

Elm Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Elm Parish Council held at the Portacabin, Begdale, Elm on Wednesday 10th June 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 – Ferguson (Chair), Milham, Lee, Cage, Pigden, Hopkin.

District Cllr Roy, Mrs L Welbourne – Deputy Clerk (minute taker), 1 member of the public, Ashley Dolling (FDC)

- 26.26 **Apologies for absence** – Received from; Cllrs Fisher, Welbourne, Goodley and Pilbeam. Council resolved to accept their reasons for absence.
- 27.26 **Members Code of Conduct** – The Chair reminded members of the need to submit; via the Clerk; any changes to their Register of Interests information.
- 28.26 **To receive declarations of interests (pecuniary, non-pecuniary & other) and any requests for dispensation.**
Cllr Ferguson declared an interest in agenda item 18 (Min. ref. 43.26) due to a professional interest.
- 29.26 **Open Forum** – 1 member of the public spoke. The following matter was raised;
1. New MVAS post installed in Coldham was near edge of verge and concerns were raised that MVAS unit may be caught by high sided vehicles. Clerk to raise matter with CCC Highways.
- 30.26 **Signing of Minutes** – Council resolved to approve the minutes of meeting held 13th May 2026 as a true record of proceedings. P. Cllr Lee, S. Cllr Pigden. Resolved unanimously.
- 31.26 **To receive Presentation from Ashley Dolling – Nature Recovery Project.**
Ashley reported as follows;
1. Role was to manage Streetpride and 'In Bloom' groups in Fenland.
 2. Strong Streetpride group in Elm / Fridaybridge who had a funding application with The Whitemill fund.
 3. The groups were fully insured and had big plans for the future.
 4. Cambs County Council had put together a team to assist with the "Nature Recovery from the group up" project.
 5. Parish Online tool would help to plot all assets and fill in any gaps.
 6. First year was free; chargeable from year two, cost dependent on Parish size.
 7. Next committee meeting for The Whitemill Fund was Monday 15th June 2026; meet twice a year to review applications.
 8. Would be interested in making The Towpath a Nature Reserve and potentially use funding to upskill FEET volunteers.
- 32.26 **District Councillor's Report** - District Cllr Roy reported as follows;
1. The Leam - A meeting was to be arranged regarding The Leam; confirmation of date to be advised.
 2. Halfpenny House – Trees had damaged the inside of the building; the board on windows would be removed as they were fixed.
 3. Begdale Road – The property opposite the former Biomarsh site had been served a 14 day notice to cut back the overhanging hedge.
 4. Fly-tipping – in Halfpenny Lane consisted of tree waste; specialist grab lorry needed. Clearance in hand.
 5. Fenland 50 – Residents encouraged to give view on Fenland 50 Plan.
 6. Strathmore House – Owner had been fined and fine had been paid. – FDC would be encouraged to apply for Compulsory Purchase order.
- 33.26 **To receive report from County Councillor** - N/a
- 34.26 **Clerk's Report**
Mrs Welbourne (Deputy Clerk) reported as follows;
- Tower Hall / FB playing field boundary – Fencing regularly vandalised; funding available for native hedging which could be planted (on T Hall side) for added security. *Council agreed to support funding application, Clerks to pursue.*
 - Emergency planning webinar hosted by Cambs Acre to be held 30th June 5-6pm, free of charge. *Cllrs Ferguson and Pigden confirmed they would attend.*

- S106 balances checked - £5223.00 remaining under 'The Dale' planning application. Also £38000 due to be received under 'Gosmoor Development'; available on occupation of 32nd dwelling for improvement of open space and recreation areas within Elm.
- Quotations being sought for replacement of Deputy Clerk's failing laptop.
- Investigations underway to seek replacement valuation for Portacabin in order to confirm accurate figure for insurance cover.
- Works at Friday bridge play area had been completed; installation of new slide and safety surface.
- Internal audit had been completed with Auditor's Report due to be approved under item 10 (Min. ref. 35.26 iv); work will now commence on submitting the external audit.
- Football net at Begdale had been removed due to ongoing vandalism
- Reference incident at FB play area where crushed glass was glued to play equipment - The police have advised that there are no lines of enquiry that could be pursued and the case is closed. The Clerks, Cllrs Pilbeam, Cage and Milham had met with Cllr Roy at Tower Hall to discuss CCTV. A way forward may be to attach a camera on the side of Tower Hall (covering play area), whilst this may not allow facial recognition, it will record incidents. The Tower Hall system could then be used to monitor facial recognition at the entrance gateway in the event of an incident (subject to correct Data Protection protocol). Monitoring system could be located in a secure cupboard within T Hall. *Cllrs confirmed quotes to be sought for this proposal.*
- Contractor for railings at the Cemetery has been chased; first section was currently being powder coated.
- Memorial bench – a request had been received from a Parishioner concerning installation of a memorial bench at either Birch Grove (near the bus stop) or Grove Gardens play area. In either case the land did not belong to the Parish Council, do Members have any views on the subject? *Members were happy with the installation, subject to the landowners permission and did not have any preference on location.*
- Grove Gardens ponds – Whilst the ponds have been maintained the workmanship was not particularly good, matter raised with contact at Tilia Homes. Also queried why recommendations included in 2023 water safety ROSPA report have not been implemented.
- LGR Update - Grounds Maintenance currently managed by County, enquiry has been forwarded to the County Green Team; FB playing field lease, County Council has advised PC to wait until LGR had taken place; Concurrent Functions Grant, advised that we are likely to lose this (£7,837), consider when raising future precepts.
- Deputy Clerk had attended Martins Law training relating to upcoming legislation designed to protect people from potential terrorist attacks at public events. It provided a useful overview of implications of the Act.
- Cilca training – Unit 2 would soon be ready for submission; representing 40% of the qualification. Unit 1 had been passed.
- Area of concrete had been exposed in front of bench at Elm play area. Contractor requested to remove it, moving forward a section of wet pour surfacing could be installed.
- Street lighting data had been received from FDC. Significant amount of work now required to assess what is required for stage 3 of upgrade program. Updated service level agreement (SLA) now rolling over annually. *Cllrs agreed in principle to accept the new SLA arrangements, to be confirmed at July meeting.*
- Key cabinet ordered secure storage. Large quantity of keys to be sorted, identified and tagged.
- Direct debit set up for the electricity supply at Begdale Portacabin. Monthly meter readings to be submitted to ensure accuracy.
- Remote meeting with Wisbech Policing team had been scheduled on 30th June, 7-8pm to discuss policing matters. *Cllrs Lee and Ferguson confirmed they would attend.*
- Update received from FDC concerning funding pot for improvements to play area in Elm - Consultation had been completed, limited feedback but positive. Matter now referred to next FDC cabinet meeting.
- Further date proposed for Cemetery Working Party event, Thursday 2nd July meeting between 5.30-6pm. *Cllr Milham confirmed he would attend, absent Cllrs to be notified.*
- Quotation for cleaning Coldham bus shelter, £95 (within Clerk's spending power). *No objections raised, proceed.*
- MVV incinerator grant fund was looking for 'Panel' volunteers. Important to have representative/s from villages otherwise funding would be focussed on Wisbech. *Mr Keeble confirmed his interest in applying, absent Cllrs to be notified.*

35.26 Financial Matters

- i. The Deputy Clerk advised the following sums had been received since the last meeting;
Interest £593.44; Cemetery fees £350.00.
- ii. To resolve to approve expenditure for June 2026 as detailed below: Resolved; P. Cllr Milham S. Cllr Lee.

PAYE	DETAIL	NET	VAT	TOTAL
Tawny Owl Services	Grounds Maintenance	£1,748.55	£349.71	£2,098.26
BT	Broadband	£36.95	£7.39	£44.34
Gallagher	Insurance	£6,860.00		£6,860.00
Willowtree Homecare Ltd	Cemetery Cottage cleaning	£335.00		£335.00
Tamar IT	Support	£54.00	£10.80	£64.80
Scottish power	Cemetery Cottage power	£45.81	£2.41	£48.22
Optimum Clean	Cemetery Cottage Cleaning	£145.00		£145.00
Walton Loo Hire	Coldham Carnival - Disabled toilet	£250.00	£50.00	£300.00
Salaries	Clerk's & Deputy Clerk salary	£2,659.81		£2,659.81
Expenses	Clerk's & Deputy Clerk exps	£200.44		£200.44
HMRC	PAYE M2	£704.18		£704.18
Nest	Pension contributions	£240.61		£240.61
Tawny Owl Services	Removal of items	£45.00	£9.00	£54.00
Tawny Owl Services	Emergency call to FB re Vandalism	£150.00	£30.00	£180.00
Local Council Support Services	Internal Audit	£254.25		£254.25
Tamar IT	Hosting package / domain name	£109.00	£21.80	£130.80
Derek king	Plants for Elm planters	£46.49		£46.49
Institute of Cem Management	Membership	£110.00		£110.00
		£14,047.09	£420.31	£14,528.20

Chair

- i. To resolve on the quotations received from A1 signs for two signs along The Towpath (cost shared 50/50 with Emneth Parish Council) Total of £400.00 plus VAT. Council resolved to accept the quotation. P Cllr Lee S Cllr Ferguson
- ii. Resolve to confirm acceptance of the content of the Internal Auditors report for 25/26 – Resolved to accept – Cllr Pigden S. Cllr Cage
- iii. To resolve to approve section 1 of AGAR 25-26 - Resolved to accept P Cllr Cage S. Cllr Milham
- iv. To resolve to approve section 2 of AGAR 25-26 - Resolved to accept P Cllr Cage S. Cllr Milham
- v. To resolve to adopt new HMRC rate for mileage; 55p/mile backdated to April 2026 - Resolved to accept P. Cllr Lee S. Cllr Milham.

36.26 To receive updates from Working Parties / Outside bodies where appropriate.

1. Finance Working party – NTR.
2. Christmas Decorations Working Party (Cllrs Milham, Lee, South & Welbourne). – Cllr Milham would arrange meeting with other WP members to discuss way forward.
3. Emergency Plan WP – to resolve on preferred option proposed by WP. - It was resolved to accept Option 3. To complete a simple Emergency Plan.
4. Street Pride – Statement received from Cllr Pilbeam – 34 bags of rubbish equating to 21 man hours had been collected. 7 incidents of fly tipping had been reported.
5. White Mill Fund - Statement received from Cllr Pilbeam. – Closing date for applications had passed. 5 applications had been received for funding. Fund stood at approximately £160,000. Decision meeting would be held at Tower Hall on 15th June.

37.26 **Planning:**

- i. **F/YR260354/F - Erection of a side extension and raising of the roof to create a first-floor level to the existing garage, together with the erection of a two-storey front extension to the existing dwelling at Silver Fern 217 Fridaybridge Road Elm Wisbech PE14 0AU** – Resolved to support P. Cllr Cage S. Cllr Lee.
- ii. **F/YR26/0381/TRGA - Fell 1no Silver Birch Tree within a conservation area at The Holt Main Road Elm, Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE14 0AB** – Resolved to support P. Cllr Cage S. Cllr Milham
- iii. **F/YR26/0382/TRCA - Works to 1x Pedunculate Oak Tree and Fell 1x Elder Tree within a conservation area at The Holt Main Road Elm Wisbech PE14 0AB** – Resolved to support P. Cllr Cage S. Cllr Milham
- iv. **F/YR26/0406/F - Erect a detached garage and boundary wall/gate with 1.8m piers to existing dwelling (retrospective) at Bungalow Stags Holt Farm Coldham Bank Coldham.** Resolved to support P Cllr Cage S. Cllr Milham
- v. **F/YR26/0410/F - Reduction of church spire at St Marks Church of England Church Main Road Friday Bridge Cambridgeshire PE14 0HJ** – Resolved to support – P. Cllr Ferguson S. Cllr Cage
- vi. **F/YR26/0407/RM - Reserved Matters application relating to detailed matters of appearance landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline permission F/YR22/1215/O to erect 2no dwellings (2-storey, 4-bed) involving demolition of existing building at Land West Of 2 Woodhouse Farm Close Friday Bridge Cambridgeshire** – Resolved to support – P. Cllr Cage S. Cllr Milham

38.26 **Highways & Footways;**

- i. **TTRO – 26/-20606 - Begdale Road, Elm - Planned emergency road closure for carriageway.**

39.26 **Neighbourhood plan – to consider all information circulated and resolve on way forward.**

Clerks requested to source more accurate quotation to proceed with plan. Item to be carried forward to July agenda.

40.26 **Parish online mapping system – to resolve on decision reference subscribing.**

It was resolved to subscribe to the system.

41.26 **To confirm date / time for next Parish Council meeting** – 8th July 2026, 6.30pm.

42.26 **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).

20.25 – It was resolved to enter closed session.

43.26 **Cemetery Cottage Tenancy – to receive update; resolve appropriately.** (Confidential due to personal/contractual information). – Cllr Ferguson confirmed her interest in the agenda item and provided an update; Application from prospective tenant had been withdrawn. Property was back on the market and more viewings would take place. Renovation works had been completed. No further action resolved.

44.26 **Cemetery Chapel – To consider confidential matters – resolve appropriately** (Confidential due to contractual matters) It was resolved to proceed with the proposal for Chapel to be used for storage, subject to a contract being in place. – P. Cllr Lee S. Cllr Milham.

45.26 **To resolve to close the closed session.** 20.45 – It was resolved to close the closed session.

46.26 **Close of meeting.** 20.45 - It was resolved to close the meeting.

Signed
Elm Parish Council Chair

Date