

Elm Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Elm Parish Council held at the Portacabin, Begdale, Elm on Wednesday 12th November 2025 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 – Milham (Chair), Fisher, Goodley, South, Ferguson, Hopkin, Lee, Pigden.

District Cllr Roy, Mrs L Welbourne – Deputy Clerk (minute taker). One member of the public.

128.25 **Apologies for absence** – Received from; Cllrs Welbourne & Cage. Council resolved to accept their reasons for absence.

129.25 **Members Code of Conduct** – The Chair reminded members of the need to submit; via the Clerk; any changes to their Register of Interests information. The Deputy Clerk also stressed the importance of this action.

130.25 **To receive declarations of interests (pecuniary, non-pecuniary & other) and any requests for dispensation**

Cllr Ferguson requested a dispensation for agenda item 19 (see minute ref 145.25) due to her business connection to the property's tenancy agreement. Council resolved to approve the dispensation in order to permit Cllr Ferguson to take part in discussions on the agenda item.

131.25 **Open Forum**

No matters raised.

132.25 **Signing of Minutes** – Council resolved to approve the minutes of meeting held on 8th October 2025 as a true record of proceedings. Proposed Cllr Ferguson, Seconded Cllr South. Resolved unanimously.

18:33 – Council resolved to suspend Standing Orders.

133.25 **District Councillor's Report** - District Cllr Roy reported as follows;

1. Fens Reservoir consultation was open until 10 December 2025. Everyone encouraged to give feedback; available on Anglian Water website.
2. LHI was open for bidding until 16 January 2026. Requests received included the junction on High Road, Elm and the A1101 for improvement. When traffic was waiting to turn right it often then caused queues to build for those wishing to turn left.
3. A Fenland working group had been established to consider Nature recovery projects e.g. FEET and Tower Hall sensory gardens projects.
4. Free weekly food waste collection was to start next year and residents would receive information in due course.
5. No current update on BioMarsh – evidence gathering continued.

18:40 - It was resolved to reinstate Standing Orders.

134.25 **To receive report from County Councillor**

County Cllr Fisher reported as follows;

1. CCC Highways report portal had been updated to show The Leam fencing matter as closed. Cllr Fisher investigating; residents encouraged to report again.
2. Fens Reservoir consultation was nearing closure; residents were encouraged to attend the consultation meeting and comment.
3. Unitary Role – Council had resolved on option A, this had been forwarded to Government. Each District Council could submit their own proposal. FDC had resolved on Option D to split Huntingdon East and West, taking in Cambridgeshire East.

135.25 **Clerk's Report**

Mrs Welbourne (Deputy Clerk) reported as follows;

- Damaged sign at Coldham reported and acknowledged by Highways
- Email from Friday Bridge Parishioner received thanking us for the works on The Leam
- Damaged street cushions outside Elm School reported to Highways for repair.
- Thank you to Cllr Milham, Mr Darker and Mr Keeble for laying the wreaths at the remembrance services. Fridaybridge clock tower had received its annual service.
- New BT contract had been signed.

- Power at Begdale portacabin was continually chased. Power providers were now reporting unregistered meter; investigations continue.
- Bus shelter land licence had been completed for Friday Bridge. Shelter at Elm to be installed with opening facing Birch Grove, thereby preventing backsplash of flood water onto users. Councillors were asked to consider:
 1. Removal of both end panels and extending concrete pad.
 2. Removing one end panel and extending pad.
 3. Install shelter with opening towards highway; no requirement for extended pad.
 Council resolved for option 2; proposed Cllr Ferguson, seconded Cllr South.
- Parish tree survey - Quotation of £450.00 received from arborist Chris Henley had been accepted under Clerks/Chairs spending powers.
- Grounds maintenance tasks completed – New slabs had laid for ashes plots; trees pollarded between back road and The Leam; trees and dyke cleared at Begdale playing field; new signs installed and Elm play area and The Towpath (warning of giant Hogweed).
- Business planning survey circulated to all parishioners; encouraged to complete as relates to how Cambridgeshire County Council should prioritise spending and savings in the years ahead.
- Quotation obtained for works to Cemetery gates, railings, and benches. First quotation received and was in the region of £7.5k-£10k depending on whether gates require restoration or replacing.
- Spoken with Philip Clarke from Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) regarding Nature Project. He would be happy to attend a meeting in the new year. Rings End Nature Reserve and FEET could benefit from the scheme.
- Quotations obtained for repairs to Friday Bridge Play area indicated a cost between £23k and £30k. Included removal of existing tractor unit, installation of slide and full replacement of safety surface area with a 5 year warranty. Currently liaising with S106 officer regarding funding. Further update at December meeting.
- Notification of the Golden Age Fair to be held Friday 12th December 10am-1pm at GER sports club in March. An opportunity for over 60's to discover opportunities, service, and support for the older generation in Fenland.
- E-mail received from parishioner reference plans for Friday Bridge Camp asking for opportunity to discuss. Not aware of any updated applications. Council resolved not to pursue a meeting at present. Proposed Cllr Ferguson; seconded Cllr South.
- The application window for 26/27 LHI projects now open and will remain so until Friday 16th January. Subject would be on the December agenda. Information had been distributed with details of what can be applied for, Councillors advised to study this before the next meeting.

136.25 Financial Matters

- The Deputy Clerk advised the following sums had been received since the last meeting; Interest £271.34; Cemetery fees £3120.00; Allotment Rent £4,466.25, Cemetery Cottage Rent £1,600.00, Wayleave £287.29.
- To resolve to approve expenditure for November 2025 as detailed below: Resolved; proposed Cllr South, seconded Cllr Fisher.

PAYE	DETAIL	NET	VAT	TOTAL
Tawny Owl Services	Grounds Maintenance	£1,638.75	£327.75	£1,966.50
Tawny Owl Services	Signs at Towpath & Elm play area	£52.00	£10.40	£62.40
Tawny Owl Services	Trees pruning	£1,300.00	£260.00	£1,560.00
Tawny Owl Services	Ashes Plots	£414.00	£82.80	£496.80
Tawny Owl Services	Begdale dyke & trees	£580.00	£116.00	£696.00
Wave	Water	£21.96		£21.96
BT	Broadband	£29.87	£5.97	£35.84
Fenland Heating Solutions	Repairs to Cemetery Cottage Boiler	£129.99		£129.99
A1 Engraving	Elm play area sign	£35.00	£7.00	£42.00
Smith of Derby	Fridaybridge clock tower service	£275.00	£55.00	£330.00
Fen Ditching Company Ltd	The Leam Clearance	£4,546.50	£909.30	£5,455.80
FDC	Cemetery bins	£230.58		£230.58
Salaries	Clerk's & Deputy Clerk salary	£2,398.85		£2,398.85

Expenses	Clerk's & Deputy Clerk exps	£428.56	£428.56
HMRC	PAYE M7	£1,002.76	£1,002.76
Nest	Pension contributions	£241.79	£241.79
		£13,325.61	£1,774.22
			£15,099.83

Chair

- iii. **To resolve on the quotations received for height restriction barrier at Begdale Car Park.**
It was resolved to proceed with the quotation from Martin Works for £2,327.00 plus VAT. Proposed Cllr South, seconded Cllr Hopkin.
- iv. **To resolve on the quotation received for the annual maintenance works at The Leam Pond.**
It was resolved to accept the quotation of £728.40 plus VAT per visit. Proposed Cllr South, seconded Cllr Lee.
- v. **To resolve on the quotation received from Tawny Owl Services for £396.00 inc VAT for works to the garden at Cemetery cottage.** Discussion held around maintenance of the cottage; it was resolved to accept the quotation. Proposed Cllr Ferguson, Seconded Cllr Fisher.
- vi. **To resolve on the quotation received from Tawny Owl Services for £275.00 inc VAT to reduce one Conifer tree at Cemetery Cottage.** It was resolved to accept the quotation, however if the tree was found to be dead in the middle, then it was to be removed. Proposed Cllr Ferguson, Seconded Cllr Fisher.

137.25 **Correspondence;**

- i. **To resolve on The Old School House (SEN school, Fridaybridge Road) request to use Bedgale Playing field for sports.** It was resolved to allow the school to use the field as all documentation (e.g. safeguarding policy, PLI) was in place. Proposed Cllr Ferguson, seconded Cllr Fisher.

138.25 **Planning:**

- i. **F/YR25/0767/F Erect 2-storey extension to side of existing dwelling involving demolition of existing garage at 20 Church Road Friday Bridge Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE14 0HN**
It was resolved to support the application; proposed Cllr Ferguson, Seconded Cllr South.
- ii. **F/YR25/0801/VOC Variation of conditions 9 (materials) and 12 (list of approved drawings) of planning permission F/YR16/1027/F (Erection of a 2-storey 2-bed dwelling and 1.2 metre high timber fence and gates and formation of a new vehicular access involving demolition of conservatory to existing dwelling) to enable a change of materials to exterior, and remove chimney at Land South Of 49 Fridaybridge Road Elm.** Council resolved to object to the application as the design was not in keeping with other properties. Proposed Cllr Ferguson; Seconded Cllr South.
- iii. **F/YR25/0816/VOC Variation of condition 05 (off site highway improvements) and condition 10 (list of approved plans) of planning permission F/YR18/0770/VOC (Variation of conditions 5, 7 and 10 relating to planning permission F/YR16/0136/O (Erection of 3no dwellings (Outline application with all matters reserved)) - amendment to off-site highway improvements, site levels and approved plans) amendment relating to offsite highway improvements and approved plan at Land West Of Rowde House Bar Drove Friday Bridge.** It was resolved to support the application; proposed Cllr Ferguson, seconded Cllr South.

139.25 **Highways & Footways;**

- i. 20mph zone – To resolve to approve draft design pending formal consultation.
Council resolved to approve the plan; highways to be advised. Proposed Cllr Ferguson, seconded Cllr South.
- ii. LHI 25/26 – application for MVAS for Coldham has been successful; noted by council.
- iii. TTRO's - details already forwarded to members for review. – No questions raised.

140.25 **To review situation concerning Biomarsh, resolve on action where appropriate.** – No further updated reported.

141.25 **To receive update from Christmas decorations working party. Resolve appropriately (Subject requested by Cllr South).** Subject deferred to 2026; working party requested to commence work on the project and update council accordingly.

142.25 **To receive requests from members for items to be included on next agenda.** Cllr Ferguson requested the parking situation around the Sportsman Pub to be added to the agenda.

- 143.25 **To confirm date for next Parish Council meeting. (10th December 2025).** Confirmed.
- 144.25 **19.38 – It was resolved 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).**
- 145.25 **To discuss matters relating to the Cemetery Cottage, resolve appropriately (confidential due to personal information).** – Cllr Ferguson confirmed her interest in the subject due to business connection. As dispersion had been granted she continued to provide an update on the subject. Appropriate action resolved unanimously.
- 146.25 **To receive an update regarding Begdale playing field (confidential due to individual’s details).**
Mrs Welbourne gave an update to Council on the matter, further updates would be given at the December meeting if needed.
- 147.25 **To discuss matters relating to the security of Elm Cemetery, (confidential due to private individual’s details)**
Mrs Welbourne gave information to Council; discussion was held around security and options discussed. Resolution Passed to install a security camera and signage at the Cemetery entrance.
- 148.25 **To resolve to close the closed session.** 20:06 – It was resolved to close the Closed Session.
- 149.25 - **Close of meeting.** – 20:06 - It was resolved to close the meeting.

Signed
Elm Parish Council Chair

Date