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Councillors Email:

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

Cllr. Edwin Kilby - kilby@reedparishcouncil.co.uk

Cllr. Barbara Blower - blower@reedparishcouncil.co.uk

Cllr. Nick Payne - payne@reedparishcouncil.co.uk

Cllr. Simon Aries - aries@reedparishcouncil.co.uk

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

Present Cllrs: K Langley (Chair), E Kilby, B Blower, N Payne and S. Aries.

In attendance the Clerk Catharine Toms, Dist. Cllr. M Prescott, County Cllr. Hill, PC Tom Woollard, PCSO Chris Brabrook and one member of the public.

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

1.09.24 **Attendance.** As listed above.

2.09.24 **To receive apologies for absence.** None.

3.09.24 **To receive Members Declarations of Interest and note dispensation granted.** None received. Cllr. Kilby, for his period of office, a dispensation granted allowing him full participation at meetings in issues arising concerning The Cabinet public house including, but not limited to, planning matters.

4.09.24 **To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 3rd July 2024 and to authorise the Chairman to sign them as a true record.** It was proposed, seconded and all voted in favour to approve the minutes. Resolved. Approved minutes to be posted on the website. **Action: Clerk/Webmaster**

Standing Orders were suspended.

5.09.24 **To invite Members of the Public to address the meeting** – A member of the public was present to raise his concern relating to recent unauthorised activity at The Cabinet and lack of action by North Herts Council (NHC) regarding enforcement. He explained that there had been more happening again at The Cabinet with an outbuilding having been renovated and now being re-occupied, again without the appropriate planning permission. He felt that it was unacceptable that breaches of planning could take place and could then, if challenged, try and be rectified by retrospective planning applications. There had been two instances of unauthorised burning of commercial waste from the site

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www.reedparishcouncil.co.uk

causing nuisance in the area. The bonfire earlier that day had led to the fire brigade being called, who subsequently put out the fire and had made the Police aware.

The Police confirmed that The Cabinet was on their radar these days as illegal fires were antisocial behaviour but classed as a civil offence issue.

They had attended a public services day to educate children in the area.

Hare Coursing was currently an issue with harvest finished, patrols were ongoing. A nuisance motorcyclist motoring across the Cricket Green had been identified and given a warning and there had been no further complaints.

They were happy to investigate any concerns raised.

The Police were thanked for their report and departed from the meeting at 8pm

It was agreed to bring forward item 20.09.24

20.09.24 To receive update from Save The Cabinet Action Group (SCAG), including re-registration of Asset of Community Value (AoCV) – The planning appeal, which dated back 18 months, was stuck in the system at the under-resourced Planning Inspectorate, so this was out of the hands of NHC. A member of SCAG had contacted the NHC Enforcement Officer regarding the illegally inhabited outbuilding and was informed that no urgent action would be taken by NHC because they would expect to receive a retrospective planning application. This lenient attitude by NHC allowed people to get away with carrying out unauthorised works with total disregard to following the correct procedures. SCAG were now trying to organise a meeting with NHC Officers and were going to put forward an agenda which would exclude matters relating to enforcement with the hope that they would now agree to have a discussion.

The application to re-register The Cabinet as an AoCV had been successful. It was agreed that an alert needed to be set up 3 months before it was due to expire in 5 years time, to avoid any lapse. **Action: Clerk**

Standing Orders were resumed.

6.09.24 To receive Chair's Report – (See Appendix A)

Thanks were given to Cllr. Langley for his sheer persistence with grant applications that had resulted in the recent £19,500 award from the National Lottery for the Play Area Project.

It was also noted that the Planning Appeal had been dismissed relating to the development at Nicholl's Yard.

Standing Orders were suspended.

7.09.24 To receive report from District Councillor – Cllr. Prescott reported that he was a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at NHC. They had reviewed results from the recent NHC Community Survey. 80% of respondents thought that NHC should listen and communicate more. Furthermore, 18% of respondents were of the opinion that NHC were doing a great job, leaving 82% who thought otherwise. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee were now trying to resurrect a project to look at how NHC communicated and how it could be improved. Cllr. Prescott had volunteered to lead this project.

Cllr. Prescott recommended that whether it was the Parish Council or individual residents communicating with NHC, they should always copy in both himself and Cllr. Hill on any correspondence and it would ensure that it wouldn't be ignored.

8.09.24 **To receive report from County Councillor** – County Cllr. Hill gave the following report:

Summer Reading Challenge - Ends 7th September – very successful with good participation again this year.

Residents' Survey – Hertfordshire County Council - Closes 15th September.

Winter Self Help - Open again until 31st October 2024 for ordering up to 34 bags of salt for use in the community.

Banking Hub - Lloyds is remaining opening through September until the promised banking hub is in place in Royston.

Junior Park Run – Royston - Working on initiating a Junior Park Run. Funding and site in place. Looking for volunteers.

Public Health/Adult Care and Health/Education - The additional investment into SEND has resulted in significant recruitment, together with ongoing training for existing staff. Significant work taking place regarding Domestic Abuse and Suicide Prevention. Work also taking place on prevention of illegal vapes.

Councillors' Surgery - The next surgery is due to take place on Saturday, 14th September from 10 – 11.30 a.m. in Royston Market.

Highways - Jackson's Lane – Speed and volume surveys to be scheduled.

Brickyard Lane/Blacksmiths Lane – data from surveys previously carried out still meet the criteria where speeds were compliant at that time.

Brickyard Lane – part of road/footpath requires patching.

Cllrs. Prescott and Hill were thanked for their reports.

Standing Orders were resumed.

9.09.24 **To discuss and agree response to NHC survey being conducted on current Parish arrangements** – Cllr. Kilby had circulated a prompt and some ideas. It was agreed that this should be discussed at an informal meeting to pull together an appropriate response. Cllr. Blower to organise a meeting. **Action: BB**

10.09.24 **To discuss succession planning** – To be discussed at the informal meeting.

11.09.24 **To receive update on audit being carried out on Parish Council assets** – Cllr. Aries had searched and found 7 benches around the village. Only two of them were in reasonable condition, the rest needed maintenance or discarding. The Parish Council had a duty to maintain the village assets. Grants for materials might be available from the Royston Area Forum (formerly the Royston Area Committee) and the Herts Community Foundation (HCF). Labour could be supplied by the Community Payback Team. Cllrs. Aries and Blower to decide what works were needed and contact the Probation Officers. **Action: SA/BB**

12.09.24 **To review action points from meeting on 3rd July 2024** – (see Appendix B).

The 10 year agreement for use of The Green by the Cricket Club was coming to an end on 31st Dec 2024. It needed to be reviewed. Cllr. Aries to obtain information from the Commons Registration Authority on what is allowed to happen on Common Land. **Action: SA**

Cllr. Langley to contact the Cricket Club and request a meeting to discuss renewing the agreement. Cllrs. Blower and Langley to attend. **Action: BB/KL**

13.09.24 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 £49,856.53 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 £24,765.47 leaving general reserves at £9,835.64.

14.09.24 To agree accounts for payment Payments to be authorised at the meeting were Clerk's salary and PAYE, £86.72 to B Blower for expenses for buying in drinks for the Annual Parish Meeting. Proposed, seconded and approved by all.

15.09.24 To consider and agree to adopt new Financial Regulations based on the recommended NALC April 2024 version – It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all. Resolved. The Clerk to forward to Cllr. Kilby for insertion on the website. **Action: Clerk/Webmaster**

16.09.14 To consider and agree to adopt new Reed Parish Council Safeguarding Policies – It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to adopt the documents as prepared and presented by Cllr. Kilby with the additions of any further adjustments recommended or required by NHC. Resolved.

Cllr. Langley to contact the Prosperity Fund to advise them that a Safeguarding Policy had now been adopted. **Action: KL**

It was agreed that two Councillors should do a safeguarding course. Cllr. Blower to contact HAPTC to see if they did such a course. **Action: BB**

17.09.24 To consider and make comment on planning application:

Full Permission Householder : Installation of electric gates and associated brick piers to existing vehicular access, including pedestrian side gate. Erection of timber clad shed with associated 1.8m high timber fencing and installation of gates to the south of the gym.

Mill Corner Farm, Jacksons Lane, Reed, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 8AB Case Ref No: 24/01711/FPH – After consideration of the application, it was proposed, seconded and agreed by all that there was no objection. Resolved.

The Clerk to respond to NHC. **Action: Clerk**

18.09.24 To receive update from the Turney Trust regarding site RD1 – There was no update to report.

19.09.24 To receive update on Wisbridge Reservoir Project – works were proceeding on site to create a smaller reservoir and landscape the area.

21.09.24 To receive update on Highways matters – (see item 8.09.24). It was noted that there had been some fly-tipping along The Joint. Cllr. Hill would report the matter.

Cllr. Hill reported that Herts County Council (HCC) could not find any record of the accident at the junction of Church Lane and the A10. Cllr. Aries to contact the person involved to obtain a Police ref. number. Cllr. Kilby to re-send details of the accident to Cllr. Hill. **Action: SA/EK**

22.09.24 To receive update on project to preserve ponds and agree any action required – Cllr. Aries, with the help of some Parishioners, would sort out the Bulrushes. **Action: SA**

23.09.24 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 there was further minor deterioration to the equipment. The rot on Activity Trail bridge needed monitoring. There was an

inspection and repair or adjustment required for the Aerial Slide to ensure free running of the rollers in the carriage. It was play impaired but there was no safety issue as such. **Action: KL**

24.09.24 **To receive update from Play Area Working Party on grant applications and agree any action required** – The grant applications had involved a lot of work but success had been achieved with the National Lottery. The grant application to the Prosperity Fund was now progressing well. Cllr. Blower to contact the Royston Area Forum regarding possible smaller grant funding.

Further discussion would take place at the informal meeting regarding putting out a consultation with the village on choice of equipment to purchase. **Action: BB**

25.09.24 **To agree to be part of the NHC Annual Inspection and Risk Assessment of Play Areas 2024** – This was proposed, seconded and agreed by all. The Clerk to contact NHC. **Action: Clerk**

26.09.24 **To receive update on arrangements with Probation Officer for maintenance of the ditches around the Green** – (also see item 11.09.24). Cllr. Blower to contact Probation Officer. **Action: BB**

27.09.24 **To discuss and agree arrangements for Bonfire Night on Saturday 2nd November** – Various village organisations were also involved, including the Cricket Club, Friends of Reed Church and Friends of Reed School. Cllr. Kilby to email volunteers from the previous year to ask for assistance. **Action: EK**

Cllr. Kilby to order the fireworks. It was proposed, seconded and agreed to the same budget as the previous year and the cost would come out of the ring-fenced bonfire night reserves. **Action: EK**

It was proposed, seconded and agreed that, as last year, proceeds this year would be put into the Play Park Fund for replacement of play equipment.

Cllr. Kilby was thanked for taking the initiative to organise the event.

28.09.24 **To receive update on renovation of Community Noticeboard (Push Energy Fund)** – no further update.

29.09.24 **To receive update on proposal to plant 8 fruit trees on the edge of the Green using Push Energy fund** – A selection of trees were agreed to be ordered and consideration be given to asking for help from the Community Payback Team with the planting. Cllr. Blower to contact the Probation Officer once a date for delivery was known. **Action: BB**

30.09.24 **To receive update on the setting up of a .gov.uk domain and migration of Council services** – It was reported that this was all now complete and the old email addresses were switched off. Cllr. Kilby was thanked for all his considerable work on this IT project.

31.09.24 **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, Assessment of condition of Parish Council benches, Appointing a new bank signatory, Cricket Club Agreement.

32.09.24 **To note correspondence received. (Information only)** – Nothing no covered elsewhere.

33.09.24 **To agree date of next meetings.** Wednesday 6th November 2024. Agreed.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.31pm

Reed Parish Council Chair's Report September 2024

1. Grant Applications

I have been engaged in the last two months in submitting two grant applications and dealing with follow up correspondence. These both relate to the project for renovation and improvement of the play area on Reed Green (see relevant agenda item for this meeting). In late May we made a second application for National Lottery Funding, our first application having been declined in December 2023. This time I am pleased to report that we heard on 17th August that this application was successful and a sum of £19,500 for the playground project was awarded from the Community Fund.

I also submitted in late July an application for £19250 via Community at North Herts District Council. This was following the invitation for community organisations to bid from the District's allocation of Prosperity Fund money. Amongst other follow up requests to this application the Parish Council was asked to provide a Safeguarding Policy as a prerequisite for our application being considered. Great thanks are due to Councillor Kilby for a lot of work at short notice to produce this document, which is presented today for formal adoption by the Parish Council. At time of writing we await the outcome of our application for Prosperity Fund money for the Playground.

Having been awarded the Lottery grant and informed NHDC, we have submitted a supplementary document to our Prosperity Fund application. Thanks to Councillor Aries for his help with this. The document makes a case for the the continuing validity and relative modesty of our application for the £19,250 from the Prosperity Fund in addition to the Lottery money. The Parish Council's plan for renovation and improvement of the playground is projected over the period 2024 to 2028. The intended first phase was to provide 4 pieces of new, replacement play equipment. Costings, however, mean that the 19,500 from National Lottery will fall £7000 short of the cost of buying and installing just 3 pieces of equipment, with the rest coming from Parish Council funds and voluntary donations. Achievement of the North Herts. award, would allow the immediate acquisition of 4 rather than 3 pieces of equipment. It would also (with a still needed additional input of Parish Council) bring forward, the improvement of surfacing and the replacement of other equipment nearing the end of its life. It would allow economies of scale and mitigate the inflationary pressure on play equipment prices we are already experiencing. It would be a prudent, efficient use of taxpayers money. We firmly believe that the excellent news from the National Lottery considerably strengthens the case for NHDC to support the Playground Project as it represents a significant gearing on local tax payer's contribution. Its award would be a cause to celebrate the collaboration of National Lottery, the District and the Parish Council to achieve an indisputable community good for Reed and the District.

2. I have also had correspondence with Save The Cabinet Action Group (SCAG) and agreed to support their request for a meeting with Officers at NHDC to seek updated information and to review the ongoing matters in relation to The Cabinet.

That completes the Chair's report for this period.

Ken Langley, Chair