

# Elm Parish Council

## Minutes of the meeting of Elm Parish Council held at the Portacabin, Begdale, Elm on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023 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 – Butcher, Cage, Ferguson (Chair), Goodley, Hopkin, Milham & Welbourne.  
Mrs S England – Parish Clerk.

- 204.22 **Apologies for absence** – Apologies were reported for Cllrs Brand, Cotterell & Probets; District Cllr Sutton had also forwarded his apologies. Council resolved to accept their reasons for absence.
- 205.22 **Code of Conduct** – The Chairman reminded Councillors of the need to advise any changes to the content of their Register of Interests forms.
- 206.22 **Disclosable interests and requests for dispensation** – Cllr Goodley advised his interest in agenda item 18 concerning the Canal Towpath (due to his connection to an individual involved). (min. ref. 220.22).
- 207.22 **Open Forum** – No matters raised.
- 208.22 **Review and approval of Minutes** – Council resolved to approve the minutes of meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023 as a true record of proceedings.
- 209.22 **Police matters** –  
The Chair and Clerk advised there had been no response from either the Police & Crime Commissioner or Sgt. Arnold in respect of issues raised.
- 210.22 **District Councillor's Report** – Cllr Sutton absent due to his attendance at Planning Committee meeting.
- 211.22 **Clerk's Report** – The Clerk reported as follows;  
Clearance works at The Leam pond were due to commence 13<sup>th</sup> February; letters advising details of the project had been circulated to residents at the location. Planning application F/YR22/0226/F including proposals for 63 dwellings at land north of Gosmoor Lane was being considered by the Planning Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> February. A gesture of thanks had been delivered to the parishioners who managed the opening and closing of gates at Begdale car park, cost to be covered by Chair's allowance. Cambs County Council Transport Strategy Department had advised that it could not authorise the installation of a MVAS fixing pole along the stretch of highway between the new Guyhirn roundabout and residential properties due to (i) the location was managed by National Highways rather than CCC and, (ii) it was felt that the issue was due to volume of traffic rather than the speed of vehicles entering Rings End. Clerk to chase police concerning request for mobile speed unit to be utilised at the location. Defibrillator training would be taking place at the portacabin on 15<sup>th</sup> February, ten of the twelve spaces had been filled. A briefing session providing information relating to the upcoming elections was being held for Clerks at Fenland Hall on 27<sup>th</sup> February; the Clerk advised she was planning to attend. A briefing for candidates and agents was also scheduled to be held on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 6.30pm at Fenland Hall, joining instructions had been circulated to all members. FDC Assets & Projects had advised that the streetlight energy tariff had risen from 16.7705p to 34.8911p per kwh plus a daily standing charge of 56.9880p with effect from September 2022. Expressions of Interest had been received from three contractors in response to Council's invitation notice concerning the upcoming renewal of its grounds maintenance contract; tenders to be considered at the March meeting. It was confirmed that Cllr Feaviour had resigned from the Parish Council, members expressed their regret and hoped that he would consider re-joining the Council at some point in the future. It was recognised that the position of Vice-Chair needed to be filled; Members resolved to appoint Cllr Welbourne to the role (proposed Cllr Ferguson, seconded Cllr Milham).
- 212.22 **Financial Matters**  
i. The Clerk advised the following sums had been received since the last meeting; Cemetery Cottage rent £750.00; Cemetery fees £1300.00; FDC Grant (to be held in reserve for village sign) £500.00; Interest £201.10.

ii. Council resolved to approve expenditure for February as detailed below;

PAYEE	DETAIL	NET	VAT	TOTAL
Idverde	Grounds Maintenance	£1,145.40	£229.08	£1,374.48
Idverde	Coldham layby project	£4,850.00	£970.00	£5,820.00
Idverde	Tree felling (FB)	£362.30	£72.46	£434.76
Idverde	Moving MVAS unit (Mch-Jan)	£351.00	£70.20	£421.20
L Welbourne	Cemetery Records	£65.00		£65.00
Wave (portacabin)	Water rates	£25.21		£25.21
Plusnet	Broadband	£22.96	£4.59	£27.55
S England	Clerk's Salary	£1,147.55		£1,147.55
S England	Clerk's Exps	£249.60	£9.04	£258.64
HMRC	PAYE M10	£76.69		£76.69
Nest	Pension	£85.98		£85.98
		£8,381.69	£1,355.37	£9,737.06

Chairperson .....

- iii. To resolve on quotations received for tree works around the parish. Council resolved to approve the following quotes received from Idverde - £1610.93 + VAT for pollarding, raising crowns and removal of ivy at the Pocket Parks and Begdale field. £737.34 + VAT for raising crowns, plant hedging (inc. protective post & rail fence) and removal of ivy at Friday Bridge playing field.
- iv. To resolve on updated quotation received for Council's streetlight upgrade project. Members studied the quotation in detail which included; UKPN connection fees and an amended charge for replacement columns where it was deemed that pole brackets could not be fitted. Concern was expressed relating to the high cost of the upgrade project however, this was balanced by the view that current levels of streetlighting should be maintained for residents in the parish. It was resolved to accept the quotation received from Cable Test Ltd (District Council's official contractor) totalling £73,075.55 + VAT for the upgrade of 41 streetlight assets. [Power to spend authorised under; 'Power to light roads and Public Places' - Parish Councils Act 1957, section 3, Highways Act 1980, section 301].

## 213.22 Correspondence

### For comment and/or resolution;

- i. Email, Emneth PC – Request for a meeting to be convened between representatives from Elm and Emneth Parish Councils and FEET in order to discuss matters connected to the Towpath. Council resolved to approve the request for a meeting on condition that specific issues were included for discussion on the agenda. It was further resolved to authorise Cllrs Ferguson & Welbourne to attend the meeting on behalf of Elm Parish Council. Cllr Milham provided an update on proceedings that had taken place at the last meeting of FEET volunteers.
- ii. Email, agent acting for owners of workshop located on High Road, Elm – request for access to the small Pocket Park in order to make building safe. The Clerk advised that; as the building's condition had been identified as a dangerous structure by CNC Building Control Servies (employed in such matters by FDC & WNBC); she had granted permission on condition that; the contractor submitted details of risk assessment and public liability insurance and, the grass surface would be protected and reinstated should damage be caused. Council resolved to ratify the action taken by the Clerk.
- iii. Addendum; Email, parishioner – raising concern at dogs being walked 'off-lead' at Coldham playing field. Members expressed the view that dogs should be kept on a lead at the location, particularly as the play area was not enclosed by fencing. Clerk to investigate further.
- iv. Addendum; Email, parishioner (Friday Bridge) – Concern raised at large development sites included in the new draft Local Plan and had the Parish Council considered producing a Neighbourhood Plan (NP)? Members confirmed that they shared the concerns expressed in relation to the proposed larger development sites however; taking into account the amount of work that would be involved in the creation of a NP for the whole parish; Council did not possess the

practical resources required to undertake such a project at this time.

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

- i. Email, FDC Member Services – Householders fines after rubbish fly-tipped by rogue waste traders.
- ii. Email – Re-consultation on Draft Bus Strategy.
- iii. Email, FDC Member Services – Fenland residents need photo ID to vote in May elections.
- iv. Email, Newsletter – Update on modernisation of QE Hospital, Kings Lynn.
- v. Email, FDC – Heritage works completed on historic Wisbech building.
- vi. Email – County Lines free webinar for parents & carers, 1<sup>st</sup> Feb. 7-8.30 pm.
- vii. Email, FDC – Free ‘Run for Fun’ sessions available in Wisbech.
- viii. Email, FDC – Free short courses available at College of West Anglia to assist with Maths Skills.
- ix. Email, FDC – Launch of new Walking & Cycling Route Map covering Wisbech area.

**214.22 Planning**

1. **F/YR22/1237/F Reconsultation** – 1 x dwelling (3 storey, 4-bed) involving demolition of existing semi-detached, 2-storey dwelling and making good to 101 Fridaybridge Rd at, East View, 99 Fridaybridge Rd, Elm. Council resolved to maintain its objections to the application on the grounds that the proposals were not in-keeping with the local street scene and the impact on the adjacent cottage would be overbearing.
2. **F/YR23/0058/F** – Single storey, 4-bed dwelling and culvert drain access at, land north west of Halfpenny Barns, Halfpenny Lane, Elm. Council resolved to support the application.

**215.22 Highways & Footways**

**Update on outstanding matters;**

- i. Zebra crossing adjacent to Elm School – CC Highways had advised that the lining undertaken in August 2022 was still clear and did not need re-painting.

**New matters;**

- i. Temporary prohibition of traffic – Jew house Drove, Friday Bridge – 22/2/23, 09:30-15:30 (Telecom works).
- ii. Temporary prohibition of traffic – Gosmoor Lane, Elm – 7/2/23-13/2/23 (Water main repair works).

**216.22 To resolve on request received for Parish Council to take on ownership of the Parish Magazine.**

It was suggested that a magazine produced by the Council would reflect the secular parish rather than just the church and could therefore include a wider range of contributions. The Clerk advised she had contacted four other parishes to enquire how the production of their magazine was managed. In the majority of cases the magazines were compiled by volunteers and/or independent Editors; the work involved ranged from two to ten hours weekly (excluding delivery).

It was resolved to place an advertisement on Council’s Facebook page inviting parishioners to make contact if they would be interested in taking on the role of Newsletter Editor.

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

Cllr Cage raised concern at an alleged planning enforcement issue that had been drawn to his attention. It was confirmed that the matter had been reported to FDC Planning Department and an officer would be visiting the location to investigate the situation.

**218.22 To resolve on date for next meeting** – It was resolved to hold next Parish Council meeting at 6.30pm on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March.

**219.22 To resolve to enter closed session in order to consider the following agenda item on the grounds of confidentiality by virtue of; The Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 s1(2).**

It was resolved to enter closed session. Cllr Goodley confirmed his interest as declared under minute ref. 206.22 and left the meeting room.

**220.22 To receive update on matters connected to breach of planning on Council owned land, resolve appropriately** (confidential due to personal data protection and possible legal implications).

Members considered allegations of an incident that had occurred on the Towpath; it was understood that the police were investigating. It was resolved to raise the subject for discussion during the meeting due to be held

with representatives from Emneth Parish Council.

221.22 **Close of meeting** - The meeting closed at 7.50pm.

Signed .....  
Elm Parish Council Chairman

Date .....