need to begin working on a new local plan as soon as the emerging local plan is adopted.

To say it is frustrating is an understatement!

#### District Councillors Report July 2018

Along with my normal council duties I also attended a site visit to DS Smiths at Fordham. They are Europe's leading supplier of cardboard packaging. The company was founded in London in 1940. It now employs 27,000 people and operates in 36 countries. Its staff at Fordham are nearly all local coming mainly from Ely and Burwell. It has a very safe and clean working environment.

Last but not least I was chosen to represent our council at the Queen's annual garden party at Buckingham Palace on 5th June 2018. It was a great honour and a truly unforgettable day. The garden has a wide variety of trees and a rose garden of HT and floribunda roses. The garden sits in 47 acres.

## **7. Minutes of previous Meeting**

Approved as correct.

### **8.1 Reach Grant Fund**

An application email had been received, asking for help to raise funds to travel to the World Scout Jamboree in West Virginia, USA. The PC appreciate that it is a great achievement for these scouts to be given the opportunity to attend this event. However, there were reservations on the justification of this as a use for Grant fund monies. **Clerk** to ask the boys to complete the Grant fund application and to give more details on how they will bring benefit to the village residents from this event.

### **8.2 Finance**

A quote for £190 had been received for the removal of a dying Cherry tree on The Green. **Clerk** to give the go ahead. It was noted that another cherry tree on the green by the bus stop was also dying. **Clerk** to ask for a price to cut back or remove this tree as required.

The hedge on the footpath leading from Reach wood to the byway at the back of Ditchfield has become overgrown **Clerk** to get quotes and talk to land owners.

The hedge by the carpark and old playground will be cut.

### **8.3 Parish Council Members**

There were none.

### **8.4 Play Spaces**

All equipment fixed now – Kompan sent replacement parts for free.

A quote had been received to remove Albert's bench, clean it up, sand, varnish and reposition it in new playground on a concrete base. The Pc considered that the bench should be left where it is for the time being, because it might well fit within the plans for that area. A Marmax products recycled plastic benches which has a more traditional look was proposed for the memorial benches. The PC approved this in a brown colour. A total price will be given for the bench and its installation. The PC will clarify that it will only take responsibility for on-going minor maintenance.

Residents had commented that it would be useful to have benches in the new playground, but there are a number of other areas around the village which could benefit from a bench. (by the swings on the green, beside the port bridge underneath the sycamore on the left of the bins). The PC was happy to discuss benches in other areas should more sponsors be received.

It was suggested that all companies that advertise in the village magazine should be approached for sponsorship.

There is a lot of bird mess on the new swings. A quote had been requested to install bird spikes on top bar of regular swings, basket swing and baby swings.

#### Old playground area development:

Old playground was closed on 30th June. Work starts on 9th July. Insurance and waste carrier licence have been received.

Councillor de Giorgio-Miller had had a meeting with Tom Cockerton, the Garden Team Manager and Co-Manager at Prospects Trust and he is going away to develop some designs with costs for the project, including the table tennis table and picnic benches. The 'Postcode local trust' provide financial support for charities and good causes which help communities enhance their natural environment in a way that benefits the wider community. Application process opens August 1st. £500-£20000 available if registered charity. **Councillor Trump** to discuss with the village centre committee to see if they are happy to work with the PC on this project. **Councillor de Giorgio-Miller** will look into it and get things in place to apply in August, bringing a final plan to the August meeting. The Co-op applications don't open again until 2019. The solar farm provides small grants but applications will be required in February.

### **8.5 Rights of Way**

Councillor Trump had heard back from Highways regarding the pot hole and road edge situation on Little Fen Drove. They had been to inspect and felt that no further action was require. This is not acceptable. **Councillor Fielding** to contact Councillor Josh Schumann.

#### **8.6 24Acres Committee**

Nothing to report.

#### **8.7 Friends of Reach wood**

The meadow was cut, as agreed, on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> July and will be cut again later in the year.

#### **8.8 GDPR**

Consent forms have been produced for new councillors to sign regarding the keeping of Councillors interest forms for 1 year after they leave, and all other details to be retained indefinitely for historical interest.

#### **9. War memorial maintenance**

The War Memorial Trusts Conservation team had declined the grant request. Following discussion, it was decided that the memorial would be cleaned by the PC and village volunteers.

#### **10. Standing Orders**

These had been updated. Following discussion and amendments these were approved. **Councillor Ward** to make amendments and circulate.

#### **11. August Meeting**

It was decided that due to the amount of activity in various areas of the village that an August meeting would go ahead.

#### **13. Information Items/AOB**

There was none.

#### **14. Payments**

S. Bailey – Clerk salary	£1,447.29
S. Bailey – postage	£17.46
CR Contracting – mowing contract	£255.50
E. On - power on the green	£15.75
Icon signs – playground sign	£150.00
N Bridgeman – PC Grant Fund –Sports day	£54.25
C. Tayleur – PC Grant Fund – Sports day	£29.40
Bailey - PC Grant Fund – Sports day	£35.00
A de Giorgio-Miller – playing field key	£6.50
J Garner – old playground removal	£3,900.00
Ernest Doe & sons – 24Acres mower	£4,000.00

The date of the **next meeting** will be **Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2018 at 7.30pm**. The Agenda for the meeting will be issued by the previous Wednesday and can be accessed from the Parish Council area of the Reach website ([www.reach-village.co.uk](http://www.reach-village.co.uk)).

Chairman:

Date:

