

Elm Parish Council

Minutes of an extraordinary Meeting of Elm Parish Council held at the Portacabin, Begdale, Elm on Wednesday 28th August 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, Dring, Ferguson (Chair), Goodley, Milham, Probets, Stevenson & Welbourne.
Mrs S England – Parish Clerk. 1 Members of the public (Safeguarding Officer – Wisbech Town FC).

75.24 **Apologies** – Reported for Cllrs Butcher & Hopkin; Council resolved to accept their reasons for absence.

76.24 **Disclosable interests and requests for dispensation;**

Cllr Probets declared an interest in agenda item 3 (minute ref. 77.24) due to his role as a coach for Wisbech Town Football Club (WTFC). It was further confirmed that; when discussions concerning proposals for a hire fee took place; the interest would become pecuniary.

77.24 **To consider updated proposals for football playing facilities at Begdale playing field, to include;** (i) clarification of status of Elmbridge FC, (ii) hire of field by Wisbech Town Football Club for the operation of a Youth Feeder Hub, (iii) terms of hire agreement, (iv) confirmation of official point of contact at WTFC, (v) clarification of arrangements for pitch maintenance. Resolve appropriately. **Subject to receipt of documentation relating to Public Liability Insurance & Safeguarding Risk Assessment (F.A. Model) IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING.**

Members were advised that Elmbridge FC was no longer affiliated.

A new proposal was put forward (as advised to Council in advance of meeting) for the Youth Feeder Hub arrangement to be set up solely with WTFC (under a hire agreement).

In respect of documentation, the Clerk confirmed that WTFC had submitted a Safeguarding Policy and a letter (signed by WTFC Chairman) confirming Cllr Probets' authority to act/speak on behalf of WTFC. Evidence of Public Liability Insurance had not been received; a Safeguarding Risk Assessment had been forwarded and reviewed, sections requiring further information had been annotated for the Safeguarding Officer's (SO) reference. Cllr Probets confirmed that he would repeat his request for details of PL insurance to be forwarded to the Parish Council.

6.40pm – It was resolved to suspend Standing Orders in order to permit the WTFC Safeguarding Officer (SO) to enter into open discussion with Members.

The WTFC SO confirmed that she would be happy to act as point of contact (in addition to Cllr Probets) in matters relating to the proposed arrangement. It was also confirmed that Adrian Cooper (WTFC Head of Youth Section) would also be an appropriate contact.

WTFC SO confirmed that the suggestions made for updating the Safeguarding Risk Assessment Policy were reasonable and she would work on the amendments during the next few weeks.

In respect of pitch maintenance, it was confirmed that Cllr Stephen Johnson and a number of other volunteers (details to be confirmed) would be maintaining the pitches. WTFC were concerned that their ride-on mower could not be stored securely at Begdale and it was therefore agreed that it would be dropped off/collected as and when required. Clerk to adapt FEET volunteers Risk Assessment to accommodate the volunteers' activities; appropriate insurance to be provided by Cllr Johnson (in his role as a volunteer).

6.55 pm – It was resolved to reinstate Standing Orders.

78.24 **Closed Session**

6.56 pm – It was resolved to enter closed session in order to discuss proposals for a hire fee on the grounds of confidentiality by virtue of; The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s.1(2).

Cllr Probets confirmed his pecuniary interest and left the meeting room. The WTFC SO also left the meeting room.

The subject was discussed by Members. It was resolved to propose a hire fee of £20.00 per match and; £10.00 per training session.

7.05 pm – It was resolved to reinstate Standing Orders.
Cllr Probets and the WTFC SO were invited back into the meeting room.

79.24 Proposals for Hire Fee

The proposed hire fees were presented to Cllr Probets.

Cllr Probets advised that the fees proposed were unacceptable, adding that; due to the poor condition of the pitch and limited facilities; WTFC expected to be charged a 'nominal fee'.

7.15 pm – Cllr Probets presented a letter of resignation to the Council Chair.

Mr Probets was asked if he would be willing to remain at the meeting to discuss the matter further; he agreed and proceeded to join the seating area designated for members of the public.

7.18 pm – It was resolved to suspend Standing Orders in order to facilitate an open discussion.

Information relating to; player match fees, club expenses (kit, referee fees etc), number of children playing, fees charged by other clubs (e.g. Wisbech St Mary) was discussed. It was confirmed that; as the pitch/es were improved and player numbers increased; there would be more funds available.

In mind of supporting the arrangement, Members asked Mr Probets for a figure that WTFC would consider to be a reasonable hire fee. Mr Probets advised that he did not have this information.

It was resolved to request Mr Probets to approach WTFC to establish a figure which would be acceptable to them in terms of a hire fee. Mr Probets agreed that he would do so and report the information back to Council (via The Clerk) as a matter of urgency.

7.28 pm – It was resolved to reinstate Standing Orders.

80.24 To resolve to enter 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).

7.30 pm – It was resolved to enter closed session.

81.24 To consider matters relating to Councillor Code of Conduct, resolve appropriately.

The Chair presented information relating to processes detailed in the Councillor Code of Conduct. A discussion took place; no specific action resolved.

82.24 To consider Personnel matters; resolve appropriately

Members discussed matters relating to the Clerk's hours, noting the significant amount of time spent in an effort to move the football project forward. The Clerk confirmed that; aside from finalising a hire agreement (pending receipt of further information from WTFC); she was now in a position to focus on other tasks/projects.

83.24 Close of Meeting

The meeting closed at 7.50pm.

Signed
Chair – Elm Parish Council

Date