

Elm Parish Council

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Draft minutes of the meeting of Elm Parish Council held in the Tower Hall, Maltmas Drove, Fridaybridge on Wednesday 9 September 2020 commencing at 6.30pm

Meetings of the Parish Council are recorded by the Clerk to aid the Clerk with minute taking.
The recording is destroyed once the minutes are agreed.

Present: Cllrs Brand (Chair), Butcher, Cotterell, Feaviour, Ferguson, Griffiths, Hopkin, Milham, and Welbourne,
Sutton (FDC) and the Clerk, D Gibbs

079/20	Apologies for Absence <i>Apologies for absence were received and approved for Cllr Bunting.</i>
080/20	Members Code of Conduct The Chair reminded members of the need 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.
081/20	To receive Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest regarding items on the agenda Members of the Council are subject to the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interest) Regulations 2012. Members were reminded that all dispensation requests must be made to the Clerk prior to the meeting and that unless the member has obtained a dispensation, he or she cannot discuss or vote on the matter and must leave the room whilst the matter is being debated or voted on. <i>See item 096/20.</i> To receive Declarations of Non-Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or a Non-Pecuniary Interest <i>There were no declarations of non-disclosable pecuniary interest or a non-pecuniary interest relating to items on the agenda.</i>
082/20	Public Forum A parishioner asked whether the number of passengers using the bus stop in Elm was sufficient to justify the expense of a bus shelter and whether the money would benefit more residents if it was spent on other items. The Chairman explained that the project was created in response to a petition from residents, although the number of petitioners is unknown. The Clerk was asked to clarify this. Cllr Milham reminded members that the bus shelter would serve both directions of travel, as there is time to cross the road when the bus approaches.
083/20	Minutes of Previous Meetings <i>It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 12 August be approved as a correct record of the meeting.</i>
084/20	Matters Outstanding <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Vacancy for Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer - the deadline for applications is 18 September and several have been received already. The recruitment panel will review the applications received and arrange short listing and interviewing as appropriate.2. Council website - The new website has been launched with all of the basic requirements, but more information will be added in due course. Members were invited to suggest additional items to be included on the website.

085/20	<p>Membership of the Council</p> <p>The Clerk reminded members that a vacancy exists. The deadline for an election to be called has now passed, so the council may co-opt to fill the vacancy. No nominations have been received.</p>
086/20	<p>District and County Councillor Reports</p> <p>Cllr Sutton (Fenland District Council) noted that the street lights in Birch Grove have been repaired. He highlighted a recent Financial Conduct Authority report showing that over £30 million has been lost through pension scams since 2017 and that action is needed to protect vulnerable members of the community. Cllr Sutton has been criticised on social media for not supporting a motion he considered improperly conceived relating to the proposed waste incinerator. Finally, he suggested that, if a Clerk with cemetery experience could not be identified, the council might consider splitting the two roles.</p>
087/20	<p>Police Matters</p> <p>No report has been received.</p>
088/20	<p>Review of Fees and Charges</p> <p>Members considered the fees and charges and resolved as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agricultural tenancies - <i>current rent £125 per acre per annum since October 2017. Comparative data required to inform increase. Review summer 2021.</i> 2. Cemetery Cottage - <i>current rent £595 per calendar month since January 2013. Increase to £650 from November. Section 13 notice to be issued.</i> 3. Cemetery fees - <i>review with new terms and conditions for cemetery extension plots.</i>
089/20	<p>Work in Progress</p> <p>The Clerk updated members on progress regarding the following issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cemetery extension - Discussions on the infilling or piping of the dykes have commenced. Middle Level preference is for piping, however Hundred of Wisbech have indicated that providing an equivalent water storage capacity elsewhere on the local system might be acceptable to them. The specification for the plinths for the headstones from the previous design is available, but the dimensions depend upon the outcome of the dyke negotiations, as burial within 10m of a dyke is prohibited. Confirmation of boundaries may result in repayment of previous dyke maintenance payments. 2. Cemetery Cottage - Recent inspections have highlighted several issues relating to the cottage. The boiler failed the gas safety inspection, due to the design of the flue, but this has now been rectified and a certificate issued. It appears that there is no loft insulation in the loft above the single-storey part of the building. During the inspection for the energy performance certificate, a wasps' nest was discovered in the ground floor loft space. Members agreed to cover the cost of the removal of the wasps nest as a gesture of goodwill. 3. Cemetery Chapel - Future use options to be explored. Tender documents to be circulated shortly. 4. Children's play areas - Statutory signage required for Elm, Fridaybridge and Coldham play areas. Awaiting confirmation of contact details. Soft play surface options to be explored for Elm. Possible Section 106 money available. 5. Bus shelter - Level of demand to be re-assessed. Signatories on petition to be checked. Shelter to be purchased through Cambridgeshire Highways Privately Funded Highway Improvement scheme. 6. Canal towpath - Two dog bins to be installed at ends of towpath. Notice boards being funded by Whitemill Environment Fund. Picnic table in Pocket Park needs attention. 7. The Leam - The level of the outfall can be raised to retain more water in winter, but supply remains precarious. Trees need attention for safety and cosmetic reasons. 8. Clock Tower - The roof repair has been completed and the guttering cleaned, but there is evidence of water penetration in the rendering. Needs repair and repainting. 9. Tower Hall fence - Rear section from back of building to the far side of the field ready for quotes. Possible Section 106 money available. Car park boundary to be defined when extension is complete. 10. Coldham lay-by - Specification needed for tender. 11. Coldham defibrillator - To be placed on wall of 4 Overstone Road. Paving and electrical work required. Defibrillator and cabinet to be purchased.

	<p>12. Trees - Safety work and remedial pruning required in the Cemetery, the Leam, and Coldham lay-by. Other sites to be checked.</p> <p>13. Street lights - All reported faults now rectified. New asset record to be created before further replacement work undertaken. Status of contract to be clarified. Electricity supply contract to be finalised.</p> <p>14. Local Highway Improvements - Application to be submitted for speed reduction measures on Fridaybridge Road.</p> <p>Further issues raised by members: Fridaybridge defibrillator cabinet requires attention. Crack in concrete on skatepark to be referred to contractor. Transfer of lease for Coldham Playing Field to be considered.</p>																																																															
090/20	<p>Training Members discussed options for training for Councillors. <i>It was resolved that the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Association of Local Councils be commissioned to provide a face-to-face training session for the whole Council when possible, at a cost of £800. Details of other training opportunities will be circulated to all members and the budget for 2021/22 will provide a generous allowance for further training for members and for the new Clerk.</i></p>																																																															
091/20	<p>Planning Applications Members considered the following applications: F/YR20/0724/TRCA - Fell 1 x Robinia Tree in a conservation area - The Limes, Begdale Road, Elm <i>Members resolved to ratify their previous decision to offer no objection to the above application.</i> F/YR20/0740/F - Erect a 2-storey 3-bed dwelling with garage - Land to the South of 125 Fridaybridge Road, Elm F/YR20/0816/O - Erect 1 x dwelling (outline application with all matters reserved) - Land South of 50 Fridaybridge Road, Elm <i>Members resolved to offer no objection to the above applications.</i></p>																																																															
092/20	<p>Financial Matters:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Clerk provided a draft income and expenditure summary as at 31 August, showing income of £61,345.11 and expenditure of £40,363.14, resulting in a surplus for the year of £20,981.97 and total funds held of £278,108.97. The new account with Redwood Bank will be opened when all of the Councillors have provided their details for money laundering checks. <i>Members resolved that the expenditure for September 2020 detailed below be approved.</i> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ref No.</th> <th>Cheque No.</th> <th>Payee</th> <th>Expenditure</th> <th>Gross</th> <th>VAT</th> <th>Net</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>16</td> <td>703044</td> <td>Smith of Derby</td> <td>Clock service contract</td> <td>219.60</td> <td>36.60</td> <td>183.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17</td> <td>703045</td> <td>Harrison Agricultural Contracting Ltd</td> <td>Refilling of Leam pond</td> <td>480.00</td> <td>80.00</td> <td>400.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18</td> <td>703046</td> <td>Balfour Beatty Living Places Ltd</td> <td>Street light repairs</td> <td>1,493.39</td> <td>248.90</td> <td>1,244.49</td> </tr> <tr> <td>19</td> <td>703047</td> <td>Turner Contracting Ltd</td> <td>Clock Tower roof repair</td> <td>216.00</td> <td>36.00</td> <td>180.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>20</td> <td>703048</td> <td>EPC Services</td> <td>Energy Performance Certificate for Cemetery Cottage</td> <td>65.00</td> <td>-</td> <td>65.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>21</td> <td>703049</td> <td>Elm Street Pride</td> <td>Donation</td> <td>500.00</td> <td>-</td> <td>500.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4" style="text-align: right;">September 2020</td> <td>2,973.99</td> <td></td> <td>2,572.49</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4" style="text-align: right;">VAT</td> <td></td> <td>401.50</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Ref No.	Cheque No.	Payee	Expenditure	Gross	VAT	Net	16	703044	Smith of Derby	Clock service contract	219.60	36.60	183.00	17	703045	Harrison Agricultural Contracting Ltd	Refilling of Leam pond	480.00	80.00	400.00	18	703046	Balfour Beatty Living Places Ltd	Street light repairs	1,493.39	248.90	1,244.49	19	703047	Turner Contracting Ltd	Clock Tower roof repair	216.00	36.00	180.00	20	703048	EPC Services	Energy Performance Certificate for Cemetery Cottage	65.00	-	65.00	21	703049	Elm Street Pride	Donation	500.00	-	500.00	September 2020				2,973.99		2,572.49	VAT					401.50	
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093/20	<p>Correspondence The Clerk reported on items of relevance to members (not otherwise covered by items on the agenda):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACRE re AGM 30 September and Local Councils Conference 23 October to be held virtually. Memorial plaque for Coldham First World War airfield. The Chairman offered to locate the plaque to enable plans to be made to display it. 																																																															

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police and County Council re scams info for circulation. • FDC re new website launch.
094/20	<p>Date and Format of Next Meeting The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 14 October, either in the Tower Hall or by video-conference.</p>
095/20	<p>Items for Future Agendas Members were invited to put forward items for discussion on future agendas.</p>
096/20	<p>Exclusion of the Press and Public <i>Members resolved to exclude the press and public from this agenda item by reason of the confidential nature of the business. Cllr Butcher declared a disclosable pecuniary interest and left the meeting before this item was discussed.</i></p>
097/20	<p>Close of Meeting The meeting closed at 8.20pm</p>