

MEPAL PARISH COUNCIL

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES TO 30TH NOVEMBER 2011

Councillors: Mr Mike Stacey (Chairman), Mrs Elizabeth Stazicker (Vice-Chairman), Mr Ron Slough, Mr Glenn Drew, Mr Tony Pleasance, Mr Allen Sallis, Mr Roy Harknett

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Mepal Village Vision: at the November meeting, the parish council received a presentation from Abigail Taylor, Forward Planning Officer of East Cambridgeshire District Council, regarding the results of the Mepal Village Vision Consultation. Disappointingly only 36 responses to the consultation were received. As a result of the consultation, two key issues were considered by the council; the first was whether the parish council would support new housing growth on the edge of the village? It was resolved that the village does not require any further housing development outside of the development envelope save any that may be necessary if a need for affordable housing is identified. The second issue was whether the parish council would support employment growth within the village? Again it was resolved that the parish council does not support allocation of land outside the development envelope for employment growth purposes. As a result of these decisions, Mepal will be identified as a low growth village within the Local Plan; any future growth will be within the current development envelope. Consultation on the new draft of the local plan will take place in spring next year.

Setting of the precept for 2012/13: at the Full Council meeting in November, the Parish Council resolved to set the estimated precept figure at £31,725 for 2012/13 which equates to an increase of 4.8% on the current financial year. The budget will be reviewed again in January before the final figure is agreed.

Mepal Woodland: as you will see from the separate article within this issue, this project has moved forward over the last couple of months and a Planting Day has now been arranged on **Wednesday 14th December**. We would welcome your help in the planting of some 400+ trees. Come and join us on site from 10:00 (please bring a spade and a festive hat!); the children from the primary school will be lending a hand in the afternoon once their tummies are full of Christmas lunch! Afternoon tea for volunteers will be served at the school at the end of the planting. If you are unable to help then please just come along and cheer us on!

Highway Warden: Roy Harknett has kindly agreed to take on the role of Highway Warden for Mepal. Roy will be working closely with the Highways Authority at Witchford to identify any issues within the village. If you notice a problem with any of the roads or footpaths then please contact Roy on 777761.

Extending the Winter Service 2011/12; Roy Harknett and Phil Martin have recently attended training with Cambridgeshire Highways Authority to extend the winter gritting service in the village. The County Council has provided equipment (spreaders and shovels) and a pallet of salt which will be stored at the Village Hall. On the instruction of the Highways Authority, the following areas of the village will be gritted by Roy & Phil; the footpath on the west side of Sutton Road from the crossing point to the top of Brangehill Lane and along the south side of Brangehill Lane to the crossing point opposite the school. The area outside the front entrance of the school. The north side of the High Street from Sutton Road to Laurel Close. The east side of Sutton Road from High Street to the Chestnut Way bus stop. The passage from Sutton Road through to Meadow Way. The footpath within the recreation field that leads to the community pavilion. To extend this service even further next winter, more volunteers are needed. Please contact the Clerk if you can help.

Renewable Energy for Mepal Community Pavilion: by the time you read this report, the photovoltaic panels may well have been installed on the roof of the pavilion. If not, they will be there very soon! The Working Party will be arranging a "green" community event in the New Year to provide information to residents about the latest renewable energy technologies and the availability of any grant funding.

Consultations: since the last report, the parish council has consider the following consultations; Boundary Commission 2013 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies in England. Whilst the parish council noted a change to the constituency for Mepal, no comment was made on the consultation. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals & Waste Local Development Framework consultation on Draft Supplementary Planning Document – RECAP (Cambridgeshire &

Peterborough Waste Partnership) Waste Management Design Guide. No comment was made on this consultation. Cambridgeshire County Council consultation on review of the decision to remove all subsidised bus service funding. This consultation required responses from individuals rather than from the parish council and was therefore advertised within the village.

Planning: since the last report, the following planning application has been considered; change of use of land from minerals extraction and processing to minerals extraction and motor sports usage involving formation of 4 metre high bunding for noise suppression and siting of 4 containers for use as storage (retrospective) at the land at Block Fen Drove, Mepal. The parish council resolved to object strongly to this application.

Next Meeting: the next meeting of Mepal Parish Council will be on Monday 9th January 2012 at 19:30 in Mepal Village Hall. Everyone is welcome to attend and should you have any items of local concern then you may address the Council at the Open Forum.

Finally, we wish everyone a Very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful 2012.