

Elm Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Elm Parish Council held at the Portacabin, Begdale, Elm on Wednesday 14th February 2024 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 – Cage, Darker, Goodley, Hopkin, Johnson, Milham, Probets, Stevenson. District Cllr Roy.
Mrs S England – Parish Clerk. 8 Members of the public.

It was confirmed that the Vice-Chairman, Cllr Probets would act as Chair for the meeting in Cllr Ferguson's absence.

181.23 **Apologies** – Reported for Cllrs Butcher, Ferguson & Welbourne; Council resolved to accept their reasons for absence.

182.23 **Members Code of Conduct** – The Chair reminded members of the need to submit; via the Clerk; any changes to their Register of Interests information.

183.23 **Disclosable interests and requests for dispensation;**
No interests declared.

184.23 **Open Forum**

6.33 pm – It was resolved to suspend Standing Orders.

Four members of the public requested to speak; the following subjects were raised;

- Comments in support of planning application ref. F/YR24/0064/O.
- Comments relating to the installation of a memorial headstone at Elm Cemetery.
- Thanks conveyed to the Parish Council from C.R.A.G. for transfer of grant funding for Coldham village sign.
- Concern raised that a business was being operated from a residential dwelling without proper planning consent.

6.53 pm – It was resolved to reinstate Standing Orders.

185.23 **Review and approval of Minutes** – Council resolved to approve the minutes of meeting held on 10th January 2024 as a true record of proceedings.

186.23 **Police matters** – None reported.

187.23 **District Councillor's Report** – Cllr Roy reported;

Update concerning ongoing flood issues in the parish, particularly along Birch Grove, Gosmoor Lane and at the A1101 junction with Main Road. Funding had been allocated to resolve the situation; tenders currently being sourced. Regarding the new development off Gosmoor Lane, there was concern that the on-site attenuation pond would not be able to cope with the volume of surface water; the long term plan should be for additional drains to be installed. Awareness of responsibility for management of riparian drains needed to be promoted, a leaflet drop could be organised for those properties affected. It was suggested that solicitors should be encouraged to raise the subject as part of the conveyancing process. Hilary Tandy (CCC Flood Resilience Team) was planning to make a presentation to the Parish Council, date to be confirmed but expected to be towards the end of April.

Concerns relating to the booking system for the Elm Centre were still being considered by the County Council, a meeting was being organised with the Diocese to include consideration of setting up a separate Management Committee for the facility.

There had been no further update from Simon Templar (Tilia Homes) concerning measures to address water safety risks at the Grove Gardens ponds.

The District Council Planning Enforcement Team were being chased concerning the damaged/unsafe boundary wall at Redmoor House.

An 'Older Driver' Workshop (for those over 65) was being held at Wisbech Fire Station on 11th April, 11am-1pm to raise awareness of updated highway legislation etc. A Community Safety event would be taking place at Elm Church on 19th February, 12-2pm; all welcome.

188.23 Clerk’s Report – The Clerk reported as follows;

1. The County Council had consulted on the use of chemical weed control management. *(Details circulated prior to the meeting), Members confirmed that they were happy with the use of chemicals to treat areas affected by weeds.*
2. In response to concerns raised relating to the condition of the Queens Drive play area in Friday Bridge, Clarion Housing had responded advising that the site was inspected quarterly and only medium or high risk issues were remedied, they accepted that the area was run down but there was no budget available to upgrade the site generally.
3. A request for bollards to be installed around the green area adjacent to Birch Grove had been acknowledged by Clarion Housing and passed onto the appropriate department.
4. Mark Peck (County Rights of Way Officer) had confirmed that a new signpost would be installed for Elm Footpath 1 and, owners of the land had been instructed to leave the gates unlocked.
5. Annual RoSPA safety checks had been booked for Elm and Friday Bridge play areas.
6. New adult and paediatric pads had been ordered for the defibrillator located in Friday Bridge.
7. A reclaim invoice had been forwarded to Emneth Parish Council totalling £459.20 which represented 50% of the cost of maintenance work undertaken on land owned by both Councils.
8. There had been no response from County Highways concerning ownership of barrel planters located in Friday Bridge. A further update had also been requested concerning other longstanding issues; no response to date. The Clerk confirmed she had contacted Cllr Steve Count to ask why Highways Officers were not responding to emails from the Parish Council.
9. Skips located at Elm Cemetery had not been emptied, a complaint had been raised with the District Waste Management Department.
10. Members were asked to consider the proposed Cemetery Chapel conversion project; subject to be included on the next agenda.

189.23 Financial Matters

- i. The Clerk advised the following sums had been received since the last meeting; Cemetery fees £2650.00; Cottage rent £750.00; Interest £298.81.
- ii. To resolve to approve payments for February as detailed below;

PAYEE	DETAIL	NET	VAT	TOTAL
Idverde	Grounds Maint. Jan. 2024	£1,263.80	£252.76	£1,516.56
L Welbourne	Cemetery/play area admin.	£499.98		£499.98
Tawny Owl maint. Svs.	Various ground maint.tasks	£332.50		£332.50
Flame Heating	Cottage - new shower	£168.00		£168.00
Anglia Locksmiths	Replace defib digi-lock	£140.00	£28.00	£168.00
Cambs ACRE	Annual sub.	£54.17	£10.83	£65.00
BT	Broadband	£23.95	£4.79	£28.74
Wave	Water rates - Begdale	£19.29		£19.29
S England	Clerk's salary	£1,354.65		£1,354.65
S England	Clerk's Expenses	£181.99	£4.26	£186.25
HMRC	PAYE M10	£448.31		£448.31
Nest	Pension Contr's	£145.64		£145.64
		£4,632.28	£300.64	£4,932.92

It was resolved to approve payment of February invoices as detailed in the schedule.

Chairperson

- iii. To resolve on quotation received for installation of new streetlighting columns (Update Project phase 2). The quotation totalling, £19,748.16 plus VAT included 15 replacement columns and LED lanterns for assets with 0 to 5 years operational life remaining. The 2024-2025 budget included funds allocated for phase 2 of the project which would also involve replacement of pole bracket lanterns. It was resolved to accept the quotation utilising Council’s power to spend on ‘lighting roads and public spaces’ provided under The Parish Council Act 1957, section 3 and Highways Act 1980, section 301.

- iv. To resolve on charge for Elm WI hiring portacabin. It was resolved to charge the WI £10.00 per session for hire of the meeting room at the portacabin.

7.20pm – Cllr Stevenson left the meeting.

190.23 Correspondence

- i. Email, Emneth parishioner – request to cut back trees in Chapel Lane and, complaint concerning dogs accessing his land from the Towpath. *The Clerk confirmed that UKPN had pruned the trees overhanging Chapel Lane; it was suggested that the parishioner may wish to install a fence along the boundary line in order to prevent dogs accessing his land from the Towpath.*
- ii. Email, parishioner – concerns relating to number of vehicles using Twenty Foot Road – *Whilst Members acknowledged the concerns raised, it was stressed that the route was a main highway which serviced March town centre, the prison and, an industrial zone, it was therefore unlikely that measures would ever be implemented to reduce the volume of traffic.*

For information purposes;

All information circulated to Council Members and posted to the website and Facebook platform where appropriate. For further details contact the Parish Clerk.

191.23 Planning

1. **F/YR24/0008/F** – Freestanding air-con unit and fence, formation of patio to rear of existing dwelling at, Waterfront Lodge, 167 South Brink, Wisbech. Council resolved to support.
2. **F/YR24/0007/F** – Install 5x planters with 2.8m high (max.) trellis to front of dwelling at, Waterfront Lodge, 167 South Brink, Wisbech. Council resolved to support.
3. **F/YR24/0063/TRCA** – Felling of 1x Beech tree and 1x Walnut tree in Conservation Area at, The Old Vicarage, Main Road, Elm. Council resolved to support requesting that consideration was given to the possibility of replacing the trees.
4. **F/YR24/0073/TRCA** – Works to 10x Cypress trees in Conservation Area at, Halfpenny House, Rose Lane, Elm. Council resolved to support.
5. **F/YR24/0071/F** – Installation of roof lights to front and dormer extension to rear. Replace single storey pitch roof with flat roof and installation of window to side elevation at, 3 Oldfield Avenue, Elm. Council resolved to support.
6. **F/YR24/0064/O** – Construction of 2x dwellings at, land East of ‘At Last’, Low Road, Elm. Council resolved to support the proposals.

7.35pm – It was resolved to suspend Standing Orders in order to allow a member of the public to speak.

Concerns were raised in connection to proposals submitted under planning application ref. F/YR24/0064/O.

7.40pm – It was resolved to reinstate Standing Orders.

192.23 Highways & Footways

- i. 20mph zone application 2024/25 – It was resolved for the Clerk to submit an application for the 20mph zone scheme based on details included in the 2023/24 submission.
- ii. Update, flooding issues – Subject considered under Cllr Roy’s report (see minute ref.187.23).

193.23 To consider maintenance requirements for play areas and resolve appropriately.

The Clerk presented details of quotation received for repair and maintenance to items of play equipment and play surfaces at Elm and Friday Bridge. It was resolved not to install safety surfacing in front of the bench at Elm (quote £354.00 + VAT); it was resolved to seek the opinion of the RoSPA Inspector before any decision was made on repair of the zip wire (quote 4392.50 + VAT) and repair of safety surfaces (quote £1804.00 + VAT) at Friday Bridge. Further quotation to be sought for other minor repairs.

194.23 To consider location for installation of refurbished bench in memory of the late Cllr Mac Cotterell.

It was confirmed that the area around Elm War Memorial could not be considered as a suitable location for the bench. Other suggestions included; the cemetery, large pocket park and green area adjacent to Birch Grove. The Clerk confirmed that she would contact Mrs Cotterell to seek her opinion on the subject.

- 195.23 **To resolve on requests submitted by the FEET Committee.**
 The Clerk confirmed that a copy of the 2022 Tree Survey Report had been forwarded to FEET.
 It was resolved to confirm that Elm PC would welcome a grant application from FEET for purchase of fuel and maintenance costs. It was confirmed that Council's insurance would not cover items of equipment used by FEET. It was resolved to approve the use of the portacabin for FEET meetings.
- 196.23 **Risk Assessment, Leam Pond** – Item deferred.
- 197.23 **Risk Assessment documents relating to use of the portacabin** – Item deferred.
- 198.23 **To resolve to prohibit larger 'easel' style floral tributes from being installed in the Cemetery.**
 It was resolved to prohibit 'easel' style tributes from being placed in the cemetery as they presented a health & safety risk particularly during periods of stormy weather.
- 199.23 **To resolve on consultation response for 'street naming' of development north of Gosmoor Lane.**
 Resolved to defer to Closed Session due to the consideration of information relating to personal individuals.
 See minute ref. 204.23
- 200.23 **To receive comments/requests from Members; to be included on the next agenda.**
 The following subjects were raised for future consideration;
 (i) Friday Bridge Football Club, (ii) An update on Strathmore House, (iii) Overgrown conifer hedging on a boundary at Coldham.
- 201.23 **Date of next Parish Council meeting** – It was resolved to confirm that the next Parish Council meeting would take place at 6.30pm on Wednesday 13th March.
- 202.23 **To resolve to enter closed session in order to consider the following agenda items on grounds of confidentiality by virtue of; The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s.1(2).**
 8.02pm – It was resolved to enter closed session.
- 203.23 **To resolve on issues relating to grave in new lawn cemetery area** (confidential due to discussion of information relating to private individuals).
 The Clerk presented details of the memorial/vase design; it was resolved to approve the installation on condition that, (i) all other tributes were removed and, (ii) it was stressed that no responsibility could be taken for subsidence/sinking should the headstone prove to be too heavy for the beam.
- 204.23 **To resolve on 'street naming' consultation** (carried forward from agenda item 19, minute ref. 199.23) (confidential due to discussion of information relating to private individuals).
 It was resolved to raise no objection to the proposed street name.
- 205.23 **Close of meeting** – The meeting closed at 20.20pm.

Signed
 Elm Parish Council Chairman

Date