

# ELM PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF MEETING

21 JULY 2015 – 7.00 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Brand, Chairman; Councillors Mrs Cotterell, Mrs Dalliday, Mrs Davis, Miss Ferguson, Hopkin, Milham, Pinnock, Stokes and Webb.

**Apologies:** Councillors Mrs Hopkin and Patrick.

**In attendance:** District Councillors Sutton and Tanfield.

The minutes of the meeting of 16 June 2015 were confirmed and signed.

### 27/15 Open Forum

#### (1) Coldham layby

A resident of Coldham informed the Parish Council that trees and bushes at the former Overstone Arms at Coldham are overhanging the layby and that, consequently, bus drivers are complaining about the situation and are “threatening” not to use the layby unless the matter is addressed.

Members decided that the situation be noted and that the Clerk would draw this matter to the attention of the relevant officer of the Local Highway Authority (LHA), asking that a letter be sent by the LHA to the owner of this property requesting him to cut back the trees and bushes which are overhanging the layby.

#### (2) Highway signage at Coldham

A resident of Coldham informed the Parish Council that the first set of chevrons out of Coldham (when heading towards Wisbech) are partly obscured by overgrown vegetation and also the speed limit sign out of Coldham (when heading towards Wisbech) had suffered impact damage – it is resting against hedging – and needs re-installation.

Members decided that the situation be noted and that the Clerk would draw this matter to the attention of the relevant officer of the Local Highway Authority, with a request that the necessary remedial works be undertaken.

#### (3) Community Speed Watch

A parishioner mentioned his awareness that Speed Watch activity is undertaken in some parishes and enquired as to whether such could be undertaken in Elm parish.

In response, the Chairman commented that there is no reason why volunteers within the community could not look to set up Speed Watch groups within the parish.

Members decided that the comments of the resident and the Chairman be noted.

### 28/15 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.

### 29/15 Proposed residential development at Gosmoor lane, Elm

Members received a presentation by Mr G Edwards of Swann Edwards Architecture on a proposal, not yet the subject of a planning application, for the residential development, by 51 dwellings –consisting of a mix of single-storey and two-storey dwellings with a variety of numbers of bedrooms - on land at Gosmoor Lane, Elm; he circulated to members a document showing an “artist’s impression” of how the development would look, together with an indicative layout plan. Mr Edwards mentioned that the proposal would include the gift of a parcel of land to the Elm C of E Primary School to facilitate an extension of its playing field.

Mr Edwards explained that, because of Policy LP12 of the Fenland Local Plan (which he explained briefly), it is necessary to undertake community consultation on the proposal and, consequently, he wishes to obtain the views of Elm Parish Council on this proposal prior to the submission of a planning application to the Local Planning Authority (Fenland District Council); he mentioned that further community consultation would be undertaken via an event to be held at the Elm Centre on 25 July 2015 (between 10.00 am and 12 noon).

Mr Edwards commented that the principles of the scheme had been discussed with Planning Officers at Fenland District Council and that they had indicated support for the scheme; Mr Edwards is currently in the process of undertaking/arranging certain surveys/investigations required to be submitted as part of a planning application for this proposal.

Mr Edwards responded to members' questions. In response to a question regarding the capacity of the local school to be able to accommodate additional pupils, Mr S Ayers, one of the owners of the land to which this proposal relates, stated that he had attended a recent meeting of the School Governors to seek their views on this proposal and that they had indicated their support in principle and had expressed no concern regarding the school being able to accommodate additional pupils.

Some members expressed concerns as to the ability of the community infrastructure within Elm to be able to accommodate any further large-scale residential development.

Members decided that

- (1) the information presented be noted;
- (2) they would take the opportunity to attend the consultation event at the Elm Centre on 25 July 2015;
- (3) this matter be discussed at the next meeting of Elm Parish Council.

### 30/15 Progress on actions from minutes of last meeting

#### (1) Play equipment provision in Elm and Fridaybridge (minute 17/15 (1))

With regard to the provision of play equipment at Elm, the Clerk informed members that the manufacturer of the play equipment for installation on one of the grassed areas at the entrance to Abington Grove is currently manufacturing the perimeter fencing and gates for the scheme.

With regard to the provision of play equipment at Fridaybridge, the Clerk informed members that he had attended a meeting involving the relevant officers of Fenland District Council and District Councillors Sutton and Tanfield on 17 July 2015, the purpose of which was to ensure that all interested parties were aware of the current progress situation and to discuss further the funding of the project.

The Clerk reported that, further to minute 153/14 (1), it is now proposed that this project be delivered as a single scheme, rather than in four separate phases. The total cost of the project is estimated at £205,000 and the Clerk had completed the funding application to WREN for £75,000 and would be making an application for £100,000 to Fenland District Council's Rural Capital Grants Fund; the sum of around £31,000 is already available towards the cost of this project from a combination of the Parish Council's ear-marked reserve of £7,500 for this purpose and Section 106 Planning Obligations monies of around £24,000 in the possession of Fenland District Council.

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

**(2) Abington Grove, Elm - parking on the grassed verge area (minute 17/15 (2))**

The Clerk reported that the works necessary to the timber bollards to accord with the results of the Local Highway Authority's safety audit had been undertaken and the supplier/installer of the bollards would be undertaking the installation works during the school summer holiday period.

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

**(3) Section 106 Planning Obligations – outstanding requirements upon developers etc (minute 20/15)**

District Councillor Sutton informed the council that, although he was yet to check the situation regarding outstanding Section 106 Planning Obligations in respect of the parish of Elm, he is fairly confident that the situation is unchanged from that reported to the council previously; he would, however, investigate the situation and, if the situation had changed, he would inform the council accordingly.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

**31/15 Police matters**

No member of the Wisbech and District Neighbourhood Policing Team was present at the meeting and, consequently, members received no information relating to recent incidents of crime and disorder which had been reported to the Constabulary, in relation to the geographical area covered by Elm Parish Council, since the last meeting of the council.

One member mentioned the speed at which one bus which conveys agricultural workers is driven through Elm.

Members decided that the situation be noted and that the Clerk would request the Constabulary to continue with its efforts to tackle speeding within Elm.

**32/15 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 garage, involving the demolition of existing shed, on land north of 81 the Stitch, fronting Bar Drove, Fridaybridge – F/YR15/0403/F (applicants: Mr and Mrs Leake).

*That the application be supported.*

- (2) Erection of 5 x 2-bed and 15 x 4-bed two-storey dwellings with garages on land west of Cedar Way, accessed from Grove Gardens, Elm – F/YR15/0514/F (applicant: Kier Living Ltd).

*Object to the application for the following reasons:*

- *approval of the proposal would contribute, through cumulative impact of current and planned residential development, to overdevelopment of the village of Elm*
- *the current community infrastructure (including lack of capacity at Elm Primary School, insufficient medical facilities and inadequate local road network) is insufficient to support the continued development within the village*
- *the application site provides insufficient facilities for the off-road parking of vehicles likely to be generated by occupiers of the proposed dwellings*
- *a part of the application site is subject to a Section 106 Planning Obligation requiring its use, once adopted by Fenland District Council, as community land.*

- (3) Change of use of paddock land to extend the residential curtilages to 164, 166, 168 and 170 Fridaybridge Road, Elm (retrospective) on land east of 164 – 170 Fridaybridge Road, Elm – F/YR15/0523/F (applicants: Mr A Edgoose and Messrs Hubbard, Smith and Sandberg).

*That the application be supported.*

- (4) Erection of a single-storey rear extension and installation of external wall insulation to existing dwelling at The Firs, 9 The Stitch, Fridaybridge – F/YR15/0543/F (applicants: Mr and Mrs D Price).

*That the application be supported.*

In addition, the Clerk reported that planning application F/YR14/0976/F (which proposed variation of condition 09 (imposition of a condition listing approved plans) relating to planning permission F/YR12/0903/F (Erection of 21 x two-storey dwellings comprising 14 x 2-bed and 7 x 3-bed; 2.1 metre high fencing and landscaping involving demolition of existing sheltered accommodation and garage and alterations to the gardens of six bungalows) relating to change of facing brick, roof tile, hanging tile; fascias and rainwater goods; windows from timber to black UPVC; removal of six trees; change to undercroft wall to parking area to House Types A, B and C t brickwork with single window and change of 1.8 metre high brick boundary walls to close-boarded timber fence with trellis at The Dale, Begdale Road, Elm), considered by Elm Parish Council at minute 110/14, has been withdrawn by the applicant.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

### **33/15 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 Tanfield, one of the District Councillors who represents the parish of Elm, informed members that

- the County Council had just opened its Local Highway Improvements schemes process for the financial year 2016/17
- the improved and extended George Campbell Leisure Centre at March had been opened officially earlier today

- the Fenland District Youth Council has funding available in the current financial year to be able to award grants of up to £1,000 per application for youth-related projects.

Councillor Sutton, the other District Councillor who represents the parish of Elm, informed members that

- Fenland District Council is proposing, to develop further its approach to shared services, to link its Planning Team with the one at Peterborough City Council
- further to minute 129/14, the Category 1 street lamp repairs within the parish of Elm should now be almost complete and that a substantial amount of the sum of the £250,000 put aside by Fenland District Council to assist Parish Councils in meeting the cost of the Category 2 works is still available; this funding would be awarded proportionately to Parish Councils
- the payment to Parish Councils of Concurrent Functions Grants would be considered as part of Fenland District Council's planned Comprehensive Spending Review.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

#### **34/15 Open spaces (including the cemetery) under the Parish Council's control**

Members considered whether there are any issues relating to the open spaces under the Parish Council's control which required discussion by the Parish Council.

Further to minute 22/15, members remain pleased with the quality of the work being undertaken by the council's grounds maintenance contractor. However, Councillor Mrs Cotterell expressed the opinion that works to control weed growth within the garden of rest area of Elm Cemetery are required.

Members decided that the situation be noted and that the Clerk would inform the council's grounds maintenance contractor of their comments regarding the contractor's work across the parish, including the need for works to control weed growth within the garden of rest area of Elm Cemetery.

#### **35/15 Application to divert and upgrade part of Footpath No. 5 at Elm**

Members considered an application which had been made to Cambridgeshire County Council, under Section 119 of the Highways Act 1980, for diversion of part of Elm Footpath No. 5 and subsequent upgrading of the entire path to bridleway.

The Clerk had circulated to members, in advance of the meeting, a copy of the application and accompanying maps (which show the proposed diversion route).

Members decided that County Council be informed that Elm Parish Council supports the application.

#### **36/15 Consultation on further street lighting energy savings**

Members considered the letter of consultation from Cambridgeshire County Council on its proposal, as a means of achieving financial savings of approximately £272,000 in its street lighting energy costs, to switch off most street lights across Cambridgeshire between midnight and 6.00 am each day and the question being asked as to whether Elm Parish Council would be prepared to contribute financially towards the cost of retaining street lighting on particular roads within Elm during those hours, with effect from the financial year 2016/17.

The Clerk informed members that, based upon the information which had been provided by the County Council, 2 street lights could be switched-off for six hours per day in the village of Elm (both on Low Road) under the County Council's proposal. The cost of retaining full operation of the 2 street lights would be £12 per light per annum

(increasing by inflation each year); therefore, the total cost for those 2 lights in 2016/17 would be £24.00 plus an administrative charge of £65; this would bring the total cost for 2016/17 to £89.00

The County Council's consultation on this matter closes on 30 September 2015.

Members decided that Elm Parish Council would not meet the cost of operating the 2 affected street lamps between midnight and 6.00 am with effect from the financial year 2016/17; if, however, this decision were to result subsequently in complaints from residents of the parish affected, the council may review its decision at that time.

### **37/15 Grants to voluntary and charitable bodies – Friends of Rings End Nature Reserve**

Members considered a request from the Friends of Rings End Nature Reserve for financial assistance, in the sum of £1,000.00, as a contribution towards the cost delivering a project of maintenance and development of the Rings End Nature Reserve (including the purchase of a pedestrian mower, the purchase and installation of interpretation boards and the production of information leaflets) at a total estimated cost of £12,500.

Members decided that a sum of £1,000 be pledged towards this project and that such funding be released to the Friends of Rings End Nature Reserve when the group is able to confirm that the remainder of the funding for the project had been secured from other sources.

### **38/15 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 and annual boiler service)	£457.60
Richard King Memorials	Memorial inscription	£66.00
Fenland District Council	Concurrent Functions Grant – first half	£2,653.00
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>£3,176.60</b>

#### **Expenditure**

Glazewing	Wheelie bin emptying – Elm Cemetery (includes VAT of £14.88)	£89.28
R J Warren Ltd	Grounds maintenance contract (includes VAT of £259.95)	£1,559.71
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £149.40 and NI of £9.00), Broadband and other expenses	£681.11
C Brennan	Playing field security (quarterly payment to 30 June 2015)	£100.00
Richard Kierman	Cleaning of notice boards etc	£45.00
Hundred of Wisbech IDB	Drainage rates	£70.95
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>£2,546.05</b>

In addition, the Clerk reported on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank and savings accounts as at 30 June 2015 (in the total sum of £148,093.54), together with the figure as at 30 June 2014.

The Clerk reported on the management accounts that he had produced for the first quarter of the 2015/16 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.

Members decided

- (1) that the income of £3,176.60 be noted and that the expenditure of £2,546.05 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank and savings accounts as at 30 June 2015 and the position as at 30 June 2014 be noted;
- (3) to note that, after allowing for the Parish Council's ear-marked reserves (totalling £79,775.00) at 30 June 2015), the actual balance available to the Parish Council at 30 June 2015 was £68,318.54; making further allowance for a general contingency (at the level of 150% of the 2015/16 Precept, which equates to £51,972.00) reduces the actual balance available to the Parish Council at 30 June 2015 to approximately £16,347.00;
- (4) that the financial information within the first quarter's management accounts be noted.

### 39/15 Correspondence

#### Issues raised by Orchard Gardens Neighbourhood Watch group

The Clerk referred to an e-mail from the Co-ordinator of the Orchard Gardens Neighbourhood Watch group - which he had circulated to members in advance of the meeting - raising a number of issues in relation to the village of Elm.

The Clerk explained to members what he felt, having examined the issues raised, to be appropriate responses, as set out below:

- the fact that there are outstanding issues in relation to an existing development (the Orchard Gardens estate) is not a material planning consideration in relation to any proposed new development by the same developer on adjoining land (planning application F/YR15/0514/F)
- Elm Parish Council had raised objection to the new planning application F/YR15/0514/F (minute 32/15 refers)
- the Parish Council is aware of the speeding issues in Elm and continues to bring the matter to the attention of the local Constabulary
- until the community land to the rear of the Orchard Gardens estate is formally adopted as such by Fenland District Council, it remains in the ownership of the land owner and, consequently, members of the public have no right to access the land. It is understood that the Parks and Open Spaces Manager at Fenland District Council has been trying for a number of years to secure adoption of the open spaces at this site.
- with regard to the possibility of Elm Parish Council providing funding towards the cost of providing Neighbourhood Watch signs on the Orchard Gardens estate, applications for grant aid from Elm Parish Council can be found on the council's website.

Members decided that the content of the e-mail from the Co-ordinator of the Orchard Gardens Neighbourhood Watch group be noted and that the Clerk would respond, in the manner set out above, to the points raised by the author of the e-mail.

**40/15 Date of next meeting**

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council had been scheduled for 18 August 2015, commencing at 7.00 pm, at the Parish Council office, Begdale Road, Elm.

**Meeting finished at 8.05 pm**

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

Date:.....

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