



Minutes of Inaugural Meetings of Reach Parish Council meeting held on 1st and 2nd April 1954

These Minutes were originally hand written and have been copied into this document reflecting the way the Minutes would have been presented in 2010. The original Minutes can be viewed upon request of the Clerk. Any significant changes from the original, including explanatory comments, are shown in square brackets.

Attendance

Mr W. Aves	Councillor	Present
Mr E. Cole	Councillor	Present
Mr R. A. Smith	Councillor	Present
Mr R. B. Wood	Vice Chairman	Present
Mrs E. E. Bendall	Clerk	Present

Mr Evans, Clerk to the N.R.D.C opened the meeting and wished the Parish Council every success in the local government work entrusted to them by the electors of the newly formed Parish of Reach. Mr Evans spoke briefly on the various aspects of Local Government and assured the Council that he and his staff would be ever available in an advisory capacity.

Mr Woods was then unanimously elected Chairman for the day. The first business of the meeting was to elect a Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year. Mr Smith proposed and Mr Cole seconded that Mr Houseden should be Chairman and as there was no other nomination Mr Houseden's name was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

The Chairman then asked for nominations for Vice Chairman. Mr Smith proposed and Mr Aves seconded the name of Mr Woods, there were no other nominations and this was carried unanimously.

Mr Evans then informed the meeting that Mrs Bendall had offered her services as Clerk to the Council in a voluntary capacity and the Council resolved to place on record their appreciation and willingness to accept.

Signed by: A J Houseden

Dated: 27th April 1954

[See Inaugural Meeting on following page]

Inaugural Ceremony

To mark the “birth” of the Parish of Reach a short inaugural ceremony was held in Reach Schoolroom on Friday April 2nd 1954, during which the Chairman of the Cambridgeshire County Council (Ald. R. H. Parker) supported by other members of the County Council, formally handed over to the new Chairman of the Parish Council (Mr A. Houseden), a copy of the Statutory Order and minute book.

In presenting the Order, Alderman Parker recalled the history of Reach and the formation of the great defence work the Devil’s Dyke, which he said was probably constructed by the inhabitants of Reach during the Anglo Saxon and Norman invasions. He also looked back on the time when Reach was a port and ships of considerable tonnage sailed across the marshes through Reach. Speaking of the famous Reach Fair Ald. Parker declared that in bygone days it was of great importance to trade and commerce.

“I have been talking in terms of thousands of years,” Ald. Parker concluded [“]and I should like to wake up in another thousand years and see what has happened to this country and to Reach in particular”. He wished the Reach people the greatest prosperity and happiness.

Mr Houseden also received a gift from the County Council, a minute book which was inscribed by the Clerk to the County Council. Ald. Parker commented: “I only hope the writing in this book will always live up to his writing and the decisions recorded, wise ones”.

The Chairman of the County Council’s Local Government and Purposes Committee (Dr R. Ellis) told the meeting that the people of Reach realised that they lost their identity by being swallowed up by Burwell and Swaffham. They also recognised that a small unit of local government if it adopted a method of “give” and “take” could be a benefit to everyone concerned.

Other members of the Cambs. County Council, Alderman A. E. Stubbs, F. A. Fry and R. J. Watts gave advice to the new parishioners and Councillor E. G. Glendon claimed that there were no worse quarrels than those “which took place over neighbouring walls” and maintained that it was the spirit of forgiving neighbours which was so necessary to make life enduring in Reach.

Mr Houseden thanked the County Council members for the interest they took in the village and added that as Parish Councillors they would do their best for the village and try to give satisfaction to everyone.

At the conclusion of the ceremony refreshments were served to the Councillors and to all who were present and games and dancing brought an enjoyable evening of celebration to a close.

Signed by: A J Houseden

Dated: 7th May 1954