



Reed Parish Council

Clerk: Catharine Toms, 1 High Street, Barkway SG8 8EA

Tel: 07763 167116 e mail: clerk@reedparishcouncil.co.uk

Councillors Email:

Cllr. Ken Langley (Chair) - langley@reedparishcouncil.co.uk

Cllr. Caroline d'Ayala (Vice-Chair) - dayala@reedparishcouncil.co.uk

Cllr. Martin Higgs - higgs@reedparishcouncil.co.uk

Cllr. Peter Lawrence - lawrence@reedparishcouncil.co.uk

Cllr. John Kershaw - kershaw@reedparishcouncil.co.uk

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 2nd September 2020 at 7.30pm
held remotely via Zoom.**

**Present Cllrs: K Langley (Chair), C d'Ayala (Vice Chair), P Lawrence, M Higgs, J
Kershaw.**

In attendance the Clerk Catharine Toms & two members of the public.

This meeting would be recorded for the purpose of the minutes

- 1.9.20 **Attendance** (as above)
- 2.9.20 **To receive apologies for absence.** None.
- 3.9.20 **To receive Members Declarations of Interest.** Cllr. d'Ayala (re: item 15.9.20) and Cllr. Lawrence (re: item 11.9.20).
- 4.9.20 **To approve the Minutes of the Meetings of the Parish Council held on 1st July, 22nd July and 13th August and to authorise the Chairman to sign them as a true record** – It was proposed, seconded and approved by all. Resolved.
- 5.9.20 **To invite Members of the Public to address the meeting.** Standing Orders were suspended to allow members of the public to address the Council. The Webmaster spoke regarding the requirement for public bodies to have a website that met accessibility standards and the deadline to publish an accessibility statement by 23rd Sept. The requirement was not about design of the website but the functionality and delivery of the information to the user. He had conducted an audit of the website which had highlighted areas of non-compliance. Some issues had been fixed but others were beyond his capability to resolve. A company recommended by Herts Assoc. of Parish and Town Councils (HAPTC) were quoting £700 to build a compliant website with an additional cost of £200 per annum for hosting and support. The Webmaster agreed to put together an accessibility statement identifying where the website was and was not compatible and how it was intended to mitigate the problems. He was thanked for all his research and it was agreed that Cllrs. d'Ayala, Kershaw and the Webmaster would liaise to sort out the problem bearing in mind that there was no budget available to spend on having a new website built this year. To be reported on at the November meeting. **Action: CD/JK.** Standing Orders were resumed.

To receive the Reed e-Newsletter and other important messages from Reed Parish Council, please subscribe to the mailing list via the front page of the Reed Village website: www.reedparishcouncil.co.uk

6.9.20 **To receive Chairman's Report** (see Appendix A)

7.9.20 **To receive report from County Councillor** – Cllr. Hill reported that the matter regarding the tree outside the school had been resolved. Unfortunately, the application for S106 monies for the school had been rejected by the legal officers at NHDC because it did not fit the criteria set between the developer and NHDC. Cllr. Hill to arrange a meeting between NHDC officers, Cllr. Langley, the Chair of School Governors and herself to try and overcome hurdles. A reminder was given that responses were needed by 16th Sept. to the Speed Management Consultation. She had endorsed the Parish Council's objection to the development on Mill Corner Farm. Cllr. Langley to talk to Chair of Governors regarding S106.

Action: KL

8.9.20 **To receive report from District Councillor** – Cllr. Morris reported that an NHDC Extraordinary Council meeting had debated the possibility of Hertfordshire becoming a Unitary Authority. At present there were 10 Dist. Councils plus 1 County Council which would all merge into one to save a lot of money. A report commissioned estimated the savings to be about £143m across the district. A downside might be that Councillors taking on the jobs would become more remote. However, Unitary Councils had been set up elsewhere, and most were working successfully. It could mean more responsibility for the Parish Councils. An Autumn White Paper would give more information.

9.9.20 **To review action points from the meeting on 1st July 2020** – this was reviewed and actions agreed (not included elsewhere in the minutes) were: Clerk to contact Cricket Club regarding Annual Meeting, low level branches around the Green not to be trimmed unless Bonfire Night took place, play area disclaimer signs to be finalised and put up by Cllr Kershaw, registering of Cart Wash and Pitties Pond to be deferred until 2021 due to Covid. Proposed, seconded and all in agreement. Resolved. Clerk to produce list of new action points. (see Appendix B). **Action: Clerk**

10.9.20 **To receive report from the Clerk on current financial position** - Copies of the accounts and list of monies received and payments to be authorised had been emailed to all Cllrs. Accounts showed a bank balance of £15,647.91 of which £10,195.00 was Push Energy Community Contribution (ring-fenced for special projects), £900.50 was Bonfire Night reserves, £1163.00 was P3 grant balance, leaving general reserves at £3,389.41. Thanks were given to County Cllr. Hill for her Locality Grant award of £502.00 towards the cost of the informative village signs

11.9.20 **To agree accounts for payment** - Payments to be authorised at the meeting were Clerk's salary and PAYE, the hire of Reed Village Hall 2019/20 (£84.00) and Planning webinars via HAPTC for Cllr. D'Áyala (£90.00). Proposed, seconded and approved by all. Resolved.

12.9.20 **To note completion of period of Public Rights for inspection of accounting records for the year ended 31.03.20** – The Clerk reported that the 30 working days ended on 28th August, no requests were received for inspection.

13.9.20 **To discuss setting up a Reed Planning Group to organise a response to current developments and imminent changes to the planning system** – After discussion it was proposed, seconded and agreed, that in order to save time at Council meetings, a Planning Working Party would be set up by two Cllrs. Langley and d'Áyala, with the aim of co-opting members of the public with an interest or expertise in planning to assist. The Clerk to obtain the recording and slides from recent planning webinars organised by HAPTC (attended by Cllr. d'Áyala and the Clerk) and disseminate these to all Cllrs. for information. It was all agreed that this working party would, under delegated responsibility,

To receive the Reed e-Newsletter and other important messages from Reed Parish Council, please subscribe to the mailing list via the front page of the Reed Village website: www.reedparishcouncil.co.uk

respond (if deemed appropriate) to recent consultations on the reform of the planning system. Resolved.

14.9.20 To discuss access gate being used from meadow of Southview Farm onto the Green – After discussion it was proposed, seconded and agreed by all for Cllr. Langley to write a polite letter asking the person to cease using the gate for vehicular access across the Green as it was not a permitted access and for reasons of safety for other users of the Green.

Action: KL/Clerk

15.9.20 Save The Cabinet – Standing orders were suspended to allow a member of the Save The Cabinet Action Group (SCAG) to address the meeting. News had recently been received from NHDC saying that they were not going to take any enforcement action on breach of the planning enforcement notice that was supposed to prevent the current unlawful use of The Cabinet as a house. However, if the business now running in a small part of the building were to close, then ongoing use of the building as a residence could lead to prosecution in the courts. NHDC had made it clear that the decision was entirely separate from the question of determining the current applications for planning and listed buildings consent. So the important thing to focus on now was the outstanding planning applications which were due to be determined in October. These applications must be refused in order to maintain The Cabinet's status as a pub. The battle was not over and it would continue to be fought vigorously. Stand Orders were resumed.

16.9.20 To receive update regarding the Wisbridge Farm Reservoir project – (see item 6.9.20) Cllr. Magill from Barkway PC had written to the Environment Agency (EA) asking about water extraction and how they were going to agree that the reservoir would be filled. No response had been received, as yet. NHDC also needed to investigate if the conditions upon which the Certificate of Lawfulness had been granted had been met, then if not, it would render that certificate void. The matter was ongoing and would be added to the topics to be discussed by the new Planning Working Party. **Action: KL/CD**

17.9.20 To receive update on further proposals for usage of S106/UU monies from Kilns Dev. (see item 9.9.20)

18.9.20 Highways – to receive update on collapsed pipe near Gladstone Villas - it was reported that since the developer of the Kilns had made an adjustment to the overflow pipe, there had been no re-occurrence of the flooding. This would be monitored.

19.9.20 Highways – to receive update on blocked ditch – Cllr Langley had written to the landowner and had agreed to meet him to discuss helping him with a working party to make access for a vehicle to clear the ditch.

20.9.20 Highways – to receive update on silted up ditches around the Green – Highways had responded saying that there was no funding available, so were unable to help. Cllr. Hill to establish if it was actually Highways responsibility, rather than the landowner's responsibility. The grips not being mowed due to wilding policy but would be useful if Highways could just maintain the grips to allow water to run off the road. Derek Gerrard had been asked about this back in June, but had not responded. This email to be forwarded to Cllr. Hill. **Action: Clerk**

21.9.20 Highways – to receive update on blocked drains - It was noted that a number of drains had now been marked in blue by Highways, so it was hoped that these were on schedule to be dealt with.

22.9.20 Highways – to receive update on blocked pipe into Pitties Pond – it was thought it might be blocked by masonry – however, there was no funding available from Highways to deal with this.

To receive the Reed e-Newsletter and other important messages from Reed Parish Council, please subscribe to the mailing list via the front page of the Reed Village website: www.reedparishcouncil.co.uk

23.9.20 To discuss Bonfire Night 2020 and decide if the event can go ahead and in what format – Thanks were given to all those that had been involved with email discussions regarding the event. Standing Orders were suspended to allow a member of the Public to address the Council. The questions were whether the event could be put on safely and whether it could be financed, as there would be less income likely due to restrictions. A smaller event had been considered. As it was run by volunteers, it was considered to be too much responsibility for them to ensure that the event could be run in a Covid-safe manner. Standing Orders were resumed.

It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all that, with much regret, the 2020 event could not go ahead. The Council committed that the funds available would be kept until 2021. Resolved.

24.9.20 To receive bi-monthly play area inspection report and note any maintenance carried out – Cllr. Higgs had completed an inspection report and this would be circulated. Some items he considered needed attention before the winter. After discussion it was proposed, seconded and agreed that it would be better if one Cllr. could be responsible for doing the inspections as it was subjective matter. That Cllr. would also be responsible for overseeing any agreed maintenance issues. The Village sign to be added to the schedule of inspection. Cllr. Kershaw agreed to take on this role. Resolved. **Action: JK**

25.9.20 To receive update regarding informative sign and P3 project and to acknowledge grant received from Cllr. Hill's Locality Budget – Cllr. Kershaw agreed to chase up progress on the sign which had been delayed due to Covid. County Cllr. Hill was thanked for the contribution from her Locality Budget. **Action: JK**

26.9.20 To receive update regarding Push Energy fund expenditure and bulb planting 3rd Oct – Cllr Higgs reported that the memorial Mulberry tree would be purchased and planted this Autumn and bulbs were about to be purchased for planting around the Green shortly. A group of volunteers would be asked to help. It was hoped that further bulbs could be planted in other areas of the village the following year. **Action: MH**

27.9.20 To receive matters for report and or referral to next agenda. (Information only) – Website Accessibility, Planning Working Party, Village Informative Signs

28.9.20 To note correspondence received. (Information only) – Nothing not already covered elsewhere in the meeting.

29.9.20 To agree date of next meeting. 4th November 2020. Agreed.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.20pm