

Elm Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Elm Parish Council held at the Portacabin, Begdale, Elm on Wednesday 12th January 2022 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, Feaviour, Ferguson (Chair), Goodley, Griffiths, Hopkin, Milham, Welbourne, Mrs S England – Parish Clerk.

- 287.21 **Apologies** – The Clerk reported apologies for Cllrs Cotterell and Exell; Council resolved to accept their reasons for absence. District Cllr Sutton had also conveyed his apologies for the meeting.
- 288.21 **Code of Conduct** – The Chairman reminded Councillors of the need to advise any changes to the content of their Register of Interests forms.
- 289.21 **Disclosable interests and requests for dispensation** – Cllr Goodley declared his interest in agenda item 21 concerning the Canal Towpath. Cllr Butcher declared his interest in agenda item 12 concerning planning application ref. F/YR21/1494/F. Both Councillors confirmed they would leave the meeting room when their items of interest were under discussion.
- 290.21 **Open Forum** – No members of the public present.
- 291.21 **Review and approval of Minutes** – Council resolved to approve minutes of meeting held on 15th December 2021 as a true record of proceedings.
- 292.21 **Council Membership** – The Clerk confirmed that; in order to fill the Councillor vacancy; a new member could be co-opted with effect from 14th January 2022.
- 293.21 **Police matters** – (i) Cllr Griffiths advised he would seek an update from Sgt. Arnold concerning the alleged issue of youths using scooters to deliver drugs in Elm. (ii) Fenland Neighbourhood Inspector, Andy Morris had deferred his attendance to Council's February meeting due to the Covid situation.
- 294.21 **District Councillor's Report** – Cllr Sutton absent from the meeting.
- 295.21 **Clerk's Report** – The Clerk reported as follows;
Friday Bridge Clock Tower – the contractor had re-coated patches of render/paint that were flaking, however there were still areas that were unsatisfactory. Contractor had been requested to inspect and undertake further work.
Fitting new LED lights into the clock faces had been further delayed due to the contractor forgetting the key.
Portacabin, broadband - setting up of the service had been delayed by Openreach; new start date was expected to be week commencing 17th January 2022.
Coldham Defibrillator – East of Ambulance Service had advised their preference was for the unit to be mounted onto a brick wall; further options to be explored. Councillors suggested the idea of constructing a brick pillar onto which the unit could be mounted.
Kissing gates & stile at the Towpath – Installation should start week commencing 17th January 2022.
Vacant land at end of Grove Gardens – The land had still not been tidied up by the Tilia Homes maintenance team. The untidy state of the ponds and lack of signage/ life aids was also discussed; Clerk to raise all issues with the developer.
Cemetery records – The Cemetery Records Assistant had made a good start, one of the first tasks would be to accurately measure out the different sections at the site.
Damaged play equipment – Outstanding repair work at Elm, Coldham and Friday Bridge play areas was due to be completed by 13th January 2022.
Portacabin, high earth loop reading – UK Power Network had still not been in contact in order to make arrangements to resolve the issue; Clerk to chase.

Abandoned vehicles, Coldham – the two remaining (untaxed and no MOT) vehicles in Station Rd, Coldham had been reported to DVLA.

Elm Village sign – the parishioner who was taking the lead on restoration of the sign had asked if two or more Councillors would meet with him to discuss the project. Councillors Feaviour, Griffiths & Milham confirmed they would be willing to attend; Clerk to arrange suitable date and time.

New entrance to Friday Bridge playing field from Maltmas Drove – Cambs Highways had been contacted to enquire if they could draw up a specification for a new footway entrance which would comply with health & safety regulations. An engineer had responded advising that, an application would need to be made under the Privately Funded Highway Improvements protocol. It was acknowledged that this would be a very slow process and in order to move things forward, Clerk should consult an independent architectural design engineer.

Parish Tree Survey – the arboriculturist appointed in early 2021 to undertake the task had been in contact advising that the survey would be carried out by the end of January.

HM The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee – Cambs County Council had been in contact concerning events for the upcoming Jubilee. Members voiced their support for something to be organised - contact to be made with the school to enquire if arrangements were already in place and how the Parish Council might support an event.

New benches – A meeting had been arranged with a local contractor to discuss options for replacement benches at Coldham layby and Elm Cemetery.

296.21 Financial Matters

1. The Clerk advised the following sums had been received since the last meeting; S106 refund (in respect of Elm safety surfaces) £7054.12; Cemetery fees £577.00; Rent (Cemetery Cottage) £750.00; Interest £16.24.
2. Council resolved to approve expenditure for January as detailed below.

PAYEE	DETAIL	NET	VAT	TOTAL
Idverde	Ground Maintenance	£1,145.40	£229.08	£1,374.48
FDC	Bin Emptying	£172.80		£172.80
Wave	Water rates - portacabin	£56.14		£56.14
Cambs ACRE	Annual Sub.	£57.00		£57.00
L Welbourne	Cem Records Admin	£78.00		£78.00
S England	Clerk's Salary	£1,135.89		£1,135.89
S England	Clerk's Expenses	£182.38	£6.00	£188.38
HMRC	PAYE & NI - Month 10	£162.57		£162.57
Nest	Pension	£88.35		£88.35
		£3,078.53	£235.08	£3,313.61

Chairman

3. Financial Report & Bank Reconciliation quarter end 31.12.21 – Council resolved to approve and accept the content of the Report and Reconciliation, details as circulated prior to meeting.
4. Budget update quarter end 31.12.21 – Council resolved to accept and approve details of the Budget update, details as circulated prior to meeting.
5. 2022-23 Budget and Precept claim – Details of the budget had been considered in detail at a meeting of the Finance Working Party held on Tuesday 11th January. No further adjustments were put forward, Council resolved to adopt the 2022-23 Budget as presented. It was further resolved to submit a Precept claim for the sum of £30,000.00; equal to the amount claimed for the 2021-22 financial year.
6. To resolve on quotations received for improvements to the surface of Begdale car park – The Clerk advised only one quote had been received however - the matter was now pressing due to the fact that the surface had further deteriorated resulting in a person falling over and suffering a shoulder injury. Council resolved to accept the quote totalling £4650.00 + VAT (submitted by Proedge Construction) on condition that the specification was reviewed to include the possibility of installing drainage pipes connecting into the dyke located to the front of the car park.

297.21 Correspondence

For comment and/or resolution;

- i. Email, parishioner – request for temporary access to be provided into Friday Bridge playing field from Tower Road pending improvement of Maltmas Drove access; resolve appropriately. Members acknowledged that the situation was less than satisfactory, however due to health & safety considerations, it was resolved that a temporary gap could not be created in the boundary fencing.
- ii. Email, Elm Neighbourhood Watch – update concerning issues around the Grove Gardens Estate; resolve appropriately. Council resolved for the Clerk to contact Tilia Homes and Planning Enforcement in support of concerns raised by Elm NHW.
- iii. Email, Cllr Sutton – Request to consider PC support for Military Covenant; resolve appropriately. Council resolved to support the Military Covenant.
- iv. Addendum – Email, parishioner – concerns relating to highway safety in the area surrounding junction of Main Road and Rose Lane. Councillors agreed that whilst the location presented risk for pedestrians, it was very unlikely that Highways would install further traffic calming measures. It was resolved for the Clerk to advise the parishioner to raise his concerns directly with County Cllr Steve Count and/or Cambs Highways.

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

- i. Email, Cambs CC – Reminder of HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.
- ii. Email, FDC – Details of rapid Covid testing sites in Fenland.

298.21 Planning

1. F/YR21/1443/F – Change of use of land to form a traveller's site for siting of 2 x static caravans, 2 x touring caravans and construction of a day room at; land north of Six Acres, Bar Drove, Friday Bridge. Council resolved to object to the application, stating that the land should continue to be used for agricultural purposes. There was also concern that a precedent was being set which did nothing to discourage the siting of caravans on land without planning permission being sought in advance.
2. F/YR21/1475/VOC – Variation of condition 4 of planning permission F/YR19/0703/F to permit alterations to dwelling and shed/kennels at; Whitehouse Farm, Coldham Bank, Coldham. Resolved, no objection.
3. F/YR21/1494/F –3 /4 bed 2-storey dwelling with detached double garage at; land west of Antwerp House, Gosmoor Lane, Elm.
7.25pm Cllr Butcher left the meeting room due to his interest in the agenda item.
Council resolved to support the application.
7.30pm Cllr Butcher re-joined the meeting.

299.21 Highways & Footways

Update on outstanding matters –

- i. To receive content of Feasibility Report received in response to 2022-23 LHI application, resolve appropriately. Council noted the Highways Officer's recommendations, it was resolved to increase the Parish's contribution to £7,500.00 as included in the 2022-23 budget.

New issues –

- i. Members noted the content of a new speed restriction TTRO for Nettle Bank.

300.21 Reports from representatives of outside bodies;

FEET – Cllr Feaviour reported; The dead silver birch tree would hopefully be felled over the coming weekend; additional bulbs, bushes and trees had been planted; further unauthorised coppicing had taken place, it was queried if the resulting piles of vegetation were a fire hazard and perhaps the top layers could be removed and chipped.

301.21 To receive update from Community Facility working party and resolve on action as appropriate.

Councillors conveyed their thanks to Cllr Exell for drafting a questionnaire for the assessment of need survey; Clerk was liaising with Jane Feaviour concerning visit to church in order to consider the space as a potential venue for the community hall; Visit to Marshland St James Hall had been postponed due to Covid restrictions.

- 302.21 **To receive update concerning replacement of benches at Coldham layby and Elm Cemetery, resolve appropriately** – update covered in Clerk’s report, see minute ref. 295.21.
- 303.21 **To receive update concerning submission of planning application for proposed conversion of Cemetery Chapel, resolve appropriately** – Item deferred pending receipt of final plans from Council’s Architect.
- 304.21 **To receive requests from Members for subjects to be included on the next agenda.**
 (i) Trip hazard caused by low and damaged fencing at the Pocket Park.
 (ii) Dog fouling – additional bins to be installed, ‘fines for fouling’ signage to be requested from FDC. Cllr Feaviour warned that South Lincs, North East Cambs and Essex had the highest prevalence of ‘dognapping’ incidents with perpetrators allegedly using drone footage to locate their victims.
- 305.21 **To resolve on date for next meeting** – It was resolved to hold the next meeting on Wednesday 9th February at the Begdale portacabin.
- 306.21 **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])** – Council resolved to enter closed session.
- 307.21 **To receive update concerning alleged breach of planning regulations on Canal Towpath** (confidential due to data protection and potential legal issues). It was not necessary for Cllr Goodley to leave the meeting room as there was nothing to report; it was resolved for the Clerk to only include the subject on future agendas if new information came to light.
- 308.21 The meeting closed at 7.55 pm.

Signed
 Elm Parish Council Chairman

Date