

Elm Parish Council

Clerk: Suzanne England
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Minutes of the meeting of Elm Parish Council held remotely on Thursday 10 December 2020 commencing at 6.30pm

Meetings of the Parish Council are recorded by the Clerk to aid the Clerk with minute taking.
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Present: Cllrs, Cotterell, Feaviour, Ferguson (Acting Chairman), Griffiths, Milham, and Welbourne.
District Councillor Sutton, Locum Clerk; D Gibbs, Parish Clerk; S England

A public forum did not take place as no members of the public were present at the meeting.

144/20	Apologies for Absence Apologies for absence were reported for Councillor Brand. Council resolved to accept his reason for absence.
145/20	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.
146/20	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. There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest relating to items on the agenda. To receive Declarations of Non-Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or a Non-Pecuniary Interest Cllr Griffiths advised an interest in agenda item 161/20 taking into account his connection with a tender submitted for proposed tree works.
147/20	Minutes of Previous Meetings It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 11 November be approved as a correct record of the meeting.
148/20	Membership of the Council The Clerk advised that an expression of interest had been received from an Elm resident. It was resolved for the Clerk to forward a 'Guide to the role of Councillor' to the resident and request that they submit a personal statement for consideration at the January meeting.
149/20	Police Matters <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. No report submitted from the local policing team.2. Other matters –<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr Gibbs advised that the monthly Police/Council meeting was due to be held on 11 December. It was resolved to authorise Cllr Griffiths to attend future meetings on behalf of the Parish Council.• It was reported that there had been several incidents of catalytic convertors being stolen from vehicles in the local area. An article highlighting the issue would be included in the next Parish Magazine, urging parishioners to be vigilant.
150/20	District and County Councillor Reports District Councillor Sutton reported as follows; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cambs County Council were no longer taking responsibility for the partly felled tree in Wales Bank. Cllr Sutton would be making other approaches in an attempt to see the matter resolved.

- Former Chairman of the Parish Council, Mr Stuart Ayres, had passed away on 4 December. Councillors expressed their condolences and held a minute's silence in recognition of the time and effort Mr Ayres had contributed to the community.

7.00pm Cllr Sutton left the meeting.

151/20 **Clerk's Report**
 The Clerk advised as follows;

- The defibrillator located at The Chequers in Elm required a new battery and replacement pads, both adult and paediatric sizes. Total cost would be in the region of £350.00.
- Streetlighting – Cllr French (Portfolio Holder) had confirmed that it was an option for Elm Parish to re-join the District Council's maintenance contract subject to the availability of accurate testing data. A copy of the District's Service Level Agreement would be circulated for Councillors' scrutiny. It was unclear if the testing data supplied by Electrical Testing in 2018 would be to the standard required in order to facilitate the transfer of streetlight assets. Garry Edwards (FDC Engineering Manager) would be providing further guidance, including details of the 'lump sum' cost of arranging for FDC contractors to undertake testing of all assets in the parish. The assets currently listed by FDC were not up to date and a full audit of all streetlights was required. Mr Gibbs confirmed that he would be undertaking this task.

152/20 **Financial Matters**

- To note sums received since last meeting.
 The Clerk advised receipts as follows; Burial fees £2302.00, Cemetery Cottage rent £595.00, NSI interest £58.96, Allotment rent £3012.13.
 7.10pm - It was resolved to enter closed session in order to consider issues relating to Cemetery Cottage. Council discussed the matter and resolved appropriately.
 7.20pm – Council resolved to reinstate Standing Orders.
- To receive update on the investment of surplus funds.
 Mr Gibbs advised that he had been unable to move forward with opening the new account as one Councillor had failed to submit their personal information to Redwood Bank.
- To resolve to formally approve the External Auditor Report acknowledging issues to be addressed.
 Council resolved to approve the Report, noting issues that required further action.
- To approve expenditure for December 2020.

Schedule of accounts for payment 10 December 2020:

PAYEE	DETAIL	NET	VAT	TOTAL
Royal British Legion	Poppy Wreath *	£17.00		£17.00
	*SECTION 137			
	EXPENDITURE			
	PAYE & NI (Oct&Dec			
HMRC	2019)	£1,296.23		£1,296.23
J Brand	Chairman's Allowance	£150.00		£150.00
Inst. of Cemetery Management	Corporate Membership	£95.00		£95.00
HMRC	PAYE & NI - Month 8	£98.14		£98.14
Fenland Dist. Council	Bin Emptying	£184.27		£184.27
SLCC	Ann. Membership Fee	£150.00		£150.00
Idverde	Grounds Maintenance	£795.40	£159.08	£954.48
PKF Littlejohn	External Audit Fee	£400.00	£80.00	£480.00
T Wiles	Repairs & Maintenance	£120.00		£120.00
Mrs S England	Clerk's Salary	£1,524.40		£1,524.40
Mrs S England	Clerk's Expenses	£270.79	£12.00	£282.79
Mr D Gibbs	Locum Clerk Service	£3,000.00		£3,000.00
Mr D Gibbs	Locum Clerk Expenses	£434.54		£434.54
HMRC	PAYE & NI - Month 9	£209.93		£209.93

	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Nest</td> <td>Pension Scheme</td> <td>£74.43</td> <td>£74.43</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>£8,820.13</td> <td>£251.08</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>£9,071.21</td> </tr> </table> <p>Council resolved to approve the payments as scheduled for December 2020. Chairman</p>	Nest	Pension Scheme	£74.43	£74.43			£8,820.13	£251.08				£9,071.21
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		£8,820.13	£251.08										
			£9,071.21										
153/20	<p>Correspondence; For comment/resolution;</p> <p>1. Mr Horton – Request for three small strands of wire to be attached to Friday Bridge War Memorial in order to secure wreaths Council resolved to authorise the attachment of wires/chain in order to provide a secure fixing for wreaths. Mr Gibbs advised that he could arrange for the work to be carried out if members of the Royal British Legion would welcome that option.</p> <p>For information purposes;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Environment Agency – Details of recovery works including refurbishment of Rings End sluice gates. 2. FDC – Details of garden waste subscription fee for 21/22. 3. FDC – Details of new Business Grant Fund. 4. Cllr Count – Covid19 update. 5. Census.gov.uk – Information relating to 2021 Census. 												
154/20	<p>Planning Applications</p> <p>F/YR20/1053/F – Part single storey, part 2 storey extension with balcony to side – Two Woodhouse Cottages, 78 March Rd, Friday Bridge, PE14 0HA (c/f from November meeting). It was resolved to confirm not to raise any objection to application ref. F/YR20/1053/F, as agreed in principle at the November meeting.</p> <p>F/YR20/1046/RM – Reserved Matters application relating to appearance, landscaping, layout & scale pursuant to appeal decision App/D0515/W/19/3230692 (F/YR19/0123/O) for erection of 4 x 2-storey 4-bed dwellings at Plots 2-5, Land south of 6 Fridaybridge Rd, Elm. It was resolved not to raise any objection to application ref. F/YR20/1046/RM.</p> <p>F/YR20/1117/F – Single storey side/rear extension to dwelling at Spring Grove, 33 The Stitch, Friday Bridge. It was resolved not to raise any objection to application ref. F/YR20/1117F.</p> <p>F/YR20/1143/A – Display one externally illuminated fascia sign at Post Office Stores, Well End, Friday Bridge, PE14 0HG. It was resolved not to raise any objection to application ref. F/YR20/1143/A.</p> <p>F/YR20/1142/F – Part 2-storey/single storey rear extension involving partial demolition, installation of external stairs to first floor living accommodation, alterations to shop front and erect 2.4m high fence and gates at Post Office Stores, Well End, Friday Bridge, PE14 0HG. It was resolved not to raise any objection to application ref. F/YR20/1142/F.</p> <p>F/YR20/1059/F – Single storey extension and pergola to rear and 1.8m high front boundary gates to dwelling (part retrospective) at Redmoor Farm House, 73 Main Road, Friday Bridge, PE14 0HL. It was resolved not to raise any objection to application ref. F/YR20/1059/F.</p> <p>F/YR20/1060/LB – Application for listed building consent - Internal and external works to listed building including, single storey extension and pergola to rear, 1.8m front boundary gates and other refurbishment alterations at, Redmoor Farm House, 73 Main Rd, Friday Bridge, PE14 0HL. It was resolved not to raise any objection to application ref. F/YR20/1060/LB.</p> <p>F/YR20/1137/F – Mount 7 x security cameras and 1 x IR illuminator on existing 6.0 high poles (at height of 3m) at land north west of Wales Bank Junction, Begdale Road, Elm. It was resolved not to raise any objection to application ref. F/YR20/1137/F.</p> <p>Concern was raised relating to anti-social activities at Strathmore House, Elm. Council resolved to authorise Cllr Ferguson to liaise with the local police team regarding the matter.</p>												
155/20	<p>Highways & Footways Update on outstanding matters;</p>												

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement works to A47 at Guyhirn – Councillors confirmed receipt of the update report following the latest Teams meeting organised by members of the project team. The long term gain of the improvements was acknowledged but Members voiced concern that; during construction; traffic would use local villages as ‘rat runs’ rather than following official diversion routes. Partly fallen tree, Wales Bank – reported under agenda item 150/20. <p>To report new matters;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report of overgrown sycamore tree in Halfpenny Lane – It was resolved for the Clerk to contact Graham Causey (Fenland Tree Officer) in order to seek his opinion concerning appropriate action to be taken. Report of overgrown Right of Way, Halfpenny Lane (A47) end – The Clerk confirmed that the matter had been reported but, to date, there had been no response from Cambridgeshire Highways. It was confirmed that the issues would be raised again with Highways, stressing health & safety concerns associated with the condition of the route.
156/20	<p>Play Area Signs – To resolve on draft design as circulated. Council resolved to approve the design for new play area signs; Clerk to arrange purchase and installation.</p>
157/20	<p>Coldham lay-by improvement works – To resolve to approve detail and circulation of Invitation to Tender. Council resolved to approve the draft Invitation to Tender; Clerk to circulate to suitable contractors requesting their response to be submitted by 5pm on 22 January 2021.</p>
158/20	<p>Cemetery; proposed part-extension to area for burials – To resolve to approve detail and circulation of Invitation to Tender. Council resolved to approve the draft Invitation to Tender; Clerk to circulate to suitable contractors requesting their response to be submitted by 5pm on 22 January 2021.</p>
159/20	<p>Cemetery; proposed infill of drainage dykes - To receive update and resolve on further action as appropriate. (Full report circulated to Members prior to the meeting) The Clerk and Locum Clerk confirmed that they had met with a local contractor to discuss the feasibility of infilling dykes running to the north and south sides of the Cemetery. Currently, as burials cannot take place within 10m of a watercourse, a large proportion of the land is unusable. The proposals would include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating a flood basin at the rear of Begdale Playing Field compensating for the loss of dyke capacity at the Cemetery. Soil excavated at Begdale to be used to infill the dykes at the Cemetery. Perforated field drain pipes to be installed in each dyke which would drain into the open dyke at the end of the Cemetery. <p>In order not to compromise the tendering process for proposed works it was resolved to enter closed session in order to discuss costings for the project. Council discussed the likely cost of the project. It was resolved to re-instate standing orders. Council resolved to draw up a proposal scheme to be presented to Hundred of Wisbech Internal Drainage Board in order to seek consent for the works.</p>
160/20	<p>Fencing at Tower Hall - To resolve to approve detail and circulation of Invitation to Tender – draft as circulated. Mr Gibbs advised that the project would be funded by remaining S106 funds. Council resolved to approve detail and circulation of the Invitation to Tender; Clerk to also investigate addition of new vehicle access gate at the site.</p>
161/20	<p>Tree works at The Leam, Friday Bridge - To consider quotes received for proposed tree works and resolve appropriately. 8.20pm – Cllr Griffiths declared his interest in the agenda item and was temporarily excluded from the meeting. Council considered quotes submitted and resolved to accept a tender totalling £2690.00 for tree works at The Leam, Friday Bridge. It was noted that removal of self-set trees between the pond and pavement may affect the integrity of the bank and therefore coppicing was a better option. 8.25pm – Cllr Griffiths re-joined the meeting.</p>
162/20	<p>To consider use of Elm Church as a community hub (request c/f from November meeting) Cllr Feaviour reported;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A meeting held in September in order to discuss the matter had been well attended (including the Rural Dean); there was significant support for creating a working party to investigate options.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was recognised that progress would be slow; current Covid restrictions would also impede further action. The cost of the project would need to be covered by support/grant funding. An article would be included in the next Parish Magazine and letters to be sent to parishioners asking if they would use the facility. <p>Members voiced their support for the project and confirmed that they would be happy to assist the working party with its investigations.</p>
163/20	<p>To consider the creation of a social media platform for the Parish Council (request c/f from November meeting) It was resolved to delegate authority to Cllr Ferguson to set up and manage a Parish Council Facebook platform.</p>
164/20	<p>To consider issue of speeding vehicles in the Parish (request c/f from November meeting) Councillors voiced concern relating to speeding vehicles between Elm and Friday Fridge and also along Gosmoor Lane. Whilst it was noted that a mobile speed detection unit had visited Elm recently, generally the situation was not monitored by the police. Other matters raised;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsiderate parking at school drop-off and collection times – it was hoped that the new school car park; currently under construction; would alleviate the problem – It was resolved for the Clerk to contact the local police requesting that they monitor the situation. A Local Highways Improvement application had been submitted (Budget £15,000) which would be considered by the panel in March 2021. It would provide an opportunity to discuss issues within the parish. A significant number of lorries were travelling along Wales Bank in order to access Henry Warby Avenue, Elm – It was resolved to authorise Cllr Ferguson to contact the business operating the HGV's in order to raise concern. Fencing at Grove Gardens pond was damaged – Cllr Griffiths to report the issue. Asbestos sheets had been fly tipped on the Canal Towpath – It was resolved for the Clerk to make arrangements for the material to be removed according to health & safety legislation.
165/20	<p>To receive requests from Members for items to be included on the next Agenda No items requested.</p>
166/20	<p>To resolve on date and format of next meeting It was resolved for Council's next meeting to be held at 6.30pm on Thursday 7 January 2021. 8.57pm - Cllr Cotterell left the meeting.</p>
167/20	<p>To resolve to enter closed session in order to consider the following agenda items on the grounds of confidentiality. By virtue of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 1 (2) 9.00pm - It was resolved to enter closed session.</p>
168/20	<p>Personnel/Staffing – To resolve on employer contributions to the Nest Staff Pension Scheme. 9.05pm – The Clerk was excluded from the meeting. Council resolved to continue with the contribution percentage currently in place. 9.08pm – The Clerk re-joined the meeting.</p>
169/20	<p>New Farm Business Tenancy – To receive an update and resolve appropriately. The Clerk confirmed that she had sought specialist advice concerning the new tenancy (for Meadowgate Field) and spoken directly with the tenants who had accepted the terms offered by Council. Terms for the new contract were discussed, including an additional clause which would prevent maize/biofuel being cultivated on the land. It was resolved to proceed with drawing up the contract at a cost of £400 + VAT.</p>
170/20	<p>Legal matters associated with alleged breach of planning legislation The Clerk provided an update to Members including details of advice received from the legal division of Council's insurers, Came & Co. Matter deferred to next meeting pending further enquiries.</p>
171/20	<p>Emergency Item – Update concerning Employment Tribunal The Clerk updated Members concerning information received earlier in the day from Council's solicitor. Further action to be resolved at January meeting.</p>
172/20	<p>Close of Meeting The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.</p>

Signed
Elm Parish Council Chairman

Date