

# Elm Parish Council

## Minutes of the meeting of Elm Parish Council held at the Portacabin, Begdale, Elm on Wednesday 8th September 2021 commencing at 6.30pm

[Meetings of the Parish Council may be recorded by the Clerk to aid with minute taking. Any such recording is destroyed once the minutes are agreed].

Present: Cllrs, Brand, Butcher, Cotterell, Feaviour, Ferguson (Chairman), Goodley, Griffiths & Milham Mrs S England – Parish Clerk.

- 196.21 **Apologies** – The Clerk reported apologies for Cllr Hopkin, Council resolved to accept her reason for absence. District Cllr Sutton had also submitted his apologies for the meeting.
- 197.21 **Code of Conduct** – The Chairman reminded Councillors of the need to advise any changes to the content of their Register of Interests forms. Cllr Griffiths requested confirmation that his Register of Interests Form had been submitted to the District Council as it did not appear to be accessible from the website. Clerk to investigate.
- 198 .21 **Disclosable interests and requests for dispensation** – Cllr Griffiths advised his interest in agenda item 9vii due to being an employee of Idverde Ltd.
- 199.21 **Open Forum** – No members of the public present.
- 200 .21 **Review and approval of Minutes** – Council resolved to approve minutes of meetings held on 11<sup>th</sup> August and 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021 as a true record of proceedings.
- 201 .21 **Police matters** – Cllr Griffiths advised that the latest monthly Police/Council meeting had been cancelled. It was reported that; (i) the area's PCSO had returned to work and, (ii) Incidents of drug dealing in Wales Bank had been reported.
- 202.21 **District Councillor's Report** – Cllr Sutton had provided the following information for the Clerk to present on his behalf; Anglian Water had advised they were proposing to add a resilience supply pipeline between Lincoln and Bexwell, the route of which would pass through Fenland; The County Council had approved the transfer of dealing with on road parking issues from the police to Civil Parking Enforcement, this may assist with resolving the issue of abandoned vehicles along Station Road, Coldham; An on-site meeting was being arrange to discuss a permanent solution for the drain located at the end of Birch Grove, all interested parties would be included.
- 203.21 **Clerk's Report** – The Clerk reported as follows – Further work to extend burial facilities at the Cemetery would commence on 13<sup>th</sup> September and should be completed by Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September; Installation of new fencing at Tower Hall was due to start towards the end of the following week; Confirmation of the start dates for improvement works at Coldham layby and fitting of kissing gates and stile at the Canal Towpath were delayed due to problems with the supply of materials.  
Safety and maintenance work had been completed at Cemetery Cottage, a deep clean was required before a new tenant moved in; this was being arranged with the contractor; The electrician would be confirming a date to start work at the portacabin, to be completed before Council's next meeting.  
The Clerk had met with Garry Edwards (FDC Engineering Manager) to take delivery of the new streetlight enplates, volunteers were needed to fix them to lamp posts. All reports of broken streetlights should now go to FDC.  
A number of Cllrs advised they would be willing to assist with fixing the enplates; Clerk to liaise concerning arrangements.  
A quotation had been received for replacing two damaged swing seats and also fitting a rubber gate buffer at Coldham playing field totalling £254.00 + VAT, a further quotation had been sourced for fixing the rocker unit at Friday Bridge playing field totalling £167.00 + VAT both sums had been accepted under the Clerk & Chair's power to spend; Confirmation of the date for installation of new safety surfaces at Elm play area was still to be confirmed, it was expected to be late September or early October.

The tree surgeon appointed to carry out a parish tree survey late last year had apologised for the delay in getting the report completed, this was mainly due to staffing issues caused by Covid. The report would be compiled in October; The architect dealing with conversion of the Cemetery Chapel had not provided an update, Clerk to chase status of pre-planning application.

Concerning Friday Bridge playing field – the zip wire had been repaired and a refund of £1750.00 had been received from S106 funds held by FDC in respect of the new gates fitted at the vehicle access.

## 204.21 Financial Matters

1. The Clerk advised the following sums had been received since the last meeting; Refund of S106 funds £1750.00, Refund from Emneth PC for spraying at Towpath £123.50, Interest £1.64.
2. Council resolved to approve expenditure for September as detailed below;

PAYEE	DETAIL	NET	VAT	TOTAL
Idverde	Maint. July & Aug	£2,290.80	£458.16	£2,748.96
Harrison Agric.	Control gate - Leam Pond	£400.00	£80.00	£480.00
Tamar IT	Email A/C set up	£40.00	£8.00	£48.00
FB Tower Hall	Hall hire	£35.00		£35.00
DC Property Maint.	Cottage redecoration	£830.00		£830.00
DC Property Maint.	Portacabin Maint.	£125.00		£125.00
Tamar IT	Stationery	£30.00	£6.00	£36.00
Mrs S England	Clerk's Salary	£1,287.90		£1,287.90
Mrs S England	Clerk's Expenses	£189.39	£2.40	£191.79
HMRC	PAYE & NI Month 5	£267.81		£267.81
Nest	Pension	£116.46		£116.46
		£5,612.36	£554.56	£6,166.92

Chairman .....

3. To adopt revised Financial Regulations, details as follows;
  - Page 5 para. 2.2 – It was resolved to appoint Cllr Welbourne to verify bank reconciliations.
  - Page 6 para. 3.2 – It was resolved to extend the deadline for budget setting from 1<sup>st</sup> November to 1<sup>st</sup> January of the following year.
  - Page 6 para. 3.4 – It was resolved to extend the deadline for setting the precept from the end of December to the end of January of the following year.
  - Pages 6 & 7 para. 4.1 – It was resolved to increase the limit of payments to be authorised by the Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman from £500.00 to £1000.00.
  - Page 16 para. 11.1(h) – It was resolved to increase the lower limit for which the Clerk should strive to seek three quotations from £100.00 to £500.00.
  - It was confirmed that the Clerk had provided a sealed, signed envelope containing computer and banking passwords to the Chairman.
4. Online banking - Council resolved to confirm ongoing approval for arranging supplier payments by online bank transfer.
5. Bank Mandate - Council resolved to appoint Cllr Feaviour as an additional signatory on the bank mandate.
6. Cleaning of bus shelter and notice boards – Council resolved to accept a quotation received for quarterly cleaning of the shelter and notice boards totalling £65.00 per visit.
7. Clearance of bottom boundary of Friday Bridge playing field – Cllr Griffiths confirmed his interest and abstained from the agenda item. It was resolved to accept the quotation of £410.00 + VAT received from Idverde Ltd for clearance of the boundary.

Cllr Feaviour reported that; due to health & safety issues; further work was required on the boundary to block off the access between the field and Tower Road. Clerk to obtain quotations for fencing off the gap.

## 205.21 Correspondence

### For comment and/or resolution;

- i. Email, FDC Planning Enforcement, response to query concerning Bar Drove – Councillors acknowledged receipt of the details and confirmed that they were satisfied with the comprehensive response detailing measures being taken concerning possible breaches of planning along Bar Drove.
- ii. Email, parishioner, raising issues relating to Elm village sign, Cemetery dykes and Cemetery Cottage boundary fence – Councillors acknowledged receipt of the details of issues raised and resolved as follows;
  - To arrange for the village sign in Elm to be repaired and re-painted.
  - To advise that the Cemetery dykes would be cleared later in the year as part of Council's maintenance contract, dredging was not required as the dykes were dry watercourses.
  - To advise that the boundary fence posts at Cemetery Cottage were solid in the ground and repairs/replacement were not necessary.

The Clerk was requested to send a letter to Streetpride thanking its members for their efforts.

### For information purposes (see website or contact Clerk for further details);

- i. Cambs Acre – Details of online events providing information on flood management in the Fens
- ii. Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) – Debt advice, contact information.
- iii. FDC – Information on Covid vaccination walk-in clinics.
- iv. CAB – Notification of launch of new website.

## 206.21 Planning

1. F/YR21/0339/F – Revised proposals, proposed development at land north and west of 47 Friday Bridge Road, Elm. The Clerk reported content of an email received from Drainage Board officers raising issues connected to proposals to pipe surface water from the development into the dyke on the opposite side of Friday Bridge Road. Council resolved for the Clerk to contact FDC Planning highlighting concerns over the issues raised.
2. F/YR21/0917/RM – Reserved matters application relating to landscaping, layout pursuant to outline app. Council resolved to raise no objection.  
F/YR18/0618/O to erect 2 x 2-storey 4-bed dwellings, land south east of 310 Elm Low Road. Council resolved to raise no objection to the application.
3. F/YR21/0752/F – Construction of 1 x 2-storey, 2-bed dwelling involving demolition of existing outbuilding, erection of garage and new access at dwelling, land west of 7 March Rd, Friday Bridge. Council resolved to raise no objection to the application.
4. F/YR21/0337/O – REVISED PROPOSALS Outline application, erection of 2 x dwellings, land west of 207 to 215 Fridaybridge Road, Elm. Council resolved to object to the application on the grounds that the proposals represented 'backfill' and were therefore not in-keeping with the existing ribbon style development in the village. Furthermore, the proposed site was in a flood risk zone.
5. F/YR21/0873/F – Single storey extension to rear of 2 Overstone Road and replace roof of existing extension at rear of 4 Overstone Road, at 2-4 Overstone Road, Coldham. Council resolved to raise no objection.
6. F/YR21/0893/F – 2-storey, 3-bed dwelling with detached garage and hobby room above, detached garden room and outbuilding and siting of mobile home during construction, Ambridge, Nettle Bank, Elm. Council resolved to raise no objection on condition that the mobile home was removed post completion.
7. F/YR21/0852/O – OUTLINE APPLICATION Erect up to 102 dwellings, a retail unit and sports changing facilities involving the demolition of existing buildings at, Fridaybridge Agricultural Camp, 173 March Road, Friday Bridge. Members suggested that the proposals would result in the creation of a remote, isolated community rather than an extension to the village of Friday Bridge. It was resolved to strongly object to the application on the following grounds;  
Highway safety hazards relating to the location including – Rural road, no lighting, no speed limit, farm access opposite, agricultural machinery using the route, high volumes of traffic when A47 was closed, proposed access invisible to motorists, extremely narrow pavement located on opposite side of carriageway, huge increase in traffic movement at site junction caused by proposed development.  
Drainage Strategy proposals would create an impact on sewers and increase the risk of flooding downstream Many watercourses were already filled to capacity and would not accommodate additional discharges.  
Infrastructure - impact on the provision of doctor, ambulance, hospital, and dentist services which were already overstretched. Public transport extremely limited making it virtually impossible to access employment without

use of private vehicle. Significant increase in number of children requiring school and nursery places.  
Biodiversity & Ecological Impact – Insufficient information submitted in respect of biodiversity material concerns and ecological constraints due to the presence of protected species.  
Historical importance of the site – needed to be explored and highlighted to appropriate organisations.

**207.21 Highways & Footways**

Update on outstanding matters –

- i. It was confirmed that the sycamore tree in Halfpenny Lane had been pruned.
- ii. Highways had confirmed that March Road, Coldham had been marked up for patch repairs, an order would be raised once details of the cost had been received.

To report new matters –

- i. LHI Application 2022-23 – The Clerk reported the content of a draft letter to be sent to leaders of the County Council highlighting concerns relating to the administration of the LHI scheme. It was resolved to be included in the group of Councils identified as supporting the letter.

Members discussed project options for the 2022-23 application, noting ‘added value’ requirements to be considered. It was resolved to re-submit the project which had been put forward for 2021-22, designed to implement measures to reduce the speed of traffic between Elm and Friday Bridge.

**208.21 Reports from representatives of outside bodies;**

FEET – Cllr Feaviour reported; the group would be holding a meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> September when dates would be set for future events. Active members would be reminded to supply their name and contact details for inclusion on the official volunteer list.

**209.21 To consider provision of adult gym equipment at Begdale Field and resolve appropriately**

It was suggested that the idea of constructing a Community Centre at the site should be re-visited. In the first instance a survey would need to be carried out in order to establish ‘evidence of need’. To be carried forward.

**210.21 To consider replacement of benches at Elm Cemetery**

Members were provided with details of composite benches. It was suggested that the three benches located along the main driveway could be replaced. Clerk to seek quotations.

**211.21 To receive requests from Members for subjects to be included on the next agenda –**

1. Community Centre - Begdale.
2. Cemetery benches.

**212.21 To resolve on date and format for next meeting –** It was resolved to hold the next Parish Council meeting at 6.30pm on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> October at the Begdale portacabin.

**213.21 To resolve on entering 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 s. 1[2])**

7.55 pm - Council resolved to enter closed session, Cllr Goodley left the meeting room due to his interest in the next agenda item.

**214.21 To receive update concerning alleged breach of planning regulations on Canal Towpath** (confidential due to data protection and potential legal issues). The Clerk updated Council, subject to be carried forward.

8pm – Cllr Goodley re-joined the meeting.

**215.21 To receive update concerning new tenancy for Cemetery Cottage, resolve where appropriate**

The Chairman updated Members; no further resolution required.

**216.21 To resolve on arrangements for Clerk’s Annual Appraisal** (data protection)

8.05pm The Clerk left the meeting room.

Council resolved for the Clerk’s Appraisal to be undertaken by the Chair and Cllr Griffiths.

8.10pm The Clerk re-joined the meeting.

**217.21** The meeting closed at 8.15 pm.

Signed .....  
Elm Parish Council Chairman

Date .....