



Minutes of Reach Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall on Tuesday 6th January 2026 at 7.30pm

Attendance

Tim Quilter	Chair	Present
Hilary Fielding	Vice Chair	Present
Edward Hall	Councillor	Not Present
Catherine Gibson	Councillor	Present
Nick Acklam	Councillor	Present
Vacancy	Councillor	
Vacancy	Councillor	
Susan Bailey	Clerk	Present
John Trapp	District Councillor	Not Present
Charlotte Cane	District Councillor	Not Present
Yannifer Malinowski	County Councillor	Present

Apologies for absence

Apologies accepted & approved.

Forum for members of the public

There were none.

Declaration of Interests

There were none.

1. Power on the green

The power on the green installation needs repair and updating.

Cost for the project & ongoing operational or usage cost will need to be obtained from The Grant fund.

The PC support this in principle and await further details.

Following discussion, it was agreed that **Councillor Acklam** would produce a spreadsheet of village assets of PC responsibility. This would include details of safety checks required.

2. Planning - 25/01264/LBC Walton House 21 Great Lane, Repair and replace where necessary 4 windows and repair and replace parts of the existing French windows on the rear elevation

This application had been received after the agenda was published, however, due to its nature of repair & replacement to existing and that the building is listed and in the conservation area, the PC decided they did not need to visit or comment, leaving this to the experts at ECDC planning.

3. District Councillor Report

No report received.

4. County Councillor Report

Councillor Malinowski reported that she had objected to the Kingsway consultation, mainly due to the pylon corridor issues.

The CCC road reporting tool is still not operating properly, and all issues should still be reported to Councillor Malinowski. The PC again asked about the bridge safety barrier by Swan Lake Barns. **Clerk** to again email Councillor Malinowski with full details. **Clerk** to again email Councillor Malinowski about the ongoing streetlight repairs issue.

5. Minutes of previous Meeting

The minutes were approved as correct.

6.1 Finance

The insurance broker had supplied the yearly questionnaire, to ensure the level of cover is as required. Councillors approve, and **Clerk** to continue with the renewal process.

6.2 Parish Council Members

A member of the public had reported concern that rat poison had been put down on Barston Drove. Councillors had investigate this, in cordination with Swaffham Prior PC, and were satisfied that those concerned were aware of the legalities of using poison and had received assurances that that the area was safe.

Another issue was raised and discussed in confidential session.

Confidential session

A resident, who wishes to remain anonymous, had raised concerns over the dog field business running off of the byway at the back of Ditchfield. The resident had spoken directly to ECDC and been told that to remain anonymous they must report the issues via the PC. The complaint is regarding the noise especially when dogs are shut in the stables, the language of the workers on site, the number of dogs on site, the disposal of dog waste and the height of the gates to stop large dogs escaping. ECDC planning had told the resident that planning would be required for the portacabin and change of use for the field. This would include a management plan which would cover these issues.

Following discussion the PC asked that all the residents that would like to complain should write as the PC was unable to take anonymous complains but that the PC would ensure the matter would be confidential.

Councillor Fielding to discuss with the resident.

6.3 Play Spaces

Nothing to report, however, a new officer will be required.

6.4 Rights of Way

Nothing to report.

6.5 24Acres Committee

Hedge laying has been arranged for 1st February, **Councillor Gibson** to put details on the village Facebook page.

6.6 Friends Of Reach Wood

Nothing to report.

6.7 A to B1102 Group

Nothing to report.

6.8 Nature Recovery Plan

In early December Councillor Acklam had met with CCC representatives regarding the From The Ground Up Nature Recovery project. He had suggested four quick win improvement proposals in the parish that were already in Reach's Nature Recovery Plan and could be assisted by the project - an expansion of Plantation Wood and its connection by footpath to the Devil's Dyke and improvements to the fields owned by the County Council on either side of the Dyke. A definitive response has yet to be received. **Councillor Acklam** to continue to engage with CCC.

A chalk stream group, a spin off from the Ground Up work, had met in the village hall and looks set to continue. The group aims to improve the quality of water bodies in the Lower Cam and Lodes catchment area including Reach Lode and the Catchwater.

The NT had started peat restoration work at Hurdle Hall.

6.9 Hythe Restoration Group

Anglian Water (AW) had agreed in principle to return to the village some of the land occupied by the redundant sewage works. However, subsequently, Councillor Acklam had received correspondence from AW's surveyor which contained conditions for the return which were not practicable. The PC approved a form of words to respond to the surveyor.

The PC's expression of interest for funding from AW's Thriving Communities Fund had not been successful. Feedback was awaited and there are other funding options that are open to us.

6.10 Website & public communications

Councillor Hall had been in discussions with a local IT company about the PC email subscriptions and IT support. The PC would like to use a local business who can provide face to face support if needed. A final quote is awaited.

6.11 Energy developments in the locality

Councillor Acklam reported -

Kingsway Solar had failed to secure a guaranteed connection to the grid following a review by a subsidiary of National Grid. Whilst this and other doubts about the need for this additional solar energy capacity raised serious questions about the viability of its scheme, Kingsway had indicated that it still intended to submit a planning application. The Parish Council Alliance and Kingsway Solar Community Action was therefore continuing to plan its opposition to the application. Councillor Acklam said that he had been appointed to the recently formed steering group of the two bodies. He sought and received endorsement of the terms of reference of the steering group from the PC. Whilst there was some degree of delegated responsibility conferred by the terms of reference, necessitated by the pace at which Kingsway's planning application might proceed, PCs would be kept fully briefed on developments. The steering group would meet again on 8th January.

Councillor Acklam said that the above mentioned review also raised doubts about the business need for the BESS proposed by Grenergy on land adjacent to Reach 24 Acres.

Following the meeting the PC was informed that ECDC Planning Committee would take the Grenergy application on 14th January. **Councillor Acklam** to attend to represent the public health and environmental concerns of residents to the committee.

7. Precept budget YE2027

Following discussion, the PC approve a precept rise of £1,880 for the YE 2027.

The increase is mainly due to a move of £1000 into restricted reserves for S137 spending. This is a limited amount that the PC can spend to benefit the village but that is not within its normal spending. Examples of this spending in YE 2026 are donations to both the AtoB1102 group and the Kingsway Action Group. Additional spending for YE 2027 along with inflation rises, will include a new budget allowance for maintenance of the defibrillator and telephone box, and a larger increase in streetlight maintenance costs.

8. Applying to register communally owned land as an asset of the community

A communally owned area of land at the bottom of Chapel Lane which includes a grass area crossed by two public footpaths and a tarmaced section facilitating rights of access to two adjoining homes had been excluded from the registration of Local Green Spaces in the Neighbourhood Plan. The PC wanted to ensure its future for the village and, on advice from ECDC, agreed to register it as a community asset. Following discussion it was agreed that **Councillor Acklam** would complete the registration.

9. Moving the defibrillator

Councillor Gibson will go ahead with arranging the installation of the defib. and the refurbishment of the telephone box.

9. Payment

E.on – Power on the green £60.08

The payment from last month was not made and is included in the above figure.

S Bailey – Clerk salary
Parish Council Websites – Website hosting

Confidential
£314.64

Payments approved. **Councillor Hall** to authorise.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held **on 3rd February 2026 at 7.30pm.**

The agenda for this meeting will be issued by the previous Tuesday and can be accessed from the Parish Council website <https://reachparish.gov.uk/parish-council/agendas-and-minutes>

Chairman:

Date: