

# ELM PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF MEETING

12 September 2017 – 7.00 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Pinnock Chair; Councillors Mrs Dalliday, Mrs Cotterell, Stokes, Miss Ferguson (left the meeting at 20.10), Mrs Davis, Patrick (left the meeting at 20.15), Milham.

**Apologies:** Councillors Brand, Mrs Hopkin, and Hopkin. District Councillor Sutton

**In attendance:** District Councillors Mrs Tanfield.

The Minutes of the meeting of 15 August 2017 were discussed and Councillor Pinnock requested that some amendments be made. It was agreed that the Clerk would make those amendments and then Councillor Pinnock would sign them as a record of the meeting.

### 56/17 Members' Code of Conduct

The Clerk reminded Members of the need for them to submit to the Monitoring Officer at Fenland District Council, via the Parish Clerk, any changes to the content of their Register of Member Interests forms.

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

### Public Forum

A parishioner asked the question as to why all the concrete street lighting columns were removed. Councillor Pinnock said that from memory the Parish Council had no say in the matter as they don't own them. The parishioner made particular reference to a street light at Coldham that is made of concrete and hasn't been exchanged.

Councillors Pinnock and Ms Tanfield said that they thought that the parameters for removal weren't to do with whether they were made of concrete but those that were deemed requiring removing or replacing. The parishioners said that it seemed acceptable to him but if it was to be replaced, this needed to be done soon with winter coming. Councillor Pinnock asked that he keep an eye on it and report back if he had any further concerns.

A parishioner reported an issue with the road markers/highways signs at Redmoor Lane and the fact that a recent accident had further highlighted the issue. Councillor Pinnock asked that the Clerk report it through the County Council website.

A parishioner asked about the progress of the Elm Church bells. She was informed that the bells were still being worked on and it was hoped they would be ready before too much longer.

A parishioner raised the point that the Agenda was late going on the website and the fact that the July Minutes still had draft on them. The Clerk apologised and said that she would get the July minutes altered. She said that the Agenda usually goes out on time and she would endeavour to ensure it does in future.

Councillor Patrick raised the point that the fact that they went on the Noticeboard meant that the Council was legally compliant. Councillor Pinnock said that according to the Parish Council publication scheme they should be

on the website as well. He said that he would be passing this on the Chairman proper so that it doesn't happen again. He further stated that he felt more people go onto the website to view the documents rather than read Noticeboards.

### **57/17 Progress on actions from minutes of last meeting**

#### **(1) Play equipment provision in Fridaybridge (Minute /17 (1) refers**

The Clerk reported that Councillor Tanfield had been in contact with staff from FDC and we were waiting to arrange a meeting when that officer returns from leave.

#### **(2) Speeding across the Parish (Minute /17(2) refers**

Councillor Pinnock reported that Speedwatch had not been very active due to school holidays and the recent roadworks in the village which had slowed traffic.

Activities will resume shortly and Mike Brooks the officer in charge of Speedwatch for the County, would be bringing the new County Casualty Reduction Officer to visit the Speedwatch scheme. This would be organised by the Speedwatch Co-Ordinator.

#### **(3)& (4) Local Highway Improvements schemes – Elm & Fridaybridge (Minute /17 (3) & (4) refers)**

Councillor Pinnock reported that the flasher units outside the two schools in Elm and Fridaybridge. However reports have been received that the units have frequently not been working.

Councillor Pinnock said that the Fridaybridge units were working but the Elm ones were not. The units can only be programmed for three hours per day so at times they will not be working. Councillor Pinnock has a palm programmer for the units and will be programming them.

The issue of the units and their maintenance and warranty costs were discussed by Members.

It was resolved that the money be put aside from the Christmas lights fund in a separate reserve and this be used to replace the units if/when they go wrong after the 5 year warranty period.

The reduction of speed limit scheme is still awaiting the costings from CCC before going ahead. Councillor Pinnock expects these to be in the region of £2-3K. He has requested costs from the County Council for putting in LGV signs both ends of Gosmoor Lane to cut down the number of LGVs going down there.

### **58/17 Police matters – PCSO Sue Clarke**

No email was received from the Police prior to the meeting.

### **59/17 Planning Applications**

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

Councillor Patrick informed Members of his non-pecuniary interest in the two planning applications at the Sportsman Public House as he knows the owners well and would not be commenting on the applications. Members noted this.

F/YR17/0707/F – Erection of 1no 2-storey 4-bed dwelling with integrated garage and 1no 2-story 4-bed dwelling at Land South of 183 Main Road Fridaybridge

***Resolved: That the application be supported***

F/YR17/0759/LB – External alterations to a listed building involving replacement and repair of existing windows at The Limes Begdale Road Elm Wisbech PE14 0BQ.

***Resolved: That the application be supported***

F/YR17/0761/O – Erection of a dwelling (Outline application with all matters reserved) – Land North of 39 March Road Rings End Guyhirn.

***Resolved: That the application be supported***

F/YR17/0737/F – Change of use of part of church hall to form a 2-storey 2-bed dwelling involving single-storey side extension to link old engine house store at Fire Engine House and Plot 1 All Saints Church Hall Main Road Elm

***Resolved: That the application be supported. However Members wanted their concerns noted by the Planning Authority, as to the location of the development and the potential hazards to traffic and pedestrians.***

F/YR17/0799/LB – Alterations to a listed building involving the erection of single-storey side extension to link Engine House to Church Hall (to enable a change of use of buildings to residential use) at Fire Engine House and Plot 1 All Saints Church Hall Main Road Elm

***Resolved: That the application be supported. However Members wanted their concerns noted by the Planning Authority, as to the location of the development and the potential hazards to traffic and pedestrians.***

(Councillor Patrick wished it to be noted that he considered himself to have a non-pecuniary interest in applications F/YR17/0812/F and F/YR17/0813/LB and therefore did not intend to comment on them)

F/YR17/0812/F – External works to existing public house including removal of timber porch and erection of a 1.2 metre high timber fence at The Sportsman Main Road Elm PE14 0AG

***Resolved: That the application be supported***

F/YR17/0813/LB – Internal and external works to a Listed Building including removal of timber porch at The Sportsman Main Road Elm PE14 0AG

***Resolved: That the application be supported***

F/YR17/0798/F – Erection of a single-storey rear extension to existing dwelling involving demolition of conservatory at 31 Oldfield Avenue Elm PE14 0AL

***Resolved: That the application be supported***

### **60/17 Reports from District and County Councillors**

Councillor Tanfield reported that things had been relatively quiet at FDC due to the summer recess. She is putting together a paper with officers in respect of how the Council communicate with the public particularly in respect of consultation. This is to give people who have taken the time to consult on an issue, thanks and feedback by FDC. It is hoped this will encourage greater involvement from the public to consultation exercises by FDC.

The Comprehensive Spending Review is ongoing with 9 projects ongoing across the District. These are all currently on budget.

She had nothing to further report in respect of issues raised by Parishioners.

### **61/17 Open Spaces (including the cemetery) within the Parish**

The inspection of the Parish Play equipment report was previously circulated to Members. The two issues highlighted were the fencing around the Fridaybridge playground and a bolt missing on one of the pieces of equipment.

The Clerk was asked to look into who was responsible for the fencing and report back at the next meeting.

### **62/17 Viability of August Meeting**

Councillor Brand had requested that the viability of holding the August meetings be considered. Members discussed the issue and resolved that although numbers were reduced they were sufficient to constitute a quorum.

In addition due to the financial and planning matters that required discussion each month that the meeting should go ahead in August each year.

### **63/17 Noticeboards**

The Clerk requested guidance from Members as to what they felt was appropriate to go on the Parish Noticeboards. She had included some job advertisements from local organisations. Members discussed the issue and resolved that the Clerk be authorised to put Agendas, Minutes, Parish Council Notices and Accounts (for example Audit or Elections), on the Noticeboards and anything unrelated to Council business should be referred to the Council for approval.

### **64/17 Local Highway Improvements (LHI) 2018/19**

Councillor Pinnock raised the matter of the funding available for the next financial year for Local Highway Improvements and the email received from the County Council. Applications have to be in by the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2017 which is after the date of the October Meeting. Councillor Pinnock suggested that he prepare an application for submitting by the deadline.

Members discussed the matter and resolved that Councillor Pinnock be authorised to prepare an application for circulation to and agreement by Members. Thereafter, subject to their agreement, he be authorised to submit the application on behalf of the Council.

### 65/17 Cemetery Cottage

The painting of the Cottage had taken place and the invoice for payment received. Quotes were still awaited in respect of the Tenant's request for thermostats to be added to a number of the Cottage radiators. The Clerk had given the Tenant details of two contractors to contact to hasten the quotes being obtained.

### 66/17 Chapel of Rest

Members were informed that the painting of the Chapel had been completed. Prior to the commencement of those works by the Contractor, the Chapel Bell had fallen out of its casing. Some parts of the metal cannons of the Bell had perished. The Clerk reported that the Contractor had provided the Clerk with details of a welder who could repair the Bell. She had taken it to the welding company prior to the meeting and had been given a quote to repair it of £25-£35 approximately. Members resolved that the repair of the bell be authorised and the approximate cost be noted.

### 67/17 Website

Councillor Pinnock raised the issue with the Clerk that the cumulative monthly accounts were not showing on the website for the last few months. She acknowledged that this was an oversight on her part and she would get them done as soon as possible. Members discussed about the possibility of the Clerk having control of the website rather than through a Web company. Councillor Pinnock suggested that the Clerk had quite a few duties and training to carry out already but that this maybe something to be considered in the future. The Clerk reported that the Web company had put a lot of work into the updating the Website with Councillor Pinnock and due to this outlay it may be prudent to leave the situation as it is and reconsider in the future.

Members resolved that the situation be noted and reviewed at a future date.

### 68/17 Recording of Meetings

The Clerk reported that she had done a lot of research in respect of this issue as she had received a request for a copy of the recording, she had taken of the meeting to aid her production of the minutes, from a Parishioner. As she had been advised by the Legal Adviser to the Councils and Clerks Direct, Paul Clayden, that this was not information covered by the Freedom of Information Act, she had refused to release the recording. The parishioner had appealed this decision. The Clerk was therefore bringing the matter to the Council again as a Review needed to take place in respect of the Clerk's decision.

The Clerk had again approached Paul Clayden for advice together with advice from the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) again and spoke to one of the legal advisers to the SLCC.

The information received was differing but they were all in agreement that the Clerk would not be criticised or be acting unlawfully if she deleted the recording. In addition the advice from the ICO was that the information required to go into the public domain was the approved Minutes and that this could be a "defence" under the legislation for not releasing the recording.

Members discussed the issue and resolved that the Clerk did not have to release the recording and that she could delete the recording when she had prepared the Minutes and they were subsequently approved by Members.

Councillor Pinnock wished it to be noted that he disagreed with this decision.

69/17 Financial Matters

(1) Income and Expenditure since last meeting

<b>ELM PARISH COUNCIL</b>		
<b>Income &amp; Expenditure</b>		
<b>12 September 2017</b>		
<b>Income</b>		
<b>Payer</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount £</b>
Peter Heron	Cemetery Cottage Rent	595.00
National Savings	Interest Received	62.43
Turner & Son	Interment Fee - Burial	990.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,647.43</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
<b>Payee</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount £</b>
SLCC	Admin Costs	82.80
R Kierman	Notice Boards cleaning	45.00
Mr J Davison	Works to Cottage	1,500.00
DA Pest Control	Control of moles	60.00
CL Butcher	Salary & Expenses	676.53
HMRC	Clerks' Tax & NI	444.57
RJ Warren Ltd	Grounds Maintenance	1,799.27
Solagen Limited	Speed Indicator Device	12.00
PKF Littlejohn	Audit Fee	360.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>4,980.17</b>

In addition, the Clerk reported on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank and savings accounts as at 31 July 2017 (in the total sum of £181,147.88), together with the figure of £144,680.19 as at 31 July 2016.

Members decided

- (1) that the income of £1,647.43 be noted and that the expenditure of £4,980.17 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank and savings accounts as at 31 August 2017 and the position as at 31 August 2016 be noted;
- (3) to note that, after allowing for the Parish Council's ear-marked reserves (totalling £121,425.00) at 31 August 2017), the actual balance available to the Parish Council at 31 August 2017 was £176,425.00 making further allowance for a general contingency of £55,000 reduces the actual balance available to the Parish Council at 31 August 2017 to approximately £3,446.93;
- (4) Councillor Pinnock asked about the progress of the Internet Banking for himself and Councillor Brand as he had taken his ID documents into the bank on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2016. The Clerk confirmed that the paperwork required had been signed by Councillors Brand and Mrs Cotterell and taken into the Wisbech Branch and she was awaiting further correspondence from the bank but expected this to be a little while yet due to the time taken for the last time the bank mandate had been updated.
- (5) Councillor Pinnock asked that as the Clerk had internet banking could the financial report include figures for the bank account as at the date as near to the date of the meeting as possible, rather than the end of the previous month. The Clerk agreed to provide the figures a few days before the meeting.
- (6) Councillor Pinnock requested that the agreed expenditure from this and previous meetings be shown as earmarked reserves in the financial report. The Clerk said that these were not earmarked reserves but agreed expenditure. Councillor Pinnock requested that regardless, the figures for agreed expenditure be deducted from the earmarked reserves.
- (7) Councillor Pinnock raised the issue of his request for the Internal Auditor to be included on the Agenda for the meeting. The Clerk confirmed that this was not included due to the number items already on there. He wanted this item to be discussed. The Auditor had offered to come back mid-year for a review. Members were asked to agree funding for this to go ahead and they agreed.

### 70/17 Correspondence

A resident had raised the issue of the fact that a grit bin in Fridaybridge had been overturned and could this be removed until the winter. Members discussed the fact that another grit bin in the Parish had been secured to a fence post to prevent this and agreed that the grit bin in Fridaybridge be similarly secured and asked that the Clerk get a cost for this from the previous Contractor. The resident also asked that Dog Waste Bins be provided in the same area.

Member discussed that they were also required in other areas in the Parish and asked the Clerk to get some costings together for the next meeting.

A resident advised that he was pleased to note that two of the Willow trees at the Leam had been pollarded but felt that the third tree there also required works. He had also asked that the Leam be thinned out. The Clerk informed Members that she had rung the resident to report that the works on the watercourse were to be carried out in late autumn.

She further reported that she had agreed to speak to Councillor Brand about the third Willow tree as he had knowledge of the works required and had spoken to the Contractor previously.

The Clerk reported that the External Audit had been completed by PKF Littlejohn and the letter received on the day of the meeting.

They had requested some further clarification from the Clerk, some weeks ago, on one issue in the figures and she had dealt with this. The Audit was returned with no further actions required. Their payment for the service was included in this month's financial report. The Clerk reported that the paperwork from the Auditor needs to go on the Noticeboards and Website by the 30 September 2017.

Members decided that the details be noted.

**Date of Next Meeting**

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council is scheduled for 17 October 2017, to commence at 7.00pm, at the Parish Council office Begdale Road, Elm.

**Meeting finished at 8.45 pm.**

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

Date:

DRAFT