



Reed Parish Council

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Draft minutes of the meeting held on 3 January 2018 at 8 PM in Reed Village Hall

**Present Cllrs: K Langley (Chairman), P Lawrence, C d'Ayala and M Higgs.
In attendance the clerk Catharine Toms and 4 members of the public.**

- 1.1.18 **To receive apologies for absence.** Apologies were received from Cllr. Duke.
- 2.1.18 **To receive Members Declarations of Interest.** Cllr. K. Langley regarding (item 10.1.18) Planning progress on Brickyard Lane, Cllr. C d'Ayala regarding (item 10.1.18) Planning Application - Wicketts and as a member of the Save the Cabinet Action Group (SCAG), Cllr. Lawrence as Chairman of the Village Hall Committee.
- 3.1.18 **To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 6th December 2017 and to authorise the Chairman to sign them as a true record.**
Proposed by Cllr. Lawrence, seconded by Cllr. C d'Ayala. Agreed.
- 4.1.18 **To invite Members of the Public to address the meeting.** There were none at this time.
- 5.1.18 **Chairman's Report.** The Chairman reported that the report of the public meeting held on 29th November, to discuss the possibility of a loan application by the Parish Council to the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) for the purchase of the Cabinet Pub, would be posted on the website and available for all to see. Also reported was the commencement of the work of the Working Party, set up by the Parish Council at the December meeting, to produce the application to the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government (DCLG) for permission to apply for a loan from the PWLB.
- 6.1.18 **Accounts for Payment.** Accounts for grass cutting, HAPTC training, the Clerk's salary and PAYE were agreed.
- 7.1.18 **To budget for a replacement computer.** The Chairman reported that the Clerk's computer was broken and beyond economic repair. A new computer was essential for the Clerk/RFO to function on behalf of the Parish Council. Consideration also needed to be given with regards to compliance with the requirements of the new data protection law (GDPR) from May 2018. It was estimated that a new computer, together with Microsoft Office 365 software, would cost in the region of £400. County Cllr. Fiona Hill said she may be able to assist towards some of the cost from her Locality Budget. (The deadline for applications was 12th March 2018). Proposed by Cllr. Higgs, seconded by Cllr. d'Ayala. Agreed.
- 8.1.18 **To agree a budget for 2018/19.** The actual income and expenditure from Apr 17 to Jan 18 along with forecast income and expenditure Feb 18 to Mar 18 was examined in detail. With elections due in 2018, it was established that the existing reserve included an amount built up previously for the cost of a possible election. The proposed budget for 2018/19 was tight and would erode into reserves to a small degree in the coming year but it was considered not enough to warrant requesting an increase in Precept. The proposed

application for permission to borrow from the PWLB would not have any impact on the budget or Precept application. It was proposed by Cllr. Higgs, seconded by Cllr. d'Ayala to agree the proposed budget and associated Precept application of £4,180.00. Agreed.

9.1.18 **To agree a new Bank Mandate.** This was necessary to remove David Smith as an authorised signatory and to add new clerk, Catharine Toms. Proposed by Cllr. Langley, seconded by Cllr. Lawrence. Agreed. The new mandate was signed by Cllrs. Langley and Lawrence.

10.1.18 **To discuss Planning Applications and Progress.**

1. **Thatchers.** The appeal against refusal of planning permission had been refused some weeks ago and it appeared that the building was still being used. A letter had been written in December to NHDC to express concern and to enquire as to their policy in a situation such as this, for enforcement where the appeal had been lost. However, as yet no reply had been received. Cllr. Morris asked for a copy of the letter sent to NHDC and agreed he would chase for a response. Standing Orders were suspended to allow Mike Howes to inform the Council that NHDC had to keep an Enforcement Register and that he would write to request sight of this. Standing Orders were resumed.
2. **Brickyard Lane.** Cllr. Langley declared an interest in this item. It was proposed and agreed that Cllr. Lawrence would take over as Chair for this item and that Standing Orders could be suspended to allow Cllr. Langley, as a resident of Brickyard Lane who was being impacted by health and safety issues with this development, to address the Council. He expressed concern about the installation, without prior notice, of two bulk LPG storage tanks close to the boundary of his and his neighbour's property in Brickyard Lane. The original plans had been submitted and passed without the need to inform of the intention to heat 12 houses from bulk gas tanks on site. He said that this showed a lack of transparency when trying to secure planning permission and he had since learnt that there was a lack of clarity about whether health and safety was independently monitored and assured. He requested two letters to be written. Firstly to the joint developers, Rand Bros. and Ford Homes expressing surprise and disappointment that neither the Council, nor the residents been informed prior to installation of the gas tanks. Also to support the residents request that a wall rather than a fence be built as a safer boundary. Secondly, to write to the Chair of Planning at NHDC and MP Sir Oliver Heald to register concern about the operation of the Planning and Building Control system that had allowed this situation to occur. It was learnt that Building Control Services on site were sub-contractors hired and paid by the developers. It was proposed that letters should be written. Proposed by Cllr. Lawrence, seconded by Cllr. D'Ayala. Agreed. Standing Orders were resumed. Cllr. Langley returned to Chair the meeting.
3. **Wicketts.** Cllr. d'Ayala declared an interest in this item and left the meeting. After discussing the application, it was proposed by Cllr. Lawrence, seconded by Cllr Higgs that there was no objection to this application. Agreed. Cllr. d'Ayala was invited back into the meeting.
4. **The Chapel.** After looking closely at the plans it was proposed by Cllr. Lawrence and seconded by Cllr. d'Ayala and agreed that the Council had no objection to the structure proposed and noted a sympathetic attempt to replicate the scale and appearance of the old chapel.

However, the published plans did not fully clarify the issue of parking. If the parking was not to be off road, then the Council would lodge an objection. There was an assumption that parking would be accessed via the adjacent field and it would be stressed that this should be achieved so as to minimise any change to the character of the small meadow, otherwise it would be detrimental to the character of the village.

11.1.18 Report of the Cabinet Working Group and to authorise conduct of a household survey on the Cabinet application to borrow - The Working Group of Cllrs. Langley and D'Ayala, had met and been working diligently, they had since co-opted assistance from Mike Howes and also from a Consultant who had great experience in this field and who, at reasonable rates, would help prepare a business plan and an application to borrow. Standing Orders were suspended to allow Mike Howes to speak. The cost of the Consultant would need to be met. SCAG would aim to pay money towards this, generated from their fund raising efforts. He said that the owner of the Cabinet, Mr Newman, had put in an appeal against the refusal of his application for change of use, but it had not yet been validated. Mike Howes had written to Richard Tiffin and copied in Mark Simmons at NHDC. The letter reported that building work was going on with piles of building materials standing on the driveway. He asked NHDC to check out the situation. The same email was being sent to Chris Braybrooke at NHDC. It was proposed by Cllr. d'Ayala and seconded by Cllr. Langley that a letter should also be written to NHDC from the Parish Council expressing concern. Agreed. Standing Orders were resumed.

Cllr. Langley wished it to be noted that the communication from the DCLG had been exemplary.

The Working Party request to conduct a household survey was approved.

12.1.18 To discuss the Playground and Green - Cllr. Lawrence reported that he still needed to lift the lower branches on the trees.

13.1.18 To discuss the quotation for tree work on Church Lane and Blacksmiths Lane - A quotation had been received from Herts & Cambs Tree Services for £770 + VAT. The Financial Regulations indicated that 3 quotations would be required. Cllr Lawrence would obtain two further quotations.

14.1.18 To discuss NHDC and Herts Highways - Cllr Lawrence wished to minute appreciation to HCC Highways regarding the work being carried out on the Reed to Buckland A10 footpath and to Cllrs. Hill and Hunter with their support for this project. Also to HCC Highways for their prompt action with recent ditch clearing. Cllr. Higgs asked if the Council would consider installation of grit bins around the village. Cllr. Hill mentioned that she may be able to support this through her Locality budget as long as bins were not located on HCC Highways owned land. Cllr. Morris mentioned that he had salt supplies available for gritting in the public areas of the village.

15.1.18 To receive matters for report and or referral to next agenda. Possible location of grit bins. Quotations for tree work. Review of governance documents before year end.

16.1.18 To note correspondence received. Nothing of significance.

17.1.18 To agree date of next meeting. 7th March 2018. Agreed.

The meeting closed at 10:00 PM