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Councillors Email:

Cllr. Ken Langley (Chair) - langley@reedparishcouncil.co.uk
Cllr. Caroline d'Ayala (Vice-Chair) - dayala@reedparishcouncil.co.uk
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Cllr. Barbara Blower - blower@reedparishcouncil.co.uk
Cllr. Nick Payne - payne@reedparishcouncil.co.uk

Minutes of the meeting held on 4th January 2024 at 7.30pm held at Reed Village Hall.

Present Cllrs: K Langley (Chair), C d'Ayala (Vice Chair), E Kilby, B Blower and N Payne.

In attendance the Clerk Catharine Toms, Dist. Cllr. G Morris and five members of the public.

This meeting would be recorded for the purpose of the minutes.

1.01.24 **Attendance.** As listed above.

2.01.24 **To receive apologies for absence.** County Cllr. F Hill (attending another meeting). Apology accepted.

3.01.24 **To receive Members Declarations of Interest and note dispensation granted.** Cllr. d'Ayala (item 18.01.24). Cllr. Kilby, for his period of office, a dispensation allowing him full participation at meetings in issues arising concerning The Cabinet public house including, but not limited to, planning matters.

4.01.24 **To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 1st November 2023 and to authorise the Chairman to sign them as a true record.** An amendment was required to item 3.11.23 to document Cllr. Kilby's dispensation granted. It was proposed, seconded and all voted in favour to approve the amended minutes. Resolved. Approved minutes to be posted on the website. **Action: Clerk/Webmaster**

Standing Orders were suspended.

5.01.24 **To invite Members of the Public to address the meeting.** A member of the public wished to bring to the attention of the Parish Council the untidy mess outside a Housing Association property in Blacksmiths Lane. The tenants were carrying out work on the house and the garden was now cluttered and the highway verge outside destroyed. It was asked if anything could be done about the situation. Cllr. Langley agreed to inform Settle Homes. **Action: KL.**

The Chair agreed to suspend Standing Orders during the meeting if members of the public wished to speak on agenda items.

Standing Orders were resumed.

6.01.24 **To receive Chairman's Report** – (See Appendix A)

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www.reedparishcouncil.co.uk

7.01.24 **To receive report from District Councillor** – Dist. Cllr. Morris reported that a planning application had just been submitted by Rands to widen access to their field from the A10. The Parish Council were yet to receive notification on this. It was noted that Reed Parish Council had not been consulted on the latest planning application relating to the Wisbridge Reservoir (to remove condition 9 – removal of excess material from the site), although Barkway had been consulted. The Clerk to contact the Planning Case Officer at North Herts Council (NHC). **Action: Clerk**

He advised the Parish Council that there was now a new Enforcement Officer at NHC and that it would be worth SCAG contacting them regarding The Cabinet. Cllr. Kilby asked Cllr. Morris to find out if the frustrating lack of willingness by Officers at NHC to discuss matters with interested parties was unique to NHC or whether it was a country-wide situation.

8.01.24 **To receive report from County Councillor** – County Cllr. Hill had submitted a report in her absence. Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) had put additional funding into Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and in addition into Education, Health and Care Plans. They were recruiting and training more staff. She had visited Reed First School and they were still investigating ways to resolve the speeding/parking issues outside the school.

Works were now completed on the entrance to the old Red Lion site and a request had been submitted for improvements to be made to the road surface in that area. All damaged/fallen signs had been reported for repair or replacement. Free salt had been provided by HCC for the village grit bin. The need for maintenance near the bus stop on the A10 had also been reported.

She had responded to numerous surveys/consultations including ones from the NHS, NHC proposal to increase car parking charges, the Cambridge congestion charge. She had also voiced her concerns on the proposals for alterations to waste services provided by NHC.

Standing Orders were resumed.

Cllrs. Morris and Hill were thanked for submitting their reports.

Dist. Cllr. Morris departed from the meeting at 7.55pm.

9.01.24 **To receive a pre application update report from representatives of the Turney Trust regarding RD1** – A pre-application had been prepared to submit to NHC by February with the aim, once feedback had been received from NHC and HCC Highways, to submit a formal planning application in the summer. Ahead of that, an opportunity would be made for the village and other interested parties to view the full plans and make comment. It was anticipated that the building work would take between 18 months and 2 years. The initial plans showed a development of 24 dwelling, split into 3 sections. The western section off Blacksmiths Lane would be housing association homes, with shared ownership and rented properties. The middle section would be Turney Trust houses, which would be offered to people under the rules of the Trust for those in need, with priority being given to people of Reed and Therfield. It was mentioned that some of their existing housing stock needed renovation, so some existing tenants could be relocated to Reed. The remainder of the site would be for open market properties. Site RD1 was an allocated site within the NHC adopted Local Plan and it was hoped this development would bring a benefit to Reed. Mr Chambers and Mr Anderson were thanked for their presentation.

It was agreed that Cllr. Langley should contact Ms. Blunt at NHC, as a matter of urgency, regarding potential S106 monies that might be available to Reed as a result of the development. **Action: KL**

Cllr. Langley to ask for an update from the Turney Trust ahead of each Parish Council meeting. **Action: KL**

Site RD1 update – to be a regular item on the agenda. **Action: Clerk**

10.01.24 **To review action points from the meeting on 1st November 2023** - reviewed.

Action Points from this meeting (see Appendix B).

11.01.24 **To receive report from the Clerk on current financial position**

A list of monies received and payments to be authorised had been previously circulated to all Cllrs. Accounts showed a bank balance of £29,118.93 of which, £10,133.35 was Push Energy Community Contribution (ring-fenced for special projects), £3,779.45 was Bonfire Night reserves, £690.75 was P3 grant balance, S106 Sustainable Transport Reserve was £651.87, Play Park Reserve was £4,198.25, leaving general reserves at £9,665.26.

12.01.24 **To agree accounts for payment.** Payments to be authorised at the meeting were Clerk's salary and PAYE, £60.00 North Herts Council for the Annual Play Area Inspection and £525.00 to Carl Edwards for grass cutting on the Play Area in 2023. Proposed, seconded and approved by all.

13.01.24 **To agree budget for 2024/25 and agree associated Precept**

Application to North Herts Council - Information had been previously forwarded to all Cllrs. The proposed budget was agreed and it was proposed, seconded and agreed to request a Precept at the same level as 2023/24 of £8,418.00 (including the Council Tax Reduction Scheme). Resolved. The Clerk to submit Precept request to North Herts Council. **Action: Clerk**

14.01.24 **To consider and agree renewal of grass cutting contract for the**

Play Area for 2024 – Cllr. d' Ayala reported that the contractors had done an excellent job over the past year and it was then proposed, seconded and agreed by all to renew the contract for the forthcoming year. The Clerk to contact Mr Edwards. **Action: Clerk**

15.01.24 **To discuss result of community survey and agree format of**

Annual Parish Meeting for 2024 – Further to a survey conducted (15 responses received) and after a lengthy debate it was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to hold the statutory required Annual Parish Meeting (APM) as a separate meeting to be held on a date (to be decided) between 1st March and 1st June. The printed Annual Village Report to be printed and distributed ahead of the APM and to include date and time of the meeting to encourage a better attendance. Within the report would also be included a comprehensive list of all activities that took place in Reed. The APM would aim to be a more social event with drinks served on arrival and consideration be given to inviting village organisations the opportunity to market their groups with table displays. This would be trialled for one year to see if attendance was improved. It was agreed that the printed Annual Village Report was very well received and was therefore worth the effort and cost of production. Cllr. Kilby to compile the Annual Village Report. **Action: EK**

Cllr. Payne to compile a comprehensive list of 'What's On' in the village. **Action: NP**

All Cllrs. to email Cllr. Payne with lists of activities – to ensure nothing was missed. **Action: ALL**

16.01.24 **To consider and make comment on planning application: Full Planning Permission : Erection of enclosed outdoor cricket nets and associated resurfacing following demolition of existing outdoor cricket nets.**

Reed Cricket Club, Blacksmiths Lane, Reed, Hertfordshire, SG8 8AX. Case Ref No: 23/02847/FP – After consideration of the application, it was proposed, seconded and agreed by all that there was no objection to the application. The Clerk to respond to NHC. **Action: Clerk**

17.01.24 **To receive update regarding required plan to remove excess material from Wisbridge Reservoir site** – The Clerk had, once again, contacted NHC to determine if a disposal/re-profiling plan had been received from the applicant as the 12 month deadline had elapsed. The response was that it had not been received and that an application had been submitted to get this condition 9 removed. Reed Parish Council had not been officially consulted on this, only Barkway Parish Council. The Clerk to contact the Case Officer at NHC, as a matter of urgency, to find out why Reed had not been consulted. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr. Langley to draft a representation strongly opposing the application and to be submitted to NHC by 25th January. **Action: KL/Clerk**

18.01.24 **To receive update from Save The Cabinet Action Group (SCAG)** – There was nothing much to report. The appeals were still pending determination by the Planning Inspectorate. SCAG would contact the new Enforcement Officer at NHC.

19.01.24 **To receive update on Highways Matters** – (also see item 8.01.24). Cllr. d’Ayala reported that some drains were blocked around the area of Blacksmiths Lane and the corner of Jackson’s Lane and that the ditches around the Green were about to overflow onto Church Lane. Cllr. d’Ayala to report the blocked drains to HCC and copy in County Cllr. Hill. **Action: CD**

20.01.24 **To receive update on project to preserve ponds and agree any action required** – There was nothing to report currently. Work could commence again in September.

21.01.24 **To receive bi-monthly Parish Council play area inspection report and agree any action required** – An inspection had been carried out by Cllr. Langley and it was reported that presently no action was needed.

22.01.24 **To receive Annual Play Area Inspection report and agree any necessary action** – The NHC Annual Inspection report concluded that everything was considered low risk apart from the tyre swing which was moderate risk. The advice was to carry out work on any minor matters pointed out or just monitor.

23.01.24 **To receive update from Play Area Working Party, including funding, and agree any action required** – Cllrs. Langley and Blower had submitted an application for grant funding to the National Lottery but 5 weeks later it had been refused and there had been no explanation as to why this was. NHC had also been approached for grant funding but the Area Community Officer had informed them that there were currently no funding pots for play equipment in North Herts.

As the length of the meeting had reached 2½ hours a vote was taken as to whether the meeting should continue. It was proposed, seconded and agreed to continue.

24.01.24 **To receive from Bonfire Night 2023** – (see item 6.01.24 – Appendix A - Chair’s report)

25.01.24 **To receive proposal to plant replacement trees on the edge of the Green using Push Energy funds** – A site meeting to be arranged to consider matters again. Cllr. Blower to circulate some possible dates. **Action: BB**

26.01.24 **To receive report on condition and renovation work required for Community Noticeboard near the School** – to be deferred to the March meeting.

27.01.24 **To consider and agree if Reed Parish Council should sign up to support the Armed Services Covenant** – After discussion it was proposed, seconded and agreed by all that this was not appropriate for Reed. The Parish Council did not consider its powers were relevant to the purposes set out in the covenant and supporting documentation. Resolved.

28.01.24 **To receive matters for report or referral to next agenda. (Information only)** Ponds Protection Project, Tree planting on the Green, Wisbridge Reservoir, Projects for Community Payback work, Speeding in Brickyard Lane, Play Area Project, Community Noticeboard, Turney Trust and Site RD1, Commemoration of 80th anniversary of D-Day, to set a date for the APM and clarify information to be sent out to residents in Annual Village Report.

29.01.24 **To note correspondence received. (Information only)** – Herts Association of Parish and Town Councils (HAPTC) had written to ask Councils to give consideration to holding an event on 6th June to commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-Day. To be an agenda item for March. **Action: Clerk**
Cllr. d’Ayala had informed the Chair that she intended to step down as a Parish Councillor in the forthcoming months.

30.01.24 **To agree date of next meeting.** Wednesday 6th March 2024. Agreed.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.30pm.