

# ELM PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF MEETING

15 NOVEMBER 2016 – 7.00 pm.

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

**Apologies:** Councillors Mrs Davis, Hopkin, Mrs Hopkin, Patrick and Webb.

**In attendance:** District Councillors Sutton (until 7.45 pm) and Tanfield (until 7.45 pm).

The minutes of the meeting of 18 October 2016 were confirmed and signed.

### 79/16 Open Forum

#### (1) Bells at All Saints Church, Elm

A parishioner enquired as to whether the Parish Council is able to provide an update with regard to restoration of the bells at All Saints Church, Elm (minute 95/14 refers).

In response to the enquiry, Councillor Stokes mentioned his understanding that the bells would be removed from the church on Tuesday of next week, for restoration works, with the aim of their being re-installed in time for Easter of 2017.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

#### (2) Highway markings

A parishioner expressed the opinion that there is a need for the white lining in the vicinity of the clock tower at Fridaybridge to be refreshed and also that the white lining which marks the road edge on the B1101 between March and Fridaybridge is not sufficiently distinct, thereby putting motorists at risk when using this road at night during poor weather conditions.

Members decided that the comments of the parishioner be noted and that the Clerk would refer those comments to the relevant officer at the Local Highway Authority.

#### (3) Overgrown hedges between Fridaybridge and Elm

A parishioner commented that some works had been undertaken but the trimmings had been left on the ground, which still results in obstruction of the footpath.

Members decided that the comments of the parishioner be noted and expressed the hope that this issue would be addressed either by the land owner responsible for the situation or by "enforcement" by the Local Highway Authority.

#### **(4) Parish newsletter or magazine**

A parishioner enquired as to whether it would be possible for an Elm parish newsletter or magazine to be produced, as a means of keeping parishioners up-to-date with matters affecting the parish. He showed councillors, as an example of what he would like to see produced in Elm parish, the Summer 2016 edition of the Walsoken Parish Magazine.

Members noted that the Walsoken Parish Magazine is produced by All Saints Parish Church at Walsoken and not by the Parish Council.

Members decided that the comments of the parishioner be noted and that they would be supportive of any community group or body which may wish to produce a parish magazine or newsletter.

#### **80/16 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.

#### **81/16 Progress on actions from minutes of last meeting**

##### **(1) Play equipment provision in Fridaybridge (minute 66/16 (2))**

The Clerk informed members that, due to workload pressures, he had been unable to submit an application (electronically) to WREN for funding towards the cost of providing an equipped play area scheme at Fridaybridge. He stated that he hoped to be in a position to submit the application prior to the next meeting of Elm Parish Council.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

##### **(2) Speeding across the parish (minute 66/16 (3))**

Councillor Pinnock updated members on the operation of the Speed Watch scheme across the parish. He had circulated to members, in advance of the meeting, reports containing statistical data in relation to Speed Watch activity between January and 31 October 2016. The reports show that: 15,267 vehicles had been "clicked"; 1,217 vehicles (7.9% of the total) had been speeding; 82 Speed Watch sessions (covering a period of 112 hours) had taken place. He expressed his appreciation of the activities of the Speed Watch volunteers, who brave the elements to make the parish safer

Officers of Cambridgeshire Constabulary continue to support the Speed Watch team with speed checks, which had resulted in seven motorists being given tickets on one day.

Councillor Pinnock commented that the results of the highways monitoring (minute 66/16 (4) refers), which had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting, confirm the speeding patterns in Elm. He expressed the opinion that all indicators suggest that the 40 mph speed limit between Elm and Fridaybridge should be reduced to 30 mph; however, he had been informed, today, by the Local Highway Authority that the Constabulary would not support such a measure. He expressed the opinion that the highways monitoring information provides a wealth of information and that, although such monitoring costs approximately £350 per location, it would be beneficial to extend this exercise to the remainder of the parish to assist in providing evidence of the need for other speed reduction measures; he suggests that this be considered at the time of setting the council's budget for 2017/18.

Further to minute 66/16 (2), Councillor Pinnock mentioned that he would be meeting with Police Inspector Will Davis on 17 November 2016 to discuss Speed Watch procedures and to ascertain why the Constabulary would not support a reduction in the speed limit between Elm and Fridaybridge.

Members decided that the current situation be noted and to support Councillor Pinnock's suggestion that some highways monitoring data be published on the council's website

**(3) Local Highway Improvements scheme 2016/17 (minute 66/16 (4))**

Councillor Pinnock reminded members that they had, at the last meeting of the council, supported proposed amendments to the draft plan which had been produced by the Local Highway Authority (LHA) and that he had been informed today that these amendments had been accepted by the LHA. He, therefore, presumes that revised plans would be produced by the LHA, which would subsequently undertake a consultation exercise in that regard.

Members decided that the current situation be noted.

**(4) Planning appeal in relation to proposed residential development at Henry Warby Avenue, Elm (minute 69/16)**

Councillor Pinnock reminded members that he had sent a second letter to the Planning Inspectorate regarding the outcome of this planning appeal and that the response he had received repeated that of the original letter that he had sent, i.e. the decision of the Planning Inspector could be challenged in the High Court. He commented that if a Planning Inspector is able to over-ride the policies within a Local Plan and the views of the Parish Council and residents in such an arbitrary way as in this case, Local Plans have little relevance other than to give a false impression to the community that their opinion is worthy of consideration.

Councillor Pinnock commented that the appeal decision in this case means that the new dwellings threshold for Elm, as set out in Policy LP12 of the Fenland Local Plan, had been exceeded by 52 dwellings.

Members decided that the information reported by Councillor Pinnock be noted.

**82/16 Police matters**

PCSO Sue Clarke, of the Wisbech and District Neighbourhood Policing Team, attended the meeting to inform the council of recent incidents of crime and disorder within the geographical area covered by Elm Parish Council, as well as updating the council on other relevant matters.

PCSO Clarke mentioned that three men travelling around the area in an orange van had been offering gardening services at a very reasonable price; however; when the work is complete, they demand considerably more money than the quotation and become very aggressive if customers refuse to pay the higher amount. She gave a description of each of the men involved. The PCSO mentioned that the Elm Neighbourhood Watch group had been made aware of the situation and she suggested that villagers need to be vigilant.

The PCSO informed the council that there had been a number of accidents involving vehicles going into the dykes between Elm and Fridaybridge and Coldham. These accidents are as a result of motorists driving at speed; this further justifies the need for Speed Watch activity across Elm parish. She mentioned that Special Constables had undertaken speed checks in Elm on 8 November 2016, as a result of which seven motorists had been given speeding fines.

PCSO Clarke informed the council of two non-dwelling burglaries which had taken place in Elm. She commented that, as a result of regular patrols in the village, the amount of anti-social behaviour at Fridaybridge had reduced considerably. She mentioned that both Halloween and Bonfire night came and went without any problems.

The PCSO mentioned that she is seeking to identify contact points within the parish, for the purpose of undertaking public engagement, particularly as the New Horizons outreach vehicle is no longer available.

Members decided that the information reported by PCSO Clarke be noted.

### **83/16 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) Fell one Oak tree within a Conservation Area at Elm House, Main Road, Elm – F/YR16/0908/TRCA (applicant: Mrs D Bullard).

*That the application be supported.*

- (2) Erection of a storage building at Fenmarc Produce Limited, 178 Gosmoor Lane, Elm – F/YR16/0940/F (applicant: Fenmarc Produce Limited).

*That the application be supported.*

- (3) Erection of a first-floor side extension, balcony to rear and porch to front of existing dwelling at 21 Kilderkin Close, Fridaybridge – F/YR16/0946/F (applicants: Mr and Mrs Pearce).

*That the application be supported.*

- (4) Erection of 9.95 metres high (max. height) side extension to existing building at Fenmarc Produce Limited, 178 Gosmoor Lane, Elm – F/YR16/0947/F (applicant: Fenmarc Produce Limited).

*That the application be supported.*

- (5) Part change of use of land from caravan storage to domestic curtilage and erection of a single-storey extension to existing dwelling at Little Ranch, Begdale Road, Elm – F/YR16/0963/F (applicant: Mr M Davey).

*That the application be supported.*

In addition, members considered a pre-application consultation in respect of a proposal to erect a dwelling on land north of Carnaby House, Back Road, Elsm.

Members decided to make no comment in relation to the pre-application consultation but to await formal consultation by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) in respect of any planning application submitted to the LPA for this proposal

### **84/16 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 two District Councillors who represents the parish of Elm, informed members that

- further to minute 27/16, the Cabinet at Fenland District Council (FDC) had decided to introduce a charge, with effect from 1 April 2017, for the Garden Waste Service. She mentioned that FDC would be offering a discount of 10% off the annual charge of £40.00 in respect of payments received before 1 April 2017; in addition, FDC would be allowing payment of the annual in three instalments. Also, householders would be able to have additional garden waste bins at a cost of £40.00 per bin. She commented that FDC was keen to continue to offer this service, which is not a mandatory service, but needed to make financial savings
- further to minute 70/16, Fenland District Council (FDC) would be making a decision on 17 November 2016 as to its support or otherwise for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough devolution proposal. She expressed the opinion that the devolution proposal would be beneficial for Fenland and stated that she would provide the "facts and figures" at the next meeting of Elm Parish Council if the proposal is supported by FDC
- work is underway across Fenland to identify persons who would be prepared to become Dementia Care Friends; she suggested that perhaps Elm Parish Council would like to consider participation in the initiative.

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

- he is appreciative if the activities of the Elm Parish Speed Watch group; he had studied the data which had been circulated by Councillor Pinnock in advance of this meeting
- with regard to minute 81/16 (2), the council ought not to be concerned regarding the lack of support from the Constabulary in terms of achieving a reduction in the speed limit between Elm and Fridaybridge; he is aware of speed limit changes which had been effected in other areas despite a lack of support from the Constabulary
- he would report to the next meeting in relation Section 106 Planning Obligation matters in relation to Grove Gardens and Cedar Way, Elm
- he too is disappointed with the decision of the Planning Inspectorate in relation to the proposed development at Henry Warby Avenue (minute 81/16 (4) refers); he mentioned that Wimblington Parish Council is considering Judicial Review of a decision of the Planning Inspectorate in relation to a planning application for an aerobic digester
- he had referred to the Middle Level Commissioners the issue of tree cuttings having been deposited, by a person unknown, in a drainage dyke at Wales Bank
- it was evident from attending the Remembrance event on 13 November 2016 that cleaning of the Elm war memorial is necessary prior to next year's event.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

#### **85/16 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 require discussion by the Parish Council.

Further to minute 71/16, Councillor Pinnock informed members that he had made contact with the council's website host, Fenweb Limited, with regard to publication of the digital version of the council's burial registers; he had forwarded a sample of the documentation to Fenweb Limited and is seeking to arrange a meeting with the company to discuss publication of the documentation on the Elm Parish Council website.

The Clerk informed members that, further to minute 71/16, despite "chasing" the contractor on two occasions he is still awaiting a quotation for installation of two lockable, removable bollards.

Members decided that the information reported by Councillor Pinnock and by the Clerk be noted.

## **86/16 Local Highway Improvements 2017/18**

Further to minute 72/16, members considered further the submission of a bid for highway improvement works.

Councillor Pinnock informed members that, further to minute 72/16, he had made contact with Mr M Pickering, the Project Manager within the County Council's Highways Service, with a view to holding a meeting to discuss the feasibility of obtaining LHI funding for 2017/18 for a speed reduction scheme in the vicinity of Fridaybridge Primary School; after which both Mr Pickering and he would meet with the Headteacher of Fridaybridge Primary School. A date for such a meeting is still to be arranged. Councillor Pinnock commented that it is unlikely that funding could be obtained under the Local Highway Improvements scheme for highway works in the vicinity of that school; as was the case for the 2016/17 bidding round.

Further to minute 72/16, Councillor Pinnock informed members that he is assisting staff at Meeko House, the children's home at March Road, Fridaybridge, with the submission of a Local Highway Improvements scheme application for 2017/18 with the aim of reducing the speed of vehicles in the vicinity of its premises on the B1101.

Members decided that the information reported by Councillor Pinnock be noted and that Elm Parish Council would submit no application under the County Council's Local Highway Improvements scheme for 2017/18.

## **87/16 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
D Bates	Allotment rent	£650.00
A Fitzjohn	Allotment rent	£1,700.00
W and W G West	Plot purchase and interment fee	£1,279.00
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>£4,152.60</b>

### **Expenditure**

R J Warren Ltd	Grounds maintenance contract (includes VAT of £263.58)	£1,581.47
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £150.90 and NI of £9.90) and reimbursement of expenses	£709.18
Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal	Donation	£30.00
Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal	Poppy wreath	£17.00
Elm Parish Speed Watch Group	Donation towards administrative costs	£50.00
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>£2,387.65</b>

In addition, the Clerk reported on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank and savings accounts as at 30 September 2016 (in the total sum of £168,734.38), together with the figure as at 30 September 2015.

Members decided

- (1) that the income of £4,152.60 be noted and that the expenditure of £2,387.65 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank and savings accounts as at 31 October 2016 and the position as at 31 October 2015 be noted;
- (3) to note that, after allowing for the Parish Council's ear-marked reserves (totalling £93,595.00) at 31 October 2016, the actual balance available to the Parish Council at 31 October 2016 was £75,139.38; making further allowance for a general contingency of £55,000 reduces the actual balance available to the Parish Council at 31 October 2016 to approximately £20,139.00.

### **88/16 Financial support to Elm Parish Speed Watch group**

Councillor Pinnock proposed that the council makes a donation, under the provisions of Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, to the Elm Parish Speed Watch group as a contribution towards the cost of operation and management of the group's activities during 2016.

Members decided that a donation of the sum of £50.00 be made to the Elm Parish Speed Watch group.

### **89/16 Correspondence**

The Clerk informed members that there are currently no items of correspondence for reporting to the council.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

### **90/16 Date of next meeting**

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council is scheduled for 13 December 2016, to commence at 7.00 pm, at the Parish Council office, Begdale Road, Elm.

**Meeting finished at 8.00 pm**

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

Date:.....