

ELM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

17 MARCH 2015 – 7.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Stokes, Vice-Chairman in the Chair; Councillors Mrs Cotterell, Mrs Dalliday, Hopkin, Mrs Hopkin, Milham, Miss Webb and Webb.

Apologies: Councillors Brand, Mrs Lankfer and Pinnock.

In attendance: District Councillors Sutton and Tanfield.

The minutes of the meeting of 17 February 2015 were confirmed and signed.

151/14 Open Forum

(1) Fridaybridge Clocktower

Further to minute 75/14 (2), the parishioner who had informed the council, a number of months ago, that he had witnessed a lack of internal illumination to one of the clock faces on the clocktower at Fridaybridge commented that the situation remains the same.

The Clerk reminded members and the parishioner of the action that he had taken to address this situation (minute 75/14 (2) refers), i.e. for the repair works to the internal lighting at the clocktower to be undertaken in conjunction with the annual servicing of the clock mechanism; as it appears that the necessary action had not so far been taken, he would pursue the matter with the company which undertakes the maintenance of the clock mechanism.

Members decided that the comments of the local resident and the Clerk be noted.

(2) Highway defects at Coldham

A resident of Coldham mentioned both a dangerous pot hole at Coldham, at the Station Road/March Road junction, and areas where the carriageway is breaking up along the B1101 leading out of Coldham towards Fridaybridge.

The Clerk undertook to draw these highway defects to the attention of the Local Highway Authority.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

(3) Whitemill Local Environment Fund Committee

A parishioner enquired as to whether Elm Parish Council possesses a logo, which could be included on the documentation of the Whitemill Local Environment Fund Committee.

The Clerk responded that Elm Parish Council does not possess a logo.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

152/14 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.

153/14 Progress on actions from minutes of last meeting

(1) Play equipment provision in Elm and Fridaybridge (minute 140/14 (1))

With regard to the possible provision of play equipment at Elm, the Clerk reminded members that he had placed an order for the manufacture and installation of the play equipment, as agreed at minute 124/14 (1), and informed them that he had requested from the manufacturer/supplier of the equipment the information required by the Local Highway Authority for the purpose of undertaking a safety audit in relation to the creation of a play area on the grassed verge area at Abington Grove, Elm.

With regard to the provision of play equipment at Fridaybridge, the Clerk informed members that, following his meeting with the relevant officers of Fenland District Council and District Councillor Tanfield on 25 February 2015, he had completed an application form for funding from WREN towards the provision of play equipment at the playing field at Maltmas Drove, Fridaybridge; he had forwarded the completed application form to Fenland District Council for onward submission to WREN.

At the meeting on 25 February 2015, it was agreed that there are four elements to the proposed Fridaybridge play area scheme, as follows:

- Creation of a community garden (no cost (voluntary labour and donations of plants and materials); able to be commenced immediately)
- Play equipment (estimated to cost £60,000; likely funding source to be Fenland District Council's Rural Capital Grants scheme)
- Multi-Use Games Area (estimated to cost £35,000; likely funding source is WREN)
- Skateboard park (estimated to cost £70,000; likely funding source is WREN).

The officers of Fenland District Council had suggested at 25 February 2015 meeting that it should be possible to use Section 106 Planning Obligation monies held by Fenland District Council as matched funding where necessary in association with the applications for funding.

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

(2) Fishing at The Leam, Fridaybridge (minute 140/14 (2))

The Clerk informed members that he had submitted the draft byelaw, in respect of the No Fishing rule applying to the pond at The Leam, Fridaybridge, to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for provisional approval.

Prior to submission of the draft byelaw to the DCLG, the Clerk had examined the DCLG's guidance on the making of byelaws to ascertain the possibility of including within that byelaw the No Camping rule which applies to The Leam. Although it would have been possible to have included within an Open Spaces byelaw the No Camping rule, the guidance produced by the DCLG states that any byelaw introduced should be in response to a genuine and specific problem. The Clerk had consulted members, by e-mail, as to any

evidence they have that camping at The Leam is happening; in the absence of such information, the Clerk had not included the No Camping rule in the byelaw submitted to the DCLG.

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

(3) Abington Grove, Elm - parking on the grassed verge area (minute 140/14 (3))

The Clerk reported that the Chairman had both obtained a quotation for the supply and installation of bollards made from recycled plastic and ascertained from Fenland District Council whether Elm Parish Council would be eligible to make an application to the Whitemill Local Environment Fund Committee for funding to meet the cost of such bollards. As a result of the Chairman's investigations, it is clear that the cost of recycled plastic bollards would be significantly more than those manufactured from timber; furthermore, Fenland District Council has stated that Elm Parish Council, as a public authority, would not be eligible to make an application to the Whitemill Local Environment Fund Committee for funding to meet the cost of such bollards.

The Clerk reminded members that, in the light of the situation regarding the cost of acquiring bollards manufactured from recycled plastic, he had consulted them, by e-mail, seeking their agreement to his accepting the lowest quotation received for the manufacture and installation of timber bollards around the green area to the left of the Abington Grove entrance – 130 metres of bollards installed at 1.2 metres apart, at a cost of £3,050 plus VAT. All of the members who had responded had supported the Clerk's suggestion and, consequently, he had placed an order with the contractor which had submitted the lowest quotation. In addition, the Clerk had requested the contractor to provide the information necessary for the purpose of the Local Highway Authority (LHA) undertaking a safety audit in respect of the proposal; the information had been received from the contractor today and the Clerk would forward that information to the LHA.

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

154/14 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 commented that she hopes that the community had seen an improvement recently in terms of the level of Police presence across the parish. She mentioned that Police officers in Fenland had been provided with technology which, subject to them being able to access wi-fi networks, enables them to work remotely (allowing them to spend more time in the community and less time at a Police Station). She made the point that the crime rate in the parish is very low; since the last meeting of Elm Parish Council there had been three crimes recorded; those being two incidents of thefts from a vehicle (at Elm) and one theft of a catalytic converter (at Fridaybridge).

PCSO Clarke informed members that one of her particular areas of focus at this time is the inconsiderate and illegal parking of vehicles on the roads in the vicinity of Elm C of E Primary School; she made the point that the problems linked to parking in the vicinity of schools is not an issue which is unique to Elm and is not one which is likely to cease without Police intervention. The PCSO stated her awareness of the parking of vehicles on the grassed area at the Abington Grove/Main Road junction and of the Parish Council's proposal to seek to prevent such parking of vehicles through the installation of bollards at that location.

PCSO Clarke informed members that she proposes to adopt a zero tolerance approach to the inconsiderate and illegal parking of vehicles in the vicinity of schools and she is in the process of trying to secure funding for posters at schools to "educate" motorists to park safely and lawfully. She is also looking to encourage parents to participate in a "walking bus" campaign.

The next area of focus for PCSO Clarke would be to tackle motorists' speeding through villages; one of the areas within the parish which seems to be suffering from speeding and poor driving is Gosmoor Lane, Elm. She would be examining the adequacy of the existing speed limit signs along Gosmoor Lane, to see whether they provide a sufficient "message" in terms of the speed limit.

The PCSO reported that she is also working with officers at Fenland District Council to address fly tipping at Bar Drove. In addition, she mentioned that the Elm Neighbourhood Watch scheme is now operating again.

With regard to the members of Elm Parish Council reporting to her any issues of concern, PCSO Clarke stated that she is happy to receive telephone calls direct (as opposed to use of the 101 telephone number) on 01945 473761 or by e-mail: sue.clarke@cambs.pnn.police.uk (to which members could forward photographs of any issues requiring attention by the Constabulary).

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

155/14 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 2 x two-storey dwellings, involving demolition of existing building, on land north of 4 Limes Avenue, Elm – F/YR15/0146/F (applicant: Mrs Carla Bird).

That the application be supported.

- (2) Erection of a part two-storey, part single-storey rear extension, the formation of a first-floor balcony, insertion of first-floor and second-floor side windows and the erection of a 2.1 metre high (max height) boundary wall and gates to existing dwelling at 4 Goosetree Road, Rings End – F/YR15/0164/F (applicants: Mr and Mrs Foreman).

That the application be supported.

In addition, the Clerk reported that planning application F/YR14/1025//F (which proposed the change of use from 3-bed dwelling to day school on land south of 2 Rookery Cottages, Well End, Fridaybridge), which had been considered (and supported) by the Parish Council at minute 127/14, had been withdrawn by the applicant.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

156/14 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 members that

- because of the difficulties experienced by local residents as a result of the inconsiderate parking of vehicles by contractors working on behalf of Circle Roddons Housing Association (CRHA) on the scheme for re-development of the site of The Dale, Begdale Road, Elm (minute 143/14 refers), CRHA had given instructions to the contractors to park their vehicles in a considerate manner and had sent a letter (providing contact details for residents to report to CRHA any future incidents of inconsiderate parking of vehicles by contractors) to 42 households in the vicinity of the site; CRHA states that it had heard nothing from residents in response to the letter. District Councillor Sutton added that residents in a part of Manea had experienced similar difficulties. He

stated that if a local resident had either not received a letter from Circle Roddons Housing Association (CRHA) or is still experiencing difficulties as a result of the inconsiderate parking of vehicles by contractors, he would pursue the matter with CRHA. Councillor Mrs Dalliday offered to act as the link between the residents and District Councillor Sutton.

Councillor Tanfield, the other District Councillor who represents the parish of Elm, reported that

- she understood that some of the residents affected by the inconsiderate parking of vehicles by contractors working on the scheme for re-development of the site of The Dale had not received a letter from Circle Roddons Housing Association and she would be liaising with District Councillor Sutton in that regard.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

157/14 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.

The Clerk informed members that the first cut of the grass at Elm Cemetery had taken place and that, in his opinion, the overall condition and appearance of the cemetery is very good.

No member of the council had any issue to raise under this item of business.

Members decided that the situation be noted.

158/14 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
Peter Barnes Funerals	Interment fee and plot purchase	£660.00
M J Coates Memorial Mason	Cemetery memorial	£370.00
Peter Barnes Funerals	Purchase of cremated remains plot	£121.00
W & W G West	Plot purchase and interment fees	£1,995.00
Total Income		£3,669.60

Expenditure

Glazewing	Wheelie bin emptying – Elm Cemetery (includes VAT of £14.10)	£84.62
R J Warren Ltd	Grounds maintenance contract (includes VAT of £241.88)	£1,451.29
T Jordan	Salary (less income tax of £149.40 and NI of £10.08), Broadband and other expenses	£720.39
Anglian Water	Water for Begdale Road playing field	£13.85

Kierman Window Cleaning	Clean parish notice and information boards	£45.00
H M Revenue and Customs	Clerk's Income tax and NI (December 2014 and January and February 2015)	£556.81
Total Expenditure		£2,872.02

In addition, the Clerk reported on the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank and savings accounts as at 28 February 2015 (in the total sum of £128,024.73), together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 28 February 2014.

Members decided

- (1) that the income of £3,669.60 be noted and that the expenditure of £2,872.02 be authorised;
- (2) that the levels of funding held within the Parish Council's bank and savings accounts as at 28 February 2015, together with the month-end figures for each of the preceding six months and as at 28 February 2014, be noted;
- (3) to note that, after allowing for the Parish Council's ear-marked reserves (totalling £57,745.50) at 28 February 2015), the actual balance available to the Parish Council at 28 February 2015 was £70,279.23; making further allowance for a general contingency (at the level of 150% of the 2014/15 Precept, which equates to £45,000) reduces the actual balance available to the Parish Council at 28 February 2015 to approximately £25,279.00.

159/14 Correspondence

- (1) Wisbech and District Stroke Club.

The Clerk reported his recent receipt of an application from the Wisbech and District Stroke Club for financial assistance from Elm Parish Council towards its operational costs.

Members decided that the information reported by the Clerk be noted and that the application be considered at the next meeting of Elm Parish Council.

- (2) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils.

The Clerk reported to members the annual invitation from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils (CAPALC) for Elm Parish Council to become a member of the association, at a cost of £564.03 for the municipal year 2015/16.

The Clerk outlined briefly the information provided by CAPALC as to what it considers to be the benefits to a local council of it being a member of the association and he reminded members that Elm Parish Council had not been a member of CAPALC for a number of years, on the basis that members had not been convinced that such membership provided good value for money.

Members decided, on the basis that they are still not convinced that such membership provides good value for money, that Elm Parish Council would not become a member of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils for the municipal year 2015/16.

160/14 Date of next meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Parish Council had been scheduled for 21 April 2015, commencing at 7.00 pm, at the Parish Council office, Begdale Road, Elm.

Meeting finished at 7.40 pm

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

Date:.....