



## *Reed Parish Council*

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

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Councillors Email:

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

Cllr. Martin Higgs - [higgs@reedparishcouncil.co.uk](mailto:higgs@reedparishcouncil.co.uk)

Cllr. John Kershaw - [kershaw@reedparishcouncil.co.uk](mailto:kershaw@reedparishcouncil.co.uk)

Cllr. Peter Lawrence - [lawrence@reedparishcouncil.co.uk](mailto:lawrence@reedparishcouncil.co.uk)

**Minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> January at 7.30pm in Reed Village Hall  
Present Cllrs: K Langley (Chair), C d'Ayala (Vice-Chair), P Lawrence, M Higgs  
and J Kershaw. In attendance the Clerk Catharine Toms, County Cllr. F Hill and  
Dist. Cllr. T Hunter & one member of the public**

- 1.1.20 **To receive apologies for absence.** Dist. Cllr. Gerald Morris, Mr M Howes and Mr E Kilby – apologies accepted.
- 2.1.20 **To receive Members Declarations of Interest.** Cllr. d'Ayala (item 12.1.20). Cllr. Lawrence (Village Hall).
- 3.1.20 **To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 4th December 2019 and to authorise the Chairman to sign them as a true record.** There was one typing error to correct (re: item 2.12.19 – declaration of interest for Cllr. d'Ayala should have read 10.12.19). Amended minutes were approved. It was proposed, seconded and all voted in favour. Agreed.
- 4.1.20 **To invite Members of the Public to address the meeting.** Standing Orders were suspended to allow members of the public present to address the Council. No one wished to speak. Standing Orders were resumed.
- 5.1.20 **Chairman's Report.** Nothing to report.  
County Cllr. Hill arrived in the meeting at 7.35pm.
- 6.1.20 **To review trial of monthly meetings and agree future schedule of meetings**  
– A paper detailing various options had been previously circulated to all Cllrs. A trial period since Sept had resulted in additional meetings in Oct and Dec, this had incurred extra cost to the Council in respect of Clerk's salary and hall hire. It was considered that the benefits of having additional meetings had not outweighed the disadvantage of eroding the Council's financial reserves. It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to revert to bi-monthly meetings and where urgent issues arose and an interim meeting could not be scheduled, then the matter could be dealt with under a delegated power scheme (see item 7.1.20).
- 7.1.20 **To consider and agree adoption of 'Scheme of Delegation' policy** – It was proposed, seconded and agreed that a Scheme of Delegation Policy could be incorporated within the Standing Orders. A draft to be produced for discussion and adoption at the March Council meeting. **Action: Clerk/KL**
- 8.1.20 **To finalise and agree budget for 2020/21 and associated Precept application** - The actual income and expenditure from Apr 19 to Jan 20 along with forecast income and expenditure Feb 20 to Mar 20 was examined in detail. The proposed budget for

2020/21 was tight and would erode reserves to an extent in the coming year but it was considered not enough to warrant requesting an increase in Precept. It was proposed, seconded and all voted in favour to agree the proposed budget and associated Precept application of £5,000.00. Resolved. **Action: Clerk**

9.1.20 **To receive report from the Clerk on current financial position** - Copies of the accounts and list of monies received and payments to be authorised were handed to all Cllrs. Accounts showed a bank balance of £15,976.09 of which £10,195.00 was Push Energy Community Contribution (ring-fenced for special projects), £900.50 was Bonfire Night reserves, £661.00 was P3 grant balance, leaving general reserves at £4,219.59.

10.1.20 **To agree accounts for payment** - Payments at the meeting were to NHDC for the play area inspection, Clerk's salary and PAYE. All were agreed.

11.1.20 **To receive update on setting up of Parish email distribution list** - It was reported to be all set up and a period of testing would commence. The purpose of this would be to communicate on a timely basis with parishioners. An invitation would be extended to parishioners to sign up and it would be GDPR compliant. **Action: CD**

12.1.20 **Save the Cabinet (SCAG)** - A letter had been received from the Chair of SCAG. It detailed that the enforcement appeal was still pending. A visit by the Inspector would take place the following week. A member of SCAG had attended a meeting with the Chief Executive Officer of NHDC, the Conservative Party Leader at NHDC, Dist. Cllr. Morris and the Head Planning Officer to explore the idea of a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) on The Cabinet, as a possible option. NHDC did not rule this out, although were reluctant due to costs and the difficulty involved, and in addition, would look to be fully indemnified for costs. The CPO would no doubt be appealed and could succeed. It was noted that the Parish Council approval to borrow was due to expire in May. A fresh new application would be needed, as it had already been renewed once. Compensation to the owner of The Cabinet with a CPO would likely be much less than offers he already received for Cabinet. The Parish Council was urged to write to the agent and the owner of The Cabinet advising that a CPO was being discussed and inviting him to reconsider offers already received. SCAG were writing similarly to individuals who had made offers that had been rejected. It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all that the Parish Council would write to the agent and owner of The Cabinet. Resolved. **Action: KL**

13.1.20 **To consider and make comment on planning application:  
Full Planning Permission : Change of use annexe to one bedroom dwelling with  
Associated parking spaces.**

**1 Coronation Row, Crow Lane, Reed, Hertfordshire, SG8 8AD**

**Case Ref No: 19/02906/FP**

A draft response had been previously circulated to Cllrs. After consideration of the application it was proposed, seconded and agreed to object to this application. Resolved. The Clerk to respond to NHDC. **Action: Clerk**

14.1.20 **To receive latest play area inspection report and agree any necessary action** - It was proposed, seconded and agreed to align future inspections to the bi-monthly Council meetings. Cllrs. d'Ayala and Higgs to carry out next bi-monthly inspection. Resolved. **Action: CD/MH**

15.1.20 **To receive latest Parish Council play area inspection report** - The NHDC organised annual play inspection report summarised the play area as having an overall 'moderate risk'. The wooden steps were considered a problem. It was proposed, seconded and agreed to convene a working party by the end of April to give the play area attention needed in areas indicated within the report. Cllr. d'Ayala offered to help cut back low tree branches before Spring. Resolved. **Action: KL/CD**

16.1.20 **To consider and agree proposal for wording of play area disclaimer sign** - The aim was to protect the Parish Council from people not using the equipment appropriately. Cllr. Kershaw to refine and circulate draft wording. **Action: JK**

17.1.20 **Highways – update on parish action plan, action to stop flooding due to blocked drains and speed signs for the A10** – A Highways Liaison Meeting was due to take place the following week at NHDC. Cllr. Lawrence would be attending and proposed to take up various ongoing issues with NHDC. As a result of the Highways meeting in Reed a Parish Action Plan was now in place for Reed and could be updated on an ongoing basis. A damaged drain cover had now been replaced. Concern was raised over the ongoing problem of a fountain of gushing water causing flooding onto the Highway, likely caused by damaged drainage pipework within the Kilns development. This was a planning issue if conditions of the planning permission had not been met. Cllr. Hill agreed to contact a senior planning officer at NHDC to check if the developers had been compliant and to advise Highways of the ongoing problem. Cllr. Kershaw to report the issue on behalf of the Parish Council. **Action: JK.**

It was confirmed by County Cllr. Hill that speed signs for the A10 would be included in her 2020/21 Highways Locality budget, the exact location points yet to be clarified.

18.1.20 **To receive update on information signs for the village** – A few amendments were needed, once done, a final version would be circulated. Cllr. Kershaw had spoken to a person who might be willing to create a stand. Cllr. Kershaw to progress the project. **Action: JK**

19.1.20 **To agree future responsibility for emptying bin in the play area** – It was proposed, seconded and agreed that Cllrs. d’Ayala and Langley would monitor and empty the bins as appropriate. Resolved. **Action: CD/KL**

20.1.20 **To receive matters for report or referral to next agenda. (Information only)** – Email database, Parish Action Plan incl. highways flooding and drainage, Push Energy expenditure, Play area sign, Village informative sign, reservoir, Bi-monthly playground inspection, P3 grant footpath project, Scheme of Delegation policy.

21.1.20 **To note correspondence received. (Information only)** – The Environment Agency (EA) had responded to a letter sent by the Parish Council listing concerns regarding the Wisbridge Farm reservoir project. Officers had visited the site and had reiterated to the site operator the requirement to use compliant material in the construction. The letter informed that extraction of water of more than 20 cubic metres from ditches would need an abstraction licence. As water resources were low in the area it was considered by the EA unlikely that an abstraction licence would be granted. It was also considered by the EA that it was unlikely that the ditches would provide enough water to fill the reservoir. As the ditches were also supplying the River Quin, it would have implications on river flow downstream. Water in the ditches might also contain pollution from agricultural or road runoff. This could affect quality of water in the reservoir.

The Parish Council considered that this all brought into question the legitimacy of the reservoir project. Also, if the reservoir project got halted, then what would happen about reinstatement of the area. It was proposed, seconded and agreed that Cllr. Langley would draft a letter to NHDC Planning copying in the letter received from the EA. It would ask whether the EA had ever been consulted by NHDC before a Certificate of Lawful Development had been granted. **Action: KL**

22.1.20 **To agree date of next meeting.** Weds 4th March 2020. Agreed.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.32pm