

ELM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

15 APRIL 2014 – 7.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Brand, Chairman; Councillors Mrs Cotterell, Mrs Dalliday, Hopkin, Mrs Hopkin, Mrs Lankfer, Milham, Pinnock, Softley, Stokes and Webb.

Apologies: Councillor Miss Webb and County Councillor Gillick.

In attendance: District Councillors Sutton and Tanfield.

The minutes of the meeting of 18 March 2014 were confirmed and signed.

149/13 Open Forum

Planning application F/YR14/ 0203/F (Erection of a single-storey 3-bed dwelling north of La Chaumiere, Back Lane, Collett's Bridge Lane, Elm)

A resident of Collett's Bridge Lane informed the Parish Council of his concerns, which he stated are shared by other residents living in the vicinity of the application site, regarding this planning application.

The resident made the point that the application claims to be compliant with the September 2013 Fenland District Council Core Strategy document policies CS3, CS12 and CS16 (as well as the retained elements of the 1993 Fenland District-wide Local Plan) as it describes the proposal as a sustainable development of a single infill dwelling in an otherwise built-up frontage; he then explained the reasons why he and other local residents consider this not to be the case.

The resident informed the Parish Council that the objections of local residents are based upon both planning policy and road safety issues, as follows:

- as is stated in the planning notices on the site and in the local press, this application site lies outside of the Development Area Boundary contained within the 1993 Fenland District-wide Local Plan.
- Policy CS3 of the September 2013 Fenland District Council Core Strategy document states that new development in Collett's Bridge should normally be restricted to an infill site within an otherwise built-up frontage. However, this is not a single dwelling infill, as the site is not located between two developed plots but between agricultural land and a developed plot; as such, the grant of planning permission for this proposal may set a dangerous precedent.
- over the last 27 years there have been four previous planning applications for this site, all of which were refused planning permission. In 1989 an appeal was made to the Planning Inspectorate; the appeal was dismissed on the basis that the western side of Collett's Bridge is primarily agricultural land with a small scatter of dwellings (there has been no change to that situation since 1989).
- residents of Collett's Bridge are very concerned about the detrimental impact that the residential development of this site could have upon road safety. They feel that the lane is too narrow to support development on both sides; in particular, the approach from the northern end of the lane is hazardous as vehicles exiting the plot would be unseen by oncoming traffic. Collett's Bridge Lane is essentially a cul-de-sac (as Back Lane is unadopted) with limited ability to turn or pass another vehicle on the public highway and is incapable of safely supporting further traffic generated by development on the western side.

- the proposed design of the property is completely out of keeping with the surrounding properties
- Part A of Policy CS12 (Rural Areas Development Policy) of the September 2013 Fenland District Council Core Strategy is relevant to this application and requires that all 11 criteria of Part A must be met. However, this application fails, for the reasons explained by the resident, to meet 7 of those criteria
- Policy CS16 of the Core Strategy (Delivering and protecting High Quality Environments across the District) is also relevant to this application and requires that all 13 conditions must be met. However, this application fails, for the reasons explained by the resident, to meet 4 of those criteria.

In conclusion, the resident expressed the opinion that the proposed development should be refused planning permission for the reasons that

- the application site is in an unsafe location, due to inadequate access and lack of highway visibility
- the site lies outside of the 1993 Development Area Boundary
- the application fails to comply with relevant policies (those being CS3, CS12 and CS16) of the new Core Strategy.

The resident requested that the Parish Council supports the concerns of local residents and, consequently, registers with Fenland District Council, as Local Planning Authority, its opposition to this planning application.

Members decided that the concerns of the resident be noted and that they be taken into account by the Parish Council when considering the planning application (minute M156/13 refers).

150/13 Members' Code of Conduct

Further to minute 31/12, the Clerk reminded members of the need for them to submit to the Monitoring Officer at Fenland District Council any changes to the content of their Register of Member Interests forms.

Members decided the reminder from the Clerk be noted and acted upon.

151/13 Introducing the Police and Crime Commissioner

Ms Nicola Fenton, the Outreach Worker for the Peterborough and Fenland Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Cambridgeshire, explained to members the role and responsibilities of the PCC and the purpose of the Police Crime Plan 2013-16. The Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire is Sir Graham Bright.

Ms Fenton reminded members that the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) was elected to office (for the period to May 2016) in November 2012, as a replacement for the Police Authority; she commented that the view of the Government, in making this change, was that having a single person with responsibilities for policing in each County would provide greater accountability to the public. Responsibilities of the PCC include overseeing the work of the Chief Constable and holding him to account for the performance of the County's police service, as well as setting the Constabulary's annual budget and writing the Police Crime Plan for 2013-16. She made the point that the PCC is keen to be aware of the issues of importance to local communities.

Ms Fenton outlined the five objectives of the Police Crime Plan for 2013/16; namely to:

- Maintain local police performance
- Deliver policing within the available budget
- Continue to tackle crime and disorder – with a focus on anti-social behaviour, dwelling burglary, organised crime and drugs misuse.

- Keep people safe – with a focus on domestic abuse, integrated offender management and vulnerable people – especially child sexual exploitation and hate crime.
- Maintain the resilience of protective services.

Ms Fenton explained that, upon the instruction of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Cambridgeshire Constabulary is in the process of recruiting Special Constables; in addition, the PCC proposes that, to increase the effectiveness of police officers' time and to reduce bureaucracy, police officers will be provided with mobile devices (such as an i-pad).

Ms Fenton responded to a number of members' questions and undertook to provide to the council, via the Clerk, answers to those questions which needed investigation on her part.

Members decided that the information presented by Ms Fenton be noted.

152/13 Progress on actions from minutes of last meeting

(1) Facilities for young people in the parish (minute 138/13 (1))

The Clerk informed members that the situation with regard to Fenland District Council's adoption of the open space land at Grove Gardens is unchanged from that reported at minute 138/13 (1).

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted.

(2) Elm Cemetery – operational issues (minute 138/13 (2))

The Clerk reported that he had been contacted by a small number of parishioners regarding thefts of flowers from graves at Elm Cemetery over the weekend of Mother's Day (29/30 March 2014).

In addition to suggesting to each of those persons that they report the thefts to the Constabulary, the Clerk had drawn the matter to the attention of PCSO Dave Russ; the Clerk had informed the PCSO that when there had been had a spate of similar thefts a couple of years ago, PCSO Bugonovic had produced warning notices bearing the Constabulary logo (with wording along the lines that Police are aware of thefts and are monitoring the situation) which had been displayed at the cemetery and on parish notice boards. In response, PCSO Russ undertook to produce similar notices for placing on the cemetery gates.

The Clerk reported quotations that he had obtained from a local contractor for re-painting the cemetery fencing and gates and supplying and fitting a new handle to the door of the Cemetery Chapel, in the sums of £250 and £35.00 respectively.

Members decided that

(1) the information reported by the Clerk in relation to thefts of flowers from the cemetery be noted;

(2) the quotation for supplying and fitting a new handle to the door of the Cemetery Chapel be accepted;

(3) the Chairman would inspect the condition of the paintwork of the cemetery fencing and gates and that subject to him being satisfied that re-painting is required, the Clerk would accept the quotation for that work.

(3) Maintenance of water courses (minute 138/13 (3))

The Clerk reported a quotation that he had obtained from a local contractor for cutting back vegetation and clearing soil and debris from the dyke adjoining the playing field at Begdale Road.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and that Councillor Hopkin would inspect the dyke with the aim of delivering the works at a lower cost to the Parish Council.

153/13 Death of the Secretary of the Elm C of E Primary School

Members are aware of the road accident on 27 March 2014 in which Carolyn Jobson, the Secretary of the Elm C of E Primary School, was killed.

Members decided to record their condolences in relation to the tragic death of this valued member of the community.

154/13 Police matters

The Clerk reported that PCSO Dave Russ, of the Wisbech and District Neighbourhood Policing Team, was unable to attend the meeting, This officer had, however, provided a report detailing recent incidents of crime and disorder within the geographical area covered by Elm Parish Council, which the Clerk presented to members, including:

- Coldham – no incidents reported
- Fridaybridge – no incidents reported
- Elm – one incident of theft from the garden of a domestic property; one report of hare coursing
- Rings End – no incidents reported.

PCSO Russ' report mentioned that the next meeting of the Rural South Neighbourhood Forum would take place on 10 September 2014; this would operate on the basis of the New Horizon outreach vehicle being located at Maltmas Drove, Fridaybridge from 12 noon and concluding with a meeting (to decide the neighbourhood policing priorities for the next six months) on the vehicle commencing at 5.00 pm.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk, on behalf of PCSO Russ, be noted.

155/13 Possible provision of play equipment at Fridaybridge

Further to minute 136/13, members considered the possible provision of play equipment at Fridaybridge.

Councillor Pinnock informed members that he had obtained from District Councillor Sutton information relating to the design and cost of the skateboard park which had been installed at Christchurch in recent years. Subsequently, Councillor Pinnock had made contact with the company which manufactured and installed that skateboard park and asked the company to provide a quotation for the manufacture and installation of the same type of skateboard park at Fridaybridge; the quotation is in the total sum of £50,999.00. Councillor Pinnock stated that he would check the detail of the quotation and then forward, via the Clerk, to other members of the council.

Councillor Pinnock added that, according to information he had obtained, Fenland District Council is holding around £24,000 in Section 106 Planning Obligation monies which could be used for the purchase and installation of play equipment at Fridaybridge.

Members decided that Elm Parish Council would continue to investigate the possibility of providing play equipment at Fridaybridge.

156/13 Planning applications

Members considered the following planning applications and decided to submit to the Local Planning Authority the comments set out (in italics) below:

- (1) Erection of a two-storey 4-bed dwelling with integral single garage and 1.8m (max height) wall, railings and gate to front on land north-west of Homelands, Well End, Fridaybridge – F/YR14/0179/F (applicant: Mr A Edgeley).

That the application be supported.

- (2) Erection of 3 x two-storey 4-bed dwellings with attached garages, involving demolition of existing sheds, on land south and east of Meadowcourt, Main Road, Elm - F/YR14/0186/F (applicant: Mr J Boyall).

That the application be supported.

- (3) Erection of a two-storey 3-bed dwelling with attached garage on land east of Bungalow, Waldersea Farm, March Road, Rings End – F/YR14/0196/F (applicant: Mr P Crowson).

That the application be supported.

- (4) Erection of a single-storey 3-bed dwelling north of La Chaumiere, Back Lane, Colletts Bridge Lane, Elm – F/YR14/0203/F (applicant: Dr J Harrall).

Object to the application for the following reasons:

- *the proposed dwelling would be out of character with the nature of the existing dwellings within the area*
- *the site lies outside of the Development Area Boundary for the village of Elm*
- *the access road to the site is inadequate to serve additional properties.*

(Councillor Stokes requested that his dissent from this decision be recorded)

- (5) Erection of a two-storey 3-bed dwelling, involving demolition of existing garage, on land north of The Overstone, March Road, Coldham – F/YR14/0215/F (applicants: Mr and Mrs P Bray).

That the application be supported.

- (6) Erection of 2 x two-storey 2-bed dwellings on land north of 3 Limes Avenue, Elm – F/YR14/0070/F (applicant: Mr T Adcock).= revised application, to change design and layout and to reduce number of bedrooms from 3 to 2.

That the revision to the application be supported.

- (7) Erection of a two-storey 2-bed dwelling with attached single garage and (retrospective) temporary siting of a mobile home during construction on land west of Two Woodhouse Cottages, 78 March Road, Fridaybridge – F/YR14/0224/F (applicants: Mr and Mrs P Hills).

That the application be supported.

- (8) Erection of a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling, involving demolition of existing sunroom, at Glendale, 342 low Road, Elm – F/YR14/0234/F (applicant: Mr D Rockcliffe).

That the application be supported.

(Councillor Mrs Cotterell declared her pecuniary interest in this application, by virtue of her ownership of a property adjoining the application site, and retired from the meeting for the duration of the discussion and voting thereon)

- (9) Erection of first-floor extensions to side, involving formation of porch and alterations to existing garage to enable conversion and extension and alterations to existing rear lean-to, at Bath Farm, 174 Fridaybridge Road, Elm – F/YR14/0250/F (applicant: Mr J Turnbull).

That the application be supported.

157/13 Reports from District and County Councillors for the parish

Given the absence from the meeting of the County Councillor who represents the parish of Elm (Gordon Gillick) no report was received by the Parish Council in relation to current County Council issues.

Councillor Sutton, one of the District Councillors who represents the parish of Elm, informed the Parish Council that

- Councillor Alan Melton had announced that he would be standing-down as Leader of Fenland District Council on 8 May 2014; however, it is anticipated that the commitment given by Councillor Melton to meet collectively with the Chairman and Clerk of each of the Parish Councils within Fenland to discuss the future of Concurrent Functions Grants (minute 141/13 refers) would be “picked up” by whoever is elected as the new Leader of Fenland District Council on 8 May 2014
- District Councillor Tanfield, the local resident who had spoken at the last meeting of Elm Parish Council (minute 136/13 refers) and he had met last week with a representative of a company which manufactures and installs play equipment; as a result of the meeting, a master plan (to include a skateboard park, multi-use games area, other play equipment and a community garden) for the Fridaybridge playing field would be produced; a visit had also been made to Peartree Way and the play equipment company's representative was asked to produce a draft scheme, with an indicative budget of £25,000 to £30,000, for that estate. Councillor Sutton suggested that some of the funding for the provision of play equipment at Fridaybridge could be met by the Parish Council and the use of Section 106 Planning Obligation monies due to Fridaybridge. He added that a public consultation event would take place at Fridaybridge on the play equipment master plan
- being aware of community concerns regarding the matter, he would make efforts to secure the cutting back of an overgrown hedge situated on land adjacent to Main Road, Elm.

Councillor Tanfield, the other District Councillor who represents the parish of Elm, informed the Parish Council that she had nothing to add to the information provided by Councillor Sutton.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

158/13 Financial matters

The Clerk reported on the Parish Council's income and expenditure since the last meeting, as follows:

Income

Maxey Grounds	Cottage rent (less fees)	£523.60
Turner and Son	Interment fee	£275.00
Peter Barnes	Interment fee	£275.00
Total Income		£1,073.60

Expenditure

Glazewing	Wheelie bin emptying – Elm Cemetery (includes VAT of £13.43)	£80.59
Cambridgeshire County Council	Annual rent for playing field at Fridaybridge	£375.00
R J Warren Ltd	Grounds maintenance contract (includes VAT of £293.89)	£1,763.32
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £146.20 and NI of £8.16), Broadband and other expenses	£680.42
Mrs S Woodhouse	Playing field security (quarterly payment to 31 March 2014)	£100.00
Kings Lynn IDB	Drainage rates	£64.04
Total Expenditure		£3,063.37

In addition, the Clerk reported on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank and savings accounts as at 31 March 2014 (in the total sum of £123,150.22), together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 31 March 2013.

Further to minute 21/11, the Clerk reported on the management accounts that he had produced for the fourth (year-end) quarter of the 2013/14 financial year; he gave explanations as to variances between the estimated income and expenditure for the year and the actual levels of income and expenditure in that financial year.

Further to minute 142/13, the Parish Council considered the setting of a date and time for the first meeting of the Finance Committee.

Members decided

- (1) that the income of £1,073.60 be noted and that the expenditure of £3,063.37 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank and savings accounts as at 31 March 2014, together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 31 March 2013, be noted;
- (3) to note that, after allowing for the Parish Council's ear-marked reserves (totalling £57,139.50) at 31 March 2014), the actual balance available to the Parish Council at 31 March 2014 was £66,010.72; making further allowance for a general contingency (at the level of 150% of the 2013/14 Precept, which equates to £45,000) reduces the actual balance available to the Parish Council at 31 March 2014 to approximately £21,000.00;
- (4) the financial information within the fourth quarter's management accounts be noted;

(5) the first meeting of the Finance Committee be held on 1 May 2014 (to commence at 7.00 pm).

159/13 Application for financial assistance - Fenland Association for Community Transport (FACT)

The Clerk reported an application from the Fenland Association for Community Transport (FACT) for financial assistance towards the cost of operating its Dial-a-Ride North service, which covers the village of Elm.

The application form states that ten of the members of the FACT Dial-a-Ride North service (some of whom are wheelchair users) are residents of Elm; this service is used by Elm residents to access shopping within the district on a weekly basis and to visit areas outside of the district (such as Peterborough and Kings Lynn) on a monthly basis.

Members decided that a donation of £50.00 be made to FACT.

160/13 Parking on the grassed verge at Abington Grove, Elm

Further to minute 134/13, the Clerk reported information provided by the Local Highway Authority in relation to the possibility of installing bollards, to prevent the parking of vehicles, on the grassed verge at Abington Grove, Elm.

The County Council's District Highway Manager states that the cost of supplying and installing bollards would be £3,019.20 and he asks whether Elm Parish Council would be able to fund the whole or part of this cost.

Councillor Pinnock reported that he had also received an e-mail from the County Council's District Highway Manager, in which he had provided the same costings but had asked whether Elm Parish Council would be able to fund the whole cost of such a scheme

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk and Councillor Pinnock be noted and that the Clerk would seek from the Local Highway Authority (LHA) further details of the possible scheme and clarification as to the level of financial contribution that the LHA would be expecting from the Parish Council towards the cost of such a scheme.

161/13 Correspondence

The Clerk reported that he had received no items of correspondence of relevance for reporting to this meeting of the Parish Council.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

16213 Date of next meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council had been scheduled for 20 May 2014, to commence at conclusion of the Annual Parish Assembly which takes place at 7.00 pm, at the Parish Council office, Begdale Road, Elm.

Meeting finished at 8.40 pm

Signature:.....(Council Chairman).

Date:.....