

# Information for prospective Town Councillors

Reepham is a small market town which, including the outlying area, is composed of approximately 1000 dwellings with a voting population of about 2000 people. Reepham Town Council is at the first level of local government working, in conjunction with Broadland District Council and Norfolk County Council, to ensure that local services are provided and local needs met within the framework set out by central government. Reepham Town Council is composed of twelve councillors, any or all of whom have been either elected or returned unopposed. In the event that there are not enough candidates to fill the vacant seats at election time, or if a vacancy occurs between elections and an election is not called, a candidate can be co-opted to the Council. The Town Council holds regular meetings, usually on the second Wednesday of each month except during the month of August.

The Council employs a Town Clerk, the person responsible for ensuring that the Council operates in accordance with Standing Orders, and a Finance officer. It is important to remember that all decisions must be made by Councillors at Town Council meetings, having taken advice from the Town Clerk and the Responsible Finance Officer as appropriate.

The Council will, wherever possible, conduct all its correspondence electronically. To enable Councillors to undertake their duties responsibly training will be offered and it is expected that councillors will take advantage of any appropriate training that is available. Reepham Town Council has statutory obligations or functions delegated from other bodies which it must fulfill on a continuing basis. These include responsibility for maintaining the cemeteries, the churchyard and the public toilets and overseeing items such as dog and litter bins, notice boards etc. In addition Reepham Town Council either owns or controls assets on behalf of the community, some of which are listed below:

## Town Hall

The Town Hall is owned by the Council on behalf of the people of Reepham. It is independently managed by a Town Hall Management Committee made up of representatives of the various user groups together with two Town Councillors deputed to sit on the committee. The Management Committee make all decisions, financial and otherwise, regarding the running of the Hall and make regular reports to the Town Council. Meetings take place every two months.

## Stimpson's Piece

Stimpson's Piece was donated to, and is held in trust on behalf of, the people of Reepham, the sole Trustee being Reepham Town Council. There are meetings of the Trustee, ie. the Town Council, at regular intervals and these are usually held on the same evenings as the full Town Council meetings.

Stimpson's Piece should be managed by a Management Committee (cf the Town Hall above) but this is currently under review. There is at present a requirement for up to four councillors to sit on the Stimpson's Piece Management Committee. A Management Committee meeting take place every two months.

Reepham Tennis Club has leased the tennis courts and the Town Council is committed to nominating up to two members of the Tennis Club management committee.

## Allotments

There are three allotment sites, on Norwich Road, Stony Lane and Fiddler's Field, off World's End Lane. These are leased or rented and the Council is responsible for the maintenance of the communal areas, fences and hedges.

## **Market Place**

The Market Place is owned by Reepham Town Council. The Council currently holds an events licence for the Market Place to enable community groups to use the area for events or entertainments.

## **Street Lighting**

The Council is responsible for the upkeep and replacement, where necessary, of the street lighting.

## **Overton Way**

The upkeep and maintenance of the green open space and the play equipment in Overton Way is the responsibility of the Town Council.

With all these commitments it is imperative that Councillors take an active part in all the various areas of Council business. Councillors will be notified of agenda items for all meetings the week prior to the meeting and they should make every effort to ensure that they are fully prepared for any discussion. Financial reports will be circulated to all Councillors before each meeting by the Finance Officer. As far as possible any queries that a Councillor may have should be raised with the Town Clerk or the Finance Officer before the meeting in order to prevent any undue delays in progressing Council business at the meeting.

It is equally important that Councillors take an active role in the wider community by, for example, sitting on the various management committees and in supporting local community initiatives. It is not anticipated that any Councillor should, on average, expect to attend more than about 14 formal meetings a year but inevitably there may be periods when there are additional calls on Councillors time.