

Elm Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Elm Parish Council held at the Portacabin, Begdale, Elm on Tuesday 15th February 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, Cotterell, Exell, Feaviour, Ferguson (Chair), Goodley, Griffiths & Milham, District Councillor Sutton, Mrs S England – Parish Clerk.

Two members of the public.

- 309.21 **Apologies** – The Clerk reported apologies for Cllrs Hopkin & Welbourne; Council resolved to accept their reasons for absence.
- 310.21 **Code of Conduct** – The Chairman reminded Councillors of the need to advise any changes to the content of their Register of Interests forms.
- 311.21 **Disclosable interests and requests for dispensation** – Cllr Goodley declared his interest in agenda item 25 concerning the Canal Towpath.
- 312.21 **Open Forum** – Council resolved to suspend Standing Orders.
One member of the public requested to speak on matters relating to planning application F/YR21/1536/O.
Cllr Sutton left the meeting due to his interest as a member of the Planning Committee.
Council confirmed that the information would be taken into account when the application was considered under item 12 on the agenda.
Cllr Sutton re-joined the meeting.
Council resolved to reinstate Standing Orders.
- 313.21 **Review and approval of Minutes** – Council resolved to approve minutes of meeting held on 12th January 2022 as a true record of proceedings.
- 314.21 **Council Membership** – Item to be carried forward until suitable candidate was identified.
- 315.21 **Police matters** – Cllr Griffiths advised as follows;
Matters of concern could be reported to Sgt. Arnold via his email address as well as through normal channels. No crime statistics had been reported at the recent police/council meeting. Two officers had met with Cllr Feaviour in order to discuss drug related issues in Elm village.
Other issues – Concern raised that the police were taking no action against motorists parking their vehicles on double yellow lines at the corner of Abington Grove. A person had been seen taking photographs of vehicles in Grove Gardens, concern that it could be for the purpose of cloning number plates. Tools had been stolen from a van (during daylight hours) parked in Fridaybridge Road.
The Clerk confirmed that the new Fenland Neighbourhood Inspector had been invited to the March meeting.
- 316.21 **District Councillor's Report** – Cllr Sutton reported;
Additional hoops had been installed along the boundary of Henry Warby Ave and Pear Tree Way in Elm; It was unlikely that Highways would fund the installation of fencing to prohibit vehicles crossing the verge from Atkinsons Lane into the new housing area, situation to be monitored as new planting may solve the issue; Flooding in Atkinsons Lane made it impassable after heavy rainfall, Cllr Sutton to raise the issue; Details of new solar panel multibuy scheme, details to be forwarded for parish website and social media page; Arrangements for meeting with Cambs Flood Risk Manager, Hilary Ellis were being organised.
- 317.21 **Clerk's Report** – The Clerk reported as follows;
- Portacabin, broadband – Broadband service was now up and running, Members welcome to connect in order to access documents relevant to the meetings. It would also facilitate the Clerk working from the portacabin when appropriate.

PROJECTS:

- Begdale car park – resurfacing work had been completed; surface water was still present after periods of heavy rainfall but it drained away in reasonable time. Proedge had also installed concrete fixings for drop bolts on the gates at no extra cost.
- Friday Bridge Clock Tower – Clock faces had been fitted with LED lighting; Anglia Locksmiths had replaced the door locks. The wall coating contractor had suggested reviewing the surface of the Tower in early spring when hopefully the weather would be milder, further coating could then be applied if necessary. Payment deferred until such time Council satisfied with the result.
- Repairs and maintenance to play areas in Coldham, Elm & Friday Bridge – all work had now been completed, the annual Playsafety inspections were due to be scheduled.
- Coldham Defibrillator – Further to issues relating to a suitable fixing point, the property in Overstone Road had been re-visited – during a meeting with the owner, a section of wall had been identified which; it was hoped; would comply with regulation. Clerk to meet with electrician onsite to discuss how a power supply might be connected.
- Tree Survey – A copy of the parish tree survey had been circulated detailing maintenance work required along the Towpath, Pocket Parks, Begdale field and Fridaybridge playing field. The following queries were raised;
 - (i) Would FEET be happy to undertake the more minor tasks; pruning stems for example.
 - (ii) Would work along the Towpath be equally funded by both Elm and Emneth Parish Councils. Clerk to approach Emneth concerning the matter.
 - (iii) Investigate which tasks might be achievable prior to the nesting season; Clerk to raise the issue when seeking quotations.

OTHER MATTERS:

- Untidy state of vacant land at the end of Grove Gardens and other issues connected to Health & Safety around the pond area and the green – The Clerk had contacted Tilia Homes highlighting concern that issues were not being addressed. Cllr Exell was now in contact with their Aftercare Manager and an onsite meeting had been arranged to discuss the situation.
- Cemetery Cottage – Tenant has been in contact concerning problems relating to door locks and minor issues affecting electrics and plumbing. Appropriate contractors had been instructed to undertake the necessary repairs, thanks to the Chair for her assistance.
- HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee – Confirmation had been received that the Headteacher at Elm School was very interested in arranging an event; a picnic on the school field had been suggested with the preferred date being Friday 3rd June.
- Reclaim of S106 funding – Remaining S106 funds held by the District Council totalling £1499.16 had been reclaimed as a contribution towards the fencing installed at Tower Hall.
- Cemetery records – Progress was being made with identifying the location of plots in the cemetery. A number of enquiries had been received from families concerning the whereabouts of some of the older graves, investigations were quite time consuming but it was hoped that the locations could be identified.
- Highways issues – The following issues had been chased – road surface at Coldham; road surface at Bramble Lane (repaired a short while ago but four days later the surface had subsided and fallen apart); the issue of cars crossing the grass verge from Atkinsons Lane. No response from the Highways Officer.

318.21 Financial Matters

1. The Clerk advised the following sums had been received since the last meeting; S106 refund (in respect of Tower Hall fence) £1499.16; Cemetery fees £801.00; Rent (Cemetery Cottage) £750.00; Interest £29.13.
2. Council resolved to approve expenditure for February as detailed below, Cllr Sutton thanked the Parish Council for its contribution to Tower Hall.

PAYEE	DETAIL	NET	VAT	TOTAL
FB Tower Hall Comm.	Extension Grant	£15,000.00		£15,000.00
Proedge Construction	Begdale car park	£4,650.00	£930.00	£5,580.00
Idverde Ltd	Fencing - Tower Hall	£3,150.00	£630.00	£3,780.00
Idverde Ltd	Grounds Maint. Jan 2022	£1,145.40	£229.08	£1,374.48
FLP	Repairs - FB playing field	£216.06	£43.21	£259.27
FLP	Swing seats - Elm play area	£148.06	£29.61	£177.67
FLP	Coldham play area maint.	£482.24	£96.45	£578.69

FLP	FB playing field - repairs	£60.00	£12.00	£72.00
Smith of Derby	Clock Tower - LED's	£497.00	£99.40	£596.40
Anglia Locksmiths	FB Clock Tower - door lock	£105.00	£21.00	£126.00
Anglia Locksmiths	Tape for doc storage boxes	£2.63	£0.53	£3.16
Cambs ACRE	Annual Subscription	£47.50	£9.50	£57.00
L Welbourne	Cem records admin.	£247.00		£247.00
Mrs S England	Clerk's Salary	£1,353.81		£1,353.81
Mrs S England	Clerk's expenses	£250.17	£8.57	£258.74
Nest	Pension contr's	£120.51		£120.51
HMRC	PAYE & NI Month 11	£238.91		£238.91
Idverde Ltd	Removal of hedge/trees at Cem	£2,162.50	£432.50	£2,595.00
Idverde Ltd	Kissing gates & stile	£2,210.00	£442.00	£2,652.00
Idverde Ltd	Moving MVAS unit	£99.00	£19.80	£118.80
C Hennelly	Tree Survey	£480.00		£480.00
Anglia Locksmiths	New locks at Cem Cottage	£130.00	£26.00	£156.00
		£32,795.79	£3,029.65	£35,825.44

Chairman

3. To resolve to contribute £350.00 towards the cost of a new oak bench at Coldham layby. Council resolved to approve a contribution of £350.00.
4. To resolve on new bracket and lantern to be fitted to streetlight FPC2 in Well End at a cost of £665.58 + VAT. Council resolved to approve the installation and expenditure.

319.21 Correspondence

For comment and/or resolution;

- i. Email, Emneth Parish Council – information relating to boundary fence lying between the Pocket Park and Chapel Lane, including confirmation that Norfolk Highways absolved themselves of any responsibility for the fence. It was resolved for the Clerk to investigate the matter; subject to be carried forward.
- ii. Email, confirmation that Elm School were interested in hosting a 'family picnic' event in celebration of HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Clerk to convey Council's support for the event to the Headteacher of Elm School.

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

- i. Email, MAGPAS – Thanks to Council for grant funding. It was reported that the Air Ambulance had since provided medical support in the parish, underlining the importance of providing support for the service.
- ii. Email, FDC – Fenland Local Plan progress update, February 2022.

320.21 Planning

1. **F/YR21/1536/O** – one dwelling (outline, matters reserved) at; land west of Lowlands, Collets Bridge Lane, Elm. Members noted the comments presented during public forum relating to the application. Council resolved (6 For; 1 Against; 1 Abstention) to object to the application on the grounds that the proposals were contrary to Fenland Local Plan Policies LP3 and LP15 in relation to; style of development, sustainable growth criteria and the promotion of the use of non-car transport.
Cllr Griffiths confirmed he had commented on the application in his personal capacity.
2. **F/YR22/0068/F** – Single storey side extension to dwelling & new car port at; Rose Villa, Low Rd, Elm. Council resolved to support the application.
3. **F/YR22/0100/F** – Formation of menage and erection of six floodlights on 5m poles at; land west of Florence House, Back Road, Friday Bridge. Council resolved to object to the application on the grounds that the proposals may contravene par. 185(c) of the National Planning Policy Framework concerning light pollution.

321.21 Highways & Footways

Update on outstanding matters –

- i. The Clerk confirmed she had chased all ongoing issues but Highways had not responded.

New issues –

- i. To address concerns relating to vehicles accessing Halfpenny Lane from the A47. It was suggested that 'sat nav' systems were directing motorists via that route; situation to be monitored.
- ii. To note details of new TTRO affecting Fridaybridge Road junction with Wales Bank. Members raised concern relating to how the TTRO would affect local bus services. Clerk to confirm diversion route with Cambs Streetworks Team and Stagecoach.
- iii. It was reported that the old sign from The Bell public House had been knocked down.
- iv. General concern raised at the volume of heavy traffic which continued to travel through Coldham, Friday Bridge and Elm

322.21 Reports from representatives of outside bodies;

FEET – Cllr Feaviour reported; The working party would be undertaking further maintenance work during the upcoming weekend; the owl box had been installed, camera to be fitted in due course; it was hoped that Emneth PC would support plans for tree planting along the Towpath.

323.21 To consider proposals/plans for FDC funded tree planting initiative.

Council resolved to support the proposals for tree planting; Clerk to investigate requirements for watering and also, whether there was any restriction attached to planting within 10m of a watercourse. It was suggested that the planting area in Begdale field could be known as 'The Jubilee Wood'. Volunteer planting days had been scheduled for 5th and 11th March.

324.21 To receive update and resolve on action concerning proposal to provide a Community Facility in Elm.

Cllr Exell advised that a meeting was due to be held at Elm Church (17th February) between members of the working party, PCC, and representatives from the Diocese in order to receive information which would assist in determining whether the church building was the best location for the community hall. A further meeting of the working party had been scheduled for 22nd February, 6.30pm at the portacabin.

325.21 To receive update concerning access to Friday Bridge playing field, resolve appropriately.

The Clerk advised that the existing access was extremely hazardous underfoot and measures to install a path which was compliant with regulations (leading from the verge to the existing tarmac path) would be cost prohibitive. Discussions had taken place with Cllr Sutton concerning the possibility of creating an access from Tower Hall car park once building works had been completed. It was resolved to contact the Tower Hall Committee concerning the proposal, agreeing in principle that Council would be open to funding the purchase of new gates to be installed at the side of the premises.

326.21 To receive update concerning submission of planning application for proposed conversion of Cemetery Chapel, resolve appropriately.

Council resolved to approve both the final design plan presented by the architect and, submission of the full planning application to Fenland District Council.

327.21 To resolve on anti-theft features to be added to kissing gates.

It was resolved for the Clerk to seek advice/quotes for anti-theft measures to be added to the kissing gates; to Include; bolts fixing over hinges and etching of Councils' names into the timber.

328.21 To resolve on action to address issue of hedge/shrub cuttings piled on boundary between Begdale field and adjacent property.

It was resolved for the Clerk to write a letter to the owner of the adjacent site, politely requesting for the piles of cuttings to be removed.

329.21 To resolve on additional bins to be installed in the parish.

Council resolved for the Clerk to request an additional dog waste bin to be installed in Tower Road and; investigate the possibility of a general waste bin to be installed adjacent to the bus stop on the grass area to the

front of Birch Grove.

330.21 To receive requests from Members for subjects to be included on the next agenda.

No requests put forward.

331.21 To resolve on date for next meeting – It was resolved to hold the next meeting on Wednesday 9th March, 6.30pm at the Begdale portacabin.

332.21 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.

8pm Cllr Goodley left the room due to his interest in the following agenda item.

333.21 To receive update concerning alleged breach of planning regulations on Canal Towpath (confidential due to data protection and potential legal issues). Updates concerning the matter were presented to Councillors. No further action resolved; developments to be monitored.

8.13pm Cllr Goodley re-joined the meeting.

334.21 The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Signed
Elm Parish Council Chairman

Date