



# HEATH & REACH PARISH COUNCIL



## Minutes – Full PC Meeting

Minutes of the Full Parish Council meeting held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 7.00pm at The Village Barn, Eastern Way, Heath & Reach

Signed – S D Grierson-Hill

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**02.24.0 INTRODUCTION:**

- a) Meeting attendees: *Cllrs. Fitzpatrick, Inns, Bevan & Loomes*
- b) Apologies for absence: *Cllrs. Boyden, Smith & Reading*
- c) Absentees: *None*

**02.24.1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** *Cllr. Fitzpatrick item 02.24.6 c)*

**02.24.2 APPROVAL OF PARISH COUNCIL/COMMITTEE MINUTES:**

- a) Approval of full Parish Council minutes for January 2024 -*Approved & signed by Cllr. Fitzpatrick*
- b) Approval of Finance Committee minutes for December 2023 - *Approved & signed by Cllr. Fitzpatrick*

**02.24.3 MATTERS ARISING** (for info only):

- a) Neighbourhood plan update: *Jane Hubbard – Neighbourhood Planning Officer from CBC attended the meeting to explain what a neighbourhood plan is, the benefits of one, how to write it and funding available. Neighbourhood plans were introduced under the Localism Act in 2011. The PC are the qualifying body and oversee the planning stage. However, the work can be carried out by a member of the PC with a volunteer group creating a neighbourhood planning forum. The plan is evidence based and will involve community engagement with all residents, young & old, business's, clubs, groups etc via any means available, events, meetings, social media, questionnaires, leaflet drops. A neighbourhood plan is for land and land use only, not the infrastructure within the Village. It is used to shape growth and to protect green and blue areas. Once the plan is adopted it forms a statutory development plan and sits alongside the local plan. When planning applications come in, the neighbourhood plan is used as a determination when making planning decisions. Once the plan has been adopted the plan is in place for a 5yr period. Funding of £10,000 (current figure, to be reviewed in April) is available from Locality who are part of DLUHC (Department of Levelling Up Housing & Community). This money would be used to cover the cost of an independent Agent who would be taken on to write up the report once all evidence is received. Further costs would need to be covered by PC.*

*Cllr Loomes has shown an interest in creating a neighbourhood plan and will set up and lead a neighbourhood planning forum.*

- b) *Emu Close & The Stile proposed raised tables: Enda Garvey – Highways Operation Manager from CBC attended meeting regarding the issues with flooding in Emu Close and to explain the reasons for the raised tables proposals.*



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*The soakaway in Emu Close should have been cleaned 6 years ago but wasn't. It is the size of 2 baths which is too small for the amount of water, cleaning it would prove a waste of time. A new soakaway is to be installed in next years plan, expected May or June however Enda is waiting to see drawings to ensure it is sufficient. There are currently only two gulleys in Linslade Road, one before the crossing from Birds Hill and one further down. A new oversized gulley should be installed on Linslade Road within the next week or two with further gulleys installed on Linslade Road and Birds Hill at a future date.*

*The main issue is the water flowing down Thrift Road. The gulleys should be cleared on a three-year cycle but prior to last Summer had not been cleared for three to four years. The gulleys in Thrift Road have been cleared three times since November. A big issue is with the parking area at the top of Thrift Road, sending down sand & debris with the rain and blocking the drains. Enda has requested a design meeting for Thrift Road to come up with a solution to capture the surface water.*

*The raised tables are to keep water on Linslade Road, diverting the water flow away from Emu Close and The Stile along Linslade Road into the soakaway beyond which is more than capable of taking the water.*

*The dropped kerbs in The Stile also add to flooding issues. Cars drive through the water at speed which pushes the water down the kerbs and causes flooding.*

*Longer term, a development plan is needed, Enda has liaised with the Planning Team to consult with Anglian Water to design a drainage plan. Heath and Reach do not currently have the infrastructure to deal with current water levels and future development.*

*Cllr. Mark Versallion has visited residents in Emu Close & The Stile who have been affected by the flooding. He has requested a site visit with CBC, in particular with residents at the junction of The Stile where they can give much needed information. He feels the residents need assurance that the water is not going to run into the bungalows along Linslade Road. The raised tables have been put on hold until this meeting takes place.*

*Cllr. Fitzpatrick asked the members of the public present if they want the meeting or to get work done. The response was that they want the meeting.*

*Cllr. Fitzpatrick then requested this meeting takes place sooner rather than later, concerned that funding will not be available and further damage done to property. Cllr. Versallion confirmed the work is on the schedule and should not be jeopardised. His concern is that the work should not be carried out at great expense to then be removed in the future if it failed, as in other areas of Bedfordshire.*

*Enda Garvey very happy to meet up with residents although feels that the best option is to get the raised tables in and not waste time.*

*MOP 1 concerned that raised tables will still allow flooding. Flooding in the past has sometimes come through the first three bungalows on Linslade Road into the gardens in Emu Close.*

*MOP 2 – during a period between Christmas & January 70mm of rain fell, continuous rain but not heavy. Most of the rain travelled from Emu Close into The Stile. He believes the flooding has been happening for a 10-15 year period and his belief is the main problem is down to driveways where grass areas have been taken away.*

*MOP 3 asked If public needed to be consulted, where are they tonight?*



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*Cllr. Inns asked if the tables would solve the flooding. Enda Garvey believes it will probably cure 90% of the problem, it will keep the water on Linslade Road. This is not a long-term solution it is more of a 'sticky plaster'*

- 02.24.4 PUBLIC FORUM** – members of the public have a cumulative 15 minutes to address the Parish Council. No resolutions other than those on the agenda can be resolved from items raised in the public forum.  
*9 Members of public present - No request to talk.*

**02.24.5 PARISH COUNCIL REPORTS:**

- a) **Clerks report:** *All Councillors received report prior to meeting.*

- b) **CBC Councillor Mark Versallion report:** *Meeting attended and spoke on 5 issues. Traffic calming, Emu Close flooding, CBC budget, Thrift Road and Solar Farm.*

**Traffic calming** - *Insufficient accident data to support traffic calming alone however new data regarding volume & speed of traffic through Village will be looked at alongside accident data. Cllr. Fitzpatrick pointed out that recent data had been located in places that would not record correct information, near crossing, junctions etc. and that the PC had been going round in circles trying to get answers regarding traffic calming. Cllr. Versallion confirmed CBC will also take into consideration voluntary speedwatch data which Cllr. Boyden forwards to CBC. Cllr. Fitzpatrick asked about the PC paying for their own traffic calming, which Cllr. Versallion said was a possibility, but CBC would insist on doing the drawings which would cost thousands of pounds. Cllr. Fitzpatrick asked Cllr. Versallion about the recent notification that Woburn Road is due to be closed for three weeks for footway improvements and speed limit change. Clerk has established that the proposed works are to make bus stops and pavements accessible and tidy up verges. Clerk & Cllr. Versallion have been unable to ascertain information about the speed limit change. Cllr. Versallion suggested Enda Garvey liaise with Gary Powell (Head of Highways) to try and help with unlocking some decisions about traffic calming. There is a new traffic management role advertised at CBC and it was felt that nothing will happen prior to this position being occupied (as informed by Enda Garvey).*

**CBC budget** - *£500,000,000 was available but all being spent. New administration who took over in May is run by independent Councillors. They have inherited financial problems and have a massive deficit. Tomorrow (Tuesday) there is a meeting to agree to £20,000,000 in cuts whilst increasing council tax, car park charges, social care benefits etc. There is a possibility that green bins will be charged for at £55 each. All these financial problems are going to make it very difficult for CBC to justify traffic calming in Heath and Reach.*

*Cllr. Fitzpatrick asked 'why can't we have cameras?' Cllr. Versallion said he 'totally agreed' with her but CBC & Police will not agree to them. He said Bedford boroughs are de-commissioning theirs as they are not working. Average speed cameras cannot be set up without the support of CBC as they would need to be installed on CBC land, to which they would not agree. PC could use accumulated money to design their own traffic calming, chicane/pinch points etc, however, as it is on the Highway CBC would be responsible for drawing up plans which could cost £180 - £200,000.*



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*Cllr Loomes asked about the SID's (speed indicator devices) being replaced. Cllr Inns stated the need for a firm answer from CBC yes or no before further decision made. Cllr. Versallion feels that a 'softly softly' approach works better and believes an answer should be available first week in June once new budget is up and running. Cllr. Fitzpatrick stated PC have followed the 'softly softly' approach for 5 years now.*

**Flooding, Emu Close** – Cllr. Versallion spoke about his actions regarding this issue as noted above – 01.24.3b)

**Thrift Road** – Cllr. Versallion reported that he has been in consultation with PC before over parking and issues on the road. The suggestion was that both PC and CBC give up some land to create a turning point and provide CPZ (control parking zone), Thrift Road residents were against this. Cllr. Fitzpatrick pointed out that things have changed and residents are now looking for some interaction. Cllr. Fitzpatrick is meeting with Andrew Selous for support on this issue. Cllr. Versallion was not aware of the meeting but will attend if available.

**Solar Farm** – There is to be an additional solar farm next to existing one at Clipstone Brook, opposite Pecks Farm. The size is 80 acres of agricultural land.

## **02.24.6 Planning & Environment:**

- a) CB/24/00209/FULL Glascoed, Reach Lane – Two storey side extension, single storey front extension, single storey rear extension, first floor extension over existing garage, part garage conversion – **NO COMMENT**
- b) CB/23/01187/FULL – Appeal – new access and internal access track and associated works including new electric gates and wire mesh livestock with wooden posts - *The PC stand by their original decision however concerns have been raised that work has already started in clearing the gateway entrance and much hedgerow removed. Clerk to relay this information to the planning inspectorate.*

## **02.24.7 MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION & RESOLUTION (where possible):**

- a) Clock Tower Quote update and to agree full cost: *Furlong & Higgs have agreed no increase in original quote of £29,629.60 plus VAT. After extensive investigation no match funding or grants available to assist with cost. PC to cover whole amount. Clerk to meet with F & H for pre-start meeting and book work in – IT WAS AGREED.*
- b) Coffee with the Cops: *Drop-in session for anyone in the Village that would like to have an informal chat with any questions or concerns they may have around the Village. Venue – The Dukes, 24<sup>th</sup> February 12 – 2pm. PC to provide refreshments – IT WAS AGREED.*
- c) Traffic calming: *See agenda item 02.24.5b)*
- d) Speed watch update: *No further update.*
- e) Issues with pixilating TV – *Villager had contacted Clerk regarding issue with TV signal. Restore TV, a free of charge service, had been involved in diagnosis and advising on actions required to solve problem. Villager wanted to provide this information as a useful tool for other people struggling with TV signal issues.*



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## 02.24.8

### FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION:

- a) Treasurers: £ 4,564.92      Savings: £ 54,653.23  
32 day savings: £ 100,557.10

- b) **Payments:**
- |                              |          |
|------------------------------|----------|
| Markland Gardens             | £ 485.00 |
| Sue Grierson-Hill            | £ 816.45 |
| HMRC                         | £ 204.00 |
| Sue Grierson-Hill (expenses) | £ 21.06  |
| Heath Village Barn           | £ 12.50  |
| Pear Technology              | £ 288.00 |

- c) **Direct debits/Standing orders:**
- |                        |         |
|------------------------|---------|
| Bri Gas (Bryants Lane) | £283.96 |
| Bri Gas (Clock tower)  | £ 47.82 |
| Alan Ward              | £ 43.33 |
| Anglian Water          | £ 86.00 |
| NEST Pension           | £ 15.64 |
| Waste Managed          | £ 90.00 |

## 02.24.9

### Any other Business:

- a) *Cllr. Loomes sourced price for wildflower seeds for verge along Leighton Road from the pond up towards the Village - £160.00 per kg.*
- b) *CPRE Local Plan Engagement Workshop – This would prove a useful workshop to attend in line with the PC starting a neighbourhood plan. Cllr. Bevan may attend with Cllr. Loomes.*

## 02.24.10

### Items to go on next agenda:

## 02.24.11

### Date of next meeting:

4<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Meeting closed at: 8.39pm

*In accordance with The Data Protection Act 2018 all attendees of the meeting are hereby notified that the meeting will be recorded as an aide memoire for the clerk when compiling the minutes. The recordings are held securely and are deleted after the resolution that the minutes are a true and correct record.*