

# Elm Parish Council

## Minutes of the Meeting of Elm Parish Council held at the Portacabin, Begdale, Elm on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2026 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), Welbourne, Goodley, Lee, Hopkin, Cage, Fisher.

District Cllr Roy, Mrs L Welbourne – Deputy Clerk (minute taker), 7 members of the public.

- 192.25 **Apologies for absence** – Received from; Cllrs Ferguson and South. Council resolved to accept their reasons for absence.
- 193.25 **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.
- 194.25 **To receive declarations of interests (pecuniary, non-pecuniary & other) and any requests for dispensation**  
Cllr Cage declared a personal interest in agenda item 12 ii (see minute ref 203.25) due to the site location of the planning proposal.  
18.32 Council resolved to suspend Standing Orders
- 195.25 **Open Forum** –2 members of the public spoke. The following matters were raised;  
1. A thank you was received for the donation of prizes for the raffle at Friday Bridge School; total raised £1,608.51.  
2. Thanks conveyed to Cllr Roy for his work on the Biomarsh planning application.  
18.35 – Council resolved to reinstate Standing Orders.
- 196.25 **Signing of Minutes** – Council resolved to approve the minutes of meeting held 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025 as a true record of proceedings. P. Cllr Cage , S. Cllr Lee. Resolved unanimously.
- 197.25 **To resolve on the co-option of candidate to become a member of the Parish Council.** – Mr Pilbeam’s introductory statement circulated to Members prior to meeting. It was resolved to co-opt Mr Philip Pilbeam onto the Parish Council; P. Cllr Lee, S. Cllr Cage. Mr Pilbeam signed a Declaration of Acceptance, Cllr Pilbeam was invited to join Members at the meeting table, the Chair welcomed him to the Council.  
18.46 It was resolved to suspend Standing Orders
- 198.25 **District Councillor’s Report** - District Cllr Roy reported as follows;  
1.The Government had launched formal public consultation for Local Govt. Reorganisation. Four options for Residents; two with two unitary authorities and two with three unitary authorities. Parish Council could feedback Collectively. 2. Nature Recovery meeting on Monday 16 February with Nature Team and Cambs County Council to discuss environmental projects for Elm and Christchurch. Options considered would include; Nature Reserve along The Towpath, floral gateways to villages, improvements to ponds at Grove Gardens and The Leam, Allotments at Friday Bridge, Sensory Garden at Friday Bridge, hedgerow and wild flower planting. 3. Business rates changes would begin 01 April 2026. 4. Following attendance at Flood Hub meeting, Elm Parish Council urged to set up emergency flood plan.  
18:53 - It was resolved to reinstate Standing Orders.
- 199.25 **To receive report from County Councillor** - County Cllr Fisher reported as follows;  
1. Council tax was increasing by the maximum 4.99%.  
2. Consultation over government reorganisation was open; everyone encouraged to respond to express their views.
- 200.25 - **PRESENTATION – Information relating to Community Nature Project..**  
19.06 It was resolved to suspend Standing Orders.  
Stephanie Barrett, Community Nature Engagement Officer, presented the following;
- Council would have access to a new portal to map and log all assets. This could then be referred to as and when funding pots became available.
  - Full details would be sent for circulation to Councillors.
  - After initial free period Councils would have the option to continue with the portal for a small annual fee.
  - Information could be accessed by other Councils in order to adopt best practice.

19.19 It was resolved to reinstate Standing Orders

201.25 **Clerk's Report**

Mrs Welbourne (Deputy Clerk) reported as follows;

1. An e-mail received from Cllr Roy regarding potential sites for additional play equipment had been circulated to Members; feedback requested.
2. The Begdale Playing Field entrance height bar had been installed with new signage.
3. PAT testing had been scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> February at the portacabin.
4. The bus shelter licence had been returned and signed by the Chair. Installation completed on both sites.
5. The desk top valuation had been received for Cemetery Cottage highlighting shortfall in cover; policy amended accordingly providing full cover.
6. Interest rate on Barclays savings account reducing on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2026 from 1.1% to 1.05%.
7. Interest rate on NS&I had reduced from 3.3% to 3.05%.
8. FDC had refused planning application for Biomarsh, reasons given included; 1. Condition of roads, 2. National Cycle Route, 3. Insufficient on-site waiting space, 4. Poor visibility.
9. Owner of Elm Village Shop would be happy for the installation a defib unit at his premises, subject funding becoming available.
10. BT annual price increase would be 7.3%.
11. E-mail forwarded on 2/2/26 from Cambridgeshire Flood and Water advising Webinar due to take place 4/2/26. Members advised, feedback requested from those who had attended.
12. Deputy Clerk had registered for CiLCA training commencing 4<sup>th</sup> March; hours allocated to training budget.
13. Further to request for traffic monitoring on March Road, Coldham, Cambridgeshire Highways Safety Audit Team, had advised that accident data did not meet the criteria for monitoring to take place.
14. Complaint received regarding parking situation on green area adjacent to Birch Grove had been raised with Clarion and Highways (enclosing a copy of title deeds identifying both parties were responsible). Potential future LHI bid could be submitted for bollards to be added to Gosmoor Lane/Main Road CCC boundary.
15. Clerks' hours were fully committed to Council's current admin/projects and concerns were raised for future commitments which may arise. It was noted that working parties / committees would be required to assist with additional work/projects which could include; significant planning proposals, parks and open spaces, Street Pride, Xmas decorations, nature projects, emergency flood planning, cemetery maintenance, parish newsletter.

202.25 **Financial Matters**

- i. The Deputy Clerk advised the following sums had been received since the last meeting; Interest £271.34; Cemetery fees £3,025.00
- ii. To resolve to approve expenditure for February 2025 as detailed below: Resolved; P. Cllr Cage, S. Cllr Fisher.

PAYEE	DETAIL	NET	VAT	TOTAL
Tawny Owl Services	Grounds Maintenance	£1,638.75	£327.75	£1,966.50
BT	Broadband	£32.95	£6.59	£39.54
Gallagher Insurance	Cemetery Cottage	£67.60		£67.60
Martin Works Ltd	Height Bar - Begdale Playing Field	£2,327.00	£465.40	£2,792.40
Tawny Owl Services	Repairs at Begdale Playing Field	£210.77	£42.15	£252.92
Fenland District Council	Bin Emptying - Cemetery	£230.58		£230.58
Wave	Water - Portacabin	£19.44		£19.44
Capalc	Deputy Clerk CiLCA training	£450.00		£450.00
Salaries	Clerk's & Deputy Clerk salary	£2,135.05		£2,135.05
Expenses	Clerk's & Deputy Clerk exps	£169.19		£169.19
HMRC	PAYE M10	£496.96		£496.96
Nest	Pension contributions	£155.38		£155.38
		£7,933.67	£841.89	£8,775.56

Chair .....

- iii. **To resolve on Grounds Maintenance Contract price increase of 3.5% for Tawny Owl Services for the year 26/27.** – It was resolved to accept the increase. P. Cllr Hopkin S. Cllr Fisher
- iv. **To resolve on quotation received for the electricity supply at Begdale Portacabin.** – It was noted that the energy price was high however this was only option available as meter classed as 'shipperless'. Recognised that usage should be low due to limited hours spent at the portacabin. It was resolved to accept the quotation received from Full Power Utilities. P. Cllr Fisher S. Cllr Welbourne

203.25 **Planning:**

- i. **F/YR26/0010/F - Erect part two-storey part single-storey extension to side of existing dwelling at Needham Road Cottages Needham Bank Friday Bridge Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE14 0LA** – It was resolved to support the application P. Cllr Fisher, S. Cllr Lee  
19.35 Cllr Cage confirmed his personal interest in the next item and left the meeting room.
- ii. **F/YR26/0017/F - .Siting of residential mobile home (retrospective) at Land South East Of 208A Fridaybridge Road Elm** – Cllrs resolved to make no comment on the application other than that neighbours' comments should be taken into consideration – P. Cllr Fisher S. Cllr Lee  
19.39 Cllr Cage returned to the meeting room.

204.25 **Highways & Footways;**

- i. TTRO 26-10247- The Stitch Friday Bridge, 30/3/26-31/3/26 - Installation of ducting and associated works
- ii. TTRO 26-10343 – Bar Drove Friday Bridge, 20/3/26-26/3/26 – Telecommunications works
- iii. TTRO 26-10325 – March Road Friday Bridge, 30/3/26-10/4/26 – Anglian Water
- iv. TTRO 26-10341 – Wales Bank, Elm, 23/3/26-25/3/26 – Telecommunications works

205.25 **To resolve on proposed signage for Elm Aveling Football Club at Begdale Playing Field, draft as circulated.**  
It was resolved to accept the proposed signage including design, size and location P. Cllr Milham. S. Cllr Fisher

206.25 **To resolve to install a Multipurpose Waste Bin in Well End, Fridaybridge, subject to details of preferred location.**  
Cllr Pilbeam to investigate alternative funding options and report at March meeting.

207.25 **To resolve on quotations received regarding restoration of the Elm War Memorial.** – It was resolved to accept the quotation from RLS Restoration Ltd at a cost of £1,995.00 plus VAT. P. Cllr Lee S. Cllr Cage.

208.25 **To receive requests from members for items to be included on next agenda.** Cllr Fished requested a follow up item to confirm working party details and members.

209.25 **To confirm date for next Parish Council meeting. (11<sup>th</sup> March 2026).** Resolved to confirm.

210.25 **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).**  
19.51 It was resolved to enter closed session.

211.25 **To resolve on matters relating to Grounds Maintenance Contract (Confidential due to discussion of contract).** Mrs Welbourne gave details of the proposed contract. It was resolved to accept the contract for 5 years.  
P. Cllr Milham S. Cllr Cage

212.25 **To resolve on matters relating to Cemetery Cottage Tenancy. – (Confidential due to discussions of tenancy agreement and individuals' personal details).** Mrs Welbourne provided an update It was resolved to seek quotations for waste removal / repairs and to remove the lean-to car port at the property. It was further resolved for Black Cat Residential to manage the tenancy moving forward. P. Cllr Fisher S. Cllr Lee

213.25 **To resolve to close the closed session.** 20.14 It was resolved to Close the closed session

214.25 **Close of meeting.** 20.14 -It was resolved to close the meeting.

Signed .....  
Elm Parish Council Chair

Date .....